

St John's Buildings



MEMBER PROSPECTUS

MANCHESTER | LIVERPOOL | SHEFFIELD | CHESTER

WELCOME

From Frances Heaton KC and Richard Norton,
Joint Heads of Chambers



"Thank you for considering St John's Buildings Chambers. We are a progressive and ambitious chambers with an excellent staff team and market-leading facilities. We have been successful not just because of our excellent members and staff but also because of our relentless focus on client service and proper, transparent business management. Our barristers work nationally on some of the most exciting and high-profile cases in the country.

St John's Buildings is built around all that is exceptional about the Bar: independence within a collegiate environment, excellence of advocacy and a commitment to the highest ethical standards. However, we have developed this approach within a modern business structure that approaches case capture and business development methodically and with the application of proper monitoring, audit and accountability. This has enabled Chambers to deliver an increasing case load to members, providing opportunities for you to develop as busy and diverse a practice as you desire.

We hope you find this prospectus useful and take the time to make contact with one of the team and come and see what we do differently."



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

1. Do you have the opportunity to grow and develop your practice both geographically and in quality?
2. Are you satisfied with the service and facilities that your chambers provides and with the cost?
3. Does your chambers support your health and wellbeing and offer an inclusive environment for you to grow and develop?
4. Does your chambers encourage and support inclusivity, diversity and equality?
5. What are the trends in the legal services market and is your chambers addressing them?
6. Does your chambers have a clear strategy for addressing the needs of legal services consumers?
7. Does your chambers regularly review its strategy in light of what it learns and changing government policy?
8. Do you feel confident about the future?

If you don't know the answer to any of these questions, or are unhappy with the answer, read on and see if St John's Buildings can help. Alternatively, contact one of the team at St John's Buildings for an informal chat, using the details listed at the end of this prospectus.

We are keen to speak to barristers with excellent practices and potential, who would like to benefit from working with our first-rate team.

St John's Buildings is a large and diverse chambers, committed to applying the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work and recruitment.

We wish to attract applications from all sections of society and provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

Read our [Equality Policy](#) and our [Anti-Racism Statement](#).

ABOUT US

We are one of the largest sets of barristers' Chambers in the UK, with 236 barrister members and 70 support staff. Members benefit from a wide range of skilled and experienced staff, a comprehensive set of services, access to some of the most significant cases in the courts of England and Wales, and facilities in four key legal centres. We are proud of our heritage and committed to the future of the independent referral profession.

THE ST JOHN'S BUILDINGS ETHOS

We take a commercial approach to service delivery and are constantly improving the standards we set. This approach has enabled us to attract some of the country's most high-profile cases across numerous areas of law, while also servicing a number of large contracts for advocacy services.

Clients and members are impressed by the professionalism of our approach and our ability to retain a collegiate atmosphere while focussing on service standards.

In a time of uncertainty for the legal services market, we have been able to deliver stability and a large and secure workflow for our members. We are following a clear and defined strategy of growth to enhance our ability to service our clients' needs and to ensure stability. This reflects everything we know about the future of the legal services market.

Chambers is led by a Board of Directors and audited to ISO 9001 standards. We take corporate governance and information security seriously and we are an early adopter of new technology to facilitate better and more cost-effective service delivery.

We have taken a progressive approach, bringing in consultancy skills from commerce and industry, hiring experts in legal regulation, marketing, human resources and finance and developing strategies to address public access, mediation, ABSs and barrister-only entities, unregulated legal services and block contract tendering.

Award Winning



FAMILY LAW AWARDS

WHY JOIN SJB?



St John's Buildings has a clear strategy to tackle the changing legal market. We focus on exceptional support and administration, high quality advocacy and reliable service delivery. As a result we have been successful in building on our reputation for winning and servicing work.

WHAT DOES ST JOHN'S BUILDINGS OFFER?

