



Legal Recruitment News August 2025

Welcome to the August 2025 edition of Legal Recruitment News. It includes our legal job market report, locum hourly rates, a solicitor salary guide, articles and a spotlight on one of our charity donations.

Legal Job Market Report - August 2025

Here is our summary of the current state of the UK legal job market.

Locum Recruitment - Busy

Our locum department remains busy at present as we are still in the busy season. Busy area as ever for holiday cover is conveyancing, but at the moment we are seeing quite a mix of work; family, commercial litigation, corporate/commercial, employment, property litigation roles have been posted in the last week or two. June to September is always the busiest time of year for locum recruitment and this year is no different.

Locum assignment [updates here](#).

Permanent Recruitment - Quiet

Permanent roles are generally still a bit muted, although there is still activity from both candidates and firms. We cannot tell yet whether there is increased nervousness amongst candidates looking at new roles in the current market, but this may well become a factor with the ongoing world events. However we are still having conversations with law firm owners who question their chances of success in finding new permanent staff and whether it is even worth bothering to try at present.

Permanent vacancies can be viewed here: <https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/vacancies/>

Law Firms for Sale - Quiet

If you are considering retiring or selling a law firm now is a good time to start thinking about it because the market is often quite quiet from now until the start of September when it tends to get very busy. We usually see an increase in the number of new firms coming to

the market in August - mainly because owners find themselves with a bit of thinking time about the future (its amazing what a week sat in a deckchair can do!).

[Full details of firms currently for sale on our website](#)

- list updated daily. For valuations, exit planning or a confidential discussion about a potential sale or acquisition generally please call 0800 246 5016 or email jf@jonathanfagan.co.uk. You can also download our free detailed guides on [Buying a Law Firm](#) and [Selling a Law Firm](#).

Ten Percent Group statistics for July 2025 (2024 figures in brackets)

- New locum roles added - 29 (25)
- New permanent roles added - 16 (29)
- New candidates added - 73 (48)

Commentary: Locum roles have remained steady, but permanent jobs have declined by just under 50%. This can be for a host of reasons, but we think this is in part due to thinking by some firms that there is no point looking due to lack of good/affordable candidates, and not bothering to recruit. Candidates registering is still on the increase, with a large number of solicitors looking at locum work (quite often using locum assignments to top up consultancy fees from one of the many platforms).

KPMG & REC Report on Jobs UK - 11th August 2025

This is a monthly report prepared by KPMG following a questionnaire sent to over 400 UK recruitment consultancies, including ourselves.

- Starting salary inflation slips to lowest in nearly four-and-a-half years
- Permanent placements and temp billings continue to decline
- Rapid upturn in candidate supply amid reports of redundancies

Commentary from Jon Holt, CEO of KPMG UK

“The labour market cooled in July as chief execs held back from increasing their recruitment budgets. Economic uncertainty, the complexities of AI adoption and global headwinds are all weighing on business planning. A larger talent pool has helped temper wage inflation, which helped convince the Bank of England to cut interest rates. While UK plc remains resilient, a further loosening of monetary policy could help boost business confidence. But many firms will continue to pause major investment decisions until there is greater clarity in the Autumn.”

Commentary from Kate Shoesmith REC Deputy CEO

“..with starting salaries and temp pay rising only modestly, it was right to cut interest rates last week. More action like this, to stabilise the business cost-base, is what will support

growth and boost the jobs market this year. Fluctuations in permanent and temporary job placements signal a labour market that remains resilient but uneven. Construction, a key economic bellwether, has seen a rise in temp vacancies, an early sign of confidence returning. Demand for blue-collar temp roles and permanent engineering jobs also remains steady, offering another glimmer of optimism. At the same time, hiring in retail and hospitality are down. Employers in these sectors are pausing due to cost pressures and uncertainty around employment law, although when the turn comes, these industries typically rebound quickly."

Interim Lawyers - Hourly Rates of Pay for Locum Solicitors and Legal Executives August 2025

NB: Remote Working Role rates are about 10% lower.

