

Legal Recruitment News - June 2025

Welcome to the June 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. You can read the entire content below in an email, or read the newsletter in PDF format at www.legal-recruitment.co.uk.

Legal Job Market Report - June 2025

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

Locum Recruitment - Busy

Our locum department is extremely busy at present, although we did not get that many new roles in for May. June is another matter entirely and Emma Ireland, our locum consultant, is flat out at present handling a wide range of assignments. Busy areas are of course conveyancing and wills & probate, but at the moment we are seeing quite a mix of work - roles in house (junior), private crime, family, children, property litigation and court of protection 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 picking up after a quiet period, but generally still a bit muted. This goes with the national picture - see below. Candidate registration numbers are picking up again but still remain low compared with last year.

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

Law Firms for Sale - Busy

If you are considering retiring or selling a law firm now is still a very good time to start thinking about it. The market remains busy with high demand for particular types of law firm. New firms are coming onto the market which then drives more interest for existing firms. In the last few weeks we have started to get a significant number of calls from buyers who tell us they are backed by private equity investors looking to enter the legal sector (they tend to focus on turnover of at least £10 million so mid size firm focus rather than small high street). [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 ring 01824 780937 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 May 2025 (2024 figures in brackets)

- New locum roles added - 18 (21)
- New permanent roles added - 12 (29)
- New candidates added - 54 (82)

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

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

- Candidate supply expands at sharpest rate since end of 2020
- Demand for staff falls at softest rate in eight months
- Pay growth strengthens but remains below historical trend

Commentary from Jon Holt, CEO of KPMG UK

“May’s data shows very little change. Employers are still holding back on hiring, which meant last month the number of jobseekers increased at the steepest rate since 2020. The first half of this year has been full of uncertainty for businesses who are still trying to navigate cost pressures, technology advancements and global risks. Business leaders will want to see how the new trading agreements with the US and EU, Government spending plans and the Modern Industrial Strategy will drive forward our economic growth. To boost the jobs market employers need to feel confident about the outlook and understand how AI will impact their business.”

Commentary from Neil Carberry REC CEO

“More encouraging signs in temp billings, vacancies, and stabilising private sector demand offer a measure of optimism as we head into the second half of the year. There are early signs of promise, particularly in the Midlands, which saw its first increase in permanent placements in a year and a rise in billings after four months. Meanwhile, the downturn in temporary billings has eased further in London and the North of England.”

Interim Lawyers - Hourly Rates of Pay for Locum Solicitors and Legal Executives June 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) £60-£75, (contentious) £45-£60 per hour
- Conveyancing – £35-£50 per hour
- Commercial Property – £45-£60 per hour
- Employment Solicitors – £50-60 per hour
- Family Solicitors (Legal Aid) – £35 per hour
- Family Solicitors (Private) – £45-£50 per hour
- Family (Child Care LA) – £35-£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-£95 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 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 - June 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

Consultancy and the Reality of Self-Employment

Choosing to be a consultant rather than a salaried member of staff is an increasingly popular way of working for solicitors in the 10 year PQE + range. We get quite a bit of interest in roles when they come through to us from firms offering consultancy work, which usually has the advantage of flexible & remote working, good hourly rates, no internal pressure to perform, no office politics, freedom to set your own working conditions, and complete control over matters from start to finish.

This all sounds great, but we often get asked questions by would-be consultants about annual leave, working conditions, tax status, guaranteed hours and time off. How do the two fit together?

If you are contemplating becoming a consultant, you need to be aware that usually you leave the secure environment of being of an employee and join the ranks of the self-employed. Self-employed people enjoy flexibility, freedom to be their own boss, setting rates and much more besides. But there is a rather large trade-off. You are not only the boss, you are also the worker!

Annual leave becomes a thing of the past. Instead, if you want to take time off, you either have to take the work with you, find a locum to cover it for you, speak to the consultancy firm about ensuring workload is minimal during this time, or attempt a week or two of firefighting and keeping clients happy without doing very much.

You are responsible for managing your work. Most consultancy firms will expect you to generate your own matters and this means you have to become a business development manager as well as a solicitor. Whilst the consultancy firm may well handle all the billing, it is also highly possible you will need to do your own bookkeeping including invoicing. At the end of each tax year you will need to complete accounts; if you are working via a limited company there will usually be two lots to do.

Work is never guaranteed for consultants, so if you are expecting a regular income from doing consultancy, think again. Unless you have a large bank of clients to tap into to generate the work, it is highly unlikely you can sit in your office all day and work will just drop into your lap. Business development is a time consuming task with limited obvious gains in the short term, but essential for a lot of self-employed professionals.

If you decide to get locum cover in order to take annual leave, be prepared to spend significant sums of money. We regularly take calls from consultants working at the larger consultancy law firms, looking for locum cover whilst they are take leave. They rarely go ahead with it as I think the cost is somewhat prohibitive. In these cases I believe the consultants have taken the work with them instead.

