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# Justice destroyed is justice denied

Another legal adviser who is taking strike action over Common Platform blogs about how the flawed systems has been impacting them and their colleagues, and talks about the impact of strike action.

[I am taking strike action](#) and I want to explain why. I am a legal adviser, a solicitor and a professional. I work hard and take my legal responsibilities extremely seriously.

I have given constructive feedback about Common Platform (CP) since day one. I have been interviewed by the employer about CP. I give written and oral feedback. I have tried my best to make my employer listen. I can see the risks involved in using an IT system that is not fit for purpose in a courtroom. The risks are big and the stakes high. [BBC's File on Four](#) described HMCTS's approach to the agile development of CP with 'flying a plane whilst it is being built'.

Legal advisers and court associates work in the courtroom. We see first-hand the negative impact CP is having on the day to day running of the courts. We are seeing our colleagues breaking under the pressure it is creating. We are inputting case outcomes whilst magistrates, lawyers, police officers, victims of crime, vulnerable defendants and many more sit waiting for us to result a case.

Not only are we working with an IT system which is flawed but we are then being prevented from fulfilling our primary role: advising on the law. We are lawyers. The magistrates are not. Legal advisers must ensure the law is applied and followed. We must ensure everyone has a fair hearing. If this is not treated seriously in a courtroom then what hope is there? The legal system is the cornerstone of democracy. Without it what do we as a civilised society have left? While legal advisers are spending hours each day inputting case outcomes that is time away from assisting unrepresented defendants, time away from dealing with criminal cases, time away from advising on the law.

HMCTS has proved time and time again through constant gaslighting that they have absolutely no interest in what is happening in the courtroom but instead measure its success by focusing on software performance. HMCTS has chosen to

ignore our concerns. They have chosen to ignore the tears shed over the keyboard in the courtroom by people who deserve much better.

Taking strike action is a big step. We are in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis and I have a family to support. I've been using a community kitchen to get food on the table. There are also consequences for other through no fault of their own: there might be people in the cells for longer because I am not there to deal with them; there might be trials adjourned. But my conscience is arguing in favour of this action. It is telling me there are people far worse off than me and that I owe it to society to act, to try and put a stop to something that is having such damaging effects on my colleagues and the justice system.

I am just one voice but I am one of an enormous number of PCS members of criminal justice stakeholders who see day in day out the damage CP is doing. With such a strong argument surely HMCTS must listen eventually. Justice destroyed is justice denied.