

Winter 2020


GULLANDS
SOLICITORS

InBrief

The Magazine of Gullands Solicitors



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Her Majesty The Queen marks RBLI centenary

Welcome to InBrief

As we welcome in the New Year and new decade this month there is always a renewed sense of optimism and why not put this to use and start planning ahead for your or your business' future.

In this edition we cover a range of subjects for business owners, including indemnity clauses in construction contracts, updated land contamination advice and a useful guide to registering as a charity and your legal obligations, a full copy of which can be found on our website.

On page 4 we look at commercial leases and some of the areas where you might be caught out if you don't take professional advice.

For individuals we look on page 7 at the increasing costs of care for older people, especially here in the South East and ways to plan ahead for you and your family's future.

Later in January some of our team will bravely sleep overnight to help raise funds for Street Soccer and there are more details about this and how to get involved on page 10.

Also on page 11, news about Her Majesty the Queen's recent visit to Aylesford and the work of the RBLI. Chairman Blair Gulland who is a trustee of RBLI has been very actively involved in the new village which she opened.

We put Associate Peter Burfoot under the spotlight on page 12 to find out more about him in our staff profile.

We will be attending a number of events throughout 2020, details of which can be found on page 3 and we look forward to chatting with friends and contacts about the latest legal issues.

Wishing everyone a happy and successful 2020.

John Roberts
Managing Partner



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2020 Events

Gullands will be at a number of events taking place around the South East this year including:



Farm Expo Wednesday 4th March 2020

We are at Farm Expo at the Kent County Showground, Detling once again and on hand to offer thoughts on a range of rural issues – pop along to our stand to have a chat to the team. It is free to enter and open 8.30am to 5pm further details at <https://kentshowground.co.uk/farmexpo/>

Agri South Thursday 14th May 2020

We are delighted to be attending the inaugural 2020 event which is focusing on research, technical development and innovation in farming. Pop along to our stand to have a chat to our team. The event is to be held in Faversham ME13 9HY and is free to attend and gates open at 8.30am <https://agri-south.co.uk>



Viti-Culture Thursday 9th July 2020

We will once again be attending Viti-Culture at Plumpton College, Lewes supporting the fast growing UK wine industry. Visit our stand to have a chat to the team – we work with a range of clients in the sector. The event is free to attend and gates open at 8.30am <https://viti-culture.com>

Weald of Kent Ploughing Match Saturday 19th September 2020

We are delighted to support the Weald of Kent Ploughing Match and to welcome invited guests to our stand for hospitality on the day. All profits raised go to support a number of rural charities. The next match will be held at Woolpack Corner, Tenterden Road, Biddenden, Kent, TN27 8BH by kind permission of the Neve family. Gates open at 8am and tickets are £7.50 and under 12's go free. This is the biggest event in the rural calendar for the Weald of Kent and shouldn't be missed www.wkpm.co.uk



Keep an eye on our events page for details of other events we are hosting or taking part in www.gullands.com/news-events/events/

Mock interviews for students

The Year 11 students at The Maplesden Noakes School, Maidstone, have had help preparing them for the start of their working life as they recently undertook a 'Mock Employer Interview' with the support of some local employers, including Gullands.

The students spent 30 minutes being interviewed for a mock Saturday job. They had the choice of five jobs and were provided with job descriptions to help them to choose which role best suited their skills. They then submitted their newly written CVs to the employers for interview.

The Y11s had spent the previous day off timetable to undertake a number of workshops on resilience, a digital footprint session, and interview skills. They also had sessions with Berry Recruitment and CMR Group who delivered talks on what they expect to see on CVs, the "dos and don'ts" of interviews and inside market tips.

Emma Mills, careers officer for the school said: "Each student met with an employer and flourished, given the opportunity to discuss different industries and career pathways and gained written feedback on their CVs and their interviews. This wouldn't be able to happen without the continued support of the local employers, who gave up their time and are able to share their knowledge and wisdom of the working world. Many employers offered to come back and spend extra time with students on their CVs. There were also invitations into working places for the students along with networking details and contacts of those they knew within the industry to help them on their way after GCSEs."



Lizzie Smith far right from Gullands with the other employers.