We asked one of our regular consultants for their thoughts on annual leave and they replied as follows:

"There is generally no cover - all firms I've worked with expect you to deal with it. I normally work quite a bit before and let clients know well in advance (and work quite a lot after to catch up). Having someone to use to cover is something I would love to have! When my daughter was born I was only able to take 1 day off."

In summary - consultancy is clearly here to stay - consultancy firms are growing rapidly, retiring solicitors see joining one as a great way of continuing to work without the hassle &

overheads (see other articles on the thorny issue of succession & run off cover!) and younger solicitors view it as a way of getting more freedom with their work. However you have to bear in mind that being employed does have its advantages in terms of job security, regular salary payments and annual leave. All of which are not available in the same way to the self-employed.

Locum Hourly Rates and How To Set Them

Recently we have seen a huge increase in hourly rate proposals from certain locum solicitors looking for residential conveyancing roles. The current rates we get pitched for locum roles in office range from about £40-£55 per hour. For remote working it goes from £30-£50 per hour.

When we recently sent out an assignment to locums and noted that £55 per hour was unaffordable for a lot of smaller firms, I did get a few responses from locums to ask why. Quite often locums reference their experience - it is a common assumption that a locum with 20 years PQE and extensive experience will earn more per hour than a locum with say 10 years PQE, but this doesn't tend to be the case - firms look at the economics quite often and decide that either candidate could do the work required.

Affordability - Small High Street Firm Example

As business brokers and recruitment consultants, we regularly get sight of a lot of law firm accounts. We conduct well over 100 valuations a year for law firms of all shapes and sizes, and as part of this we get to scrutinise accounts.

I'll use a small high street practice as an example to explain our reasoning as to why £55 per hour is unaffordable for a lot of firms. Take a 2 solicitor practice generating £250k of turnover. They undertake conveyancing & wills and probate work on a 50/50 split. In this firm, it would be likely that there would be 2 support staff costing around £55k (1 secretary, 1 administrator/legal cashier) and overheads will probably be another £50k on top. Assuming a corporation tax rate of 20%, the owners would be generating a profit after tax of c£116,000. Each owner would therefore be taking home c£58,000 gross.

Looking at these figures, if a locum agrees to cover a 2 week holiday for £55 per hour, the cost would be £3,850 plus agency fee of £693. This means that to go on holiday for 2 weeks each owner has to pay £2,271.50. Their annual pay drops to £55,728.50. If they take two x 2 week holidays in any year, their annual pay will fall to £53,457.

£35 per hour has the effect of a 4 week holiday costing each owner £1,225 per fortnight. Four weeks in a year will result in their annual pay falling to £55,550.

The difference is quite substantial. Each week at £55 per hour compared with £35 per hour costs £700 more, something that is probably unaffordable for a firm of this size.

Advice on Setting Locum Rates - Be Flexible

Look at the firm or employer. If you are interested in the assignment, what do you think can they feasibly afford to pay? The next question has to be what can you offer that will generate a good margin of profit for you- how much is accommodation & travel going to cost for example? Speak with our consultants - we tend to have a handle on the rates being proposed by other locums and we can give you a steer on a competitive rate. After all, its in our interests to get you decent rates - our pay depends on the amount you get paid. Similarly however its also in our interests to suggest realistic rates for each assignment - there is no point pitching at levels we know a firm are simply not going to pay or be able to afford to pay.

Office based assignments are still attracting considerably less interest from locums than remote or hybrid roles. London tends to be a lot easier to attract office based locums, holiday destination areas tend to be a nightmare. A locum covering in Cornwall in August is going to have to charge a high hourly rate to make it feasible, but the same principle does not apply to assignments in Cornwall in January.

In the summer there is always a lot less availability from locums, which pushes rates up, but if levels get to rates that a firm simply cannot afford, then the partners often make the decision to try to struggle on without external assistance.

I suspect I will write this article and get a lot of replies to say that my example for fees generated above is too low, but this is realistic based on the small firms we see. Medium & larger firms are of course completely different.

Low Profit Law Firms - Can They Be Sold?

Yes. This could be the shortest article we have written to date, but essentially law firms generating low profit margins can still be sold (but please read below).

The longer answer is that it very much depends on the circumstances. If you have a general high street law firm with c£1 million turnover, it would be reasonable to expect the profit margin to be somewhere around the 20%-35% mark. This would be a fairly standard and the firm would probably be getting along just fine.

