



Intermediaries for Justice

...from investigation to trial

Welcome to IfJ's AGM and Professional Development Seminar

Knowledge, Skills & Resilience

November 15th, 2018



Welcome to the fourth IfJ AGM. It certainly has been a very busy year and I'd like to thank the trustees, who all work on an entirely voluntary basis, for their constant hard work. We will be hearing from our treasurer shortly who is due to step down following the AGM. May I take this opportunity to thank Richard for his constant help over the last few years.

What have we been doing?

It has been an incredibly busy and exciting year – some of this is courtesy of Baroness Newlove and her Voice for the Voiceless report. Things gathered momentum and it just hasn't stopped. People are recognizing the name of IfJ nationally and we are becoming a recognised charity with potential to grow. This slide runs through some things we have been involved with.



Activities undertaken by IfJ Trustees and members **November 17 – October 18**

Aims and objectives

- To liaise and co-operate with other organisations
- To increase awareness
- To improve Fair Access to Justice

Areas covered

- Trainings
- Meetings
- Producing documents
- Attending and presenting at events
- Media coverage

TRAININGS AND ATTENDANCE

- Inns of Court College of Advocacy training on Defendants
- Delivered training to family solicitors on working with vulnerable people
- East London Magistrates with Baroness Newlove (April 18)
- Solicitors in Warrington at a conference about intermediary work in the family courts (Oct)
- Trained Human Rights Barristers in Bulgaria (May 18)
- Justice Meetings on Mental Health and Defendants
- Standing Committee for Youth Justice – delivered a training on the role of intermediaries
- Attended and contributed at NSPCC conference in September 2017 and the subsequent networking event
- Care not Custody reception re: Liaison & Diversion (July 18)
- Attendance at discussions re Child House Project (Aug 18)
- Participated in Ministry of Justice’s ‘Defendant Voice’ Panel (Sept 18)
- IICSA- invited to join the panel during the Justice seminar (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse)
- Attended as a panel member on the Luton Family Justice Board training event for solicitors, judges, barristers in the Bedfordshire area.

PRODUCED

- Drafted a paper (about the difference between supporters in the criminal courts and intermediaries) for *Justice Committee* to use in the Criminal Rules Committee Meeting
- Document 'Evidence Only?' following survey of IfJ members opinion
- Worked on document for JUSTICE, which will appear in the new practice direction, illustrating the difference to judges between the new supporter role and the intermediary role
- Submission to the Wales Justice Commission

PRESENTED AT

- APIL Conference and stand - speaking to attendees to promote the role and understanding of RIs (Jul 18)
- Liaison with South West & Wales Courts re: roll out of Section 28 hearings
- Submission to the Wales Justice Commission

MEETINGS

- With Director of Family and Criminal Justice Policy at the MoJ to discuss links with IfJ
- With QAB members to discuss position of IfJ

MEDIA

- Participated in a podcast as part of the barristers training on working with the vulnerable, promoting the ethos that we are here to work together and that intermediaries are a tool available to the CJS to access evidence.
- Interview on Woman's hour for IfJ to raise the profile of intermediary work and access to justice via a communication specialist
- Interviews: The Today Programme and Breakfast TV about the role of Intermediaries
- Interviews with The Guardian Newspaper and BBC Radio Sussex about the role of intermediaries
- Set up IfJ Social media – Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp groups

OTHER

- Liaison with South West & Wales Courts re: roll out of Section 28 hearings
- On-going liaison with CAWS (Citizen Advice Witness Service)
- On-going liaison with Prison Reform Trust

FUTURE PLANS

- Dec 18 - deliver training to paramedics (Canterbury University) – about trauma & the intermediary role
- Jan 19 – deliver training to Liaison and Diversion clinical network
- Feb 19 – deliver training to well-being practitioners (diploma course at Centre for Child Health)
- Training about the role of intermediary for NSPCC
- Training for the Parole board regarding future training
- Deliver training to solicitors on working with vulnerable defendants



At the May conference we celebrated becoming a charity. Having achieved this, we now need to raise funds to develop and grow.

Our primary objective as a charity is a rather old fashioned term 'the relief of need'....this is basically the relief of need of vulnerable people by raising awareness about our role with the general public and professionals, therefore creating potential for fair access to justice.

Now we all know the oxygen mask example of supplying oxygen first to the adult, before the child. So, in order to achieve 'the relief of need of vulnerable people' we need to support intermediaries in the work they do. IfJ aims to continue to create a cohesive group by providing a central body / a hub where they can exchange ideas, and receive additional training.



This year we have supported intermediaries who have been investigated by QAB: or called to family court to be cross examined as a witness or have been approached by the media and needed help...etc

Let us take a few moments to reflect on our current role. I would say we are a group of highly motivated and dedicated people who work in isolation, in what is at times a very unforgiving system. We need to be congratulated for surviving at times in the lion's den of court and what has been for a few years, a rudderless scheme.

This year IfJ has had meetings with various people from the MOJ such as Melisa Case and Matthew Gould and also with some members of QAB. They have all endorsed what IfJ does and have helped clarify how we might work alongside them.