Commercial leases

A guide

It is always advisable for a solicitor to read a commercial lease on your behalf before you sign it or renew it, to help ensure there will be no future surprises.

Leases do tend to be more landlord friendly and often require the tenant to take on full responsibility for the property, which can have many consequences and costs that they may not have anticipated.

It is firstly important to check the heads of terms have been correctly included in the lease by the solicitor drafting it on behalf of the landlord. Make sure everything you have agreed verbally with the landlord is included and query anything you are not sure about, or which is incorrect.

Next look at costs such as the requirement for a rent deposit. Will it be protected by a rent deposit deed and also what do you have to do to ensure it is returned in full at the end of the lease. It is very likely if you are leasing part of a building to have to pay service charges, so check what services you receive and what repairs are required or planned to keep the whole property in good order. Check also how the service charge is apportioned between tenants of the building.

Consider the condition that the property is in as you take it over and what the lease says about the condition it has to be returned in.

If you are required to return it in excellent condition this could leave you with a major repair bill for damage that was already existing. Your solicitor will be able to advise on how to reduce this liability and you may want to consult a buildings surveyor to understand the condition of the building and potential future repairs required.

Your solicitor will also check that any previous alterations which may have been carried out by the landlord or other tenants has the required planning and building regulations consents. Many leases require the occupying tenant to carry out remedial work which may be required by a local authority, even if they are not the person who carried out the original work.

It is also important to check that if you have a break clause in your lease, you can actually exercise your right to exit it without any onerous conditions being imposed. These could include for example having to pay a full quarter's rent, to full compliance with all of the lease terms. A minor breach such as a failure to repair something could mean your request to the break is invalid, requiring you to continue paying the full rent and complying with all of the terms of the lease. Pay close attention to the notice period as if you miss it you will lose your right to exercise the break clause.

It is also important to check that you can make alterations to the property and what can and cannot be done. You may also be required to

pay your landlord's costs to agree to them. If you make changes it is likely your landlord will want to impose conditions such as removing the alterations and making good the property at the end of the lease. These are known as dilapidations and can be very costly.

Also check your insurance requirements with a specialist company or broker. If the property is damaged, you may be required to keep paying rent, even if you can't use it. Your solicitor will be able to advise on how to protect against this scenario.

In the future you may want to move to a new premises and if you want to do this before the end of the lease, check if it can be transferred to someone else and under what terms. Very often the terms are such that you will still remain responsible under the lease if the new tenant defaults.

If you would like to remain in the property and require a new lease, do you have the right to one or is this excluded by the landlord's statutory entitlement?

Entering into a commercial lease can be a long term and costly commitment, so minimise your risks and take advice to make sure you fully understand your position both now and in the future.

Marianne Webb can be contacted at m.webb@gullands.com



Construction contracts ruling

A ruling by The High Court in *Rabilizirov v A2 Dominion London Ltd 2019* has upheld an earlier County Court ruling and should serve as a warning to sub-contractors and their potential liability to others, including liability for loss of rental income caused by defects in the work they carry out.

In this case A2 Dominion London Ltd are property developers who own the freehold of a building and they employed the contractor Durkan to carry out work. A2 had also sold a lease to the claimant Rabilizirov.

Durkan employed a sub-contractor (GCL) to carry out the work and in both the contract and the subcontract there was an indemnity clause in favour of the employer and the contractor.

The Court upheld the earlier decision that the contract and sub-contract indemnity clauses covered liability incurred by GCL to Durkan and in turn Durkan to A2 Dominion.

This once again highlights the need to have a contract in place with all parties when carrying out any building works and the importance of an indemnity clause, which allocates risk for claims for loss or damage and costs between all of the contracted parties.

It is important for sub-contractors to understand the level of indemnity they may be providing as these clauses are becoming very detailed in JCT standard contracts and for their employer to ensure that an indemnity clause is included and defines the full extent of losses covered.

It is therefore always sensible to take legal advice before signing any construction contract to understand your future liability or if you need to make sure specific provisions are included and worded accordingly.