- Civil Litigation – £45-£65 per hour
- COLP/COFA roles (temporary) - £50-£150 per hour/monthly retainer of £2-3k
- Commercial Contract – £35-£75 per hour
- Commercial Litigation – £50-£125 per hour
- Company Commercial – £50-£80 per hour
- Construction (non-contentious) £80-£110, (contentious) £60-90 per hour
- Conveyancing – £40-£55 per hour
- Commercial Property – £45-£60 per hour
- Employment Solicitors – £50-60 per hour
- Family Solicitors (Legal Aid) – £40 per hour
- Family Solicitors (Private) – £45-£55 per hour
- Family (Child Care LA) – £40-£45 per hour
- Immigration Lawyers – £30-£55 per hour
- In House Counsel: 0-3 years PQE – £35-£50 per hour
- In House Counsel: 3+ years PQE – £50-£110 per hour
- In House Interim Lawyers (SMEs) – £60-£85 per hour
- Insolvency – £50-£55 per hour IP – £55-80 per hour
- Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence – 3+ years PQE – £40-£50 per hour
- Professional Negligence – £45-£55 per hour
- Property Litigation – £45-£65 per hour
- Wills & Probate – £40-£60 per hour
- Locum Legal Cashiers - £25-£35 per hour
- Locum Paralegals - all areas - £20-£30 per hour

We have an online calculator to convert hourly rates to salary equivalents -

[click here](#). NB all rates exclude agency fees. The rates are for self-employed locums billing firms directly on a weekly basis. These are the ranges we have seen over the last 30 days from assignments.

Ten Percent Legal Salary Guide - August 2025

Each month we publish a list of any salary levels we become aware of from employers in relation to jobs offered and salaries indicated. These are the salaries we have had indicated by law firms to us for 3 years PQE and upwards. London figures in brackets where relevant.

- Commercial In House Solicitor (General) - £80k - £120k (£85k-140k)
- Commercial Litigation - £45-£65k (£50k-£90k)
- Corporate Commercial - £50k-£150k (£65k-£175k)
- Construction - £65k-£95k
- Commercial Property - £55k-£100k
- Insolvency - £55k-£75k IP - £50k-£90k
- Professional Negligence - £45k-£65k
- Crime - £40-45k
- Civil Litigation - £40k-£60k
- Conveyancing £35k-£55k (£60k)
- Employment Solicitors - £35k-£55k
- Family Solicitors - £35k-£50k
- Immigration Lawyers - £35k-£45k
- Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence £30k-£55k
- Property Litigation - £45k-£60k
- Wills & Probate - £45k-£60k

Support Staff

- Office Manager - £40-60k
- Legal Cashier - £30-35k
- Senior legal accounts professional - £35k-45k
- Secretary - £22-28k
- Paralegal - £22-27k

Candidate Salary Expectations

Candidate salary expectations are very often higher than salaries being paid to existing staff within a law firm with less than a £2 million turnover. We regularly view staff lists when valuing law firms via our business broker service, and the salaries being paid by law firms to existing staff are invariably lower than candidate salary expectations for similar roles. There is also a huge disparity at the moment between expectations for remote working from candidates compared with firms' requirements - hybrid working is becoming the minimum requirement for a significant proportion of candidates.

Salary Level Assistance

If you would like assistance with salary levels, please contact our specialist permanent recruiter, Peter Gresty FIRP. Email pete.gresty@ten-percent.co.uk

In House Legal - Better Work-Life Balance?

In House Legal Departments – the Green Grass on the Other Side of the Fence? How easy is it to move from a solicitors' firm to an in house legal department? Is it an easier life on the other side? Will my stress levels reduce if I work as an in house legal counsel? Will my pay packet go up or down? What benefits are there working in house as opposed to private practice solicitors firms?

Working in house is often considered the holy grail of legal jobs. After all, what could be better than a job that has no external financial pressures, no requirement to put in long hours to generate fee income and no awkward clients? In house legal jobs have perks such as flexible hours, set office hours, benefits in addition to salary, real pensions, small legal teams and more autonomy. Unfortunately although all the perks above are correct and the day to day work of in house lawyers tends to be quite different to that of solicitors in private practice, it is not all wonderful and in house legal departments tend to be under pressures albeit of a different nature. We regularly see CVs for in house counsel who move on every 2-3 years throughout their career.

How Easy is it to Move from a Solicitors Firm to an In House Legal Department?

It is not easy to move from a solicitors firm into an in house legal department. The reason for this is fairly simple and applies both ways – in house legal departments look for in house solicitors, not private practice solicitors. Working in house tends to require a different mindset and also more generalist experience than a lot of private practice solicitors have. To give you a specific example – a lot of private practice solicitors specialise in one area of law – for example a solicitor working in a corporate finance department will undertake a considerable amount of work involving asset financing and arranging deals. They will have limited experience of reviewing a contract for the supply of photocopiers to company headquarters. In house lawyers tend to be jack of all trades.