1. We are one of the largest barristers' sets in the country, with proven expertise across all areas of law
2. Our clerking team is large, diverse and highly experienced, supporting barristers in every stage of their career.
3. We have an ambitious strategy for the future and are actively pursuing that strategy
4. This strategy is underpinned and enabled by our values, which define how we behave collectively and individually, to clients and to colleagues
5. In partnership with Advanced Legal, we have developed a market-leading solution to secure electronic document management for barristers, enabling cases to be presented in court without paper briefs. We have received Cyber Essentials Plus and ISO27002 accreditation for our IT security
6. We are an inclusive and supportive chambers, with a focus on wellbeing, cohesion and professionalism, receiving a Certificate of Wellbeing from the Bar Council
7. Our in-house business development and marketing teams ensure we are positioned to win further prestigious and high-value contracts and cases
8. We have a continuing programme of investments including regular IT refreshes
9. We provide access to a comprehensive online library, provided by Bloomsbury Professional, Lexis Nexis and Thomson Reuters
10. We are based in four of the UK's best and most appealing cities, offering exceptional living standards.

OUR PRACTICE AREAS

Our Chambers offers a wide range of services and each barrister belongs to at least one of our practice groups.

One of our greatest strengths is that each individual barrister benefits from being part of a cohesive team within a large, multidisciplinary set of chambers. This means that we can offer expertise and experience in a wide range of areas, with each area complementing and informing others. The practice groups are matched to experienced, dedicated clerks, ensuring expertise at every point of contact.

Crime Fraud; Financial Crime; Magistrates Court; Crown Court and Appeals; Courts Martial and Service Law	Direct Access	Education
Employment	Family Family Finance; Children (Public and Private law); Private FDR; Family Arbitration	Inquests and Coronial
Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence Catastrophic & Fatal Accidents; Costs; Fraud; Disease; Travel Claims	Public and Administrative	Regulatory and Professional Discipline Environmental; Health & Safety; Licensing; Professional Discipline; Sport Discipline; Trading Standards & Consumer; Transport
Business and Property	ADR	Court of Protection

We are accustomed to developing new areas of specialism based on the needs of our clients and our members' skills and experience.

OUR VALUES

At St John's Buildings we care about creating and maintaining a positive culture. We want to be known for our cohesion and the consistency of highest quality service delivery. Our values define our culture, what we stand for and how we behave individually and collectively, both in relation to our clients and as colleagues.



SERVICE EXCELLENCE

We are proud to have been recognised as Chambers of the Year on numerous occasions and continue to apply the same high standards across all sites. Our barristers and staff are committed to delivering high-quality services and support to all of our clients. We don't rest on our laurels, but continuously seek to improve our services.



APPROACHABILITY

Our clients say we are friendly and approachable. We provide a supportive service and environment to clients, members and colleagues. We are always exploring ways to ensure our services are accessible and welcome Direct Access clients.



COMMUNITY

Our barristers and staff work together to provide a seamless service to clients. Our barristers enjoy collegiate support across practice groups and sites, sharing their expertise to develop others. Welfare is high on the agenda in Chambers and we have been recognised for our work in this area by the Bar Council. Equality, diversity and inclusion are critical to Chambers' success, both as a workplace and service provider.



AGILITY

Forward thinking - we scan the horizon and talk with market leaders about technical opportunities to enhance our services. We continue to adapt to market needs and challenges to ensure continuity and to provide the services our clients want and need. We embrace new technology enabling our barristers to work anywhere in the UK and radically reducing our use of paper.

ACCESS TO THE BEST WORK

Our barristers appear in some of the biggest cases nationally. Our reach extends far beyond the cities in which our chambers are based, with cases nationally and internationally.

FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY v AVACADE AND OTHERS [2020] EWHC 1673 (CH)

David Berkley KC and Steven McGarry represented the second and fourth defendants in a case concerning transferred pensions valued at approximately £90 million.

EFOBI (APPELLANT) v ROYAL MAIL GROUP (RESPONDENT)

David Flood appeared in this Supreme Court case. The key issue is whether the Claimant bears the burden of proving that discrimination has occurred or whether the burden is neutral under Section 136 of The Equality Act 2010.

RE H-N AND OTHERS (CHILDREN) (DOMESTIC ABUSE: FINDING OF FACT HEARINGS)

Lorraine Cavanagh KC appeared in the four conjoined Domestic Abuse appeals before the Court of Appeal [Re H-N and Others] for an intervener, the ALC.

FAIZ v BURNLEY BC

The Court of Appeal handed down a guide on waiver in leases in its judgment in Faiz v Burnley BC [2021] EWCA Civ 55. Philip Byrne acted for the appellants. David Berkley KC acted for the respondent.

