



An interview with Jodie Cunnington-Brock

Jodie joined nplaw as a Trainee Solicitor in September 2018, currently working in the Public Law Team. She previously had a career in housing before deciding to complete her training to become a solicitor.

What did you study at university?

LLB at the UEA

What part of your law degree did you find the most challenging?

Learning an entirely new skill set. Everything is brand new on the degree as you learn new modules that you haven't heard of before.

What area of law do you find the most interesting?

I enjoyed Housing Law and completed my dissertation in this. I also enjoyed the Constitutional and Administrative Law module along with Land Law.

Roughly how many meetings do you attend per week?

This varies depending on the work I am doing. We are lucky that a lot of our clients are on site. It also varies depending on what team you are in. For example, I haven't been to as many in my Planning seat, however in the Public Law and Dispute Resolution Teams I have met more clients and been in Court more often.

What do you like most about working with the Public Law Team?

It's really interesting work and there is a variety of law involved. It includes contracts, SEN work (special educational needs), employment, commercial and court of protection matters. I have built many transferable skills which interlink. I have been able to attend employment tribunals, hearings and inquests.



An interview with Bethany Stokes

Bethany joined nplaw as a Trainee Solicitor in September 2018 after graduating with a first in her law degree and completing the Legal Practice Course with a distinction at De Montfort University. She is currently working in the Planning Team.

What made you choose studying for a law degree?

I completed some work experience in a law firm and decided I wanted to become a solicitor. I chose a law degree as I wanted to study a range of modules, both core and elective.

Is law something you've always been interested in and wanted to pursue? Was there a point where you doubted a career in law?

I decided I wanted to become a solicitor towards the end of studying for my GCSEs and I haven't looked back since!

Did you ever consider an alternative route in to law rather than the traditional university route?

I didn't as I wasn't really aware of the other routes however the great thing about nplaw is the wide range of experience and backgrounds people have. People have taken all different routes to get to where they are now and it's great to learn about the various options.

Did you ever gain any work experience prior to your training contract? Where were they? Did you find them valuable in making any future decisions?

I completed various work experience placements but the most valuable experience I gained was working as a Judicial Assistant. I did this for a year and developed an array of skills which were invaluable in helping me secure a training contract.



An interview with Kasim Hussain

Kasim joined nplaw in September 2019 as a Trainee Solicitor. His first seat is in the Property Team.

Where and what did you study at university?

I studied Law at Nottingham Trent University and gained a 1st class degree. I also did my LLM/LPC at Nottingham Law School which I passed with a commendation.

What attracted you to a career in law?

I completed work experience in year 10 at a local law firm and became interested in criminal law.

Have you always desired to become a lawyer? Were there any other career options you had in mind?

At the end of my law degree I considered whether to continue and complete the LPC or whether to go into a different field. I had achieved a good grade in my law degree which encouraged me to complete the LPC.

What is the most exciting case you have worked on so far?

I am working on a matter which involves looking at how a transfer of property could be set aside in circumstances where a person may have coerced their family members into transferring the property to him.

Why did you choose local government law?

My first job was in local government and I like the variety of law and the flexibility.



An interview with Ellen Jepson

Ellen joined nplaw in September 2019 as a Trainee Solicitor and is currently in the Dispute Resolution Team.

Where and what did you study at university?

I studied Law at Durham and graduated with a 1st class degree. I went on to do a Masters degree in Law from at Cambridge.

Did you gain any work experience or any work placements before/after/during your time at University? Where were they? Did you find these useful?

I took a gap year before university and completed work experience during this. I also did a legal research internship at university, shadowed a barrister and have worked as a paralegal for 11 months at Irwin Mitchell.

What was it that excited you about law and made you choose a career in it?

I like problem solving and also interacting with a variety of people. I like the fact that there are always new, intellectually challenging pieces of work.

What do you find the most challenging about being a trainee solicitor?

Managing working on a variety of tasks with multiple lawyers.



An interview with Alex Steadward

Alex joined nplaw as a Trainee Solicitor in September 2019.

Did you go from university straight to law school?

I did the LPC straight away and then a Masters to develop my knowledge of areas I found particularly interesting.

Was it difficult to find a training contract?

Yes, it took me five years! Perseverance was very important, as was regularly reflecting about what skills and experience I needed get evidence of for my CV.

Why did you choose local government law?

Prior to starting my training contract, I first got to experience local government law as a legal assistant in child protection on a maternity cover contract. I enjoyed working for that council and I then joined their Welfare Rights unit to advise and represent members of the public in relation to benefit claims and appeals.

Do you enjoy your work?

Yes. I enjoy having the responsibility of conducting my own cases and building familiarity with the people on the front-line who need proper advice to guide their decisions. I have only been here for a couple of months, but I have already worked on cases in very niche and specialised areas such as forced marriage.

What are your ambitions for the future?

My first goal is to qualify as a solicitor. nplaw allow us to complete a seat in all of their practice areas so I am looking forward to finding out what I enjoy the most and trying to build more expertise further down the line.



An interview with Oliver Forster-Vets

Oliver Forster-Vets graduated from the University of East Anglia with an LLB in July 2019, and joined nplaw in September 2019 as a Legal Officer in Planning. This is his first legal role following university but during his degree he conducted research in a number of areas of law, including International and EU Environmental Law. He further gained knowledge of EU law during his year abroad in the Netherlands, during which he also had the opportunity to study areas of law such as Privacy Law and the Law of Art.

What area of law do you find the most interesting?

I like most areas of law which have an impact on the community – areas of law that allow you to see your impact are personally rewarding and motivating.

Why did you choose local government law?

I enjoyed studying environmental law and wanted to work in an area of law that can benefit the community.

Do you enjoy your work? What are your ambitions for the future?

It's all still quite new and I found it a challenge going from studying to working. I am looking forward to developing my career within nplaw as there are clear opportunities to progress. I am still making decisions about my future career in law and what area of law I want to focus on in the future.