

MEET THE NATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR TEAM

We advise across the public sector, whether it be local authorities, universities and colleges, central government, and their private sector partners, contractors, developers, funders and investors. The core team is supported by over 60 more lawyers who have in-depth experience of the public sector, and client directors who provide unique client support.



MADELEINE DAVITT
Senior Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate
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Madeleine is one of the founding members of Davitt Jones Bould, having previously worked for the Government Property Lawyers. Madeleine has advised public sector clients for many years, including Central and Local Government organisations such as The Royal Parks, the Cabinet Office, Ministry of Defence, BCP Council, Somerset County Council, Defra, UK Health Security Agency and more. She has led on major projects including regeneration schemes for Wiltshire Council and Bedford Borough Council, and numerous estates rationalisation projects for the Government.



SANDY MUNROE
Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate
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Sandy is a commercial property specialist with over 35 years' experience. Her expertise ranges from the property aspects of joint venture acquisitions or projects for local authorities, including outsourcing of specific services to supporting local authorities with disposal of assets and the granting of leases on various buildings and assets. She also has vast knowledge and experience in estates management for both public and private sector organisations, acquisitions, refinancing and large-scale voluntary transfers for registered providers, sales and PFI projects for Health Trusts, as well as disposals and the building of new schools for local authorities.



STEPHEN CHALCRAFT
Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate
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Stephen has over 30 years' experience advising the commercial property sector. He specialises in structuring and delivering large and complex public/private real estate projects including property joint ventures and collaboration agreements. Stephen has particular expertise in the complex range of issues that affect large scale commercial urban regeneration and development projects involving local authorities, housing companies and universities. This includes major town centre regeneration projects and the establishment of major new enterprise zones, often involving the provision of significant new transport infrastructure. Stephen also advises on the implications of net-zero and sustainability issues.



SEAN BULMAN
Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate
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Sean advises public sector clients on development work, high value acquisitions and disposals, and major estates management work, advising defence organisations, local government and central government clients on these issues. Sean has a reputation amongst our clients for being an exceptional project manager, always ensuring a successful delivery of them. For example, Sean advised Surrey County Council on their multistage development of the new emergency services centre in Crawley, and associated infrastructure including the Airline Academy building. He has managed many large estates projects for the likes of Ministry of Defence and the Department for Work and Pensions.

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PHILIPPA HIPWELL

Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate
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Philippa regularly deals with development work and high value acquisitions for local authority clients as well as the subsequent legal work relating to the estate management including agreements for lease, new leases, renewals and lease re-gears. For example, she led a team of lawyers on one Council's £72million acquisition of an office via company acquisition and has acted for numerous other local authorities on their commercial property transactions. Philippa has advised several Government clients including National Highways, Natural England, Department for Education, and the Department for Work and Pensions on the full spectrum of estates management issues.



MELANIE GREER-WALKER

Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate
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Melanie has a wealth of experience advising our public sector clients on commercial property matters. She regularly leads teams of lawyers on large development projects, including advising Chichester City Council in the drafting, negotiation and completion of a Development Agreement between the Council and its selected developer in relation to a major housing scheme development of over 1,000 properties. She has also led large estates management projects for such bodies as UK Health Security Agency, Defra, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Florence Nightingale Museum Trust and Natural England.



STEPHANIE ROBINSON

Partner - Public Sector/Real Estate Finance
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Stephanie is a real estate finance expert, having acted for many English, German and Islamic commercial and mortgage banks, non-bank debt providers, funds, borrowers and developers, on a variety of loan facility and restructuring transactions. She has significant experience in managing real estate finance transactions and has managed deals with large development projects and portfolios of properties, often requiring numerous and varied security and ancillary documents.



HELEN CLOSE

Partner - Public Sector/Property Litigation
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Helen has 27 years' experience in property litigation. She has a proven track record in advising local authorities and Government clients on complex landlord and tenant and real estate disputes as well as experience working with client Property Directors and their teams providing assistance with all their strategic and day-to day portfolio management. Helen also has significant telecommunications expertise.

