



Public Law Project



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**OUR 2025 – 2030 STRATEGY**

**Advancing fairness in  
society through public law**

# Moving forwards together



**Jonathan Senker**  
**Chair of Trustee Board**



**“The belief that we achieve most through shared endeavour is embedded in our DNA. It also runs through our strategy. So, this strategy is more than a direction for PLP – it is also an invitation.”**

In times of uncertainty, clarity of purpose, of values and of direction are essential. That is why it was vital to PLP’s Board and Executive Team that our strategy be derived from thinking fundamentally about who we are as an organisation, our purpose, our values, and the impact that we feel compelled to make.

In today’s volatile and unpredictable environment, we were determined to establish a clear and steady compass – something that could guide us irrespective of which way the winds are blowing – or how hard.

At the heart of this strategy is our purpose: advancing fairness through public law. It is bold and hopeful. It demands that we strive for greater equity and justice no matter the climate.

At the same time, we are acutely aware that hard-won progress can be rapidly lost. We must strengthen and defend human rights and access to justice now and buttress them against future threats. We must be especially focused on working alongside marginalised communities, whose rights and access to justice are too often the first to be further degraded.

Our approach must be genuinely strategic. This is not about setting a rigid plan which may shatter on contact with unpredictable developments. It is about equipping our organisation to respond to change, to act with foresight, and to help to shape the future. It is also about empowering and supporting our excellent Executive Team with the flexibility to adapt in order to achieve the most.

At the same time, we have made clear the nature and extent of the impact that we aim for. We will hold ourselves accountable for delivering this, and we encourage others to do likewise.

Since joining PLP, I have been continually inspired by the spirit of collaboration that runs through the organisation. The belief that we achieve most through shared endeavour is embedded in our DNA. It also runs through our strategy. So, this is more than a direction for PLP – it is also an invitation. If you share our sense of purpose and belief in what is possible; if you feel the urgency of defending rights and the conviction that the law is one of our strongest tools for advancing fairness, then we hope you will travel with us as we take this strategy forward.

# Moving forwards with courage



**Shameem Ahmad**  
Chief Executive Officer



**“It is the very challenges of this era which demand from us a more hopeful and aspirational vision than ever.”**

Public law is society’s connective tissue. It binds together the key elements of our democracy and provides the structure for these to work together effectively. Public law is an expression of respect for each individual, each community, and each institution. It works with and reinforces the principles of the rule of law, human rights and equity.

Public law is fundamental to a fair and inclusive society. At its best, it enables the state to confront and navigate challenging contexts and make well thought through decisions for us all. Where public bodies make decisions that are unlawful, irrational, unfair or contrary to human rights, public law is there to enable people to challenge those decisions and hold the state to account.

This strategy was put together at a time when the case for hope is challenging to make. Marginalised communities are being scapegoated and oppressed, to the point where their lives are being put at risk. We are beset with crises: the climate crisis, increasing poverty, the growing fracturing of society. Across swathes of the country, access to justice is non-existent. Essential state decision-making processes are being carelessly passed on to opaque algorithms. At a time when we need more global leadership, the international world order feels ever more fragile. Domestically, the threat of authoritarianism has reached our shores. If those with authoritarian impulses gain the levers of power, they would have the means to

systemically target marginalised communities and dissolve the principles that underpin a healthy democracy for us all. The stakes are high.

This is not the time to be asking for little, but for doing more. It is the very challenges of this era which demand from us a more hopeful and aspirational vision than PLP has ever had before—one in which the state is not only lawful and fair, but confident and just, capable of securing a fair and inclusive society. I believe striving for this new vision is both vital and achievable. Neither PLP nor any single organisation can be the silver bullet. However, as part of a broader social justice movement that spans generations, it is our responsibility and privilege to take forward the work that others long began.

We wanted a bold strategy that sets the course for us to confront the threats faced by society and centre marginalised communities as we do so. Our work will be underpinned by our values and our principles: striving for equity, sharing expertise, acting with courage and working, as ever, in collaboration.

Together with inspiring clients, partners and collaborators, we must meet this moment head on. No matter the challenges in the years ahead, PLP will advance fairness in society through public law with determination, with authority and with others.

# Building on PLP's history

Our strategic development process enabled us to revisit PLP's extraordinary history and reflect on the work of our multi-disciplinary team comprised of casework, research, events and training, policy and advocacy, and communications. We are proud of what we have achieved together with our brilliant partners and clients. This provides a springboard from which to continue to make an impact. Some highlights from recent years include:

- ◆ **We have been involved in era-defining issues:** from working on the prorogation of Parliament case, to safeguarding the promises made to the Windrush generation and dismantling the Rwanda immigration policy.
- ◆ **We have tackled threats to the rule of law head on:** from becoming a leading voice on public sector use of automation and Artificial Intelligence, to tenaciously advocating for and continuing to realise access to justice and defending the Human Rights Act.