Is it an easier life working In House rather than in Private Practice?

It's pretty clear that a lot of private practice solicitors think so. However we similarly get calls from in house solicitors wanting to make a move into private practice because they are fed up of the in house work. The main reason lawyers look to move out of in house roles is usually to increase their pay packet. Salaries are traditionally lower in house. Similarly job security is a major issue - at some companies staff remain in a perpetual state of uncertainty, for example the company planning to relocate to Alaska or sell/merge.

Flexible Hours

Private practice solicitors usually base their decision to move into in house roles on the basis of the perceived flexible hours that are available and a more relaxed approach to working. In house departments seem a lot more comfortable about remote working, and also tend to be situated in more regional locations, whereas commercial law firms are usually located in city centres. This can be viewed as a considerable benefit to solicitors who have spent many hours of their lives commuting into the centre of cities and getting home at ridiculous times of night.

Will My Stress Levels Improve if I work as an In House Legal Counsel?

For a good number of years I provided career coaching to solicitors looking to make a change in their professional lives and there was very often a common theme running throughout these sessions - stress. It is often related to a specific part of your job, not the type of job itself. It is almost always caused either by a colleague making someone's life a misery or by dissatisfaction with the day to day work. The first step is to identify the cause of stress and do something about it, rather than make a move elsewhere. Decisions to change jobs are difficult enough without making them for the wrong reasons. I coached in house solicitors with exactly the same issues as private practice lawyers.

Will my pay packet go up or down?

I have rarely come across solicitors in private practice moving into in house roles and getting a pay rise. Anyone coming from a commercial law firm, unless they are working for one of the regional law firms who pay lower salaries to local staff in their regional offices, is going to be earning considerably more than the salary ranges indicated for in house roles. The only place in house legal departments tend to trump private practice law firms is with the benefits that go with a role.

If you decide to go in house, do it for the right reasons.

Preparing a CV for Locum Work - Top Tips

Prepare a Locum CV for Locum Work

Writing a CV for locum work is a bit different to preparing a CV for permanent roles. You need to give the following information immediately to any reader:

- Confirmation you have experience as a locum
- Detailed information about your experience - if you are a conveyancing solicitor, what exactly are you able to do?
- Full information on your professional career since qualification
- No gaps on the CV
- Confirmation you have a clean practising certificate and impeccable career to date
- IT experience

- Your address

Write a Relevant Summary

Very easy to do. At the top of the CV, below your name and contact details, including a 2 sentence summary as to who you are and what you do. For example "Residential Conveyancing Solicitor with 25 years PQE, based near Lowestoft but available for assignments everywhere. Conveyancing experience to date includes (detail here). IT literate and able to use (list CMS here). Hourly rate £40 per hour."

Keep the Education Section Brief

The education section needs to be brief if you are looking at locum work and not detract from focus on the work experience section. The first entry needs to be the fact that you are a solicitor or legal executive and the date you were admitted to the roll or gained your legal executive certificate. Underneath this you need to include your university degree, SQE/LPC/GDL. The class of your undergraduate degree can be very useful particularly if it is a 2:1 or 1st Class. Confirmation of A Level grades can also be good if you have straight As or Bs, but GCSEs or O Levels simply need to be stated and the number. Make sure this section is in reverse chronological order.

Full Work History

- Your work history needs to be in full from the moment you left school through to the present day.
- Keep irrelevant or dated entries brief.
- Write an extensive list of bullet points broken down into different sections covering all the different work that you have undertaken and are capable of assisting with, and then underneath this give a reverse chronological list of all the assignments you have undertaken.
- 2-3 pages of detail on your work history would not be unusual.

IT Skills

Very important but keep it brief. So many locum assignments now require locums to be able to handle their own IT & admin work, and a CV that does not contain confirmation of this is going to be ineffective. Firms want to see that you are IT literate. Typing speed and confirmation of experience of different CMS is very, very important for certain types of law. List the CMS you can use.

References

Don't worry about references unless you have two "to whom it may concern" references you can send out in full with the CV. Failing this, we would recommend having 'available on request' but making sure you have two references you can use when asked.

General Pointers

- There is no such thing as a perfect length of a CV but we usually recommend making sure your CV is at least 3 pages long, if not longer, in order to get the information into it that we would like to see.
- Make sure you use a nice simple font and avoid using Microsoft templates, boxes, text fields, ensuring that the CV is as text based as possible without too much embellishment.
- Always send the CV as a word document and not a PDF. PDFs cause terrible problems despite looking more professional than a word document. They are considerably harder to manipulate and use across differing systems. This has not changed in 25 years of recruitment.

