

Job Description - Paralegal

The firm

Town Legal is a specialist planning law firm created in 2016 by some of the leading figures in the planning law sector. We take pride in providing high-quality legal services to our clients and are passionate about making a positive impact on the built environment.

Careers at Town offer exceptional opportunities to work on all aspects of planning law across England and Wales. We act for a wide range of clients, including developers, landowners and public authorities and provide unparalleled planning law advice in relation to larger complex planning law matters.

Focusing on one area of law has allowed us to carve out a unique brand in our marketplace. We have been voted the most highly rated planning law team in the country in Planning Magazine's 2019-2023 surveys and we were awarded Boutique Law Firm of the Year at The Lawyer Awards in 2020. We have featured in The Times survey for Best Law Firms 2020 -2024 and we are ranked band 1 in the legal directories.

Role and responsibilities

You will work as part of our team on a wide variety of projects, working alongside our team of lawyers and other paralegals assisting a range of clients, consultants, solicitors and barristers. You will have lots of opportunity to expand not only your legal skills, but also your professional network whilst working with us.

Some of the tasks you'll be involved in (with supervision as required) are:

- Legal research – conducting comprehensive research on planning legislation, case law and policy, for use in advice notes prepared by you, or others, or for sharing as part of our internal/external training sessions.
- Client pitches – assisting in preparing pitch documents for new work.
- Client contact – liaising with clients on matters to receive instructions, provide advice (under supervisions), respond to queries and provide updates on matter progress. You will also attend meetings, including consultations with Counsel.
- Preparing legal agreements – reviewing and drafting of Section 106 agreements, highway agreements and other legal agreements as well as completion formalities and execution management.
- Assisting with court proceedings and planning appeals – preparing bundles and ensuring efficient and accurate filing/submission of documents, as well as tracking timelines, assisting with instructions and reviewing evidence. You are also likely to attend hearings and inquiries, assisting the team on all matters and taking a note.
- Preparing letters of representation – to advocate for our clients' position in relation to neighbouring development schemes.
- Knowledge sharing – we encourage everyone at Town to keep up to date with changes in planning law, regulations and industry best practice, as well as what's happening in the market. You may be asked to share these insights with the team as part of training sessions that we run regularly both internally, and for our clients and contacts.

You will be reliable and responsive, able to manage and meet/exceed expectations and keen to think ahead to try to anticipate the needs of the stakeholders you work with. You will form strong working relationships built on trust and credibility.

We work as one team at Town, both internally and with our clients and their advisers. As a paralegal, you will be a key part of our team. You will take advantage of all knowledge sharing activities and develop your expertise through internal and external training opportunities; you will contribute to marketing and business development activities, provide proactive support to others in the team and will be organized and efficient with your time recording.

Skills and experience

This role would suit somebody who has already had some professional legal training. However, SQE training can be undertaken part-time alongside the role, and we'd be delighted to discuss this further. For anyone considering a change of career into law (without any prior legal experience, but with relevant industry experience), it is possible to qualify with us within c. 2.5 years.

The ideal Paralegal candidate will:

- be able to demonstrate a passion for planning and development and a desire to work within a busy and successful specialist legal practice
- be educated to degree level
- have experience in a law firm or barrister's chambers AND/OR the broader real estate sector e.g. a planning consultancy, built environment consultancy or architectural practice, heritage or other development specialist consultancy, or in a council planning department
- be sensitive to stakeholder needs and requirements, and adept at building and maintaining trusting relationships with clients and colleagues;
- enjoy investing in their own personal growth and development, and feel enthusiastic about the prospect of contributing to the success of the firm;
- promote Town's values and act as a positive role model to those at all levels, by proactively sharing their knowledge and recognising and supporting the success of others;
- value difference and consistently behave in a way that fosters an inclusive and respectful working environment;
- enjoy working both independently and as part of a team and show a real interest and love for planning and the built environment;
- be proficient using document management software, legal research tools and the full Microsoft Office Suite;
- have excellent communication skills, with the ability to adapt their approach to the needs of the client and others; and
- have exceptional organisational skills, a keen eye for detail, and the ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously whilst meeting deadlines.

What's in it for you?

A career at Town offers a unique opportunity to work with and learn from some of the leading and most respected Planning lawyers in the industry, while using your skills, perspectives and ideas to help us to shape the firm for future generations.

This is a rare opportunity which offers the potential for progression into a training contract with Town.

This role is offered either on a full-time or part-time basis (at least three days per week). Many of our people work flexibly to accommodate responsibilities and individual needs outside of the office. While

we recognise the value of bringing our people together for part of each working week, our culture also promotes and supports agile and flexible working.

We offer a comprehensive employee benefits package which includes:

- 26 days' holiday per year (FTE) plus 1 additional day for your birthday
- Private medical insurance
- Dental insurance
- Contributory pension scheme
- Life assurance
- Enhanced family leave provisions

Diversity & Inclusion at Town Legal

At Town, we recognise the benefits diversity brings to both our culture and our ability to meet the needs of the clients and communities we serve. We strive to create an inclusive environment where all employees feel valued, respected and able to fulfil their potential. We are an equal opportunities employer. Decisions relating to recruitment, development, promotion and reward are made in relation to role requirements and are not influenced by age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law.

If you require any reasonable adjustments or accommodations at any stage in the recruitment process, please contact Sharon Xenophontos at Sharon.xenophontos@townlegal.com or 020 3893 0391. Sharon will work closely with you to ensure a smooth and supportive experience both during the recruitment process and during onboarding if you secure the role.

We welcome direct applications from candidates. Recruiters: please note Town Legal has a Preferred Supplier List in place. CVs from agencies who are not on our PSL will not be accepted.

First-stage interviews will be arranged for April/May 2024.