



Laura Williams, Trainee Solicitor (Property)

Laura currently works in our conveyancing department. She assists clients on all aspects of buying and selling residential property.

Our 'cuppa with' series is an informal chat with one of our team to give a deeper understanding into their area of law and share some little-known legal facts!

1. Tell us about your job

As a conveyancer, I specialise in property law and act on behalf of clients buying, selling, transferring equity, and remortgaging property. Essentially, we deal with the legal process of transferring property from one person to another. My main responsibilities involve advising clients on property transactions, answering questions, reviewing many documents, and communicating with all parties involved in the transaction (other solicitors, estate agents, lenders, mortgage advisors etc). I am currently a trainee solicitor in the property department. Since graduating in 2022, my legal experience has been solely in conveyancing, and I have chosen to complete the first seat of my training contract in this department.

2. What is the best part of your job?

In the conveyancing department, each day is different and there is so much to learn. We assist clients in what can be a stressful but extremely happy time, and I find it very rewarding when I receive positive feedback and kind words from clients after assisting them in their sale or purchase. I gain a lot of job satisfaction in this role as we act for clients in an exciting time of their lives and clients are grateful for our assistance.

3. And the worst part?

Conveyancing is a busy and fast-paced environment with tight time constraints which can be overwhelming at times. There are a lot of parties in the transaction, not just our clients, who depend on us. Although completion is usually a happy time for clients, the conveyancing process is long, and it is easy for clients and other parties to become frustrated or stressed due to delays or issues which we stumble upon. A key part of being a conveyancer is managing client's expectations and providing support if they feel stressed. Although this can be difficult at times, having the ability to communicate clearly with clients and manage their expectations is an essential skill required in the role.

4. Do I need a conveyancer, or can I do it myself?

The conveyancing process is complex and time-consuming, instructing a conveyancer makes the process a lot simpler for clients. As conveyancers, we complete the legal work required to transfer the ownership of the property. We ensure we explain the process clearly and break down any legal jargon a client may not understand. If someone has no knowledge of the conveyancing process of property law, this could lead to severe complications, and we strongly advise clients to instruct a conveyancer to guide them through the process and make it as stress-free as possible.

5. What fact would surprise people to know about property law?

Under the Land Registration Act 2002 (which repealed the Land Registration Act 1925) it is compulsory for all land in England and Wales to be registered with the Land Registry. If a property is not registered at the Land Registry, this means the property is unregistered. Therefore, the deeds to the property, which are usually held by the owner or in some cases the bank, are the only proof of ownership an owner has. The following situations are triggers for when a property will need to be registered: a change of ownership, such as a sale, gift or assent, or a mortgage or long lease. We usually deal with unregistered titles when a property is being sold by an elderly or deceased client. The process of dealing with an unregistered title is completely different, but it is very interesting to deal with original deeds rather than registered office copy entries. We strongly advise clients who hold original deeds to their property to keep them safe, especially if the property is not registered.

6. What does a typical day entail?

A day in the conveyancing department differs from day to day. Some days I review contract documentation and draft a client's final report on title, or I review and report on my client's search results or mortgage offer and advise on any risks. However, the next day I could be dealing with 8 completions would be an extremely busy day at work. I also regularly have appointments with clients to give advice and obtain necessary documentation.

7. What question do you get asked most about your job?

The most common question asked if I tell people I am a conveyancer is why the conveyancing process takes a long time. At David Gray, we understand clients want to complete their transactions as soon as possible. However, as conveyancers, we have so many hoops to jump through. We must ensure we are doing everything to the best standard to ensure our clients are correctly advised and face no issues in the future. We try to help our clients understand the conveyancing process and give timescales from the get-go, to avoid any disappointment or issues along the line. It may seem like the conveyancing process is long, but as conveyancers, we have a responsibility to not only our clients but to our client's lenders and the firm to adhere to the correct protocol. We are also under strict money laundering regulations which can take up a lot of time.

8. What's it like working at David Gray?

I started at David Gray in May 2023 as a conveyancing paralegal, and I have recently been promoted to trainee solicitor. David Gray has a very supportive work environment; everyone is friendly and there to help you at any time. The firm also offers lots of progression opportunities, there are promotions available to roles such as trainee solicitors, associate solicitors, senior associate solicitors, and even partners. David Gray hosts social events which allow you to get to know people from other departments who you may not cross paths with regularly. There are lots of great benefits to the job and I have learned and progressed so much in a short space of time. I am excited to continue my training here and see what the future holds!

If you would like to speak with Laura or one of the conveyancers, give us a call on

0191 243 8167 or visit www.davidgray.co.uk