



MISSION STATEMENT

The Northants and Bucks Junior Lawyer Group (NBJL) strives to promote the interests of Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire’s Junior Lawyers and Young Professionals.

The NBJL will achieve this by organising educational and career based seminars in order to provide a venue for training and development. We aim to make personal development for young professionals easily accessible for the benefit of both the individual and the business community in this region.

The NBJL recognises the central role that a community plays and the responsibilities we have as young professionals. We seek to support the community by holding events to raise both the awareness of and donations for our chosen charities.

The NBJL value the standards of both the legal profession and the administration of justice and aim to provide a forum for junior lawyers to interact, discuss current contemporary issues and support one another in order to ensure these standards are maintained. We also actively support and work with the National Division of Junior Lawyers.

OUR COMMITTEE

The committee for 2009 consists of the following people:

Chairman	Gemma Davison	Woodfines LLP
Vice Chairman for Bucks	Erin Terry	Woodfines LLP
Vice Chairman for Northants	Gordon Ackers	DFA Law
Treasurer and Secretary	Angela Fourie	Tollers LLP
Sponsorship	Natalina Facchiano	EMW Picton Howell
Sponsorship	Lucy Thompson	EMW Picton Howell
Events	Laura Bennett	DW Solicitors
Events	Ashleigh Bryan	DFA Law
Events	Faye Pepper	Kimbells
Events	Ben Ashworth	EMW Picton Howell
Marketing	Tracy Evans	Tollers LLP
National Rep	Nicola Berry	DFA Law

OUR MEMBERS

The Northants and Bucks Junior Lawyer Group is open to all those who fall into one of the following categories:

- A student undertaking a dual or single honours law degree
- A student undertaking the GDL/CPE
- LPC students
- BAR students
- Trainee Solicitors
- Trainee Legal Executives
- Paralegals
- Pupil Barristers
- Barristers up to 2 years call
- Legal Executives up to 5 years PQE
- Solicitors up to 5 years PQE

We recognise the importance of supporting lawyers as early as possible into their legal career. We aim to support students by providing them with the opportunity to network with legal professionals, providing an invaluable insight into the world of legal practice. In addition we offer the chance to socialise and extend their training further through attendance at our seminar and workshop events.

For trainees and those who are up to 5 years PQE we believe working together is essential to the legal profession. As the law, policies, economy and politics constantly change, so does the work we carry out. This group allows lawyers to debate changes to the profession and ensure the upholding of the central ethics and establishment of the profession. The issues we consider are wide and diverse, for example: from changes to public funding, publicity in courts to the debate over what lawyers should wear in Court. As well as this, we can focus on the specific issues that more often affect junior members of the profession, including ongoing professional training and career progression.

We currently have 198 confirmed members. However, this number is growing every day.

OUR GEOGRAPHICAL AREA & PLANNED EXPANSION

Although we cover the whole of Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire, we focus upon the commercial hubs of Northampton and Milton Keynes. These two cities are growing business communities, each with their own culture and business philosophy. However, as with many regions the business communities are close nit and difficult to gain access to. Our group hopes to provide an introduction to these areas and the opportunity to develop relationships with professionals in both regions. We believe that now, more than ever, is a time to bolster links with neighbouring businesses and support each other through the economic down turn.

It is partly for this reason that this year we have decided to begin an expansion into Bedford. Furthermore, there is currently no junior lawyer group or young professionals group in Bedford. It is therefore a natural progression, making both commercial and practical sense to expand into that region.

OUR EVENTS

Practice and Educational Workshops and Seminars

Our practice and educational based events are not only aimed at the legal profession but are also designed to appeal to those in local business. We achieve this by organising skills based events, for example training on networking, marketing and stress management. We appreciate that the relationship between the legal profession and business is inextricably linked and working together is essential to the local economy and community.

This year we are holding the following events:

April

29th April – Obtaining NQ Positions: Practice Event with Hays (Milton Keynes)

May

27th May - How to Network Practice Event with John Keble (Milton Keynes)

July

15th July - Law Care Practice Event (Milton Keynes)

August

NQUK Legal Recruitment Talk (venue & date to be confirmed)

Social Events

We plan to hold a variety of social events in order for legal professionals and local businesses to network and improve current links as well as to support our chosen charities (please see the charities section below). Our first event of 2009 was the Annual Shelter Quiz. This Quiz is always well attended and this year was no exception with 60 young professionals competing for first place. We raised £300 to support the housing charity Shelter. Shelter is the chosen charity of the National Junior Lawyers Division.

We will also be holding the following events this year:

April

7th April - Hotel Chocolat Networking Event (Milton Keynes)

June

Charity Rounders Game with BBQ (Northampton)

September

Third Week – New Trainees Welcome Drinks (Milton Keynes)

November

7th – NBJL Annual Ball (Milton Keynes)

December

1st week – Elections for New Committee (Northampton)

Charity Work

The NBJL has always been committed to working to raise funds and supporting charities. In 2007 the NBJL supported the National Division of Junior Lawyer's chosen charity, Shelter. Shelter is a highly respected national housing charity that provides an invaluable service to thousands of people. In 2009 we once again supported this charity by holding a quiz in February.

In addition to Shelter last year the NBJL held a barbeque to raise funds for Burma and the Annual Ball raised over £300 for Children in Need.

This year's committee has chosen to support just one charity, as we feel our efforts would have a more worthwhile impact if they were to be concentrated on one cause. This year we have chosen to support the work of the Citizen Advice Bureaus in Northampton and Milton Keynes.

The Citizens Advice Bureau provides an invaluable service to local communities across the country. They currently have over 20,000 volunteers and resolve 5.5 million problems each year. All their volunteers are trained in order to provide advice on: housing, benefits, consumer issues and debt. As well as this they campaign for justice and change on a national level. They have successfully campaigned on many issues for example, overpayments of tax credits, and the shortage of NHS dentists. Currently they are campaigning to promote tenancy deposit protection, ending child poverty and a 'Right to Justice' campaign concerning the shortage of family legal advice.

As with all charities they often struggle to secure funding despite the important work they carry out. This is also despite the majority of this work being carried out by unpaid volunteers. This year will be particularly difficult for charities to raise funds due to the current economic downturn.

The work they do combined with the campaigns they carry out is essential to the local community and is strongly related with the work of the legal profession. It is for all of these reasons that this year we are proud to support the Citizen Advice Bureaus of Northampton and Milton Keynes.

THE FINANCES

We are a non-profit organisation. Our events are funded by the generous donations of our sponsors, without which we would not be able to support our growing number of members. As we are always keen to ensure that our sponsors gain something for their generosity we strive to obtain sponsorship from businesses that will derive a particular benefit from both our organisation and the event in question.

As part of the National JLD we also have access to a number of discounts on products and services which have been exclusively negotiated by them. Our members also have access to discounted membership rates for certain areas of law.