OTI (BY HER MOTHER AND LITIGATION FRIEND OI) v GUYS AND ST THOMAS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

A case of infant stroke settled for a capitalised value of £6,258,845. Michael Redfern KC and Sufiyan Rana represented the Claimant.

R v THOMAS ANDERSON

Andrew O’Byrne KC and David James represented Thomas Anderson who was sentenced to 20 years in prison for the attempted murders of three men.

H v AN ADOPTION AGENCY

Lorraine Cavanagh KC led Eleanor Keehan. The novel issue was whether the Family Court has jurisdiction to grant a declaration of parentage in respect of a natural father where the child had been adopted years prior to the application.

KK v LEEDS CITY COUNCIL AND DK

This appeal judgment raises an important issue of procedure and practice in relation to joinder applications and disclosure of information. Joseph O’Brien KC appeared for the Official Solicitor in successfully resisting the appeal.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION AND CHILDREN ACT 2002 AND IN THE MATTER OF C (CHILDREN) (REVOCATION OF PLACEMENT ORDERS)

St John’s Buildings’ barristers successfully defended an appeal against a judge’s refusal to revoke a placement order. Lorraine Cavanagh KC led Matthew Carey for the local authority and Karl Rowley KC led Mark Senior for the children. The Court of Appeal took the opportunity to address the applicable principles to an application to revoke a placement order after leave has been granted.

IN THE MATTER OF F AND G (DISCHARGE OF SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER)

Mark Senior appeared as counsel for subject children in a groundbreaking case in which the Court of Appeal considered for the first time the legality of a court making care and special guardianship orders in the same proceedings.



SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

TOP ROW L-R:

CHRIS RONAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Heads the Senior Management Team and takes the lead on Chambers' strategy, reporting to the Board. He has overarching responsibility for the market positioning of Chambers, all operational aspects and projects and has been integral to the growth of Chambers, through seven mergers, since 2002.

DAVID ANDERSON, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

David joined SJB in 2008 after five years at the Bar Council in roles including remuneration policy and as Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Bar. He is President of Manchester Law Society and was named in the Management Section of the Lawyer Magazine's 'Hot 100' in 2008.

PAULA BLACKSHAW, HEAD OF ACCOUNTS

Paula is skilled in Coaching, Statistical Analysis Tools, Dispute Resolution, Quality Management, and Quality Assurance. Strong finance professional with a Level 7 Extended Diploma focused in Strategic Management & Leadership from Brighton School of Business Management.

HELEN POWER, HEAD OF HR

With over 20 years of HR management experience in a range of sectors, Helen ensures we look after our people by embedding our positive culture and values, adopting best practice HR processes and focusing on wellbeing, engagement and inclusion.

CHRIS SHAW, SENIOR CLERK, CIVIL

Chris is the senior clerk for the Civil Team, looking after the PICN, Business & Property, and Employment teams across our four sites.

MARK HEALD, SENIOR CLERK, CRIME & REGULATORY

Joined Chambers in 2014, before then he was a Senior Clerk of a Leeds set for over 20 years. Mark's clerking career started in 1991 before which he worked for the CPS.

BOTTOM ROW L-R:

PAUL LAVERTY, SENIOR CLERK, FAMILY & COURT OF PROTECTION

With over 30 years' experience, Paul has clerked many members to various Judicial appointments, including High Court Judges and KCs.

MARK ROBINSON, SENIOR CLERK, CHESTER

Since 2008, Mark has been the Senior Clerk at our thriving Chester site, leading a team of clerks who help provide high quality legal services in Cheshire, Wales, Shropshire and beyond.

TIM BOOTH, SENIOR CLERK, SHEFFIELD

Senior Clerk in Sheffield for over 30 years at SJB and prior to merger with Paradise Chambers. Tim is privileged to have previously clerked one High Court Judge, 17 Circuit Judges and nine KCs in his time in Chambers.

SCOTT BALDWIN, SENIOR CLERK, LIVERPOOL

Scott has 30 years of experience as a barristers' clerk. Prior to joining SJB in 2024 he was the Chief Executive/Senior Clerk at St Mary's Chambers in Nottingham for 17 years.

MARK WILLIAMS, SENIOR CLERK

Mark joined St John's Buildings' in 2024 after spending over 20 years as a barristers' clerk in Leeds. Mark was senior clerk in his previous role for 12 years and specialised mainly in areas of Family Law and Court of Protection.