- ◆ **We have pioneered new approaches:** pooling expertise of all kinds in order to dismantle barriers faced by all marginalised communities, enabling cutting-edge conversations about public law, facilitating extensive collaboration across our network and ensuring our events through to our policy work is grounded in lived and living experience.

Revisiting our history through the lens of using PLP's unique strengths to rise to current challenges made it clear that while PLP has always existed for people experiencing marginalisation, this strategy must go even further to centre them in our work. Some have been directly marginalised by the state and others have been left behind through neglect. We exist for them all. We refer throughout the strategy to "marginalised communities" to keep the document accessible, but we wish to acknowledge here that the individuals and communities for whom PLP exists have breadth of lived and living experience and nuanced circumstances.



**"When I was told I owed DWP over £8,000 I was in disbelief. Paying it back even at a small amount a month would have taken me years and meant making day-to-day sacrifices for my family. The worst part was I knew I had done everything right and DWP were in the wrong.**

**While the process of going to court has caused me a lot of stress, I finally feel I've been heard and I hope my case can be used by others in the future."**

**K, client PLP represented on an overpayments case with the Department of Work and Pensions**



**"I'm really overjoyed and very emotional actually about the judgment today... Thanks also to the wonderful and amazing legal team. I couldn't have had a better one, literally the dream team for this particular case."**

**Ellen Clifford, represented by PLP in her case against an unlawful Department of Work and Pensions consultation**

# Meeting challenges head on

Grounded in a deep and thoughtful analysis of trends and future thinking as well as our history and strengths, this strategy places PLP confidently in an era of escalating challenges, ensuring that we do our part with others to confront them.

We are witnessing a concerning rise of authoritarianism and unaccountable power across the globe. This shift is particularly devastating for marginalised communities, including migrants, who face increasing exclusion from society and find their futures neither guaranteed nor safeguarded. At the same time, we see the rule of law being systematically degraded both domestically and internationally, while power concentrates in the hands of unelected and unaccountable individuals and entities who operate beyond democratic oversight.

These authoritarian tendencies are contributing to a growing fracturing of society itself. Political polarisation has intensified, while respect for fundamental democratic institutions – including Parliament, the state, and the justice system – continues to diminish.

Economic marginalisation compounds these challenges, with rising poverty and mounting pressure on public bodies leading to deteriorating public service outcomes for those who need them most. Climate change is a growing threat, and its impact is disproportionately felt by marginalised communities. Communities and individuals face multiple, intersecting disadvantages that create complex barriers to justice and equality. Meanwhile, Artificial Intelligence and automated decision making is proliferating at a rate that is outpacing existing regulatory frameworks, creating fresh opportunities for exploitation and exclusion.

These interconnected challenges demand a coordinated response that that our history demonstrates we are equipped to make; a response that protects the most vulnerable, strengthens democratic institutions, and ensures that power remains accountable to the people it affects.

## **Our strategy ensures that PLP brings its strengths to contribute to addressing these challenges:**

- ◆ Rise in authoritarianism & unaccountable power
  - ◆ Increased fracturing of society
  - ◆ Growing economic marginalisation
  - ◆ Rising unfettered use of technology
  - ◆ Escalating impact of climate change



# Introducing our strategy

## Our purpose

uniquely places us to engage with society's challenges and achieve our vision

## Our values

are central to how we will need to work

## OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES

# To advance fairness through public law

We strive for  
**equity**

We share  
**expertise**

We work in  
**collaboration**

We act with  
**courage**

Our purpose will enable us to address these **challenges** and bring about our vision

Rise of authoritarianism and unaccountable power

Greater fracturing of society

Increased economic marginalisation

Escalated unfettered use of technology

Growing impact of climate change

**Our vision** is a guiding star to the society we will strive to create

## OUR VISION

# A fair and inclusive society secured by a just and confident state

The **cornerstones** are its essential conditions and the areas we can add the most value



### CORNERSTONE 1

**Advancing and protecting the frontiers of public law**



### CORNERSTONE 2

**Justice is accessible to all**



### CORNERSTONE 3

**No one is marginalised in society by those with power**

The **foundational cornerstone** supports the others and describes a PLP equipped to drive our purpose in pursuit of our vision



**FOUNDATIONAL CORNERSTONE**  
**PLP is representative, relevant and respected**

# Making it happen:

## Our strategic cornerstones



### CORNERSTONE 1

## Advancing and protecting the frontiers of public law

Public law is an integral part of society. It enables the state to make good and fair decisions often in challenging contexts. Where public bodies make decisions that are unlawful, irrational, unfair or contrary to human rights, public law enables people to challenge those decisions and hold the state to account. We will reinforce the role of public law in enabling a fair and inclusive society. We will ensure that public law remains valued and valuable now and long into the future.

