



Solicitor

Corporate & Governance – 4 years PQE +

The Firm

Devonshires has been based in the City of London for more than 150 years. From our offices in London, Leeds & Colchester we provide legal services throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our clients range from some of the world's largest multi-national corporations to private individuals. We act for a significant number of charities, housing associations and Regulators. We would describe ourselves as "full service" with specialists in Commercial/Corporate, Civil Litigation, Housing, Employment, Real Estate & Projects & Property Development. Over the past few years we have grown significantly and now have over 230 employees.

The Department

Headed up by Andrew Cowan, Devonshires' Banking and Governance team is a leader in its field with substantial experience of complex finance, corporate and commercial work. As a market leader in the social housing sector, the firm is involved in high profile, innovative transactions. Its clients, in this sector, span housing associations, local authorities, regulatory bodies, charities and investors.

In addition, the firm has a strong mainstream corporate / commercial practice; advising commercial property developers, SMEs and large private companies.

The team is supported by five other partners: Julian Barker and Gary Grigor (on the banking side), Jonathan Jarvis, James Lyons and Kirsty Thompson (on the corporate, commercial and governance side). The team comprises thirteen solicitors, three consultants and three trainees. It works closely alongside all other practices within the firm, including Real Estate and Projects, Litigation, Construction and Housing Management.

Work type

Although the successful candidate will have the freedom to develop their own practice, the below is indicative of the work available:-

Mergers, Acquisitions & Restructures, typically involving, in respect of the social housing sector, a range of housing groups (comprising charities and non-charities) some of whom will be regulated and others that will be standard trading companies and, in respect of the wider

corporate offering, ranging from PLCs and large private companies to SMEs. Deal sizes vary but regularly exceed £1 billion.

Corporate & governance; working alongside senior executive officers and their non-executive boards to develop and support their structures and governance. Supporting charitable entities compliance, including vires considerations and exercising investment powers. Establishing new companies to support new entrants to the social housing sector – these include institutional investors.

Commercial Contracts, including IT contracts, merchant agreements and collaborative procurement;

Joint Ventures, typically joint ventures between housing associations and house builders, investors or repairs and maintenance contractors;

Regulation, assisting clients with regulatory compliance and, where applicable, attending to “problem cases”: helping housing clients overcome identified financial or governance issues.

Job Purpose

We are looking for a Solicitor with 4 years PQE with a Company/Commercial background, and ideally with corporate governance charity experience.

You would be open and organised with excellent drafting skills; able to help our clients manage large transformative projects alongside the wider Devonshires deal team, other consultants and advisers. You will be client and task focussed and proactive – able to list and advise and make sure all deadlines and client expectations are met.

In return we offer a dynamic environment with access to high quality challenging work and the opportunity for the right candidate to progress further.

Main Duties & Responsibilities

This is not an exhaustive list and from time to time it may be necessary to vary these to meet the department and business needs:

The main duties for this role include:

- Responsible for the day to day running and management of files.
- Build and maintain relationships with clients and provide updates.
- Drafting documents.
- Attend board meetings.
- Interact directly with clients; understand and meet their deadlines.
- To be fully involved in marketing and business development in a client focussed manner.
- Organise and maintain tidy and accurate files.

- Good team player to work in collaboration with the department and sharing knowledge as and when required.
- To follow departmental procedures, the Solicitor's Accounts rules and the Firm's policies and procedures as detailed in the Office Manual, including LEXCEL.
- Undertake such duties and tasks that are appropriate for the role of a Solicitor such as changes in information systems and new technology as may reasonably be required.

Person Specification

- You will be a Solicitor with experience of company/commercial law. Experience with Charity law, Housing Association law and Regulation experience would also be an advantage.
- You will have excellent communication and client care skills.
- An empathy with the aims of the social housing/not for profit sector would be helpful.
- You will have a strong academic background, ideally gaining a 2:1 or better degree level (or equivalent).
- Strong drafting and communication skills, both written and verbal.
- Self motivated with an ability to prioritise a demanding workload.
- You will be commercially aware and able to convey clear and concise information to clients and external organisations, which will not compromise the practice or the firm.
- A high attention to detail to produce work/documentation which is consistently of a high standard.
- To have a flexible approach to work to ensure client deadlines are met.
- To be familiar with Word, Excel, Outlook and Internet applications.
- Assisting with enquiries made by both clients and other fee earners and chasing paperwork where necessary.
- To provide clients with monthly invoices and progress reports as and when required.
- Organise and maintain tidy and accurate files both in hard copy and electronically and to ensure compliance with LEXCEL and SRA standards.
- Be a supportive team player and willing to assist others.