MEMBER SERVICES

	CLERKING/ADMINISTRATION	
Diary Management	Client care and meet and greet	Administrative support
Case Management	Case capture and proactive business development	Frontline telephony and reception support
Post handling and distribution	Billing and fee collection	Credit control
Proactive career development	DCS/Common platform support	Typing services
Four Northern city office presence	Multi-disciplinary specialist support	Market expertise
	MARKETING	
Professional support with tenders and pitches	Seminar planning and delivery	Networking/hospitality events management
Legal directory entries	Social media coverage and support	Press releases and exposure
Branded stationery	SEO/digital marketing	Website marketing
Charitable events	Award entries	Internal newsletter
	FACILITIES	
City centre conference facilities	City centre office/storage space	ADR suites
Shared IT facilities	Hard copy library facilities	Secure storage and archiving
Secure destruction and shredding	Tea and coffee	
	IT/ONLINE	
Work anywhere IT services	Secure cloud storage and collaboration software	MLC mobile
Comprehensive online library - Bloomsbury/LexisNexis/Thomson Reuters	Print/copy	Office 365
Dedicated IT support line	CJSM support	DCS/Common Platform software
Video conferencing	Cyber Essentials+ certification	

MEMBER SERVICES CONTINUED

	REGULATORY/COMPLIANCE	
"MyBar" support	BMIF and top-up insurance support	Regulatory returns management
CPD support	Complaint management	ICO/Subject Access Request support
GDPR compliance and training	Ethical advice	

	CAREER	
Practice development review process	Cross selling	Practice area exposure/opportunity to diversify
Representation on specialist bar associations and Bar Council	KC mentoring scheme	Support with applications (judicial/KC/tribunal/panel)
Opportunity identification		

	WELLBEING	
Wellbeing mentoring panel	Funded counselling and support	Bar Council certified best-practice
HR department support	Written standards and policy management	

	OTHER	
ISO9001 accredited procedures	Property investment through shares	Cyber security insurance
City centre bike storage	Corporate governance/record keeping	

SUPPORT FOR YOUR PRACTICE

We have 70 staff based in our Chambers in Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and Sheffield, with the same comprehensive service being offered from each site and available to all of our 236 barrister members.

Our team of senior clerks have many years of experience. This wide-ranging expertise enables members to consider alternative areas of work and to transition into new and exciting areas, with support from experienced barrister mentors and clerks.

Since 2020, 30 members of Chambers received judicial and/or tribunal appointments and our past members include senior circuit and High Court judges.

We have a customised KC mentoring scheme, assisting our members in their application for Silk.

ONLINE LIBRARY FACILITIES

Members of chambers have access to three online library subscription services, which are provided by Bloomsbury Professional, LexisNexis and Thomson Reuters respectively.

All three services provide online access to the main legal textbooks which are used by members; the latter two also provide online access to legal information resources including up-to-date legislation, law reports, journals and precedents.

Listed are the online resources available to members from each of the three online services:

TEXTBOOKS

Bloomsbury titles

- Duckworth – Matrimonial Property & Finance
- Hershman & McFarlane – Children Law & Practice

Sweet & Maxwell titles

- Andrews & Millett - Law of Guarantees
- Bowstead on Agency
- Bullen & Leake - Precedents of Pleadings
- Chitty on Contracts
- Charlesworth & Percy on Negligence
- Clerk & Lindsell on Torts
- IDS Employment Law Handbooks
- Kemp Quantum of Damages
- McGregor on Damages
- Jackson & Powell on Professional Liability
- Rooke & Ward on Sexual Offences
- Ruoff & Roper - Registered Conveyancing
- Snells Equity
- Woodfall - Landlord & Tenant
- LexisLibrary titles

RESEARCH

(ie. cases, legislation, journals, current awareness, precedents, practice notes)

- Lawtel
- LexisLibrary
- Practical Law
- Westlaw

WELLBEING AND SUPPORT



St John's Buildings was one of the first chambers in the country to receive a Certificate of Recognition from the Bar Council for our comprehensive wellbeing support provision. Our wellbeing provision includes free access to an external helpline, provided by Health Assured, that provides access for any SJB member to support from qualified, experienced counsellors.

The collegiate and supportive nature of our chambers allows us to have an internal panel of barrister members who have formed a Mentor Panel. They offer support on issues including handling distressing cases, mindfulness, anxiety, workload management, return to work, career planning and much more.