David Brown can be contacted at d.brown@gullands.com

Land contamination updated guidance

In June 2019 the Environment Agency published an update to its Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination known as CLR II. The existing CLR I is scheduled for withdrawal this year. The updated guidance and an introduction to it can be found at: www.gov.uk/guidance/land-contamination-how-to-manage-the-risks

The Environment Agency requires the guidance to be followed in a number of regulatory and management contexts, such as voluntary remediation, planning, assessing liabilities or under the Part 2A contaminated land regime under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The stated aim of the guidance is to assist in assessing the risks, making appropriate decisions and taking action where necessary. These aims are reflected in the three stages of the risk management process prescribed under the guidance namely:

1. Risk assessment
2. Options appraisal
3. Remediation strategy.

The practicalities of the remediation strategy are also dealt with in detail, including a reminder to consider health & safety and the potential application of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015. The remediation strategy must set out the critical performance criteria for achieving the remediation objectives identified at the options appraisal stage. Whether those objectives have been achieved has to be verified with supporting data. The guidance sets out what this data should look like:

- The volumes and characteristics of pollutants treated
- Rate of reduction or removal of such pollutants
- Volumes, source and quality of any imported material

The other matters to be covered in a land contamination site report are set out in detail, with a reminder that such reports are the preserve of a suitably qualified professional.

The guidance is intended to be more user friendly than its predecessor, to comply with new rules on accessibility requiring guidance to be navigable, concise, clear and understandable.

The Environment Agency has for the last six months been seeking feedback on these changes, so it is worth keeping an eye on the land contamination risk management pages on YouGov and on claire.co.uk to see if such feedback is published and leads to any further changes. If you need advice on managing contaminated land or other environmental compliance matters, we are happy to hold an initial discussion to establish if your issue is legal and how we can help - or if we need to put you in touch with a suitable environmental consultant.

For an initial discussion, please contact **Andrew Clarke** a.clarke@gullands.com





Charity structures – a guide

Thinking of setting up a new charity? Find out what your responsibilities are and which is the best route forwards.

Before you register your charity, you need to decide whether creating a new charity is the best course of action. You must have specific, charitable aims that exist for public benefit. It's also worth doing research to see if there are any registered charities already doing what you'd like to do – you may be able to work together.

Before you can register a charity, there are a number of steps you need to take:

1. Finding trustees

Trustees must be appointed with care because it is their responsibility to direct how the charity is run. The right combination of trustees means your charity will be more effective, whereas the wrong one can lead to bad decisions and problems.

2. A charitable purpose for the public benefit

The charity's purposes must help the public in some way and must belong to at least one of the thirteen categories described by the government.

3. Choosing a name for the charity

The name of your charity must not be misleading or offensive, and it cannot be too similar to the name of an existing charity. Avoid using any trademarked names.

4. Choosing a structure for the charity

The structure will affect who runs the charity and how, and what the charity can legally do. The four most common charity structures are:

Charitable company

A charitable company is limited by guarantees instead of shares. Trustees will have limited or no liability for any debts or liabilities. You will have to register with Companies House.

CIO

A charitable incorporated organisation. Trustees will have limited or no liability for any debts or liabilities. You need to register with the Charity Commission.

Charitable trust

If you set up a charitable trust, your trustees can manage money, investments, buildings, or land.

Unincorporated charitable association

In simple terms, an unincorporated charitable association is a charity run by a group of volunteers. They cannot employ staff or own premises.

5. Creating a governing document

The governing document sets out your charity's purposes and explains how the charity will be run. The type of document you need depends on the structure you chose in the previous step and includes details such as purpose, who runs it, how trustees are appointed etc.

Once the governing document is complete, the trustees must meet to sign it. You'll need an independent witness if you're setting up a charitable trust.

It is compulsory to register a charity with the Charity Commission if:

- Its income is at least £5000 per year
- It's a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- It's based in England or Wales

Your charity will be given a number once it has been registered officially. People can use this number to find you on the Register of Charities.

The Charity Commission will not charge you for registering a charity.

If you start an incorporated charity, Companies House will charge you for setting up a new company. The rate is normally £23.

Otherwise, the costs of setting up your charity largely depend on your individual circumstances. Some people prefer to pay for a solicitor to advise them to make sure all the documentation is in order. Aside from this, costs can be minimal if you do not have any staff or premises.

