



Annual Report

# Teesside Law Clinic

[tees.ac.uk/lawclinic](http://tees.ac.uk/lawclinic)

2012-13

Inspiring success



# Welcome to Teesside Law Clinic



## Foreword

It is now just over a year since the launch of Teesside Law Clinic and it is clear that it has exceeded all our expectations.

As you will see, in the first year we accepted 98 cases on a range of legal matters and have recovered £76,382.28.

We have helped provide access to justice to individuals who may not otherwise have had it.

The students involved in the clinic have not only benefitted from working on live cases with expert academic guidance, but have also had support from the solicitors and barristers who have kindly given up their time. We are hugely grateful for this.

The clinic is a valuable resource for our students, the School, but also the broader community. Not only has it provided justice for individual clients, but the clinic has been involved in Streetlaw – taking legal advice to the community, through talks and presentations. More recently, it has launched some smart phone apps.

I am sure, like me, you will find this annual report illuminating and interesting, highlighting what has been a fantastic first year for the clinic under the great leadership of Andrew Perriman.

I am confident that the clinic will go from strength to strength.

**Dr Mark Simpson**  
Dean, School of Social Sciences & Law

In our first year of operation, Teesside Law Clinic has firmly established itself within the legal community. We are grateful to all those who have provided assistance and support to the students in the clinic.

Without that engagement and support, Teesside Law Clinic would not be in the strong position it is now. The students who have recently graduated valued the opportunity, experience and advice given to them, and I believe that as a result of their hard work in Teesside Law Clinic, they will go on to have successful legal careers.

**Andrew Perriman**  
Teesside Law Clinic Supervisor





# Teesside Law Clinic

Teesside Law Clinic at Teesside University opened its doors in September 2012. Fourteen final year students were involved in the clinic as part of their LLB degree.

All work carried out within the clinic is supervised by professionally qualified staff who ensure that the service provided meets the expected standards of a solicitors' practice.

We are committed to ensuring our students leave Teesside University with the best possible employability skills in the legal profession.

We work in partnership with law firms, barristers chambers, charities and voluntary organisations to provide our students with real opportunities and practical skills in law.

While Teesside Law Clinic prioritises the community need for legal services and the interest of their clients, we also recognise that our students benefit from involvement in real life cases with real people with real legal concerns.

Students take on actual cases and provide a complete legal service including conducting interviews, researching statute and case law, providing written advice, drafting legal documents and providing court representation.

Participation in the clinic accounts for 40 credits towards the students final year mark. Assessment is by means of a portfolio of work completed during their time in the clinic, along with two reflective essays based upon the students' development over their time in the clinic.

For further information please visit [teesside.ac.uk/lawclinic](http://teesside.ac.uk/lawclinic) or email [lawclinic@tees.ac.uk](mailto:lawclinic@tees.ac.uk).



## Areas of law

- > Employment
- > Civil disputes
- > Landlord/tenant
- > Consumer
- > Criminal injuries compensation appeals
- > Family Law (limited areas)

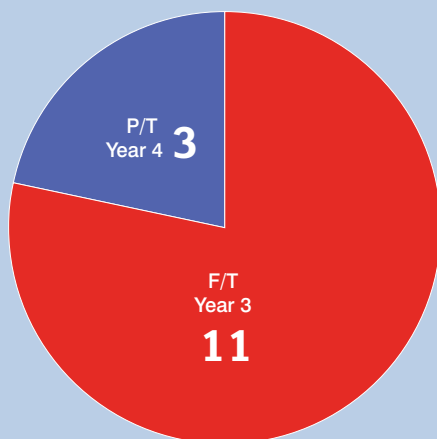
## Awards

Nominated for [LawWorks](#) and [Attorney General Student Awards 2013](#).

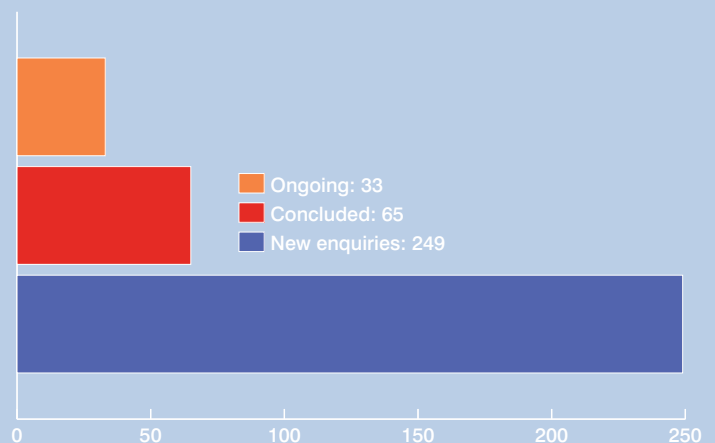
Nominated for two awards: the *Best Contribution by a Law School* and *Best New Student Pro Bono Activity*. Staff and students from the clinic attended this award ceremony in London on 25 March 2013, where the clinic was recognised by the Attorney General and received a *Highly Commended* award for the Best New Student Pro Bono Activity.

