

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Welcome to

The Legal Team

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Children's

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Adult's & Litigation

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Property, Planning & Contracts



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welcome to Stockton-on-Tees

We know talented lawyers have choices. We hope this pack gives you a flavour of what makes Stockton different and why so many colleagues choose to build long and rewarding careers with us. Choosing your next role is about more than reading a job description. It's about understanding the culture, the people, the opportunities and whether an organisation feels like the right fit for you.

As part of our continued investment in Legal Services, we're growing our team and recruiting across Children's Social Care, Adults & Litigation and Property, Planning & Contracts. These are not replacement posts. They are newly created opportunities designed to strengthen our in-house expertise, increase capacity and support the ambitious future of Stockton-on-Tees.

Whether your passion lies in supporting vulnerable children and families, advising on complex litigation and adult social care matters, or helping deliver major regeneration and development projects, you'll find meaningful work that genuinely makes a difference to people's lives and communities.

We believe talented lawyers should be able to build a successful career without sacrificing their life outside work. We offer genuinely flexible working arrangements of up to 37 hours per week, allowing you to shape a working pattern that works around your life, family commitments and interests. Whether that's full-time, part-time, compressed hours, hybrid working or something in between, we're open to the conversation.

When you do come into the office, you'll be working from Dunedin House, our modern headquarters in the heart of Stockton. Bright, contemporary and designed for collaboration, it's a space where people genuinely enjoy coming together, sharing ideas and supporting one another.

Many of our lawyers tell us they've found something here that can be difficult to find elsewhere. The quality and complexity of work often rival private practice, but without the billing targets, time recording pressures and constant focus on chargeable hours. Instead, you'll work on challenging and high-profile matters where the focus is on outcomes, relationships and making a positive impact. You'll have the opportunity to develop deeper expertise in your chosen specialism whilst still benefiting from the variety, collaboration and breadth that local government legal practice offers. No two days are ever quite the same.

We know that choosing your next role is a significant decision. That's why we've tried to give you an honest insight into our culture, our people and the opportunities available. What you'll hopefully see is a team that is ambitious, supportive, collaborative and genuinely committed to helping one another succeed.

If you're looking for challenging and meaningful work, flexibility that fits around your life, opportunities to develop your chosen specialism, and a team where you can make a visible difference every day, we'd love to hear from you.


Head of Legal Services

Hear from the Team

Chloe Sherry, Lawyer (Adult & Litigation)

I started working at the Council in January 2021 as an Apprentice Legal Officer within the Legal Support Team, completing the CILEX Level 6 Fast-Track Chartered Legal Executive Apprenticeship alongside my job.

The role exposed me to all areas covered by Legal Services which is where I found an interest in Adult and Litigation matters. My career progressed alongside the apprenticeship where I was initially promoted to Legal Officer within the Legal Support Team and then was successful in applying for a Lawyer vacancy within the Adults & Litigation Team.

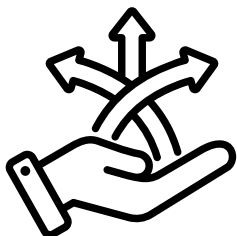
My workload involves a wide variety of matters including Court of Protection proceedings, advising on adult mental health, safeguarding, ordinary residence, and general queries.

I represent the Local Authority in appeals brought by Parents/Carers in the SEND Tribunal and attend the Magistrates Court for education prosecutions or seeking applications for a Premises Closure Order as instructed by Trading Standards or Enforcement.

Each day can look very different, and no two queries are the same. I enjoy the variety as it keeps my working weeks interesting and means I am continuously developing my skills and knowledge.

As a newly qualified Lawyer working in a busy area, I am fortunate to work alongside a small team of experienced lawyers, who are always there to support me with my development and learning.

The flexibility of the role allows me to work from home to keep an eye on my mischievous cocker spaniel, whilst also being able to break up the week by going into the office to catch up with colleagues over cake and a cuppa from the Dunedin café.



Background to the Team

Legal Services plays a vital role in supporting the Council to deliver services lawfully, effectively and in the best interests of Stockton-on-Tees residents.

Our work is diverse, challenging and rewarding, spanning everything from protecting vulnerable children and adults, supporting major regeneration projects and procurement activity, to representing the Council in courts and tribunals.

Our team brings together specialists across a wide range of legal disciplines, including Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Regulatory and Litigation, Property, Contracts and Highways, supported by an experienced Legal Practice Team that provides the operational backbone of the service.

Together, we help colleagues navigate complex legal issues, manage risk, support decision-making and deliver positive outcomes for our communities.