#### GOALS

#### IMPACTS

##### 1.

We will lead the development of public law intentionally and ambitiously

- ◆ Greater rights and protections in law for all, especially marginalised communities
- ◆ Improved quality of government policy and decision-making
- ◆ Increased ability to challenge unjust policies and decisions

##### 2.

We will address imbalances of power, including unaccountable power, offering a visionary and positive future

- ◆ PLP and sector enabled to tackle unaccountable power of non-state actors
- ◆ PLP and sector enabled to tackle risk of authoritarianism and impact on the rule of law and marginalised groups

##### 3.

We will ensure rights and protections are valued by the public, understood by experts and respected by those in power

- ◆ Wider understanding of public law's value, including expanded reach across England and Wales
- ◆ Enhanced spaces with diverse perspectives to learn about and develop public law
- ◆ Solutions produced through deeper understanding of problems



## CORNERSTONE 2

# Justice is accessible to all

Everyone should be able to access and trust the justice system. This is a fundamental component of the rule of law. It is essential to enable people to hold the state to account and ensure it upholds the principles of public law. We will bring our expertise and work with others to realise this vital feature of a fair society.

### GOALS

### IMPACTS

**1.**

**We will design and advance a fair and inclusive administrative law justice system that is accessible to all**

- ◆ Significant progress towards universal and inclusive access to justice in administrative law system
- ◆ Improved quality of decisions by public bodies

**2.**

**We will expose and work to dismantle structural barriers that prevent marginalised communities accessing justice**

- ◆ Greater awareness of barriers faced in accessing justice and change needed to increase inclusion
- ◆ Increased access to justice for marginalised communities and organisations representing them equipped

**3.**

**We will advocate for a better resourced and more effective administrative law justice system**

- ◆ Resourcing accounts for diverse needs
- ◆ High quality materials and resources assist people in accessing remedies
- ◆ Quicker decisions and remedies within administrative law justice system





### CORNERSTONE 3

## No one is marginalised in society by those with power

By focussing our work where we can have the most impact for all communities that have been marginalised intentionally or that have been left behind through neglect, PLP seeks to strengthen society. PLP has the privilege to work with many communities. We will collaborate and share expertise to enable a fairer and more inclusive society. We will work to ensure that the state and those with power do not marginalise communities

#### GOALS

#### IMPACTS

**1.**

**We will work with marginalised communities to use public law to dismantle marginalisation, discrimination and oppression**

- ◆ Increased challenge of unjust policies and decisions affecting marginalised communities challenged
- ◆ More communities use public law to address marginalisation and participate in public decision making
- ◆ More advocates of public law share positive and empowering experiences

**2.**

**We will expose the harms faced by marginalised communities and reduce marginalisation perpetuated by those with power**

- ◆ Better informed narratives in media about experiences of marginalisation and its impact
- ◆ More empathetic policy and decision making that has been explicitly informed by marginalised communities

**3.**

**We will partner with marginalised communities to enforce and uphold rights**

- ◆ Deeper understanding of communities we have hitherto not reached
- ◆ More communities able to enforce their rights
- ◆ Strengthened legal cases, ability to advance public law and better jurisprudence developed



## FOUNDATIONAL CORNERSTONE

### PLP is representative, relevant and respected

PLP exists for all marginalised communities in society. To maximise our impact, we will develop our authoritative voice in the sector. We will keep innovating and ensuring that we effectively represent and work with marginalised communities to boldly shape society. We will embed an ambitious approach to accessibility, inclusion and ensuring that lived and living experience is reflected at PLP.

#### GOALS

#### IMPACTS

##### 1.

**We will embed a systematic and ambitious approach to accessibility, inclusion and ensuring that lived and living experience is reflected at PLP**

- ◆ Lived and living experiences deeply valued at PLP, informing our work and environment
- ◆ Sector leading approach addresses inequitable barriers in our work and with others in sector

##### 2.

**We will define how our values and purpose can be projected and embedded internally and externally**

- ◆ Staff deeply connected to PLP's values and purpose
- ◆ Organisational culture nurtures diversity of thought and experience
- ◆ PLP is trusted and respected

##### 3.

**We will proactively develop long-term thinking and horizon scanning to identify threats and opportunities with agility**

- ◆ Healthy debate enables PLP to engage with big issues with partners
- ◆ PLP balances thoughtful, long-term approach with agility to maintain relevance
- ◆ PLP provides solutions that break barriers including via international lens

##### 4.

**We will increase the influence, value and impact of PLP**

- ◆ Embedded cross organisational approach reach and advocacy for communities hitherto not reached
- ◆ Strategic communications, advocacy and partnership approaches increase impact, collaboration and alliance of expertise
- ◆ PLP's impact is demonstrable and integrated into continuous learning

##### 5.

**We will develop a growth strategy that enhances our capability to deliver PLP's ambitious vision**

- ◆ High quality resources to enable PLP's work
- ◆ Capability strengthened through organisational sustainability approach, including increased and diversified funding
- ◆ PLP continues to broaden and deepen expertise, experience and capacity

# Our partners, patrons and funders

Our work would not be possible without your support.

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**We are excited to work with you to deliver this bold vision and ambitious strategy.**



# Public Law Project



## Get in touch

Address: The Design Works, 93-99 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7EY

Telephone: 020 7843 1260

[www.publiclawproject.org.uk](http://www.publiclawproject.org.uk)

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