



Issue #22 | Summer 2026

Consortium Quarterly

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Summer edition of your CQ.

In this edition of CQ we have our regular, topical articles and a Legal Updater from our Partner firms. We also have updates from our Junior Lawyers Group. You can also find out more about what's new with the Consortium on page 4.

Consortium Board Changes

Two Board members have recently stepped down from the Board, Jill Travers and Vicki Bates. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jill and Vicki very much for their contributions to the Board and the Consortium.

As a result of Jill and Vicki leaving we advertised the Board vacancies to members and have been delighted with the responses. The Board are in the process of considering the applications. We will update members on news of appointments as soon as we can.

Annual Training Day, Tuesday 6 October 2026, Hilton Liverpool

Since my last update, you should have received the invitation to reserve your place and choose your workshops.

We have a great take up of the invitation so far. If you would like to come please do respond as soon as possible as spaces are now limited.

Our keynote speaker this year is Dave Bunting MBE. Dave has over 35 years of leading expeditions in mountainous and challenging terrains, much of that gained within the armed forces. He will be sharing his inspirational experience with a focus on leadership and teamwork challenges.

NWLC Training Programme

The Training Programme will be taking its usual break over the Summer and we are working with the partner firms on a new 12 month programme to start from September.

We held a very informative and practical in person workshop on Procurement in June which was well attended and received excellent feedback.

The new 12 month programme will consist mainly of webinar with two in person events. Members will be notified as soon as courses are available to book.

As always, all NWLC training courses are free for members to attend.

Do bear in mind that if you cannot attend any of the online sessions on the day you can 'catch up' on them at a later date via the NWLC website. There is now an excellent comprehensive library of past webinar recordings and slides on the website, including those from the last Annual Training Event.

Finally, please bear in mind that members have access to a range of 15 law firms through the NWLC Solicitors Framework and 13 chambers on the Barristers Portal. If you are externalising legal advice do consider using a Framework firm or barrister from the Portal. These firms and barristers can offer very good value for money for members.

Also do please take advantage of the 'added value' offers from our partner firms Browne Jacobson and Capsticks, which includes the opportunity to obtain some legal advice at no cost. To take advantage of this really useful benefit please contact Bradley Martin at Browne Jacobson and Tiffany Cloynes at Capsticks. Their contact details are available on the NWLC website after signing in, under Added Value. Alternatively please contact Fiona Pritchard by email, info@nwlegalconsortium.com.

As always, if you have any comments or suggestions about what you'd like to see in future CQ editions or about the Consortium generally, please do get in touch with me at Anne.Greenwood@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk. I'd be very pleased to hear from you.

I'm very much looking forward to seeing in person those members who can attend the Annual Training Day. I'm sure that we are in for a great day.

With best wishes



Anne Greenwood

**CHAIR OF NWLC
MANAGEMENT BOARD**

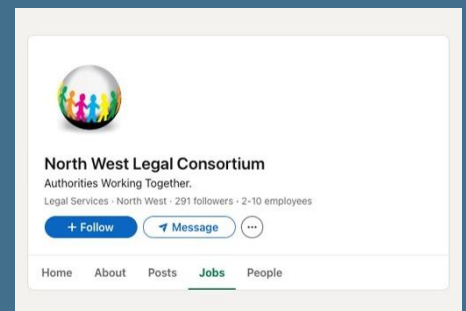
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What's new at NWLC

Fiona Pritchard highlights some of the latest developments at the North West Legal Consortium.

To contact Fiona please email:
info@nwlegalconsortium.com



NWLC AGM

The NWLC AGM will be held on:

8 September 2026 at 1.15pm

By Teams call and expected to last no more than 30 minutes.

All members are welcome and the link to join the call has been sent to all members registered on the NWLC members directory.

If you would like the link or have any questions please contact me
info@nwlegalconsortium.com

NWLC Solicitors Framework Consultation

The Board are working on a questionnaire to find out members' views on the current solicitors' framework Agreement.

We are hoping the questionnaire will be available at the Annual Training Day and it will also be sent by email later this year.

Any feedback will be collated and considered by the Board during preparations for the procurement of the new framework agreement.

We would love to hear from you.