Selling My Business to Local Rival

One of the great myths in selling a business, which applies across all sectors, is that the best person to buy your business from you is one of your known, local competitors. After all, they know your business and its reputation. What could be a better fit than somebody five doors up the road simply taking over your practice, paying you a premium, and you walking away knowing everything is the same as it was before? The same applies with large practices - we often get sellers of smaller firms giving examples of the local regional firm acquiring other similar sized practices in recent times. Very often sellers have the notion that the local regional firm or the local rival up the road is going to pay a good market premium to acquire their business.

Unfortunately, this is very often unachievable. There is a theory in the trade that if a local firm or a competitor wanted to buy your company they would approach you directly to discuss. If they don't contact you directly without prompting to discuss a purchase of your business, then it is highly unlikely that they are interested, or in a position to afford to make an acquisition.

However, this is unlikely to stop the local rival you make contact with expressing a keen interest in opening talks with you. These talks may well rumble on for years to come for the following reasons.

A Trusted Partner

Before listing all the reasons why selling your business to a local rival is never a particularly good idea, we should say that doing a deal with parties you know can be a very positive thing to do. You will be dealing with people you probably know and trust, you can get a deal

completed knowing that your clients will be well looked after and you can move on in confidence that everything has been dealt with safely. However, the option will almost always be along the lines of handing over your business without a price being paid. Reasons why selling to a local rival may not be a very good idea.

Cheap Recruitment

If you approach your competitor, they will immediately know that it is highly possible that there are going to be a number of staff available for employment very shortly, or at least there may well be a lot of staff who are unsettled by your efforts to sell your business. It is highly likely also that your staff are going to find out you are considering a sale. This is one of the worst things that can happen when it comes to a business sale, because employees do not like being unsettled. Finding out that you are planning to sell the business to someone they don't know will immediately unsettle staff who will look around at other options to get settled again. It can jog people into action to make a move they had not actually considered before.

Useful Market Intelligence

The local rival may spend some time expressing an interest, get all your financials off you, consider your staff list and salary levels, look at your client base, and then come back and tell you that actually your business isn't worth anything and they're not interested, or similarly they'll delay for a long period of time, then come back and say that yes they are interested, but with an offer that requires you to join them as consultants, close your business down and pay run off cover. It will give the rival lots of valuable information about your business at the very least.

Other People Do It – Why Can't We?

You don't know the circumstances of the other sales. It is highly likely that the seller had or was about to experience financial or structural difficulties, and was in dire need of disposal quickly, which meant the best option for them was to find anybody prepared to take over the business, and in which case the deal they got wasn't really a deal at all. The usual would be for the seller to close their firm down, transfer their files and staff to the buyer and then pay run off cover.

Buyer Perspective

The moment you contact the local rival to open talks, you are in a position of weakness. They are aware of your end plan, which is to close your business. A local competitor does not need to purchase your business if they're interested in taking over your clients. They can simply target your clients through marketing without paying you any money for the privilege. Similarly, they can target your staff. If you give them all the information about your firm, which includes who your clients are, who your staff are, how much you pay

them, and every aspect of the structure and formation and operation of your business, you are making their life considerably easier if that is the route they are planning to take. Our experience of some solicitor owners is that they can be quite ruthless and will take advantage of any perceived naivety!

Summary

Making an approach to local rivals to offer your firm for sale rarely achieves the outcome you expect. However, if you are looking to arrange for your clients to be dealt with by a firm you respect and trust, do a deal with known parties, and retire or move on without any stress, then doing a deal with a local rival can be a very positive thing. It will never offer you the best price for your business, but it will offer more certainty.

The Ten Percent Group donates £500 to the Huntington's Disease Association



Nominated by Catherine Charlwood, from the University of Exeter, the Ten Percent Foundation have recently donated £500 to the Huntington's Disease Association. Bridget Waters, the Trusts & Foundations Manager at the charity, said: "Your £500 donation will deliver two activity days for children and young people in Wales. Children and young people tell us how much they value these events. They make supportive friendships by coming together in this way." Bridget has also given us the information below.

Background

The Huntington's Disease Association is the only charity that supports people affected by this profoundly disabling disease across England and Wales. Our vision is a better life for anyone affected by Huntington's disease. Established in 1971 as a peer support group and registered as a charity in 1987, we have worked with and for the Huntington's community for over 50 years and remain community-led. Last year, we supported over 5,000 people affected by Huntington's disease and Juvenile Huntington's disease.

