



# Metcalfe Mercury

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Issue 3

## Dawn Leads By Example

Thetford family lawyer, Dawn Collier, has been an example to all MCP staff this summer. In June she was admitted to the Advanced Panel for Family Law, then just a few days later she was promoted to Partner!

Dawn is now part of an elite group of lawyers in East Anglia with this advanced qualification and level of expertise, making her the ideal person to speak to about any family issues you may have.

Dawn undertakes all types of Family work and also runs the Family Department and the firm's Legal Aid Franchise at the Thetford Office. She deals with all aspects of relationship breakdowns, children's arrangements and financial matters.



Steve Welcomme  
Head of the Family Department



Family Lawyer, Dawn Collier

Head of the firm's Family Law Department Steve Welcomme said of Dawn's achievement: "Congratulations to Dawn on passing her exam, becoming a member of the Panel and of course becoming a Partner. I am sure this will benefit both her and her clients."

At a time when many firms are deserting this area of the law in favour of more highly paid work we continue to believe that we should offer a service across the whole community. This is particularly important in this part of the world where transport is often an issue and people do not have the means or inclination to travel long distances to see a solicitor with sufficient expertise to deal with their case."

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# MCP Get Active for Charity



Congratulations to those who participated in the Dragon Boat Festival at Peterborough on 7<sup>th</sup> June.

The crew braved dismal weather conditions and gamely tackled three heats against all odds. This was the first time for most of the crew and there were a few wobbly moments but we stayed upright!

The first heat was more of a team building exercise than a race, but we managed a credible third. After a hearty breakfast and some Dutch courage (Ali takes first prize for cracking open the cider at 9.30am) the

second heat ensued. We were the only mixed crew so did well to come third and shaved three seconds from our first heat.

By now the rain had turned from a steady drizzle into a downpour but after a cracking feast of burgers, sausages and kebabs we decided it was time to get serious!

We were now ready for the final heat. The rain was now torrential but we didn't care, this was our chance to shine ... and then we were off!

**“IT WAS TIME TO GET SERIOUS!”**

We rowed hard and fast but realised it was a futile effort as others were sailing into a comfortable lead. The

horn sounded and it was all over. We paddled slowly back to the bank singing with gusto – we might be out but we weren't down...

And so the day deteriorated. The rain was still pouring, the barbeque had fizzled out and the Pimms was all gone. It was time to go home.



Female staff raised over £2200 for Cancer Relief by taking part in the Race for Life.



# Employers Beware!



## Age Discrimination

On 1<sup>st</sup> October new age discrimination legislation comes into force. As an employer you may have an understanding of what this means but have you considered the full implications?

This legislation includes direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It means that you would not be able to request a mature, youthful, modern or even experienced candidate in your job adverts since these terms all relate to age. All decisions must be based on ability rather than age, or even experience.

It should be noted that since the law became effective in the Republic of Ireland 19% of formal discrimination claims there have related to age. Could you afford a claim?

## Help is Here from MCP...

As you can see from the examples above it is difficult to ensure that your employment practices and documentation are constantly up to date. You can often fail to realise how much a claim could cost if a case goes to an employment tribunal. MCP are helping businesses with this by offering Employment Practices Insurance.

MCP will check all your employment contracts, handbooks, procedures etc or even provide these documents if you do not have them. We will provide advice, advocacy services and provide insurance

## Fixed-Term Contracts

This July new legislation came into effect for employees on fixed-term contracts. If an employee has been on a fixed-term contract for four years or more and is then offered another fixed-term contract without breaking continuity then this new contract is classed as permanent.

When reviewing fixed-term contracts for employees it is important that employers understand this. If they do the employer could work with the employee to justify the fixed-term contract or the possibility of a permanent position. If this is not considered fixed-term employees may simply become permanent employees without the employer's knowledge.

covering the cost of any award made against you (provided you seek our advice prior to taking any action).

You will also have unlimited access to advice in connection with Employment related problems.

All this is available for a single fixed annual fee that should cost considerably less than any claim and will give you peace of mind.

For more information on any of these topics please contact Paul Garner.

## New Identity Checks

MCP are now using a new system, CallML, to confirm the identity of new clients. This means that rather than scrutinising passports, bank statements and electricity bills we will be able to confirm the identity of a new client within seconds. It also means that people will not be able to launder money from illegal sources through us.

### How does this work?

A client provides MCP with their name, date of birth and address. Their solicitor simply types this into the CallML system, which will confirm these details and then provide sample questions for the client such as "What was your previous address?" Answering these questions that only the client would know confirms their identity.

### Why is this needed?

New guidelines on money laundering were recently introduced meaning that solicitors need to do much more stringent checks on clients' identities. These new checks would ordinarily be extremely time-consuming for both the solicitor and client but this system does it quickly and easily.

Protecting against money laundering is an issue because stopping it will prevent the perpetrators of crime from cleaning their gains through legitimate products. This will make it considerably harder for them to benefit from crime. CallML does this by not only checking standard information but also looking at Terrorist Files, Fraudulent Passport data and other such information.

For more information please contact Andrew Davies

## Achievements

Rob Colwell took part in the Great East Anglia Run to raise money for North Cambs Palliative Care. Rob also passed his professional Skills Core Module Exams.

Carolyn Wright is now a Trainee Solicitor after being a para-legal for a year.

Amy Brown passed her Police Station Accreditation Exams and Portfolio Assessment at the first attempt.

Alan Thain has now donated a grand total of 50 pints of blood. The average person has 10 pints in their body so Alan has now donated 5 times that amount!

Ruth Griffiths trekked around Mont Blanc and raised £1300 for Breakthrough Breast Cancer.

## A Fresh Face

I have recently joined MCP as Marketing Coordinator. I have varied marketing experience including both local food producer Bernard Matthews and The Tweenies stage show and I am here to help take MCP to the next level!



In order to help MCP grow I want to hear from you, both staff and clients, past and present. Let me know what you think of MCP and what you think of this newsletter – we need your feedback to help us improve.

For more information please contact Ellie Ryder