A Day in the Life of a TLD Lawyer: Phil Booth

By Rachel Hyland

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At a recent TLD Quarterly Meeting, I was struck by the diverse interests our lawyers have and wanted to find out more about how easy it is to balance a legal career with other activities and responsibilities. So, I've taken the opportunity to chat with Phil Booth – a man who manages to combine an interesting and varied legal career with a geographically dispersed family and directorships at a couple of racecourses!

Good morning Phil, can you tell me a bit about when and why you joined TLD?

I joined in October 2018. I wanted to work more flexibly, move away from a full-time office job and work with a variety of clients.

And is that how it panned out? How many clients do you currently have?

I've got five or six regular clients. One of those is a retainer client, a couple of others I charge monthly for the work done, and then I have other clients that pop up now and again needing some work.

And are they in a range of industries?

Yes, absolutely. I work with a charity for the homeless and disadvantaged in Gateshead, a pet food manufacturer in Yorkshire, a rug distributor in the Peak District. I've got a client that is a management consultancy in London, another that is an airport on the South Coast.

So, they're not all local to you then?

No, I'm based in County Durham, but I support businesses all over the country. I am always willing to visit my clients if required, but I've found they're more than happy for me to be on the end of the phone. Everybody is more used to that way of working now and it's meant that there really aren't any geographic constraints on where I work.



How much of your time then is spent working for TLD?

I average three days a week, but I don't have set days. It's largely down to me when I do the work. I do like to turn things around quickly for clients - I take pride in that. When you engage a standard law firm, you have to wait for them to deal with things. With TLD, you're acting as their in-house lawyer, so I try to give my clients that service and deal with everything promptly.

And you're also Director of Leicester and Catterick racecourses, aren't you? Can you tell me what that entails?

Yes, I've been a non-executive director at Catterick for about a year but am more heavily involved at Leicester. I've been a director there since 2015 and obviously, the main thing I can offer a board of directors is legal advice. I'm also involved on the compliance side, the general oversight of the operations, the strategic management.

And does this involve going to the racecourse?

A lot of the work is done remotely but yes, at Leicester I go to all their meetings - there are about 30 a year. It's not just work – I'm really interested in horse racing. I sometimes stay over or combine it with visiting clients or family.

Both my daughters have moved away now - there's one on the South coast, and one in the Midlands. And I've got an elderly mother in Devon. So, I try to combine my trips to Leicester with visiting them. The flexibility of working from a laptop means that my wife and I can see family as and when.

It seems like you have a lot on. Do you have time for any hobbies?

The main thing I do for exercise and relaxation is go out on my bike. I like to go out every day for about 45 minutes to an hour. Because of the flexibility I have, that is something I can do – go out in the morning, in the afternoon, lunchtime or the evening – whenever I have the time.

It's clear that the way people work has changed significantly in recent years. Speaking with Phil showed me how TLD supports a different way of working, one which acknowledges that people have disparate responsibilities and interests and supports them to find a balance that works for them.



If you're a senior lawyer from an in-house background and looking for a different way of working with more flexibility and more control, have a look at our 'Working with The Legal Director' guide or contact our Recruitment Manager Georgina Rylance for a chat on 07305 902876 or email: georgina.rylance@thelegaldirector.co.uk.