

NO ONE SHOULD FACE COURT ALONE

“If you can't afford legal representation, it's very easy to feel lost in the court system. I was overwhelmed, intimidated and felt alone.”

Support Through Court Client

It is hard to imagine facing court on your own. Yet this is the reality for many people facing life-changing situations: bankruptcy, eviction, deportation, or loss of contact with children. Many thousands of people who cannot afford a lawyer must represent themselves in court.

Widespread cuts to legal aid, especially to people facing family breakdown, combined with the closure of many locally funded advice centres, mean thousands more people every day are being forced to undergo legal proceedings without lawyers.

Our clients face other disadvantages which can act as a barrier to justice: for many, English is not their first language; they may live with a disability or have a serious health problem; and many are from lower income backgrounds. Furthermore, despite being unable to access any formal legal representation themselves, our clients will often face professional barristers in court.

Every day many disadvantaged and vulnerable people have to navigate a confusing court system under incredible stress, with so much at stake. Without legal representation many are at risk of not being able to access justice.



**SUPPORT
THROUGH
COURT**

HOW WE HELP

Support Through Court is a charity dedicated to supporting Litigants in Person.

We aim to reduce the disadvantage of people facing the civil or family justice system without a lawyer, enabling them to access justice.

We believe that no one should face court alone and so we work to provide support to as many people as we can.

Over 800 Support Through Court volunteers across England and Wales offer free and independent help, tailored to the needs of each individual client.

Our volunteers can usually provide emotional and practical support before, during and after a court hearing so that clients are assisted during the whole process. We listen to our clients and help them order their thoughts and enable them to present their case to the best of their ability.

This might involve helping clients to understand the court process and fill in forms or prepare statements. Crucially, our volunteers can sit alongside clients in court, and in remote hearings they can share the experience and talk to the client afterwards.

We also work in synergy with other organisations and signpost to other support agencies and sources of free or affordable legal advice, where it is appropriate to do so.

“Countless people who do not have lawyers need help and support in our courts. Support Through Court provides an invaluable public service in aid of the administration of justice.”

The Rt Hon The Lord Burnett of Maldon, Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales

Ultimately, we aim to **empower people** to participate fully in the legal process, so that they can better **access justice.**

KELLY'S STORY

With her three children, Kelly lived in rented accommodation which had a prepaid utilities meter. Kelly was shocked when a claim was brought against her for unpaid utilities. Kelly had no choice but to represent herself in court to avoid being ordered to pay a substantial sum of money.

Support Through Court helped Kelly from the start of the case: volunteers helped her put together her evidence; helped her draft a full witness statement; and attended court with her for the final hearing.

A volunteer helped explain some of the legal language used in the claimant's argument, and before the hearing, the volunteer explained what was likely to happen in court. The volunteer also spent time running through the case so Kelly could clarify what she wanted to say before going into court.

Kelly succeeded in having the claim dismissed as the Judge was not satisfied the court had adequate evidence. Kelly was extremely grateful for the support she had received.

Name and image changed to protect privacy



OUR NUMBERS

VOLUNTEERS

881 CORE & STUDENT
VOLUNTEERS

COST PER CLIENT

£35 TO ACCESS INVALUABLE
SUPPORT FROM A VOLUNTEER

CLIENT CONTACTS

2018/19 – 75,432
2019/20 – 78,506

TYPES OF CASES

CIVIL	35%
FAMILY	64%

*Other = 1%

Our ability to keep our costs low means that a one-off donation of £35 can help a vulnerable person access invaluable support through the stressful court experience and help them better access justice.

GET INVOLVED

- Become a Friend or Carey Club member to help vulnerable people facing court alone.
- Get your company involved and join our Partnership network, look at sponsorship options and ask about staff engagement.
- Support your community by joining one of our events, or taking on your own challenge.

£35 can help a vulnerable person access invaluable support

SUPPORTTHROUGHDCOURT.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/

CONTACT US

NATIONAL HELPLINE

03000 810 006

COURT BASED SERVICES

[supportthroughcourt.org/
contact-us/](https://supportthroughcourt.org/contact-us/)

FUNDRAISING ENQUIRIES

friends@supportthroughcourt.org

“Judges are very grateful for the help they offer people before, during and after court proceedings. [Support Through Court] volunteers make a real difference to our justice system.”

Sir Terence Etherton, Master of the Rolls and Head of Civil Justice