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STEPHANIE HALL

Partner - Public Sector/Planning
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Stephanie has direct in-house senior local government experience with Manchester City Council, advising on regeneration projects. She is an expert on Planning, CPO and highways law. She has advised both public and private sector clients, managing high profile and innovative regeneration and infrastructure projects across the UK, including the Eastern Gateway regeneration programme to deliver up to 6,000 new homes. Stephanie was recognised as one of the top 10 local authority planning lawyers in Planning Magazine's annual survey in 2020 and 2021. She has also advised Government clients, including National Highways, on major infrastructure projects.



NIGEL HEWITSON

Partner - Public Sector/Planning & Heritage
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Nigel's areas of practice cover planning, compulsory purchase and highways law. His particular specialism is in relation to listed buildings and other heritage assets, and he recently co-authored the leading authority textbook on the subject. He has worked on high-profile projects including the Stonehenge/A303 Tunnel Public Inquiry and public inquiries into tall buildings in London including The Shard. He is experienced in judicial review cases for defendant public bodies and claimant developers. Nigel has worked in-house for local authorities including New Forest District Council and the London Borough of Harrow.



YOHANNA WEBER

Partner - Public Sector/Planning & Environment
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Yohanna is a specialist in planning and environmental law. She has a thorough understanding of the Local Government sector having previously worked in-house for the London Borough of Haringey and Swindon Borough Council. Yohanna has extensive experience of acting on strategic planning projects, regeneration schemes, Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), Development Consent Orders (DCOs), public inquiries and judicial review cases. Her previous work includes CPO work on the Sheerwater Regeneration Project. She has also advised extensively on nationally significant infrastructure projects and major energy infrastructure.



ANDREW WAITE

Partner - Public Sector/Environment
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Andrew is an environmental law specialist, bringing several decades of City environmental law, energy, oil and gas, telecommunications, infrastructure and real estate experience. Andrew has expertise in environmental permitting, environmental liabilities, radioactive substances/nuclear law, contaminated land, waste management, air pollution, pollution control law, statutory nuisances and community protection notices, climate change, product stewardship, environmental information, nuisance claims, nature conservation issues and health and safety matters. Andrew is recognised as a leading expert in legal directories.

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MATTHEW NEEDHAM-LAING

Partner - Public Sector/Construction
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Matthew has extensive experience in advising the construction industry, from both a contentious and non-contentious position, and engineering law. His non-contentious practice covers drafting and negotiating all forms of construction documents. He is currently actively involved in the implementation of The Building Safety Act 2023 and he has led major construction practice teams to ensure successful delivery of projects, including most recently on a major university campus development project.



CHRIS HOYLE

Consultant - Public Sector/Procurement
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Chris is a procurement specialist, with over 30 years' experience. Chris has advised both public and sector clients including a wide range of public sector projects, including the UK government on next generation networks; foreign governments on a telecoms sector reform project; and telecom and IT suppliers to foreign governments. Chris has also been an adviser to a broad range of companies in a variety of industries, providing strategic, tactical commercial advice and contract management and legal advisory support relating to telecoms/ IT matters.



MALCOLM ILEY

Consultant - Public Sector/Public Law
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Malcolm is widely recognised as a leading practitioner in public and government law, with over 40 years' experience in this area. From 2006 to early 2014, Malcolm was a senior Partner and Head of the Public Sector Commercial Department at two national market leading law firms. Prior to that, he had 20 years' in-house local government experience culminating in senior corporate positions at Leeds City Council and at Plymouth City Council. Malcolm was consistently recognised over many years in the leading professional directories, including Chambers and the Legal 500, as a leading adviser, quoted and referred to as having a "stellar" reputation in regeneration projects and as a leader in public law and administration, outsourcing of services and major project delivery.

