

Full Name	Party	Answers to Questions
Dartford		
Gareth Johnson	Conservative	
Bachchu Kaini	Labour	
Ola Adewunmi	Ind	No contact details
Simon Beard	Lib Dem	<p>Thank you very much for this letter, and for giving candidates an extended opportunity to respond to it.</p> <p>1) What is your view of future funding for publicly funded legal services in this country?</p> <p>On the criminal side we would seek to reverse the decline in legal aid funding by securing further funding for criminal legal aid from sources other than the taxpayer including insurance for company directors and changes to Restraint Orders.</p> <p>We would also conduct an urgent and comprehensive review of the effects of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act on access to justice, particularly funding for social welfare appeals, and domestic violence and exceptional cases.</p> <p>On the civil side we would reverse the massive increases in court and tribunal fees, which prevent many from pursuing good cases.</p> <p>2) How would you seek to protect those business interests of lawyers in Kent in a post-Brexit world?</p> <p>First and foremost we would seek to keep the UK inside the single market, which we believe to be the best possible alternative to EU membership for UK citizens and businesses. As you mention, this would be highly beneficial to lawyers in Kent.</p> <p>We would also ensure that the UK retains international arrangements for jurisdiction, the recognition and enforcement of judgments and for family cases, currently enjoyed under the EU Brussels I and Brussels II Regulation and the Hague Child Abduction Convention.</p> <p>3) What are you're views on the need to maintain a highly regulated profession:</p> <p>It is important both to protect the quality of the legal profession and the ability of ordinary people to access it. I strongly support reforms to the legal profession that I feel may help achieve both of these ends, including reducing the distinctions between barristers and solicitors and encouraging more people to use alternative means of dispute resolution. I am also deeply concerned about people who end up</p>

		<p>representing themselves in legal cases and believe that more needs to be done to support these people, not only for their own good but also for the sake of justice and the efficiency of trials.</p> <p>4) What is your view of engagement and if elected, how would you be prepared to engage with Kent Law Society on legal and justice issues?</p> <p>I believe that listening and engagement are the most important tasks of any MP and I would very much include listening to legal professionals as part of that. I am not a lawyer, but I am aware of the complex ways in which government policies interact with the law, both in theory and in practice and I would seek out local representatives of the legal profession in order to help me to understand these complex processes better.</p> <p>Many thanks Simon Beard Liberal Democrat candidate for Dartford</p>
Ben Fryer	UKIP	
Andrew Blatchford	Green	No contact details