Our flexible working and equality policies ensure our members benefit from a comprehensive and supportive approach to career development and management.

OUR DIVERSITY IN NUMBERS

- 47% of our KCs are female, as compared to the national average of just 16.2%.
- 48% of our barrister members are female as compared to a national average at the bar of 38.2%.
- We are proud of our stance on anti-racism. Read our [Anti-Racism Statement](#).
- Our most recent analysis of income and work allocation, conducted in May 2021, found equality of earnings and opportunities, with no disadvantage associated with ethnicity.
- We are delighted to have attracted, shortlisted and appointed a strong representation of applicants from ethnic minorities in our pupillage recruitment campaigns, including 33.3% of our intake of new pupils in 2021 and 2022 combined.

MARKETING & BUILDING YOUR PROFILE



Our Marketing Team have 30 years of experience across all channels from printed newsstand titles and outdoor advertising to Google Ads and SEO. They've worked for some of the biggest brands in the country, from Microsoft to McDonalds!

Our team produce an annual plan which covers all marketing activity from seminars and events to profile updates and directory submissions. They regularly meet with members to provide advice on marketing, whether it is how to improve your profile on LinkedIn, guidance on starting a new account on X, or how to try and gain more exposure in the legal press.

The team produce a quarterly marketing report for the Board, which looks at every aspect of their work, from our Google Ads account to website hits, mailshots, press coverage and social media engagement. This is available to all members.

In 2023, with the support of our experienced in-house marketing team, over 31% of our members were recommended in Chambers UK Bar and/or Legal 500.

The team are also responsible for our busy and successful seminar series. In the first six months of 2024, a total of 1,623 people have attended our seminars, and we have a further 13 events already planned for the second half of the year.



www.stjohnsbuidings.com



[@SJBnews](https://twitter.com/SJBnews)



[St John's Buildings Barristers' Chambers](#)

OUR LOCATIONS: MANCHESTER



LIVEABILITY

- Properties in Manchester had an overall average price of £236,076 (average four bedroom property: £439,315)
- Cost of living is 35% cheaper than in London
- The Economist's 'Global Liveability Index' in 2018 rated Manchester as the best city in the UK based on education, healthcare, crime rates, and social stability
- Voted fifth safest place to live in the UK by Compare the Market
- HS2 will make the journey to London 1 hour 7 minutes down from 2 hours and 7 minutes currently
- Trains: Chester (1 hour), Sheffield (50 minutes), Liverpool (35 minutes), Leeds (55 minutes)
- Bee Network: a joined-up cycling and walking network across the city
- MediaCity: home to BBC and ITV departments, plus the site for broadcasting and technology development in the North

CULTURE

- The Whitworth, Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester Museum, the People's History Museum, HOME arts centre, Manchester International Festival, The Lowry, Royal Exchange Theatre
- Sport: Football (Manchester United, Manchester City), Manchester Aquatics Centre, Regional Athletics Arena, National Squash Centre and Manchester Velodrome
- Cloudwater voted best UK brewery by the Telegraph

FOCUS ON: ALTRINCHAM

- Altrincham best place to live in UK in The Sunday Times guide 2020 and best place to live in the North West 2021
- 20 minutes from Manchester
- Loreto, Ambrose and both Altrincham boys and girls schools are some of the best in the country
- Altrincham Market, Stamford Park, Everyman Cinema, Planet Ice (Ice Rink)
- 15 minutes to Manchester Airport

OUR LOCATIONS: LIVERPOOL



LIVEABILITY

- Properties in Liverpool had an overall average price of £192,093 (Average four bedroom property: £337,646)
- Cost of living is 43% cheaper than London
- Named one of best places to live in the North West in the annual Sunday Times Best Places to Live guide 2021
- Voted safest city in the UK 2021 by Confused.com
- Trains: Manchester (35 minutes), London (2 hours), Chester (48 minutes)

CULTURE

- Tate Liverpool, Open Eye Gallery on Albert Dock, Museum of Liverpool, Liverpool ONE, Baltic Triangle
- Playhouse, the Empire, Everyman theatre
- Liverpool John Lennon Airport
- Granted World Heritage status from UNESCO in July 2004
- Sport: Liverpool and Everton football clubs