One Team. Multiple Specialisms. Endless Opportunities.



Regulatory & Litigation

- Notifications in the Magistrate's and Crown Court
- Trading Standards, Planning, Health and Safety and Food Safety
- High Court and County Court Litigation
- Debt recovery
- Licensing matters
- Employment Tribunal cases/Other Tribunal cases
- Housing Litigation
- SEND Tribunals
- Education law



Property, Contracts & Highways

- Regenerative schemes and major projects
- Commercial property transactions
- Land acquisitions and disposals
- Commercial leases
- Development Agreements
- Conveyancing
- Highways and traffic schemes
- Planning agreements
- Contracts and Commissioning arrangements
- Public procurement advice
- Subsidy Control advice



Adult Social Care

- Adult Social Care court proceedings
- Mental Health
- Public Inquiries/Inquests
- Judicial Review Proceedings
- Safeguarding



Children's Social Care

- Childcare proceedings
- Safeguarding
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers
- Judicial Review proceedings



Legal Practice Team

Our Legal Practice Team provides essential professional and administrative support to lawyers and legal officers across the service. The team plays a vital role in ensuring cases, court proceedings and legal transactions are managed efficiently and effectively.

The team supports; Court and tribunal administration, Case management and document preparation, Legal correspondence and client liaison, Committee and governance processes, Land and property transactions, Children's and Adults' social care proceedings, Regulatory and litigation matters, Contract and procurement work, General legal business support

LEGAL SERVICES TEAM



Ged Morton
Director of Corporate Services



Julie Butcher
Head of Legal Services



Roisin McKenzie
Lead Solicitor



Rebecca Jackson
Lead Solicitor



April Pilgrim
Lead Solicitor



Elaine Garrett
Legal Practice Manager

Steve Rovardi
Senior Solicitor

Alison Douglas
Senior Solicitor

Lauren McEnaney
Senior Solicitor

Carol Tunny
Senior Lawyer

Jenny Spence
Solicitor

Natalie Hodgson
Senior Lawyer

Michele Stowe
Lawyer

Chloe Sherry
Lawyer / Solicitor

Demi Watson
Lawyer / Solicitor

Allen W Squires
Senior Lawyer

Siobhan Barber
Lawyer

Steven Livingston
Lawyer / Solicitor

Katie Neary
Lawyer

Jamal Mahood
Legal Officer

Kieron Summersgill
Trainee Legal Officer

Niamh Hogan
Legal Officer

Suzanne Rose
Legal Officer

Emilia Vaughan
Legal Practice Assistant

**Admission Appeal
Panel Team**

Laura Poppleton
Legal Officer

Jessica Browne
Legal Officer



The Opportunities

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Children's

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Adult's & Litigation

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Property, Planning & Contracts

Why Now? Why Stockton?

We're growing. As part of a significant investment in Legal Services, we're expanding our team and recruiting across three specialist legal areas. This isn't about replacing people. It's about building capacity, strengthening expertise and creating a legal service that is equipped to support the Council's ambitious future.

We're creating opportunities for experienced lawyers to develop deeper specialisms whilst still enjoying the variety, collaboration and public-sector impact that make local government law so rewarding.

Whether your passion lies in Childcare, Adult Social Care, Litigation, Property, Planning, Contracts or Regeneration, you'll be able to focus on the work you love whilst continuing to benefit from exposure to broader legal issues, corporate projects and complex cross-service challenges.

Work Around Your Life, Not The Other Way Around

We know that great lawyers don't all want the same thing. Some want flexibility around family commitments. Some want more time for hobbies, travel or volunteering. Some are looking to leave behind billable hours and rigid targets. Others enjoy the technical challenge of private practice but want better balance and greater purpose. That's why we offer genuinely flexible working arrangements of up to 37 hours per week, with opportunities to shape your working pattern around you.

You'll work directly with senior officers, Members, partners and clients on significant legal matters that shape services, places and lives across the Borough.



The opportunities

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Children's

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Adult's & Litigation

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Property, Planning & Contracts

The Best of Both Worlds

Many of our lawyers tell us they've found something here that can be difficult to find elsewhere.

The complexity and quality of work often rivals private practice, but without the billing targets, time recording pressures and constant focus on chargeable hours. Instead, you'll work on challenging, high-profile matters where the focus is on outcomes, relationships and making a positive impact.

You'll have the opportunity to develop deeper expertise in your chosen specialism whilst still benefiting from the variety, collaboration and breadth of local government legal practice.

A Team you'll want to Join

We're incredibly proud of our culture.