NWLC Annual Training Event 2026

Preparations are well underway for this year's event at the Hilton Hotel, Liverpool on:

Tuesday 6 October 2026

Invitations have been sent to everyone who is registered on the NWLC website directory and the event is nearly full.

The NWLC Board has listened to your feedback from last year and will be including tables for delegates this year to make notes and eat lunch.

We look forward to seeing you this year!



NWLC Junior Lawyers Group

The last meeting was in person, in Manchester on 17 June and included training on Advocacy. This was a great event with very good feedback.

We are currently planning the next meeting, via webinar, for November and this will look at the transition from Trainee to Solicitor.

For more information on recent events, how to get involved with the group and or attend future events, please see Lydia Wright's update on page 17.



NWLC Commissions Portal

All members can run mini competitions for panel law firms and chambers through the NWLC website, after signing in under **Commissions, Start a Commission**. This tool allows members to:

- Select the invited firms or chambers by lot or work area
- See their rates
- Describe the work required and upload any attachments
- Set a deadline for responses
- View responses
- Notify all participants whether or not they have been successful

And keeps a record of all previous commissions on the website.



Top Tips for Commissions

To get the most from your commissions please follow these top tips:

- ✓ Unless urgent, give as much notice as possible.
- ✓ Be clear on what you are asking for – just a price or a more detailed proposal?
- ✓ Tell bidders the evaluation criteria – price, quality or both?
- ✓ Provide contact details and respond to any reasonable requests for clarification.
- ✓ Notify all bidders whether they have been successful.
- ✓ If possible, give feedback. This will help bidders to provide a more competitive quote next time.



NWLC Practice Managers Group

The in-person Practice Managers Group meeting on 30 June received very good feedback and included an SRA update.

We are currently planning a workshop for Practice Managers at the Annual Training Day with a recruitment update from Sellick Partnership.

Please let me know on info@nwlegalconsortium.com if you would like to be added to the group to receive information on forthcoming events.

Please look out for updates by email and on the website.



NWLC Website – Are Your Team Registered?

The NWLC website is a fantastic resource for members.

It includes information about the Solicitors Framework Agreement, a barristers portal, a commissions portal to facilitate mini competitions, the free NWLC training programme, a library of webinar recordings and slides, and much more.

To access all this information and receive email updates from me, you do need to be registered so please contact me to make sure you don't miss out info@nwlegalconsortium.com

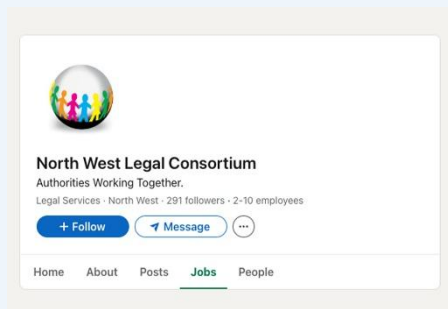
Jobs & LinkedIn

Check out the website jobs page at:

nwlegalconsortium.com/jobs

Have you seen us on LinkedIn?

linkedin.com/company/nwlc/



NWLC Member Vacancies and LinkedIn

Did you know that we advertise vacancies for member organisations free of charge on our website and our LinkedIn page?

If you are recruiting in your team, please send me a link to the vacancy and I will add it to our website for you.

info@nwlegalconsortium.com



Added Value – Spotlight on... Meeting Rooms

You may be aware that both partner firms offer free meeting facilities in their Manchester offices.

But did you know you can also use their meeting rooms in other locations free of charge, including Birmingham, Leeds, London, Nottingham, Exeter and Winchester? So, if you are looking for a location outside of the North West or have other meetings away from the office and are looking for somewhere to work for a few hours it is worth bearing them in mind, subject to availability of course.

Please let me know and I can put you in touch with the partner firms.



Added Value – Spotlight on... Free Advice

Our partner firms are happy to discuss new matters and give initial advice free of charge.

To take advantage of this added value benefit please contact the lead partners at each firm, Bradley Martin at Browne Jacobson and Tiffany Cloyne at Capsticks. Their contact details are at the end of this newsletter and available on the NWLC website, after signing in under Added Value.

Alternatively, please contact me and I can put you in touch with the partner firms.