Youth Engagement Service

HDYES is the charity's Youth Engagement Service that supports children and young people aged 8 – 25 who are affected by Huntington's disease. This profoundly disabling and rare disease destroys brain cells and affects movement, behaviour and mental health. There is no treatment or cure and the disease is terminal. Because this rare neurological disease is inherited from a parent, it can impact many members of the same family. Children and young people in Huntington's disease families may be living with a parent who has the disease. They may have caring responsibilities for a parent, other family members and/or siblings. Home life can be complex and chaotic. They may already have lost family members to the disease. And they may be worried about their own risk of inheriting the disease and what the future holds for them. HDYES provides direct support from our team of four regional Youth Workers.

Experiences

Joe, a member of HD Youth Voice, told us: "HD Youth Voice has taught me that just because someone might be quiet doesn't mean they're alright. HD Youth Voice has given us a space to talk about similar experiences we all have." Chloe, a member of HD Youth Voice and a Board member for the charity told us: "You're not alone and there's such a lovely, genuine, friendly community of people here. As young people, we can have a huge impact on how the next generation deals with this condition. By speaking up, we have the potential to change lives." Elaine has Huntington's disease. Her daughter Charlotte has tested positive for the gene and will go on to develop symptoms. Elaine told us how HDYES has helped Charlotte, saying: "I feel less anxious because I know that she can reach out to people her age. It has changed her life. She has a sparkle there."

Funding

We receive less than 2% of our funding from statutory sources. The majority of our funding comes from our amazing community through individual donations, community fundraising, challenge events, in memory giving and legacy giving. We also receive support from trusts and foundations, mainly through smaller grants from family trusts. The National Lottery Community Fund is supporting 43% of project costs for our delivery of HDYES in England only. Your donation would help to deliver activity events for children and young people in Wales. We currently receive no funding towards HDYES in Wales.

HD Youth Voice co-produced our 'You are not alone' film. The film was a Finalist in the Smiley Awards 2025.

<https://www.hda.org.uk/information-and-support/information-resources/blogs-and-stories/you-are-not-alone-a-powerful-new-film-created-by-hdyv/>

We have 53 staff, 39 full-time and 14-part-time. We have 190 volunteers.

What is this all about?

Ten-Percent Legal, Interim Lawyers, and Jonathan Fagan Business Brokers donate 10% of annual net profits to charity via the Ten Percent Foundation, a charitable trust set up by our

group of companies to distribute monies to charities in the UK and Africa. We have been doing this for over 25 years. The Foundation never incurs any administration costs (other than Triodos bank charges, which are minimal). All monies donated are distributed to charities and community organisations.

www.tenpercentfoundation.org

Why do we donate?

We set up our companies over 25 years ago with the intention of being ethical in everything we do. As part of this, we decided that a percentage of our profits should always be earmarked for charitable work and set the rate at ten percent. A sudden burst of inspiration meant we called ourselves the Ten Percent Group.

Careers Guides - Articles to Improve Your CV, Interview Technique and Career Prospects

Peaceful Late Summer Getaways in Shropshire



Ludlow Holiday Cottage - Sleeps 4

St Milburga Chapel in the Shropshire Hills is a cosy 4 person, Grade 2 listed holiday home in open countryside overlooking the Cleve Hills. Renovated in 2022, it is approximately 10 minutes' drive from Ludlow with its highly regarded restaurants, cafes and independent shops. The chapel is perfectly located for family holidays, weekend breaks and walking holidays. 10% of profits are donated to the Ten Percent Foundation. 10% discount code for newsletter readers: NEWS10

<https://www.stmilburgachapel.co.uk>

About Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment

We are a specialist legal recruiter, covering both permanent and locum roles across the whole of the UK. Over 12,500 lawyers are registered with us on our own database and we have access to a range of external & internal job boards and websites where we do not have candidates available ourselves. We also assist with recruitment advice and assistance, regularly advising partners and practice managers on suitable salary and package levels. Our company is unique for a number of reasons, including the fact that we are not shy to publish our fee structure and also donate a chunk of our profits to charity each year. We also buy, merge and sell law firms.

The Ten-Percent Group of Legal Recruitment websites gives 10% of annual profits to charity. We have maintained this tradition since we formed the company 20 years ago. So far over £225k has been donated to charities in the UK and Africa including LawCare, Unlock and Reprieve.

We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter and look forward to hearing from you if we can assist further.

Warm regards
Jonathan Fagan, Director

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