## Facts and figures 2012-13

### Students involved in Teesside Law Clinic



### Cases



### Compensation

£76,382.28

recovered for clients

# How the clinic works

The clinic process is designed around a model of best practice, taking the best systems from other student law clinics and incorporating them to create operational rules which ensure that both clients and students experience consistently high professional and educational standards.

All work carried out and produced by our students is monitored and supervised by the clinic supervisor. Standards are maintained and are akin to those of a solicitors practice, rules and regulations.

In addition, all activities of the clinic are covered by the University's professional indemnity insurance, thereby providing further protection for all staff, students and clients.

**Unfortunately we cannot help everyone who contacts the clinic.**

**Factors such as conflicts of interest, complexity of the case and educational benefit need to be considered before a case is taken on.**

## How the clinic works

### Stage 1 Pre-interview

An enquiry is made to the clinic, either by telephone or email.

Clinic supervisor assesses the merits of the case.

Client is given an appointment.

If accepted the case is allocated to students.

### Stage 2 Initial interview

Before the interview, the students meet with the clinic supervisor to discuss the case.

The students conduct the interview with the client to obtain essential information and ensure that the client fully understands the service provided by the Clinic.

The students have a de-brief meeting with the clinic supervisor to discuss whether or not to accept the case.

The client is updated and if relevant, an advice meeting is booked.

No advice is given at this stage.

### Stage 3 Advice

The students carry out relevant research and draft an advice letter.

With the clinic supervisor the advice letter is amended to meet professional standards.

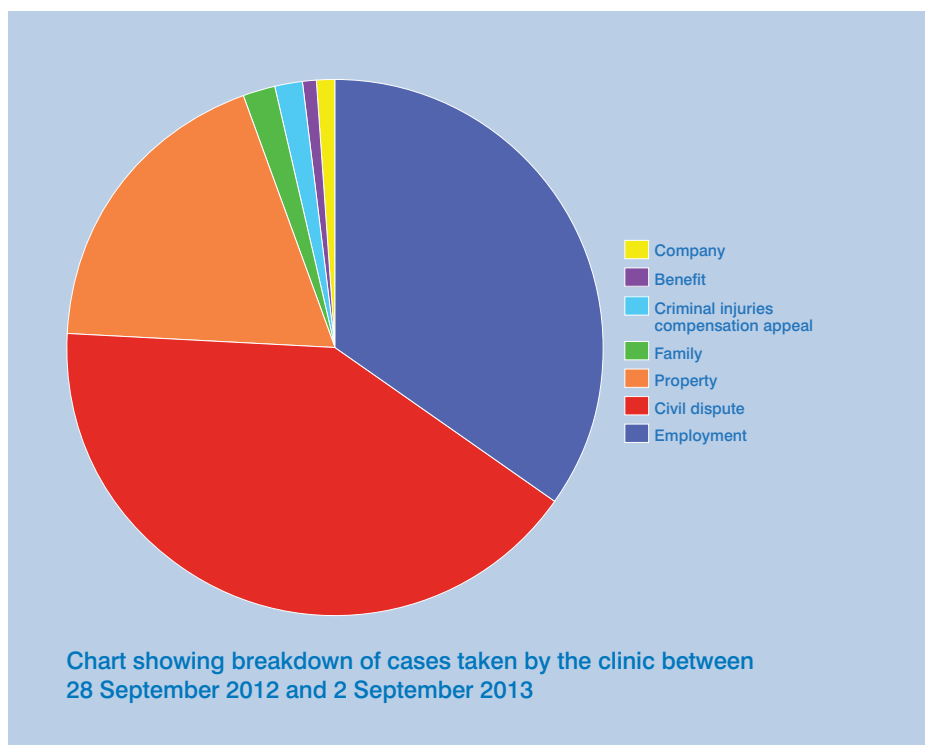
The client attends the advice meeting where the students explain the contents of the advice letter.

If no further action is required the client is asked to provide feedback on the service.

If there are next steps in the case, these are discussed with the client to determine how they wish to proceed.

## Case breakdown

During the academic year 2012-13 the clinic accepted 98 cases.