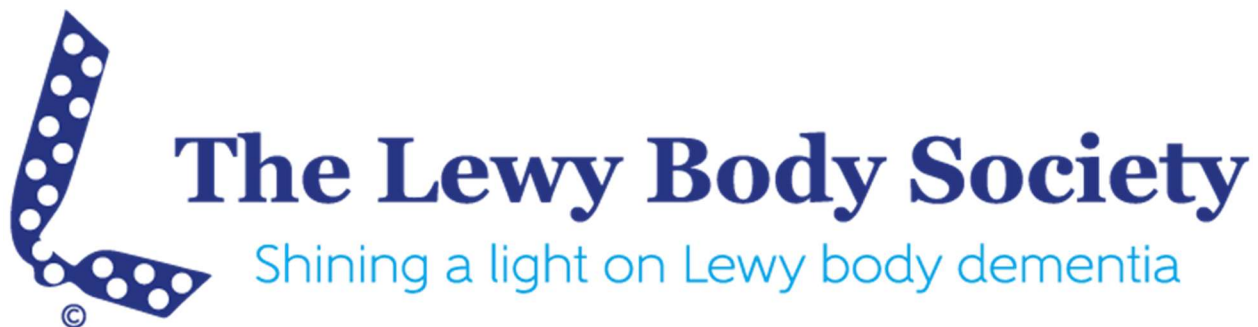
If the same law firm had a low profit margin of say 5%, buyers would be looking very closely at it to see what the issues were causing this. Reasons can be high insurance premiums due to a recent claim, staff teams not pulling their weight, inefficient working practices, poor cashflow necessitating loans & interest, extraordinary expense costs in one particular

year, one area of law supporting other less profitable departments, long term cases not yet billed. The reason can also simply be that the firm has no issues per se, it has just ticked along nicely at the speed the sellers have wanted it to. Not every business owner has an ambition to expand or grow their business throughout their working life, something certain buyers never seem to understand!

Some of these reasons do not cause values to drop or prevent firms from being sold. Others are very significant red flags that definitely cause serious problems when it comes to selling a firm.

If a firm has a large overdraft, has taken out loans to keep trading, has a low profit history for a number of years, a recent claim has pushed the indemnity insurance up and the staff team are not generating enough fees, then yes quite possibly the firm would be very hard to sell - at best a good result in these circumstances would be a buyer who was prepared to offer successor practice status and avoid run off cover, enabling the seller to exit. Other than this, law firms always have a market - you just have to be in it and meet the right buyer at the right time!

Ten Percent Legal Recruitment donates £500 to The Lewy Body Society



Lewy body dementia is a complex and frequently misdiagnosed disease that affects memory, thinking, movement, sleep and behaviour. Lewy body dementia is the second most common type of neurodegenerative dementia in older people. At least 10-15% of all people who live with dementia have Lewy body dementia.

The Lewy Body Society campaigns to raise awareness of Lewy body dementia in those who need to understand the disease and its impact – people living with Lewy body dementia and those who can make a difference to their futures. They also fundraise to research new treatments and potential cures.

The charity was nominated to receive a donation by Robin Torr, Senior Partner at Pilgrim Hope Solicitors in Standish.

Lewy Body Society is the only charity in the UK – and the first in Europe – dedicated exclusively to “the most common dementia you’ve never heard of”: Lewy body dementia (LBD). The charity is 20 years old in 2026. The charity exists to promote awareness of LBD and fund research. As the smallest member of the AMRC (Association of Medical Research Charities) they have funded £3.4 million research across 27 projects. The charity funds an Admiral Nurse specifically for LBD.

More than 400 families have been directly supported by the service. LBS has scaled awareness and campaigning activity; securing an ITN "Living With Lewy" podcast, coordinating a global campaign with international Lewy body dementia charities, and securing key annual events; including “A Scarf For Lewy” knit-a-scarf campaign. The start of the campaign in 2021 at the Royal Albert Hall collected scarfs from all over the world – it wrapped around the building 6 times.

100% of the charity funding comes from voluntary donations except for a £10k lottery grant to produce podcasts with ITN Business.

Going forwards, the charity is looking to fund more research and continue to be the voice for people with an LBD diagnosis.

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

Nominations 2025

We have received over 75 charity nominations in 2025 from academic clients, business clients, locums, solicitors, transcribers (via our sister company TP Transcription Limited)

and staff. We have a strict list of criteria concerning our donation available on the Ten Percent Foundation website. Donations tend to be within the range of £500-£2000 per charity per year. However, in the past, we have supported charities over a period of 5 years with donations going towards specific ongoing projects.

Peaceful Weekend 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 Clee 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.

Website: <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

E: jbfagan@tenpercentgroup.com | T: 0207 127 4343

Head Office: Ty Brith, Llandegla Road, Mold CH7 4QX

London Office: Ten-Percent.co.uk Limited, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3AX

Offices also in Brighton, Coventry, Glasgow and Bristol

Legal Recruitment News is produced by Ten Percent Legal Recruitment - you can view all versions of the e-newsletter at www.legal-recruitment.co.uk.

- Ten Percent Group - www.tenpercentgroup.com
- Jonathan Fagan Business Brokers - www.jonathanfagan.co.uk
- Interim Lawyers - www.interimlawyers.co.uk
- Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment - www.ten-percent.co.uk
- Legal Recruitment Newsletter - www.legal-recruitment.co.uk