FOCUS ON: FORMBY

- 30 minutes to Liverpool
- National Trust beach
- Formby Golf Club
- Formby High School rated Outstanding by Ofsted

OUR LOCATIONS: CHESTER



LIVEABILITY

- Properties in Chester had an overall average price of £281,782 (Average four bedroom property: £449,348)
- Cost of living is 26% cheaper than London
- Chester rated number three in Property Week's Hot Housing Index 2020 and number one in 2015
- Schools: Belgrave, Dee Point, St Martin's Academy and Acresfield voted "outstanding" by Ofsted
- Named the most accessible city in Europe for disabled people in 2017
- Trains: Manchester (1 hour), Liverpool (48 minutes), Wrexham (15 minutes), London (2 hours), Crewe (20 minutes)
- Chester is the gateway to North Wales, which allows for a Welsh practice to be built. We welcome Welsh speakers

CULTURE

- Short drive to Wales and the coast
- Voted fifth prettiest city in Europe by USA today
- Roman amphitheatre, Chester racecourse, medieval cathedral, Ruskinian town hall, Tudor buildings, Storyhouse arts complex, Chester Zoo, Blue Planet Aquarium, Freedome, Chester Golf Club

OUR LOCATIONS: SHEFFIELD



LIVEABILITY

- Properties in Sheffield had an overall average price of £225,105 (Average four bedroom property: £323,053)
- Cost of living is 47% cheaper than London
- Voted one of the safest cities to live in by Compare the Market
- King Ecgbert School was voted World Class School of the Year for 2019
- Trains: Manchester (50 minutes), London (2 hours), Leeds (20 minutes)
- Doncaster Sheffield airport (voted the UK's Best Airport by Which? Magazine three years in a row)

CULTURE

- Close to the Peak District National Park, surrounded by countryside
- The UK's greenest city. More than 4.5 million trees - more per person than any other city in Europe
- 61% of Sheffield's entire area is green space, and a third of the city lies within the Peak District national park
- There are more than 250 parks, woodlands and gardens in the city
- The Winter Gardens, Botanical Gardens, Millennium Gallery, Graves Gallery

FOCUS ON: FULWOOD

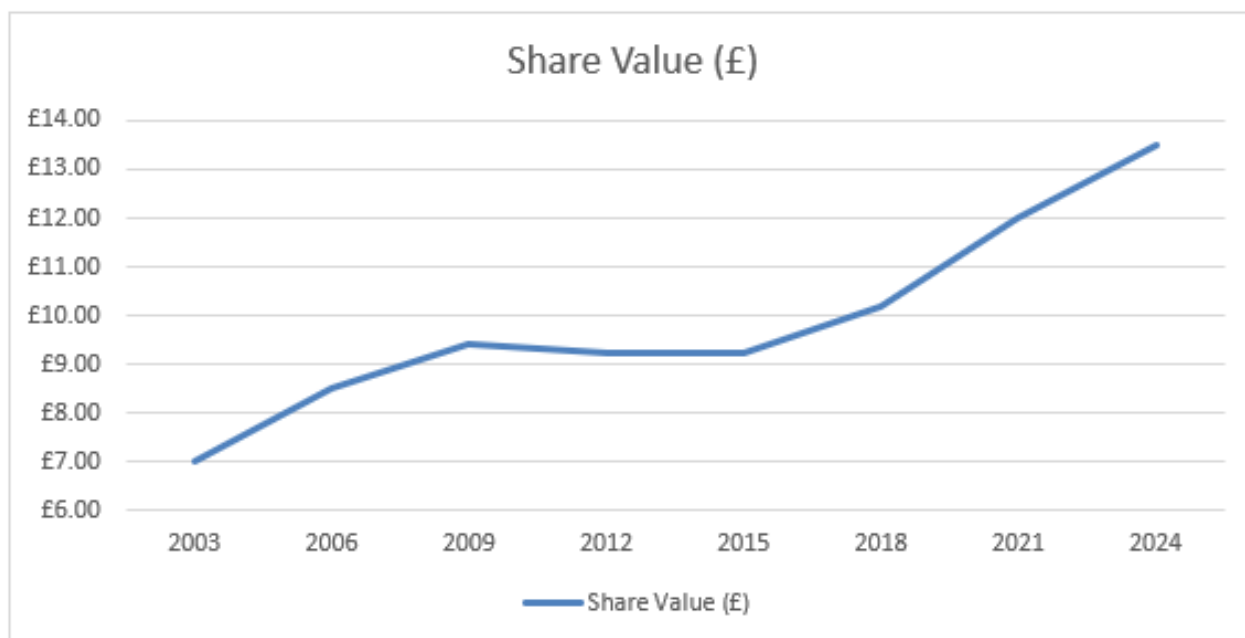
- Named as one of the best places to live in the UK by The Sunday Times 2020
- Fulwood Sports Club
- Forge Dam Park