In all cases initial advice was given, and in approximately half of these cases, further assistance was provided.

This further assistance took the form of writing letters; assisting with small claims documentation to the court; and representation in the Small Claims Court and Employment Tribunal.

These cases covered a variety of issues, including landlord/tenant disputes, unfair dismissal claims, child access, neighbour disputes, criminal injuries compensation appeals and race discrimination cases.

See the breakdown above of the full range of work covered and the proportion of each type of case.

The areas of law which are covered by the clinic reflect the areas of law which are taught in the third year of the LLB.

In this way the clinic reinforces theoretical teaching through a practical means, while also providing a valuable service to the local community.

When the clinic was launched we expected the majority of cases to be landlord/tenant matters, given the high number of rented properties in the Teesside area, especially around the University locale. However, the largest number of cases has been either civil disputes or employment matters.

We believe that the high proportion of employment cases is due to ineligibility for legal aid in these matters and a lack of representation by other organisations able to assist with these cases.

While the clinic aims to provide written advice within ten days of the initial client interview, this is not always possible in more complex cases. In these cases the client is apprised of the delay, and advice provided as soon as possible.

If assistance is provided beyond the advice stage, the case may continue for considerably longer, for example, one of the first cases taken on in October 2012, is still ongoing nearly a year later.

# What our clients say . . .

“

I would like to pass on my congratulations to the students who took on (and won) our case, and for their excellent work.

I hope that they enjoyed the experience and found it useful towards their studies.

A big thank you from both of us and we wish them good luck for the future.

> A fabulous service. I would have been lost without it, amazing students and excellent job done.

> The overall approach of the law clinic advisers was very kind and comforting.

> Very well done, I am happy with the overall service and due to the hard work, a great result.

> I'm impressed with the attitude and demeanour of the students and hope the experience was valuable to their learning.

> It is a brilliant service, which is very professional and I appreciate all the effort put in to help me out, it was more than I expected.

”

“

# What our students say



> Without this experience at undergraduate level, it is hard to identify what life in practice would be like.

> This experience has been incredibly eye opening and provided me with an opportunity to help people who would otherwise struggle for legal assistance.

> Law is such a competitive field that it is difficult to get work experience. Working in the clinic was a great way of getting hands-on practise.

> There is a big difference between the academic work and actually carrying out legal practice duties, so having the experience was amazing.

> It was an excellent opportunity to take on my own cases and see them through from start to finish.

”



# Case studies

A landlord came to Teesside Law Clinic, seeking assistance in dealing with a tenant who was not paying the rent and was anti-social.

The landlord had already issued a Section 21 Notice, but wanted to know what next steps could be taken.

The students involved in the case applied to the court for accelerated possession.

The tenant submitted a defence and as such a hearing was allocated.

The students prepared their submissions and attended the court to represent the landlord. The students presented their case successfully and possession was granted to the landlord.

Ms X had an issue with her car. A part which was fitted at time of manufacture was effectively not fit for purpose and as a result the vehicle broke down.

Ms X had the part replaced at great expense and tried to make a claim against the car manufacturer but they disputed liability.

After five months of trying to come to a solution Ms X contacted Teesside Law Clinic to take the matter further.

After negotiations between Teesside Law Clinic and the car manufacturer, they decided to reimburse Ms X the full amount she had outlaid as a goodwill gesture.

Mr Y came to Teesside Law Clinic for help in setting aside a judgment made against them.

The judgment was made in the North West of England and Mr Y did not receive any notice of the hearing.

Teesside Law Clinic students prepared the submissions as Mr Y had already applied for the set aside himself. At the hearing, the students made submissions in respect of the set aside and the appropriate grounds for doing so. They were successful and made an application for the next hearing to be held in Teesside. Again they were successful in this application.

Ms Z approached Teesside Law Clinic with an issue relating to a contract on the site her caravan was located.

Ms Z was distraught that she was effectively being tied in to the site for a further year, because despite giving notice, she was informed that the notice period given was too short. Her knowledge was she had given the requisite notice in accordance with her contractual terms.

The students reviewed the contract and found some errors and then successfully negotiated with the park owner to allow Ms Z to remove her caravan to a new site, saving her in excess of £2,000.

In addition, the park owner was grateful to us for pointing out the issues to him.





# Community projects

## Know Your Money

Know Your Money, Keep the Change (KYM) is an innovative new project funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Improving Financial Confidence programme to help young social housing residents in Middlesbrough improve their financial confidence.

Teesside Law Clinic has teamed up with KYM to provide an outreach service to young people aged between 16 - 24, providing legal advice and information on a range of legal issues including employment, consumer law and landlord/tenant issues.