We are delighted that MOJ is picking up the reins again and look forward to their February seminar. This will release time for us to expand wider in the name of Fair Access to Justice. During these talks it has been made clear that MOJ and QAB's primary remit is for the welfare of the witness, not the intermediary. It was suggested that IfJ could play a useful role in supporting intermediaries. Perhaps a strange concept really...a happy mother is a happy child...so support the mother. A well supported intermediary is a safe and well supported vulnerable witness.

It is easy at times to become entangled with politics and institutional dynamics. However, if we focus on the essence of our work as communication specialists, rather than the rights and wrongs and fragmentations of systems, it brings us back to the importance of the work...supporting vulnerability.



We are highly skilled specialists with transferable skills, which are useful in many justice settings. We had hoped that the MOJ would expand the scheme into working with defendant and family court. At one point there was an aim to do so, but lately it has been made clear that this is no longer the case. At the moment.

So that is where we are... Concentrating on the essence, connecting to what perhaps brought many of us to this work --Justice and Vulnerability and Equality of Rights for all.

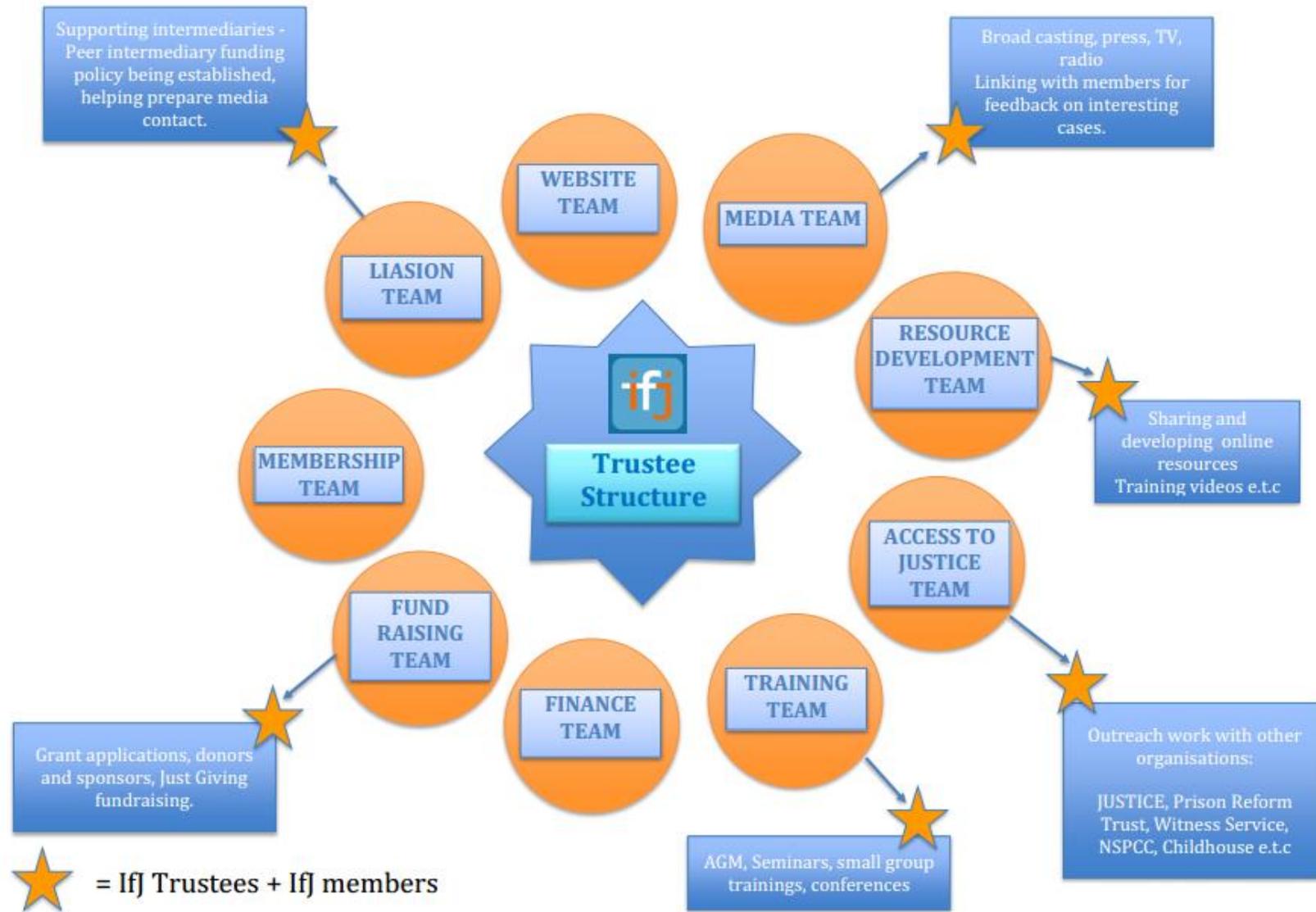


Recently I visited a refugee camp in Greece. I attended a group meeting with some dedicated young German lawyers. I recognized all the same difficulties and needs as we experience while working with the police and barristers. They didn't know how to convey their vital information in a simple form using visual materials with an ability to sit with trauma. I realized then just how vital and transferable our skills are...