Charity law in the UK

Charities in the UK have legal obligations. You must comply with:

- The Charities Act 2011
- The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016
- The Trustees Acts (1925 and 2000), which regulate the powers of the charity's trustees
- Charity Commission regulation
- The Statement of Recommended Practice for charity accounting – you must comply with the rules on the submission of annual returns, reports, and accounts
- Laws on trading, political activities, and fundraising
- Your governing document

Marianne Webb can be contacted at m.webb@gullands.com



Planning for later life

With the costs of funding care in later life an unknown quantity for many people, it is currently still up to the individual to fund the cost of their later life care unless they have assets below £23,250.

Planning ahead is important rather than waiting until care is needed. Statistically 1 in 5 people over the age of 70 currently receive care in the home and an estimated 410,000 people are living in residential care, with 170,000 self-funding and 47,000 local authority funded. The remainder are either fully local authority funded or NHS funded.

It is also estimated that the average stay in a private care home is 2.2 years although 25% of people will still be in care after 3 years and the average cost of care here in the South East is £747 a week.

How local authority funding is decided will depend on a number of factors which include:

- If you own your own house but your partner or qualifying relative (such as a relative who is aged 60 or over or is incapacitated) continues to live there, then it will be disregarded as an asset.
- Investment Bonds are also typically excluded.

- If you are married, half of your non-state pension income is also excluded as are personal possessions such as antiques or art.

Planning ahead for the potential costs of care for you, a relative or your spouse/partner means looking at financial and estate planning to decide how the costs will be met. A financial advisor will be able to guide you on how to hold and invest capital to either maximise income potential or so that it will be disregarded as available capital.

Lasting Powers of Attorney should be prepared to deal with all possible outcomes and to look after your financial affairs and health and welfare needs in the future. Choosing the right attorneys who will make sensible financial decisions on your behalf or follow your requests for health and welfare provision, such as your choice of care home is vital, before you are no longer able to make those decisions for yourself.

Creating a lifetime trust can offer a level of protection for property and savings if you are concerned about them being used to pay for care fees in the future as can transferring assets directly to your family or friends now, however it is important to take expert advice.

You are not permitted to deliberately give away assets to avoid paying for care and the

person who received the gift would be liable for paying for care costs. You will also be giving away control of your assets earlier than you might have wanted.

It goes without saying that it is also vital to have an up to date Will in place which should be reviewed every few years or on the occasion of marriage, divorce, buying or selling a house or the birth of children or grandchildren. Couples may want to consider a Will trust to protect their whole estate or just the family home. On death, the assets pass into a life interest trust and the surviving spouse will be entitled to live in the property and or receive income from investments for their lifetime. This is useful to consider where there may be children from previous relationships that you want to provide for in the future, as well as a current spouse that you want to ensure is financially secure after your death.

As always planning ahead and discussing these issues with your loved ones before it becomes a necessity gives a greater degree of certainty for everyone and will help ensure financial security and all of your wishes are carried out in the future.

Alex Astley can be contacted at a.astley@gullands.com

Elmer comes to town

Later this year Maidstone will have a fantastic display of 42 colourful Elmer the Elephant sculptures around the town and we are delighted to be sponsoring one of them and helping to raise funds for the Heart of Kent Hospice.

In the run up to the elephants being decorated there is a programme of activities taking place, with a parade and the elephant herds including baby elephant sculptures displayed in The Museum, Library and shopping centres. Twenty five local schools will also be getting a baby elephant sculpture to display.

The Elmer the Elephant Trail will go live in mid-June and there will be several weeks to spot them all around the town. A farewell weekend will be held on 4-6th September with them all displayed at the Lockmeadow Market Hall, before they are auctioned for charity on 9th September.

The trail is expected to bring thousands of visitors into the town centre and will create a real buzz. We can't wait to meet the artist who will be decorating the Gullands' Elmer and revealing what it will look like!



Taste of Kent Awards 2020 update

We are delighted to be sponsoring the Taste of Kent Awards 2020 Kent Food Business of the Year, an award for businesses based in Kent, that make a range of food product(s) using ingredients sourced from Kent where possible, which are available at multiple outlets.

