



JE Bennett Law

**Court of Protection Specialists for
Local Authorities.**

**Industry-ranked and accredited
solicitors - supporting your team
and empowering your clients.**

- **Dedicated LA Team**
- **Experienced OPG Panel
Deputies**
- **Proven, Efficient Referral
Process**
- **Proactive Approach to
Securing Orders**

Why work with JE Bennett Law?

BENEFITS TO YOUR CLIENT

Many law firms promote that they cover the practice areas associated with clients in vulnerable circumstances. JE Bennett Law, however, is a firm set up to make these clients and their families, our sole focus. We are experienced specialists and industry-recognised as leaders in our field.

Dealing with the legal needs of clients in vulnerable circumstances requires a unique skill-set, not just the necessary legal expertise, but the ability to manage the expectations of the different parties involved in a sensitive and understanding manner. The team at JE Bennett Law recognise our clients and their families are often facing difficult decisions in emotionally challenging circumstances. It's our mission to empower and protect them every step of the way.

We work for the clients and the family of those who may lack mental capacity, or be in the process of losing the ability to manage aspects of their property and affairs.

We can assist in cases where you may not have the time, resource or expertise available to deliver the optimal service for your client.



Advice and guidance were always given with both empathy and professionalism.



Mr P, Lay Deputy



BENEFITS TO LAs

The JE Bennett Law team understand the specific needs of both Local Authorities and their clients. We are highly experienced making applications for the appointment of a deputy and managing deputyships. We deliver an efficient, reliable and caring service.

- The peace of mind of referring to an OPG panel deputy team
- A proven process to act promptly in preparing and submitting applications to the Court of Protection.
- There is no additional cost to the authority from instructing JE Bennett Law.
- Our experience in securing a Deputy Assured Order ASAP and thereby recovering the authority care debt as soon as possible - including circumstances complicated by property related issues or accessing an entitlement from an estate.
- For Court of Protection work, we follow the Solicitors Guidelines hourly rates. With our head office in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, we are National Tier 1 so the rates are significantly lower than London firms.
- We can offer additional, related services such as Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney.
- Our experienced and committed local authority team also includes previous experience of working for local authority Deputyship teams.



We have found JE Bennett Law to be helpful, reliable and flexible.



James Sheedy,
Royal Borough
of Kensington
and Chelsea

DEPUTYSHIP FAQs

Can you apply for appointment as Appointee whilst awaiting the Deputy Order?

Yes, we can arrange an appointee whilst preparing the application for deputyship.

Can you deal with cases that involve the complexity of a property?

Yes. This is a common reason for referrals, including orders for sale, equity release, rentals and cases involving third party occupants.

Do you take on new deputyship cases and take over existing ones?

Yes, we are happy to do both.

On instruction, will you liaise with third parties for information and can you arrange for COP3?

Yes - after instruction we can obtain information from the LA, speak to third parties or facilitate a property search. We can arrange for a COP3 (Assessment of Capacity) to be completed, if the LA is unable to. Note: this may require additional time/expense.

THE JE BENNETT LAW LOCAL AUTHORITY REFERRAL PROCESS

We understand the time pressures facing local authority teams and our referral process has been fine-tuned over a number of years to deliver as fast a turnaround as possible with the minimum level of stress.

	AUTHORITY ROLE	JE BENNETT LAW ROLE
REFERRAL INITIATION	Complete Referral Form and supporting documents (including COP 3 assessment)	Our referral form has been tailored and refined for Local Authority cases
ARE THERE ISSUES YOU CONSIDER URGENT ON THE CASE?	Authority indicates urgency of case	We will immediately apply for appointment of an interim deputy or an interim order to address the identified urgent issues - such as release of funds for property repairs or urgent purchases for the person requiring deputyship
LEGAL ASSESSMENT OF URGENT ISSUES		We will advise you of any additional urgent issues and the required approach to reach the best outcome for the client
INSTRUCTING AN APPOINTEE		We typically appoint Money Carer Foundation (MCF) to obtain appointeeship pending our appointment as deputy to enable the person requiring deputyship to have access to funds for everyday needs.
ONGOING APPOINTMENT PROCESS		We regularly contact the Court to check on progress and report to the local authority and other interested parties as appropriate.
ON JE BENNETT LAW APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY		1. If possible we will use MCF's first funds service to obtain access to funds if they are required urgently. 2. Update all financial organisations re our appointment. 3. Arrange contributions to reduce care debt ASAP.
WAS THE LOCAL AUTHORITY THE PREVIOUS DEPUTY?	Liaising to ensure smooth handover	In cases where we are taking over from an existing local authority deputy we work in conjunction with them for a smooth transition.
DOES THE CLIENT REQUIRE A WILL?		We will undertake searches and take whatever steps necessary to get this put in place if appropriate.
ONGOING CLIENT MANAGEMENT		As a specialist and industry ranked Court of Protection legal firm, you can rest assured your client is in the best possible hands



... a very strong practice that deals with these matters in a sensitive and efficient way.



