



# TANFIELD PUPILLAGE



James Fieldsend, Chair of the Pupillage Committee



Christy Burzio, Barrister and former probationary tenant

## Key facts about Chambers

- Head of chambers: Philip Rainey KC
- 6 Silks
- 44 Juniors

## Tanfield's main areas of expertise

Tanfield is a leading property set. The main areas of expertise are:

- Residential property
- Commercial property
- Real property
- Agriculture and rural
- Development
- Infrastructure, natural resources & environment
- Finance, securities and receivership
- Private client
- Mortgages
- Social Housing

In addition, we handle general commercial disputes and professional negligence.

As well as tribunal and court-related litigation, we handle all forms of alternative dispute resolution including arbitration and mediation.

## Key facts about Tanfield pupillage

- Up to 3 pupillages available
- £80,000 pupillage award
- £40,000 paid by way of guaranteed earnings during second six months
- Up to £20,000 can be drawn down during Bar vocational training year
- Online access to all major legal publications
- Provision of laptop and screen
- Compulsory training courses paid for by Tanfield
- Internal training programme throughout the year

## Why apply to Tanfield?

- We are a leading property set
- Property work is both diverse and interesting
- Friendly and inclusive atmosphere
- Supportive training programme
- We only recruit those with a realistic prospect of becoming a member
- Positive work/life balance
- Opportunity to get involved in Tanfield's business development and marketing activities



**First six months (non-practising period)**

- Shadow members including pupil supervisor
- Paperwork including opinions and pleadings
- Attend court and client conferences in person and online

- 3 seats of 4 months each covering all our main practice areas
- Each seat supported by a different pupil supervisor
- Pupils sit in their pupil supervisor's room
- In person supervision throughout pupillage

**Second six months (practising period)**

- Practical experience of being on your feet in court
- Accompany members to court
- Paperwork including opinions and pleadings

Our office hours are 08:30 – 18:30 and pupils are not expected to work outside these hours.

Nor is pupillage all about work. You will be involved in client entertainment, conferences, seminars and all our social activities.



**The Tanfield pupillage experience by Annie Higgo**

*When I was applying for pupillage I had a clear idea that I wanted to practise in property, so naturally Tanfield was top of my list. My first introduction to land law was during my GDL, and I found that (unlike some of my peers), I both really enjoyed the subject and found that it suited my brain worked out problems. Before I applied for pupillage I did a few mini-pupillages in areas concerning the use of land, including property work, planning and construction, which confirmed that property law was the aspect that I most enjoyed.*

*Pupillage at Tanfield is split into three seats of four months in which you sit with different members of chambers; the work you do for each supervisor depends on the stage of your pupillage. During your first seat the work is generally paper-based; I was regularly involved in drafting pleadings, writing skeletons for upcoming hearings alongside attending conferences and mediations. I was fortunate enough to observe three trials during my first six which involved real hands-on experience including drafting cross-examination questions and preparing written closings. I found there was next to no "dead work", and watching work you've produced be used in front of a High Court judge gives you both real confidence and pride in what you're doing.*

*As you move onto later supervisors the focus moves on to preparing you to start on your feet in your second six and supporting you in starting your practice. Tanfield is one of the few sets at the commercial chancery bar where you have a second six in which you're doing largely your own work on your feet. Whilst it was daunting in March heading into my first hearing, you very quickly relax into it, and there's huge benefits to becoming confident in court advocacy whilst having the safety net of your supervisors to field any question, no matter how small.*

*The clerking team at Tanfield are also incredibly supportive and they make the transition into practising much easier.*

*During my pupillage I had one formal advocacy assessment with feedback from the whole pupillage committee; I still use the tips and guidance I was given that day in almost every hearing I do! Otherwise, the feedback was generally informal and ad hoc; I enjoyed not having structured marking and assessment of each piece of work I did as it felt like I could develop organically as a barrister without the pressure of a formal marking system.*

*Tanfield take on their pupils with an expectation that they will all be taken on as tenants, and the support systems in place during your pupillage continue on into your junior years of practice. Whilst pupillage is naturally stressful, I never felt any excess pressure from chambers nor was tenancy ever made to feel out of reach. I still rely on my former supervisors an enormous amount and they're incredibly generous with their time and knowledge.*

*The overriding memory for me of pupillage at Tanfield was how supported I felt; other members of chambers genuinely want you to succeed, and Tanfield's pupillage is structured in a way to give you the best chance of doing so.*

Annie Higgo, Barrister and former pupil



Hugh Rowan, Barrister and former pupil

### Top tips for those wanting to be a barrister by Hugh Rowan

- My top tip for those wanting to become a barrister is to do at least one mini-pupillage to see what being a barrister actually involves. Speak to a barrister and ask them what it is like being self-employed and check that it is the right job for you. Life at the Bar is very rewarding but it won't suit everyone.
  - My top tips for those wanting to secure a pupillage are first to make sure you showcase your experiences and skills in your application in a way that shows you will be a good barrister. Identify the top traits that a good barrister needs and then show us how you have those skills using your experience. Secondly don't forget to showcase yourself as a person.
- If you have particular interests and/or have done something unusual/interesting then make sure you mention this.
- My top tip for those wanting to secure a pupillage at Tanfield is do the above and also show us why you want to work in property. We are not looking for specific property related work experience but we are looking for those with a genuine interest in property work. Investigate what property work involves (our website is a good starting point) and then show us why you think the experience you have will help make you a good property barrister.

### How to apply

You need to complete the application form on our website.

**Complete  
application  
form**

### Selection criteria

- Intellectual achievement (at least a 2:1)
- Analytical thinking
- Effective communication
- Influencing/advocacy skills
- Resilience
- Interpersonal skills
- Drive and determination
- Motivation
- Ability to work independently

### Application process

- *January/February*: whilst we are not members of the Pupillage Gateway, we do follow their timetable. Usually, applications open early January and close early February.
- *March*: first interviews. We usually shortlist up to 20 candidates.
- *April*: second interviews.
- *May*: offers made

### Selection process

#### First interview:

- *Legal problem*. You will be given 30 minutes to consider a legal problem.
- *Interview*. During the interview, you will be asked about the legal problem. Questions are also competency based, situational and biographical. You will also have a question on ethical issues.

#### Second interview:

- *Legal problem*. A week before the interview, you will be given a legal problem and asked to prepare a written opinion. We provide online access to legal materials. You will be given a day to send back the written opinion.
- *Interview*.

#### Offers:

- If you are given an offer, you will have 7 days in which to accept it.



Training during pupillage  
is highly-rated.

LEGAL CHEEK



A very well-organised and  
approachable set.

CHAMBERS & PARTNERS



Tanfield has a long-standing  
reputation in the specialist  
fields of landlord and tenant,  
commercial real estate  
and real property.

LEGAL 500

An aerial photograph of a city waterfront, likely London, showing buildings, a river, and a bridge. The image is overlaid with a dark red gradient.

**TANFIELD**

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