## Tees Valley Women's Centre

Teesside Law Clinic is working together with Paul J Watson Solicitors and Tees Valley Women's Centre, to provide an outreach service to women for legal advice and information on a range of legal issues including employment, consumer law and landlord/tenant issues.

We will be delivering a range of benefits to the Tees Valley Women's Centre and their client group including an advice clinic and Streetlaw sessions when required.

### Will Aid sessions

In conjunction with Paul J Watson Solicitors and Freers Solicitors we raised nearly £1,000 for good causes as a result of Will Aid.

The students had the opportunity to work with solicitors and clients in the area of probate for this worthy cause.

Next year we hope it will be bigger and better.





## Streetlaw

Streetlaw is an outreach programme carried out by Teesside University law students who will present to schools, community groups and colleges or any other organisations on law, human rights, democracy, citizenship, consumer rights, and civil rights.

The presentations can be tailored to individual group needs and the teaching is carried out using interactive teaching methodologies.

This is a free service and can take place in schools, colleges, community centres or other appropriate venues.



### Benefits to the community, schools and colleges

The target audience will gain a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the identified issue, to lessen their likelihood of developing legal problems and to increase their likeliness to seek help where required.

Streetlaw is a practical approach to raising awareness to people about the law and how it can affect their everyday lives both on the street and in the communities where they live.

### Example presentations

- > Assault
- > Murder
- > Joint enterprise
- > PACE 1984
- > Anti-social behaviour orders
- > Defence of property
- > Consumer rights
- > Tenants' rights
- > Employment rights
- > Human rights

### Sessions held in 2012 - 2013

- > Topic: **murder** – Prior Pursglove College, Guisborough
- > Topic: **PACE 1984** – Sunderland College
- > Topic: **PACE 1984** – St Roberts of Newminster College, Sunderland
- > Topic: **Landlord and tenants' rights**, targeted at local landlords – Stockton and Darlington councils

# Supporters of Teesside Law Clinic

## Events

Teesside Law Clinic has hosted a number of CPD seminars for large law firms and sets of chambers. The events were attended by nearly 60 lawyers.

We also hosted the launch of Fountain Mediation, a service provided by Fountain Chambers in family cases.

These CPD seminars provide our students with the opportunity to network with practitioners at all levels.



**Cygnet Family Law**  
*The specialist family law firm of Peter Medd*

**JACKSONS** LAW FIRM

**P**  
**PARKLANE  
PLOWDEN  
CHAMBERS**

## Clerking

Teesside Law Clinic teamed up with Paul J Watson Solicitors to provide a clerking service in the Crown Court. This enhanced our criminal offering and allowed students to engage with local solicitors and barristers in criminal matters within the clinic.



**T** **THOMPSONS**  
SOLICITORS  
**STANDING UP FOR YOU**



## Trainee solicitors

Jacksons Law Firm provided a number of trainee solicitors who attended the clinic on Wednesdays to assist students with cases. We are grateful to Jacksons for this pro-bono contribution, and hope to extend the offering to other law firms in the area.



Do you want to become a supporter? Do you have a pro-bono ethos in your law firm? We are always looking for support for our students.

If you would like to become involved, please call **01642 738738** or email [lawclinic@tees.ac.uk](mailto:lawclinic@tees.ac.uk).



# Teesside Law Clinic visits

## York Law School Clinic

We were invited by York Law School Clinic to visit their facilities in November.

This was a fantastic opportunity to compare facilities and teaching approaches.

Meeting with Richard Grimes enabled a discussion surrounding best practice between the two clinics.

## Lincoln's Inn

In February 2013, ten students were invited to attend Lincoln's Inn. Senior lecturer Andrew Perriman took the students to London for the event, which included talks on Life at the Bar, a formal dinner and networking opportunity.

## House of Commons

In March Adam Gray and Russell Palmer attended the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards at the House of Commons.

## Visitors

We have had the pleasure of a number of visitors, including:

- > HHJ Bourne-Arton QC
- > Jacqui Cheer – Chief Constable Cleveland Police
- > Barry Coppinger – the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland

in addition to a number of highly regarded lawyers in the North East.

