

BIRMINGHAM LAW SOCIETY PRO BONO AWARD

Birmingham Legal Advice Clinic

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Bevan Brittan LLP, Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP, Gowling WLG, Squire Patton Boggs

This innovative collaboration is helping vulnerable people with advice on housing, homelessness, debt, welfare, legal aid and general contract law among other pressing challenges.

Birmingham Legal Advice Clinic (BLAC) sees four of Birmingham's big firms working together to provide a legal clinic each week at Birmingham library. It's run by Bevan Brittan, Eversheds Sutherland, Gowling WLG and Squire Patton Boggs with the support of the national pro bono charity LawWorks.

The clinic provides a free initial legal advice service for individuals who require legal advice but who would not otherwise be able to afford it or who have found it difficult to engage with publicly-funded legal services.

Each firm runs one clinic a month with their team of advisor volunteers, who range from trainees, paralegals, associates and partners, in which they can see up to six clients an evening.



Nadine Mansell

Capsticks Solicitors LLP

As an Inquest solicitor, Nadine sees the consequences of what can happen if a young person is not supported. She set up a Charity of the Year scheme in December 2018 and St Basils, a homeless charity for young people aged 16-25, was chosen for 2019.

Nadine has been the main point of contact and organised support throughout the year. At Christmas 2019, she encouraged colleagues to focus on St Basils' campaign to raise as many £5 notes as possible as it costs £5 a night to support a someone in a shelter. This resulted in 46 young people being supported.

They also collected enough equipment for eight starter packs for young people leaving St Basil's supported accommodation and collected two boxes of toys for Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Nadine also organises events with the Ahead Partnership engaging the local education community and in particular schools in underprivileged areas.



Emma Hardman

Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP

Emma is committed to reducing homelessness in the West Midlands and has played an integral part in a new pilot scheme being rolled out by Black Country Housing Group.

She has provided extensive and crucial advice on sound legal frameworks for new tenancy agreements which reduce evictions through non-payment of rent.

This has been made possible by Emma's involvement with the West Midlands Housing Association Partnership, specifically the West Midlands Homelessness Taskforce. This is delivered through Anthony Collins' Social Purpose Volunteering Programme.

It's set to prevent homelessness for families currently at risk of eviction for rent arrears.

Birmingham
Pro Bono
Network



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Rachel Sutcliffe and Mischa Howell

BPBN is an initiative that promotes pro bono projects across the city on social media and increases lawyer and student engagement in the pro bono community.

Rachel and Mischa worked tirelessly throughout 2019 to raise awareness and increase engagement.

They think of BPBN as a forward-thinking, engaging platform, connecting students and legal professionals.

By founding BPBN, Rachel and Mischa aimed to modernise the way pro bono opportunities were promoted.

BPBN has impacted positively upon volunteers, students, legal professionals and organisations alike.

The Litigation Programme

The Litigation Programme - University of Law

Shortly before 2019, The Litigation Programme evolved from dealing directly with enquiries received from members of the public via a dedicated e-mail 'inbox', to focusing its attention specifically on areas where skills of BPTC student advisors, as part of an LLM qualification, could make the most impact.

Its first aim is to replicate a scheme known as the Yorkshire Tribunals Advocacy Project (YTAP), which would enable BPTC students, to offer legal assistance and support social security appeal hearings in Birmingham.

Secondly its aim has been to offer legal advice on family law cases received from Women's Aid.

Both schemes started in 2019.

There are 13 groups of four full-time students available to offer assistance to clients as well as 21 part-time students.

Feedback from individuals helped has been hugely rewarding about the difference the pro bono legal advice provided makes.