The Legal 500 testimonial

OUR EXPERTISE

The team at JE Bennett Law consists of 40 specialists, each bringing relevant skills and experience to serve our clients' needs.

Senior partner Ian Macara is a member (1 of only around 51 nationwide) of the Office of the Public Guardian's national panel of professional deputies.

Our local authority team is made up of highly experienced partners and support team all with many years experience of handling Local Authority referrals.

We have many years' experience of working with Local Authorities, across the country, specialising in professional deputyship services and assisting with powers of attorney, wills (including statutory wills) and estate administration.

 **JE Bennett Law provide a highly efficient, responsive and professional service which always keeps the client at the very centre of their work. BHCC feels very assured by the high level of integrity of the firm and the firm's focus on the best interests of their clients.** 

Senior Lawyer, Social & Education Services, Brighton & Hove City Council

LEADERS IN OUR FIELD

JE Bennett Law is ranked by both the major industry ranking organisations, Chambers and The Legal 500, for its work in the Court of Protection field. Our managing partner, Jane Bennett is also individually ranked by both organisations, making the Legal 500 Hall of Fame. A number of our Local Authority team are also recognised individually by the Legal 500.



CALL:
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OTHER SERVICES FOR LAs

We have a dedicated private client team led by a Senior Partner who is also an experienced Professional Deputy working closely with Local Authorities. We have tailored our related legal services to support LAs.

1. Administering Estates - our private client team can help ease the financial strains of care debt that many local authorities have due to the impact of large numbers of deceased estates with nobody actively administering them.

We work in tandem with a number of genealogists and can help get these estates administered and local authorities repaid for the care fees they have funded as quickly as possible.

2. Wills - many deputyship clients may still have testamentary capacity (capacity to make a Will) despite requiring the involvement of Attorneys or Deputies with their financial affairs. There may, therefore, be a window of opportunity to actively evaluate prospects to make a Will. This can then simplify the estate administration process and ensure that debts (including

LA care fees) can be more swiftly repaid.

Even for Clients requiring a Deputy or Attorney for their finances but without testamentary capacity, our experienced private client team can assist with evaluating whether applying for a Statutory Will is in the client's best interests, which again offers the same benefits to local authorities for swift repayment of debt.

3. Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) - another window of opportunity is where a capacitated client can be supported to make an LPA. This can avoid the potential logjam of waiting until a Deputy becomes appointed if somebody loses capacity at a later time. We have a number of cases where we have helped a client who, otherwise, had no one to support them.

4. Trusts - we are experienced in creating and administering a variety of trusts that have inherent complexities, but equally benefits, when applied carefully to individual circumstances. Again, there may be powers and entitlements that can be used to fund the clients care or care debt that could be explored.



CLIENT CARE & PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

We are proud to have been awarded Lexcel accreditation. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for practice management and client care.



OUR PRACTICE AREAS

Court of Protection

Professional Deputyships

Professional Attorneyships

Lasting Power of Attorney

Wills

Probate/Estate Administration

Personal Injury Trusts



We are passionate about being Deputies and providing proactive advice and assistance. Over the years we have tailored our processes and procedures to work collaboratively with numerous Local Authorities and are excited to have now formed an experienced, dedicated Local Authority and OPG Panel Team.

We strive to balance the empowerment of the client (where they can be supported with certain decision making), with investing time to ascertain their individual wishes and preferences (where we are entrusted with making best interests decisions) to ensure the protection of their assets, safety and wellbeing.

In this commitment we have a natural synergy with the wide variety of Local Authority teams we regularly partner with, be that social services, hospital discharge, financial assessment, client services or legal support.

We would value meeting up with your Local Authority to explore how we can help.



Ian Macara
Senior Partner



Our Local Authority Senior Team



Richard Shearing
Senior Partner



Georgia Allum
Senior COP Paralegal



Diane Mitchell
Senior Client Administrator



Ian Macara
Senior Partner



Alexandra Gunn
Partner



Eloise Smith
Associate Solicitor

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