As you read this the shortlisted top three in each category will have been announced and will progress through to the next round of judging, before the winners are announced at the Taste of Kent Awards Gala dinner, which takes place on 5 March 2020 at the Kent Event Centre.

The Gullands team attended the prize giving for the Weald of Kent Ploughing Match and Kent Hop Competition in November and Kent's Best Hop Grower of the year judged as part of The Taste of Kent Awards 2020, was named as Tim Day of GM Day & Sons, from East Peckham, Kent with the variety Progress.



Left to right: Richard Thomas, BTF Partnership, Jill Sargent, Produced in Kent, Robert Hudd from Wealden Hops on behalf of Tim Day and Stewart Tricker, Shepherd Neame.

Tim was chosen from the Kent hop growers who entered the Kent Hop Competition, which is organised by The Weald of Kent Ploughing Match and sponsored by BTF Partnership and Shepherd Neame.

Hop growing in Kent is seeing a revival thanks to the interest in micro brewing and craft beers and Kent is famous for its Hop growing heritage. Whilst there is now a smaller number of growers in the county, they grow hops to a very high standard which are in demand from brewers across the world.

Stuart Highwood, head judge commented: "This year was a very good show with a very high standard of hops as it has been such a good growing year. Despite some growers being affected by high winds in August which caused some damage to the crop, the hop cone sizes were variable which is good for brewing. The continental flavours preferred for the modern craft beers are increasingly popular and hop growers should be looking forwards, as brewers are looking for more interesting varieties of hops to use in beer making. That said the variety Progress which Tim has won with is a traditional fuggle type hop used in making bitter."

Celebrating Maidstone's Business Community

The Mayor of Maidstone, Cllr Marion Ring, was our guest of honour at an evening reception which we were delighted to host at the Maidstone Museum, updating on the work of the One Maidstone Business Improvement District and celebrating businesses working within the town centre.

The event also coincided with the new Maidstone United Exhibition which opened in September and ran until the end of the year, which we are also delighted to be supporting, as sponsors of the club.

Blair Gulland, Chairman of Gullands commented: "This was a great opportunity to put the spotlight on the success of the work of One Maidstone and to showcase the projects that One Maidstone are carrying out. We were also very pleased to welcome guests from some of the partner organisations such as Kent Police, Maidstone Borough Council and the Mall, as well as local businesses and entrepreneurs. By bringing everyone together, we were able to showcase the work of the BID. Maidstone has undergone major transformations and this is an exciting time to be a leading business in the town centre."

Cllr Ring said of the occasion: "Maidstone town centre is such a vibrant place to live and work, and we need to do our best for the businesses who use it as a base, as well as encouraging new retailers and organisations to set up here. I'm impressed by the projects that One Maidstone are carrying out on behalf of town centre businesses, such as the flower displays that brightened up my view from the Town Hall over the summer and the One Maidstone Christmas lights in Jubilee Square."



Ebbsfleet Executives Club

The latest meeting of the Ebbsfleet Executives Club, co-hosted by Gullands, Caxtons, Wilkins Kennedy and Ebbsfleet United, heard an update on the London Resort theme park from spokesman Andy Martin, pictured above left with Blair Gulland.

The park is on track to open in 2024 and has signed deals with major brands including ITV Studios, BBC EDF and Paramount Pictures. The park will generate billions for the UK economy and create tens of thousands of jobs.

The project is on a scale to rival Disneyland Paris with hotels and a range of leisure facilities for those visiting and staying. There will be six lands created during the first phase of the work on the site on the Swanscombe Peninsula – Starport, The Jungle, The Isles, The Kingdom, The Woods and The Studio as well as a high street. The High Street will be full of shops, restaurants, hotels and a waterpark for visitors.

The Studios is described as "a gritty, modern-day warehouse with exhilarating thrills of big blockbuster features". Plans for The Woods include an "enchanted realm for children to step through the pages of a storybook". The Kingdom will include swords, sorcery and dragons and The Isles is described as a "land of creatures, mythical beasts and adventures".

The Jungle and The Starport are a mix of two worlds, launching visitors into "thrilling sci-fi adventures".