BECOMING A MEMBER



St John's Buildings' stability is built on the ownership of the properties from which we operate. Each member owns an equal share in our service company, St John's Buildings Ltd, the major assets of which are our properties in Manchester, Sheffield, Chester and Liverpool. In order to join SJB, new members are expected to purchase ten shares in St John's Buildings Ltd, with a current share price of £13.50 per share (i.e. £135 initial investment).

Over time, members are invited to increase their shareholding in chambers until they hold a full shareholding of 2,143 shares, the purchase arrangements and timing of which can be agreed depending on personal circumstances. We are confident that the investment in shares and expenses will easily be matched by the value of services provided and the impact it will have on an individual barrister's practice, leaving counsel with a valuable asset when they come to depart chambers, having met their practice objectives and goals. With a strong financial footing, St John's Buildings Ltd, the company that runs Chambers, has been profitable every year since 2013. This is a reflection of our approach to rigorous financial management and independent audit. St John's Buildings try to offer the most comprehensive set of clerking, administration and support services to our members. Our expenses are on a sliding scale of between 9.5 and 14%, with a standing monthly charge of £125. In return for that investment members not only benefit from being a member of a cohesive, forward-looking Chambers, but also from a comprehensive list of specific services provided by Chambers, as set out on pages 10-11.



CASE STUDIES

REBECCA PENFOLD

I moved to St John's Buildings in February 2020 from my London chambers, where I had completed pupillage and spent a happy seven years. It was therefore a big, daunting move, and little did I know we were about to go into a global pandemic. Despite that, SJB pulled through; the junior team became a much needed source of collegiate support, the IT infrastructure in Chambers meant the move to virtual work was seamless and the clerking team ensured that my diary remained busy and I developed new professional relationships. The past year has caused many so much worry, but moving to Manchester to a set with such firm foundations and surplus of work was one of the best professional decisions I have made.

It is difficult to decide what the strongest aspect of SJB is for me, but ultimately the criminal clerking team is second to none. I cannot sing their praises enough. The opportunities for work are incredible, and if I wanted my diary would be full of well-paid work, but it remains clear that my practice management is key to every clerking decision. I am treated as an individual and my future practice aims are always at the forefront of the clerks' minds - they are one step ahead of me in ensuring my practice develops in the way I want it to.

There is a happy mix of people across practice teams and across the four Chambers sites. It is a big set but I do not feel lost at all. In spite of all the challenges in the past year, I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year and look forward to what the future holds for me at SJB!



CASE STUDIES

FRANCES HEATON KC

In 2013, I joined SJB from a local Manchester-based set. Although I had built a very successful junior practice in that set, from which I successfully applied for silk, I was concerned about the long-term future. SJB appeared to me to have a clearer understanding of the likely shape of things for the Bar and legal services generally. In short it was already off the starting-blocks in adapting and developing strategies [eg business development, marketing and technology] to deal with the road ahead. SJB barristers were regularly in cases with me and spoke highly of the clerking, management and the collegiate atmosphere, which was readily apparent and has always been an important aspect of my work.



Since joining I have been delighted with the way in which my practice has grown and developed, being managed by a committed core team of clerks. Naturally my knowledge and involvement in the management of Chambers enhanced and exceeded my expectations. I can work without the worry of other aspects of practice administration.

Having experienced the benefits of joining SJB, I was pleased to be the successful candidate for the role of Joint Head of Chambers in 2019 and to immerse myself in assisting SJB achieve our future goals.

If you want to join a chambers that offers you a better quality of work or a practice that is managed and clerked effectively and in your best interests and those of your clients, please contact our Chief Executive, Chris Ronan, to find out what St John's Buildings can do for you and your practice.

Email: chris.ronan@stjohnsbldings.co.uk

Phone: 0161 214 1500

Write: Chris Ronan

St John's Buildings

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