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Archaic coroner service needs full reform

Plans to improve the coroner service do not go far enough, a not-for-profit campaign group has said.

While the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ) proposed draft charter for inquests may benefit bereaved families, the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) says a charter is no replacement for the planned full-scale reforms which were dropped by the coalition Government.

"While the draft charter is welcome, it does not provide grief stricken families with the updated system they so badly need," said APIL president David Bott.

"Bereaved relatives deserve to have a system in which they can have confidence. But in a bid to save money, the new Government abandoned plans to update one of the most important cornerstones of our society."

APIL spoke out after submitting its response to the MoJ's consultation on the draft charter for the current coroner service, which closed earlier this week.

In its response, APIL said it was disappointed that the Government abandoned plans to implement the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 in full because of the current economic situation.

A number of initiatives in the Act had been supported by APIL. These included the move towards largely full-time coroner posts and the requirement for organisations to report on coroners' findings.



Mr Bott added: “Bereaved families can find a coroner’s investigation extremely distressing, and this distress can be exacerbated if they are subjected to an overly complex, antiquated system.

“What is needed is for the Government to put morals ahead of money and provide a system which serves grieving people properly.”

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Notes to editors:

- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own
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