Legal Services was voted the Council's "Friendliest Team" through our Investors in People engagement work, and that's something we work hard to live up to every day.

You'll join a supportive, approachable and collaborative team where people share knowledge, celebrate success and genuinely want each other to do well. Whether you're an experienced local government lawyer or joining us from private practice, you'll find colleagues who are invested in your success and development.

Looking for Your Next Move?

We're particularly interested in hearing from experienced Solicitors, Barristers and FCILEX professionals who want:

- ✓ More flexibility
- ✓ Greater work-life balance
- ✓ Interesting and meaningful work
- ✓ Genuine career progression
- ✓ Supportive colleagues
- ✓ High-quality office space and hybrid working
- ✓ The opportunity to specialise while maintaining variety
- ✓ A chance to make a visible difference every day from you.



Lawyer/Senior Lawyer

Children's

Not every legal role allows you to see the direct impact of your work. In Children's Social Care, the advice you provide helps shape some of the most important decisions that can be made about a child's future. You'll work at the heart of safeguarding, supporting social workers, managers and senior leaders to make decisions that protect children, support families and achieve the best possible outcomes for young people across Stockton-on-Tees.

This is a role for lawyers who enjoy combining strong legal expertise with practical problem-solving, professional curiosity and relationship-building. You'll work closely with Children's Services colleagues and partner agencies, becoming a trusted adviser on complex and often sensitive matters where your legal judgement will genuinely matter.

Advocacy at the Heart of the Role

For many lawyers, the opportunity to maintain and develop advocacy skills is one of the most rewarding aspects of practice.

This role provides regular opportunities to represent the Council in court proceedings, tribunals, appeals and hearings. You'll prepare cases, present arguments and advocate on behalf of the Council, developing strong courtroom experience whilst being supported by an experienced and highly collegiate legal team.

Whether you're already an accomplished advocate or looking to build your confidence and experience in this area, you'll have the opportunity to develop skills that are increasingly difficult to maintain in many legal environments.

Build Your Specialism

As our service continues to grow, we're looking to strengthen capacity and build even greater specialist expertise. We are therefore particularly interested in hearing from lawyers who already have experience within Children's Social Care and are looking to further develop their career within a supportive and ambitious local authority environment.

Want to learn more?

email Roisin.McKenzie@stockton.gov.uk



Lawyer/Senior Lawyer

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Adult's & Litigation

Variety. Advocacy. Influence.

If you're the type of lawyer who enjoys variety, thrives on advocacy and likes solving problems, this is a role where you'll never be short of opportunity.

Our Adults & Litigation team supports a broad range of Council services, providing pragmatic, solution-focused legal advice across areas including Adult Social Care, Licensing, Education and SEND, Employment, Prosecutions and wider litigation matters. No two days are the same and no two caseloads are identical.

This role places you at the centre of decision-making, working closely with officers, elected members, partner organisations and external agencies to help ensure the Council delivers safe, lawful and effective services for residents. You'll become a trusted adviser, helping colleagues navigate complex legal issues whilst managing risk and supporting positive outcomes.

A Role for Lawyers Who Enjoy Advocacy

As part of this role, you'll have opportunities to represent the Council at Courts, Tribunals, Appeals and Licensing Committees, developing and maintaining strong advocacy skills whilst building confidence and experience.

We are particularly interested in hearing from lawyers with an interest in Education, SEND or Regulatory services (experience is welcome but not essential)

Unlike many specialist roles, Adults & Litigation offers an exceptional breadth of work. It provides the opportunity to deepen expertise in your chosen areas whilst developing a wider understanding of local government law and the challenges facing public services.