It was a light bulb moment.

So, what have we been up to this last year.

Last November we decided to introduce a co-operative style approach where teams with particular focus and interests were set up as sub groups/teams. These consist of trustees and at times IfJ members - the stars (see following slide).

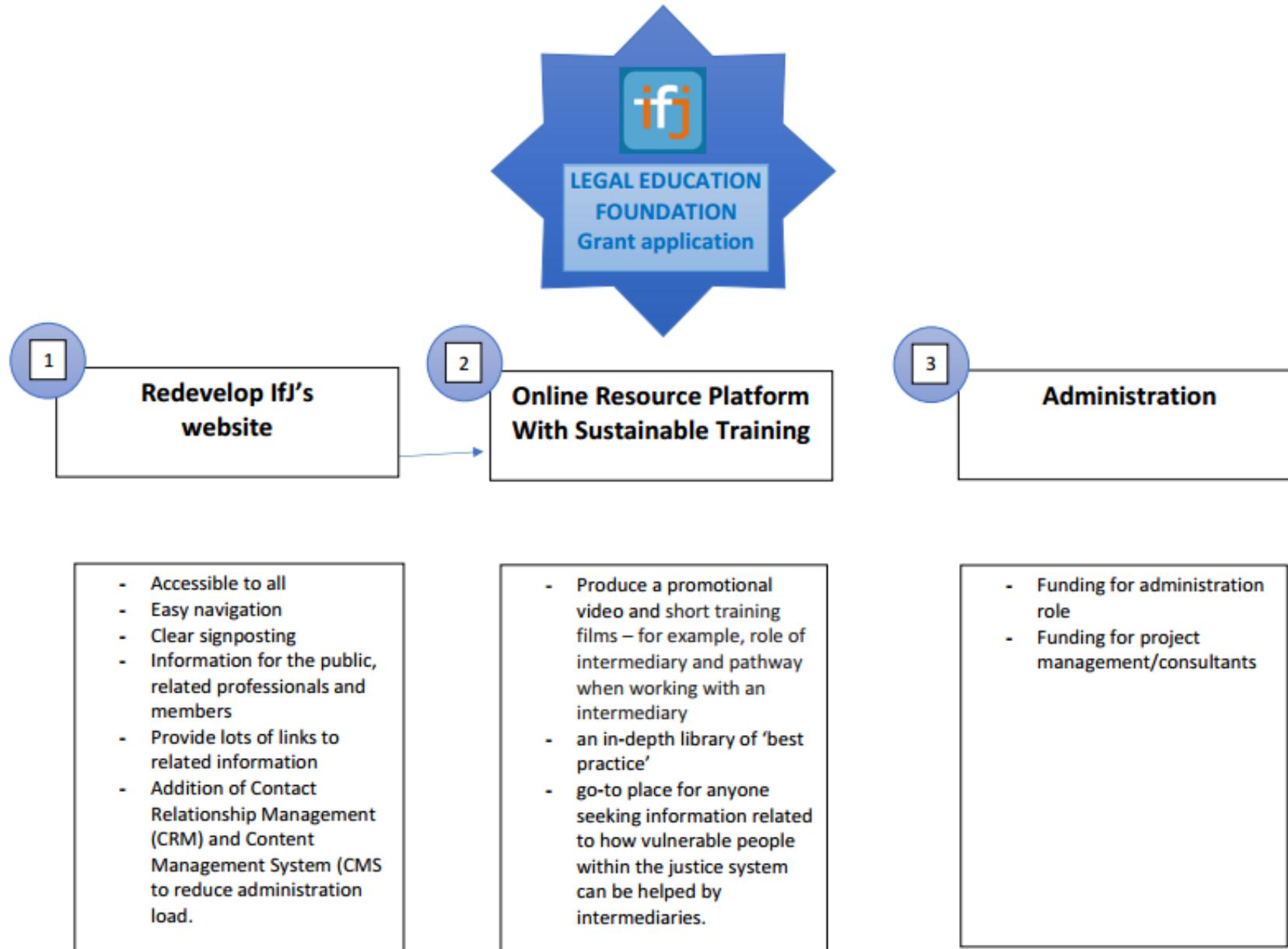




We would like you to think whether you could join us as a trustee or volunteer member. We want to be steered by what members want and hope to increase the number of members working closely with us.

We haven't time to run through everything, but in a moment a few trustees will briefly talk about their team and what they have been doing and intend to do.

I'll start by briefly talking about fundraising. IfJ is at a point where we develop or we stop. In order to develop and step up to all the potential projects, we need to raise funds. In October we put an application in to the Legal Education Foundation (LEF).





The visual explains the gist of what we applied for. This was a huge piece of work. We may not be successful, but it has been a crystalizing process and we are now ready to apply for future funds.

I will now hand over - the treasurer and then to the trustee team.