



## Automating processes within P4W allows Fisher Jones Greenwood (FJG) to offer cost-effective legal aid

### Advanced Partner for Windows (P4W) helped this firm enhance legal aid efficiency and client services

A law firm's capacity to conduct legal aid has significantly diminished in recent years due to Government spending cuts. But at FJG, we decided that we would not falter in pursuing our commitment to access to justice.

Our firm is devoted to providing legal advice to those of modest means, and we continue to offer high-quality services to clients who could not otherwise afford it. We're one of the few firms in our region that can still offer cost-effective legal aid support. The reason we've been able to continue doing this is because we're using P4W to automate our day-to-day processes.

#### Automating legal aid

Without Government funding, our key problem in providing legal aid to clients who fell out of scope, was that we couldn't commit the time and personnel needed to turn out documents on an ad hoc basis, in a cost-efficient manner. Our management team decided we needed to automate our processes as much as possible in order to improve efficiencies, reduce costs and pass on the savings to our clients.

For this reason, we adopted P4W case and practice management software from Advanced.

Creating an automated legal aid workflow has made the business significantly more efficient now that forms are produced automatically.

Information is pushed to, and captured from, the client and it's stored in our database. We also have an SMS service that automatically sends out reminders for appointments or court appearances. This functionality saves a great deal of time and money.

High levels of automation enables our fee earners to push work, like data capture and verification, down to paralegals and trainees. This improves efficiency by freeing up fee earners' time, allowing them to focus on critical legal decisions in order to maintain a high-quality legal aid client service. It's also had the added benefit of making the firm's business support staff feel more included in the process and has created an excellent teamwork ethic.

Peter Carr, our Head of IT, comments: "Before we introduced automation into the firm, we had to charge roughly £175 an hour for private work, which isn't sustainable for a legal aid client. Now, we have managed to transform hourly fees into a cost-efficient fixed-fee package."

Automating the firm's processes has been vital in maintaining and improving service to our legal aid clients. They feel engaged because they're having regular contact with us. Communication may not always be conducted face-to-face or over the phone. Often, it's achieved through automated emails and text messaging that keep clients informed and up to date.



#### Client >

Fisher Jones  
Greenwood LLP

#### Sector >

Legal

#### Project >

Automation of legal aid  
processes with P4W

*"We're one of the few firms in the region that can still offer cost-effective legal aid support, and the reason we've been able to do that is because we've automated our day-to-day processes."*

Peter Carr >  
Head of IT >  
Fisher Jones  
Greenwood >

Having all case information on a centralised database also improves our clients' perception of our firm. It allows other fee earners or secretaries to access the details of a particular case and liaise with the client immediately whenever they're asked for information or an update.

Managing client expectations and providing a top-rate client service is essential to us. It would have been impossible to maintain our standard in legal aid without the workflow wizardry of P4W. We have since been recognised by the Law Society for our efforts in providing access to justice for all, leading us to be shortlisted for the Law Society's Excellence Awards, in the category of Excellence in Technology.

### **Built to our specifications**

We chose P4W because we felt it was by far the best case and practice management software for working effectively across all sectors. We have large conveyancing and commercial departments, and we needed a practice management system that would cater for all areas as well as being able to administer legal aid. We especially like P4W's powerful scripting and document production engine and the unlimited customisation that we can apply to the database.

Our P4W database has now been so customised to our specific needs that moving away would likely be economically unviable. This indicates the depth of our commitment to the system, but the key reason we adopted P4W is that the software is designed with legal aid in mind.

P4W is fully compliant with legal aid regulations and allows us to set up any civil or criminal case, record time, post disbursements and expenses, draft and finalise claims, and to bulk upload to the Legal Aid Agency's online portal. It's just made the entire process so much more efficient for us.

As a firm committed to high-quality client service, we have also been particularly impressed with the support offered by Advanced. Peter says: "Advanced has been a very supportive business, with excellent training services, and is constantly striving to help its customers. Even more importantly, it listens to customer feedback and continually improves P4W based on what they have said."

If there is an element of the software that isn't clear to us or that we can't get to work the way we want it to, or we think 'it would be really good if it had this', we can suggest it to Advanced. Within three or four months that will probably pull through to a live release and so it's an ever-evolving system.

While access to legal aid is increasingly limited, and many legal aid specialist firms have disappeared, we have used technology effectively to improve efficiencies and reduce costs. This has enabled us not only to provide a legal aid service, but also offer award-winning, high-quality client service. This wouldn't have been possible without P4W, which has proved well suited to our firm's legal aid process needs.

## **More information**

**w** [oneadvanced.com](http://oneadvanced.com)  
**t** +44(0) 330 343 8000  
**e** [hello@oneadvanced.com](mailto:hello@oneadvanced.com)

Ditton Park, Riding Court Road, Datchet, SL3 9LL

Advanced Computer Software Group Limited is a company registered in England and Wales under company number 05965280, whose registered office is Ditton Park, Riding Court Road, Datchet, SL3 9LL. A full list of its trading subsidiaries is available at [www.oneadvanced.com/legal-privacy](http://www.oneadvanced.com/legal-privacy).