Legal Updater from our Partner Firms

Empty homes and CPO: What local authorities need to know

Over 303,000 homes in England have stood empty for more than six months. We explain how the compulsory purchase process works in practice, what the barriers are, and how councils can build the confidence to utilise empty homes.

[Read more](#) →

Community empowerment under the Devolution and Empowerment Act

This is the fifth and final instalment of a special series of insights on the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. This article looks at the community empowerment provisions within the Act, which is aimed at bringing decision-making closer to residents and giving communities greater influence over the places and assets that matter to them.

[Read more](#) →

AI in local decision-making: Old duties, new risks

Artificial intelligence (AI) is steadily embedding itself across local government. The question is no longer whether AI will be used, but whether it can be used in a way that is consistent with the transparency, accountability and fairness expected of public bodies.

[Read more](#) →

Takeaways from PPN 024: the Public Interest Test and insourcing strategies

Following the UK Government issuance of the Procurement Policy Note 024 (PPN 024), this insight discusses PPN 024 in detail, considering the scope of application, what it aims to achieve and what actions organisations should complete - marking a significant development in how public sector organisations approach service delivery.

[Read more](#) →

Social care reform: What public sector leaders should do now

With structural reform of adult social care in England remaining uncertain and delayed, public sector leaders are urged to act now by investing in integration governance, scenario-based planning, genuine provider market intelligence, and workforce strategy, rather than waiting for a centralised solution.

[Read more](#) →

Mayors can now appoint Commissioners: powers and meaning explained

This is the fourth instalment of a special series of five insights on the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. This insight focuses on one particular measure that the Act has introduced: Commissioners. We will look in more depth at the ability for Mayors to now appoint up to ten persons to assist with the exercise of the Mayor's general functions and Combined Authority or Combined County Authority functions in relation to the areas of competence.

[Read more](#) →

Public-Private Partnerships: Lessons from UKREiiF 2026

The CBI and Browne Jacobson used UKREiiF 2026 in Leeds to publish a landmark joint report calling for a fundamental reform of the legal and commercial framework governing public-private partnerships in the UK.

[Read more](#) →

Ban on upwards-only rent reviews: what it means for local authorities

This is the third instalment of a special series of five insights on the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 (the Act) introduces a significant shift in commercial leasing by banning upwards-only rent reviews, which is due to come into effect in 2027. In this insight, we outline what the ban will do, who it affects and what steps organisations should be considering now to prepare for when the ban does eventually come into force.

[Read more](#) →

Consultation on reform of zero and low hours contracts

The government has launched a consultation (closing 25 August 2026) on how the Act's reforms to zero and low hours contracts, including rights to guaranteed hours, shift notice, and short notice cancellation payments, will work in practice.

[Read more](#) →

CTIL v Timberyard Nominees: keep legal costs for MSVs reasonable and proportionate

This insight looks at the Upper Tribunal's recent decision in *Cornerstone Telecommunications Infrastructure Limited v Timberyard Nominees* providing a reminder to local authorities and housing providers of the appropriate approach to costs in relation to multi-skilled visits (MSV) under the Electronic Communications Code.

[Read more](#) →

When is a subsidy decision actually made?

The judgment of the Competition Appeals Tribunal (CAT) in *Mr Graham Thomas and Others v Durham County Council* provides much needed clarity on the question of when a subsidy 'decision' has been made and so the clock starts for challenges.

[Read more](#) →

UKREiIF 2026 Key Takeaways: The Local Government Sector

With local government devolution and reorganisation on the horizon, along with the ongoing challenges of delivering 1.5 million homes and economic regeneration mandates, there was much to talk about in relation to the Local Government sector in Leeds at UKREiIF 2026. We look at some of the key takeaways for local authorities at UKREiIF and why they are very much still open for business despite the recent changes.

[Read more](#) →

Who bears the risk of the UK's EV charging shortfall?

The UK's ambition to transition millions of drivers to electric vehicles (EVs) by the end of the decade depends on one thing above almost all others: the charging infrastructure to support them.

[Read more](#) →

Subsidy Control Act: The Sixth Streamlined Route and a Significant Judgment

The UK subsidy control regime came into force in January 2023, enabling public authorities to give subsidies that are tailored to their local needs and drive economic growth, while minimising distortion to UK competition and protecting international obligations. In this insight, we look at the new Streamlined Routes where an express pathway is available for authorities that can meet certain criteria.