It is exciting that the London Resort is here on our doorstep in Kent and there will certainly be opportunities for a range of local businesses and suppliers to get involved.



Annual charity cricket match in Bearsted



The idea for an annual charity cricket match in Bearsted which has raised thousands of pounds for charity started 15 years ago.

Gullands Partner Leroy Bradley was sitting at a table in the Bearsted and Thurnham Club with a couple of his friends having a few of drinks after a busy week at work, when it was suggested that the Bearsted and Thurnham Club should play Bearsted Cricket Club.

The next step was to get the cricket club on board with the help of Peter Clark, the then captain of the cricket club. They agreed and suggested that it should be for charity and two charities were suggested, The Heart of Kent Hospice and The Kent Air Ambulance. These charities were chosen because they are local and you never know when you will need either of them.

It was also agreed to play the match on August Bank Holiday Monday, a date that has never changed over the 15 years, although it has been forced to move due to the inclement weather, but that is British weather for you!!

Over the years the game has developed into an annual event with people travelling from afar to come and watch the two teams battle it out in the name of charity.

The game has had a streaker, who could ever forget that with a male spectator running across the pitch with only a pink cowboy hat keeping his dignity. It even made the national press one year!

The drive of Leroy and Peter getting the game off the ground and in later years Guy Pollak carrying the mantle, means the game has become an annual event, with over £25,000 being raised. They couldn't have raised the money they have without the generosity of all the businesses that have placed adverts in the programme and made donations and the people that have bought raffle tickets to support the event. Finally, the game could never have been played without the players from both teams, some who hadn't played cricket in 20+ years together with the other volunteers on the day.

To date the game has raised £25,136.34, so here's to another 15 years of the charity cricket match.

Are you interested in becoming involved as a sponsor or wish to know more about the 2020 event? Please contact **Guy Pollak** guypollak@yahoo.co.uk.



Sleepout for Street Soccer

We are delighted to support the work of Street Soccer in Maidstone and they are organising a sleep out in January at Maidstone United to raise awareness of homelessness in the town and more broadly across Kent www.streetsoccersleepout.co.uk.

The partnership between The Stones' Community Trust and The Street Soccer Foundation sees the two charitable organisations run the nationally acclaimed 'Street Soccer Academy' programme, which specifically supports homeless and vulnerable young people with a 10-week coaching and development course: ultimately to help participants move into work, education or further training, to improve their life and prospects.

The Sleepout event will take place from 7pm until 7am with a target of £10,000 to be raised from the local community, to help tackle homelessness by funding a full Academy supporting up to 15 young people.

A team from Gullands will join them for the sleepout.



Her Majesty The Queen marks Royal British Legion Industries' centenary

Thousands of local school children, residents and supporters welcomed Her Majesty The Queen to Royal British Legion Industries' (RBLI) village at Aylesford in November, when she marked the charity's 100th anniversary. Gullands Chairman Blair Gulland, a trustee of RBLI attended and was one of the team who showed The Queen around.

The Queen officially opened Appleton Lodge, RBLI's new luxury care facility for veterans and their families. The building was named after First World War Sister Edith Appleton, OBE, who was born in Kent and awarded the Royal Red Cross for nursing on the front line during the Great War.

The new care home is part of the £22 million Centenary Village development which, when complete, will provide crucial homes, welfare support and create a community for the country's most vulnerable veterans.

RBLI, which was formed in 1919 to provide support to sick and wounded soldiers returning from the First World War, launched a campaign in 2019 to build the Centenary Village – a veterans' community comprising family homes, assisted-living apartments and a community centre, which the charity says will see them support hundreds of the most in-need ex-servicemen and women every year for another century.

Work will begin immediately on the second phase of the Centenary Village. When complete, the latest development will add a further 22 apartments, each designed to be fully accessible and house single veterans in urgent need, plus 18 new family homes, and 24 assisted-living apartments. At the heart of the new development, which will sit alongside RBLI's existing village, care homes and manufacturing facility in Kent, will be a state-of-the-art community centre with an accessible gym.