If you would like to visit us,  
please get in touch on  
**01642 738738** or email  
**lawclinic@tees.ac.uk.**





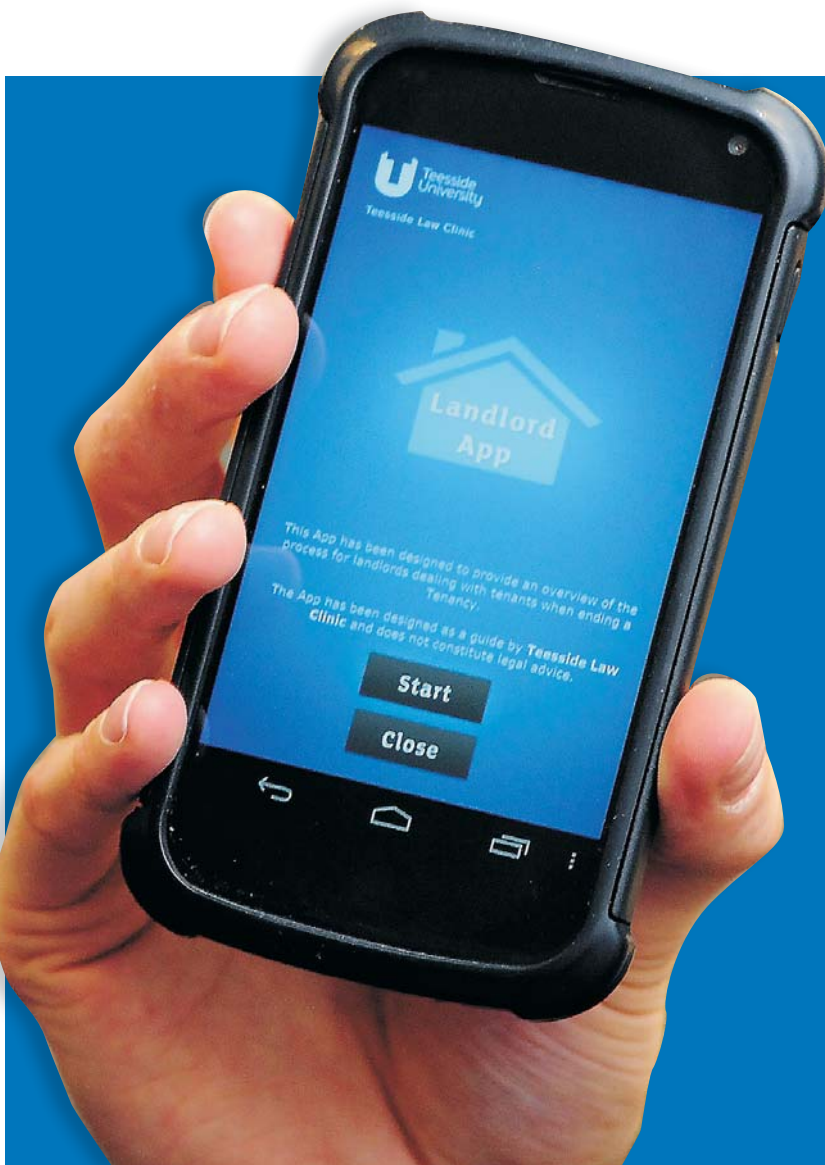
# The future

We set our sights high, both academically and professionally, so much so that developments are already underway to ensure that Teesside Law Clinic becomes an award-winning clinic and a beacon of best practice.

We have recently developed two apps. The Small Claims App aims to guide litigants through the small claims procedure. The app is free and is available to download from iTunes or Google Play. The Landlord App guides landlords through the process of ending tenancies by either Section 8 or Section 21 notices. The app costs £2.99 and is available to download from iTunes or Google Play.

There are opportunities for law firms throughout the country to advertise on the apps, thereby contributing to pro-bono activities to members of the public.

For further information on how to advertise on the apps please call: **01642 738738** or email [lawclinic@tees.ac.uk](mailto:lawclinic@tees.ac.uk).



As we head into 2014, we have extended the number of students taking part in the clinic to 20. And as a result of the recent legal aid cuts to Family Law, we are developing a family law practice to deal with some of the issues not now covered by legal aid.

One of our primary targets this year is to win an award at the LawWorks Pro Bono Awards.

We have, as a University, worked hard to develop a successful clinic as part of the LLB, to enhance the already excellent standards of teaching within the School of Social Sciences & Law.

Further information about Teesside Law Clinic

**T: 01642 738738**

**E: [lawclinic@tees.ac.uk](mailto:lawclinic@tees.ac.uk)**

**[tees.ac.uk/lawclinic](http://tees.ac.uk/lawclinic)**



This publication is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact the Enquiry Service on **+44 (0) 1642 342942** or email **[enquiries@tees.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@tees.ac.uk)**.

---

**Teesside University**

Middlesbrough  
Tees Valley  
TS1 3BA UK

T: +44 (0) 1642 218121  
**[tees.ac.uk](http://tees.ac.uk)**