[Read more](#) →



NWLC Free Training Programme 2026

The Training Programme is taking
a short break over the Summer.

We are working with our partner firms Capsticks and Browne Jacobson to bring you a new 12-month programme from September 2026.

Details will be circulated to members as soon as they are available.



Our Partner Firms

Value Added

Browne Jacobson

Introducing Browne Jacobson

From our award-winning Manchester office, we provide support to dozens of authorities in the North-West and nationally through our strong office network across the UK – we are a national law firm with genuine international reach.

We are consistently trusted by a client base that includes 250+ local authorities, 120+ NHS bodies and 20+ central government departments. Our ability to forge strong relationships with public sector organisations puts us at the centre of public sector modernisation – with market-leading work in areas such as social care, regeneration, procurement and planning placing, we are at the forefront of society's biggest issues.



The agenda facing local authorities has never been more demanding. English devolution is reshaping the governance landscape, with local government reorganisation creating new structures, new accountabilities and real transition risk. Councils are also navigating acute financial pressures, reform of children's and adult social care, the Procurement Act 2023, the Employment Rights Act 2025, and the continuing demands of housing delivery and planning reform. We are actively advising clients across all these areas.

As one of only two firms with "Partner" status on the NWLC – the largest public sector framework for authorities in North-West England, we are proud of the trust placed in us. As a Manchester-based partner and Lead Partner for the NWLC, I understand the pressures and challenges facing public bodies in North-West England.

My colleagues and I are well-positioned to support you with any matter or project you need support with; furthermore, we deliver around 30 training events each year for local authority members and regularly bring early insight on emerging legal developments.

Get in touch – we would love to hear from you.

Bradley Martin, Partner

Email: bradley.martin@brownejacobson.com

Tel: +443300452483

**Browne
Jacobson**

Capsticks

Introducing James Burt

How Capsticks can help – Electronic Communications Code

Local authorities have been challenged by government to advance digital connectivity, such as full-fibre broadband and 5G.

Since 2017, that has meant working with operators in accordance with the Electronic Communications Code, such as EE, Virgin Media, and Cornerstone in relation to:

The use of authority land and buildings for the purpose of masts;

The use of authority buildings for rooftop antennae and dishes; and

The roll-out of fibre optic broadband to homes across the region, including retained housing stock.



The Electronic Communications Code has not proven as straightforward as the government hoped and local authorities have often found themselves under pressure to complete legal agreements at low (or no) cost on tight timescales and faced with the threat of Court and Tribunal proceedings.

Our team can help local authorities to resolve these difficulties, by making use of our significant experience in this often highly technical area including:

Help with heads of terms, including where you have agents instructed;

Putting in place lease and Code Agreements, in relation to both new and existing/renewal sites;

Resolving disputes including over the terms of those agreements, third party rights or consents; and

Termination of Code Agreements and vacant possession, to facilitate demolition and redevelopment.

Our experience means that we can act effectively to keep your costs down at each stage and recover more (or all) of your costs from the Operator, helping to resolve often long running issues with a minimum of further fuss.

We also offer training via webinars or bespoke sessions to explain the application of what is a technical and complex area of law to local authorities in a practical and accessible way.

Get in touch

If Capsticks can help support you with advice on the Electronic Communications Code, please contact James Burt.



In profile

Christian Williams-White

Introducing Christian Williams-White,
Head of Child Care Legal Team at
Blackpool Borough Council and NWLC
Board Member



What is your current role and how long have you held this position?

I manage the Child Care Legal Team at Blackpool Borough Council and have been in the role since 1 November 2020.

What does your role currently involve?

Leading and supporting a team of senior solicitors, solicitors/lawyers and legal support officers undertaking child care legal work; undertaking case work including criminal injuries compensation claims for children; and working alongside senior managers, the judiciary, HMCTS and other key stakeholders around strategic objectives such as the current exploration of the development of the first problem-solving Baby Court in the UK.

What's at the top of your in-tray today?

Covering a remote Issues Resolution Hearing before a District Judge. I am pleased to report the Local Authority secured the Orders it sought and recommended, and the proceedings have concluded.

What is one thing about you that would come as a surprise to most people?