The Queen was also introduced to RBLI representatives from the charity's on-site social enterprise, Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Company (BBMC) and



Blair Gulland far right with Her Majesty The Queen.

the Employment Solutions and LifeWorks teams. The BBMC factory, which employs 70 veterans and people with disability, produces road and rail signs, and wooden products.

Brigadier Steve Sherry CMG OBE, Chief Executive of Royal British Legion Industries, said: "One hundred years ago, a group of philanthropists and forward thinkers came together to set up a community encompassing homes, welfare and employment to support vulnerable veterans. We're immensely proud to still be doing this today.

"This century of experience has culminated in our most ambitious project yet, the Centenary Village, which will place us at the very forefront of veteran support, ensuring RBLI is there for those who need us most for another century to come.

"Whilst we have moved closer towards our goal, we are still not there yet. We are delighted that Her Majesty's attendance marks the beginning of the next stage of this exciting development.

"We still require the support necessary to complete this nationally significant project, to ensure veterans both young and old have a community to turn to for the next 100 years."

RBLI has raised £16.5 million of the £22 million needed to complete the Centenary Village project. To learn more about the project, visit:

www.rbli.co.uk/centenaryvillage



Staff profile: Legal eye on...

Name: Peter Burfoot

Position: Associate Solicitor, Litigation Department

Main responsibilities and daily duties?

My principal role is to deal with disputes. This involves: advising clients on how to avoid them when there is potential for a dispute to arise and, when they have arisen, assessing them and assisting in their

resolution. If a dispute is not resolved by negotiation or processes such as mediation, I conduct civil proceedings for its determination through the courts, tribunal or arbitration. Most cases are resolved prior to a full hearing, but others go on to trial and sometimes to appeal. The subject matter is varied but most involve property, contractual or professional negligence issues for private individuals, businesses, corporate clients and charities. I have about 50 current cases. Each day I assess which to prioritise bearing in mind deadlines, intrinsic urgency and client demands. I will read and review documents, assimilate facts, apply the law, prepare advices, liaise with clients, opposing solicitors, witnesses, experts, barristers, the court and others, and prepare documents such as witness statements.

Why did you decide to pursue a career in law?

In the sixth form at school a number of non-examined option courses were offered to broaden the curriculum beyond the examined A level subjects. I chose Law as one of my option subjects. The teacher, who had also taught me Latin, had qualified as a solicitor before going into education. I learnt about the right to redress when a bottle of ginger beer contains a snail and my interest was sparked. Also, I was influenced by my Housemaster who said I would be suited to the Law and I was pleased that there was a career that I might be capable of.

If you were not in this job, what would you be doing?

After leaving school I worked on a hospital ward in Switzerland for 6 months and wanted to become a doctor but my A level subjects were wrong. I am interested in the niche raw denim industry. I know one person who changed from an IT career to set up a global sales business for a Japanese manufacturer and a geologist who has a museum in Zurich and is effectively a global ambassador in the industry in his spare time, but the opportunities are limited.

What changes would you like to see happen in the law in the next 10-20 years?

There have been a number of changes designed to avoid cases being taken to Court, which I thoroughly endorse, but there is a need for more incentives to encourage proper engagement of both parties in pre-action conduct. Whereas the Court will usually determine a winner, prior resolution necessarily involves compromise. The current incentives to compromise are the unpredictability of Court decisions, and the risk, trouble, stress, length and cost of litigation.

Hobbies / what do you like doing in your spare time?

I am an outdoors person. I do a lot of lawn mowing, hedge-cutting and competitive running. I participate in running races most weekends including a number of 10ks, half marathons, cross countries and one marathon a year. I also help with horses. I like skiing and enjoy holidays at home and abroad. I follow Formula 1 on television. I enjoy being with family and friends.



The Justice Service

Gullands' Consultant Dudley Cramp, left and partner Alex Astley, second left are also Notaries Public and attended the annual Justice Service hosted at Canterbury Cathedral in October.

A Notary Public is a public officer appointed by the Court of Faculties of The Archbishop of Canterbury. The Faculty which is granted to each Notary Public on admission enables them to draw, attest or certify under their official seal, for use anywhere in the world, deeds and other documents including Wills, conveyances of real and personal property and powers of attorney.