



Ryan Letts



Regulating
Property
And
Probate
Lawyers

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Ryan Letts, has gone from office junior to running his own conveyancing firm, The Priory Law Group in South Nutfield, Surrey. And it's all down to Crystal Palace.

My job still excites me after almost 20 years in the industry. It's what gets me out of bed in the morning – well, that and my four-year-old son! I don't think anyone grows up dreaming of being a conveyancer – I wanted to be in the police – but I've gone from office junior to being a director of my own firm, and my teenage self definitely wouldn't have imagined that.

I always knew university wasn't for me and so when I finished my A levels, I got a job as an office junior at a local solicitors' firm. I was the general dogsbody – making tea, fetching the post and doing the photocopying – but they must have seen something in me as after the first couple of months, I was asked if I'd be interested in being trained up.

I was always in and out of everyone's offices and, as a young lad, I thought a lot of the other disciplines sounded a bit boring. But I really got on with one of the senior conveyancers – we both supported Crystal Palace. He seemed to have a great rapport with his clients and the conversations always sounded so positive that I decided I'd like to do what he did, although at the time I had no idea how much work that would involve or how long it would take!

It took just over five years for me to qualify. Lots of people do it quicker, but I was also working full-time, and I needed to get my practical training in too so spreading it out just worked better for me. To start with I went to evening classes at the local college and then I switched to distance learning all the while undertaking post completion work and complying contract documentation during the working day.

I was lucky to be offered the opportunity to start practicing before I qualified. One of my colleagues left and by that stage, as I had a fair amount of experience, I was offered his position. "Sharks are born swimming", they said.

I stayed with my first firm for 13 years before I had any thoughts about moving on. I remember the conveyancer I trained with telling me one day that I had the capacity to become a partner and I thought "just the qualification will do me", but as you get older your priorities and your ambitions change. I was fortunate to begin conversations with a referring contact around two years ago about opening our own practice, which we did at the end of 2020 and haven't looked back.

One thing that I think sets us apart is our use of technology. Our clients can sign initial onboarding documentation digitally and log into a milestone portal application to see how their case is progressing in real time. I believe in being transparent and pushing enough information out to all required parties with the use of good technology, sound advice and a willingness to provide a service that I would like to receive in return as a consumer.

We've been practicing now for just under a year and whilst some parts are daunting, my stance is that life is all about challenging yourself. If we can survive the madness of the stamp duty holiday then I think we can survive anything!

It's not easy to get through the qualification but once you have, conveyancing can be a rewarding career, whatever level you wish to reach. There aren't many other industries that can give you that buzz of giving your clients the good news when everything is completed.