I was a Head Chorister at Church as a child and also in a Choir at school, which toured the USA and Canada for 3 weeks when I was in Year 11. It was a truly amazing experience and time in my life.

What are the biggest challenges facing you at present?

The biggest challenges relate to maintaining the effective delivery of an efficient and quality service against the increasing need for statutory intervention and increased workloads within the Team, whilst also continuing to safeguard and promote the welfare and wellbeing of Team members who are under pressure.

How do you see your role and the work of your team changing in the next decade

Lancashire is in the active process of Local Government Reorganisation and Blackpool Borough Council will be joining Fylde and Wyre Councils to form the new unitary Fylde Coast Council by 2028. I therefore anticipate significant change in my role due to the need to support the successful integration of the current 3 Council's Children's Services safeguarding duties and legal safeguarding teams to cover a much larger geographical area.

How do you relax?

Walking and playing with my cockapoo, Kai, who is 2 years old, very energetic, mischievous and keeps me on my toes! I also like listening and singing along (badly...) to music on Spotify or the radio.

Chambers Noticeboard

Farrar's Building

[Farrar's Building](#) is recognised as a leading set of barristers' chambers in London, with regional experience across diverse practice areas, to include regulatory, property and employment law. Drawing on extensive expertise in public sector frameworks, regulatory compliance, and innovative legal solutions, we offer a fresh strategic partnership to the Consortium. With strong recognition in the leading legal directories, our "consistently excellent" barristers and "impressive, helpful, friendly and intuitive" clerking team look forward to collaborating with Consortium members to deliver added value, enhance efficiency, and provide robust legal support to members across the region. Contact our team: +44 207 583 9241 or chambers@farrarsbuilding.co.uk

4–5 Gray's Inn Square

Our barristers are noted experts in housing, landlord and tenant, and residential and commercial property law. Chambers has particular specialism in social housing, being ranked in Band 1 by both the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners. Chambers is committed to providing a comprehensive service to all who need advice or representation in housing matters. Our members act for local authorities, leaseholders & tenants. Our barristers are some of the best at the Bar and have been involved in many of the leading cases. We handle all aspects of homelessness appeals including onward appeals and judicial review.

<https://www.4-5.co.uk/expertise/housing>

Landmark Chambers

At the halfway point of this Parliament, this year's Land Use Conference taking place on 14 October at the IET London, will take stock of the reforms which have been implemented to date and those which remain on the agenda. With land use policy central to unlocking housing supply, delivering major infrastructure, balancing the interests of owners and occupiers, and meeting net zero targets, the conference will explore the extent to which the reforms are operating to support those objectives, and the challenges which remain to be addressed.

Headline guest speaker - [Florence Eshalomi](#), Labour (Co-op) MP for [Vauxhall and Camberwell Green](#)

View the programme and speakers here: <https://www.landconference.co.uk/>

Francis Taylor Building

[FTB](#) is a barristers' chambers specialising in planning, environmental and related areas of law. We host a rolling programme of seminars and other events. To receive notification of these, sign up to our mailing list [here](#).

Mountford Chambers

Mountford Chambers is a London-based set of specialist barristers with experience in public and regulatory law. We act for councils, public bodies, and professional clients in matters such as regulatory investigations, inquests, inquiries, and professional discipline. Our focus is on clear, practical advice and strong advocacy in complex cases.

Find out more about our work and recent cases here: <https://www.mountfordchambers.com/category/cases/>

Browne Jacobson Barristers

Browne Jacobson Barristers offers specialist expertise across a broad range of public law practice areas, most notably in inquests, regulatory, employment, Court of Protection and education matters. Our barristers are committed to delivering outstanding advice and advocacy but we also recognise the value of supporting your people through legal proceedings, including reputational considerations and organisational learning.

To learn more about us, please visit our website: www.brownejacobson.com/services/barristers

Chambers Noticeboard

Broadway House Chambers

[Broadway House Chambers](#) has served Yorkshire and beyond for a century. While we are proud of our history, we are equally committed to innovation and challenging outdated perceptions of the legal profession.

Recognised by the Legal 500 as "one of the leading sets in the North of England," we are known for both our experience and the strength of our emerging talent. Our 80 members work across seven specialist teams: Family, Crime, Civil, Immigration, Employment, Regulatory and Sport. With a broad range of seniority, clients can select barristers suited to their needs and budget.

Sign up to free webinars by clicking [here](#).

Cornerstone Barristers

Our barristers are noted experts in housing, landlord and tenant, and residential and commercial property law. Chambers has particular specialism in social housing, being ranked in Band 1 by both the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners. Chambers is committed to providing a comprehensive service to all who need advice or representation in housing matters. Our members act for local authorities, leaseholders & tenants. Our barristers are some of the best at the Bar and have been involved in many of the leading cases. We handle all aspects of homelessness appeals including onward appeals and judicial review.

<https://www.4-5.co.uk/expertise/housing>

Kings Chambers

Kings Chambers is a leading civil law set with offices in Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds, recognised nationally for excellence across a wide range of practice areas. The set comprises more than 120 barristers, including 21 King's Counsel, providing specialist advisory, litigation and advocacy services. Members regularly appear in courts and tribunals nationwide, including the High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. Kings Chambers is trusted by national and international law firms, as well as public and private clients, for its first-class representation and practical, commercial advice. The set also delivers an extensive programme of webinars, conferences, and training, and is consistently ranked by Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500.

Exchange Chambers

Ian Whitehurst of Exchange Chambers will be delivering a remote seminar on the 24th November 2026 10am in relation to (1) Regulatory, Planning and Environmental Enforcement and (2) Powers, Breaches and Practical Strategy/ Effective Enforcement and Financial Recovery. The training programme is designed for local authority lawyers, investigators and regulators involved in planning and environmental enforcement and provides practical guidance on responding to breaches including enforcement powers, evidential issues, prosecution decisions and strategic enforcement options along with how to identify suitable cases to include the use of the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA). To book your place please email seminarbookings@exchangechambers.co.uk



Junior Lawyers Group Update



Our Junior Lawyer Group Lead and Board Representative, Lydia Wright, updates us on the group.

In June, the junior lawyers group hosted the second in-person event of the year, following the first in-person session in March. This was at Browne Jacobson's offices, in Manchester.

In the afternoon, for the junior lawyer's session, [Justin Quinton](#), [Holly Quirk](#) and [Callum Heywood](#) presented sessions on advocacy. We hope our junior lawyers found this session as helpful as we did. Thank you for all of your feedback so far, and we welcome any further comments that you may have. We would also like to thank the junior lawyers who attended the event for your questions, which made the event run smoothly and ensured the event could be informative, and tailored to local government.

We are taking on board requests for topics in future and will be discussing any comments made at our next planning meeting in July. Our team have discussed future events for the junior lawyer's group, and our team and the firms are planning a programme for 2026/2027.

Planning is also under way for the Annual Training Event, which will take place on **6 October 2026**. This has proved to be hugely popular so far, so we encourage any junior lawyers who wish to attend to sign up as soon as possible.

You may have seen an email has been circulated to our mailing list to join the 'O Shaped Academy' for In- House Lawyers, which is free of charge. This is through our partner firm Browne Jacobson. The academy is a programme of webinars with key skills for junior lawyers to develop. We know that some of you attended the first session which was on the 23 June, so we hope you found this useful.

We would like to thank our partner firms Capsticks and Browne Jacobson for their support in allowing us to continue to provide events for our members to attend, both in-person and virtually.

If you are a junior lawyer, or you have any junior lawyers in your team, who are not already a member of the Junior Lawyers Group and would like to sign up, or if you have any suggestions for the group, please email info@nwlegalconsortium.com

We look forward to seeing you all again soon!



Lydia

Solicitor, Cheshire West and Chester Council



NWAA's Charity Golf Day

- **West Lancashire Golf Club** •
- **Thursday 24th September 2026** •

Tee off at the West Lancashire Golf Club in support
of the North West Air Ambulance Charity!

Four ball entry £1,195

To register your team, visit nwaa.info/golfday -
to book via invoice, email events@nwairambulance.org.uk.

Main event sponsors



fletchers
solicitors



Registered Charity No. 1075641

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**Browne
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Consortium Quarterly

For further information about any of our services, please contact our Consortium Development Manager, Fiona Pritchard at info@nwlegalconsortium.com or visit our website:

nwlegalconsortium.com