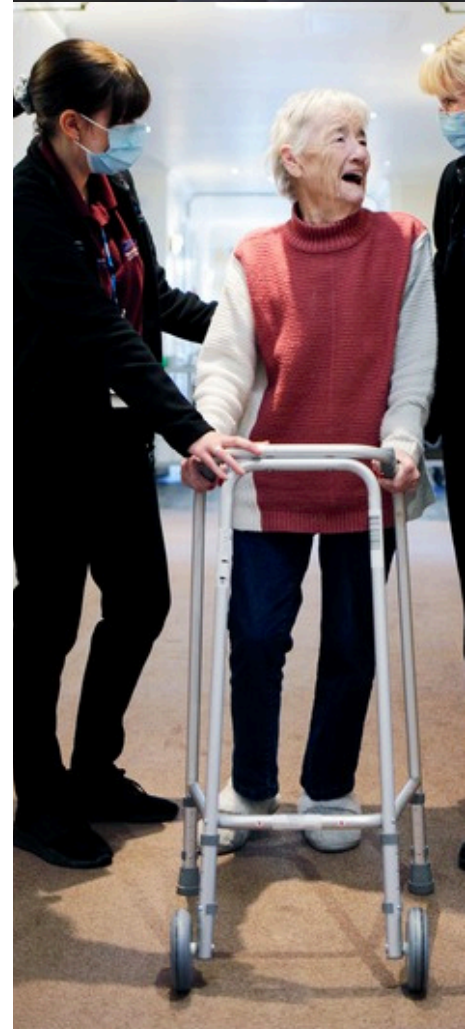
More Than Just Litigation

This is a role for lawyers who enjoy building relationships, influencing decisions and finding practical legal solutions.

You'll be encouraged to contribute ideas, support service improvement and work collaboratively with colleagues across the Council.

Want to learn more?

email rebecca.jackson@stockton.gov.uk



Lawyer/Senior Lawyer

Lawyer/Senior Lawyer: Property, Planning & Contracts)

This is an opportunity to work at the centre of some of the most significant projects taking place across Stockton-on-Tees. From major regeneration schemes and town centre investment programmes to strategic land acquisitions, commercial developments, planning matters and infrastructure projects, your work will help shape the places where people live, work and spend their time.

As part of our Property, Planning & Contracts team, you'll advise on matters that are visible, meaningful and often high profile. The legal advice you provide won't disappear into a filing cabinet. You'll be able to see projects move from concept to completion and know that your contribution played a part in making them happen.

Work on Projects That Matter

Stockton is an ambitious Borough with an exciting future. Our legal team supports major regeneration initiatives, commercial opportunities, development projects, highways schemes, strategic acquisitions and a wide range of planning and property matters. This means you'll have exposure to a diverse and interesting portfolio of work that continues to evolve alongside the Borough itself.

Whether you're working on a complex property transaction, supporting a regeneration project or advising on planning and contractual matters, you'll find opportunities to broaden your expertise whilst developing your own areas of specialism.

More Than Traditional Property Law

We're looking for lawyers who enjoy being involved in projects, building relationships and helping find solutions. You'll work closely with senior officers, Members, external partners and stakeholders, providing practical advice that balances legal, commercial and operational considerations. The role offers a unique combination of technical legal work, strategic involvement and visible impact.

Whether you already specialise in Property, Planning, Highways or Contracts, or you are looking to further broaden your experience, you'll join a brilliant team committed to helping colleagues grow and develop.

Want to learn more?

email april.pilgrim@stockton.gov.uk



What are we looking for?

Solicitor or Barrister or FCILEX, fully qualified to practise in England and Wales

Knowledge of local government services and the statutory responsibilities

Knowledge of the legal, political and governance framework within which local authorities operate, including an understanding of the relationship between Officers and Elected Members.

Knowledge of Local Government services and the statutory responsibilities, priorities and challenges facing local authorities.

Knowledge of effective stakeholder engagement, negotiation and communication techniques, enabling the provision of clear, practical and proportionate legal advice.

Knowledge of case management principles and workload prioritisation, including the ability to assess risk and determine appropriate levels of involvement, escalation and delegation.

Knowledge of corporate governance principles and the importance of adopting a corporate approach to service delivery and decision-making.

Knowledge of relevant legislative and policy developments impacting your specialist area.

Knowledge of professional standards, ethics and best practice applicable to Solicitors, Barristers and FCILEX professionals.

Recent experience of legal practice including advocacy experience

Provision of legal advice relating to your specialist area.

**please see respective person specifications for each post as there are variables by role.*



A day in the life

Lawyer

Whether at home, Dunedin House, or court, agile working gives you flexibility. Begin your day by reviewing emails, case updates, and new instructions from internal client departments, including Community Safety, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Licensing and Adult Social Care.

Morning

Join a TEAMS or in-person meeting with internal clients or partner agencies. You might be advising on a criminal prosecution matter, guiding officers through licensing issues, or preparing for an upcoming tribunal or court hearing in an adult social care or closure order case.

Lunch

Lunch in the wellbeing room, a stroll by the river, meeting a colleague at the Riverside café, or simply taking a breather at home; whatever supports your wellbeing. We trust you to balance your time and take the breaks you need.

Afternoon

The afternoon might be spent analysing new legislation and what it means for council services, drafting guidance or legal briefings, updating colleagues on emerging case law, or contributing to corporate projects and policy development. You play a key role in advising upon matters that shape how the Council delivers for local people.

Wrap Up & Reflect

Close the day by updating case notes, planning tomorrow's hearings or meetings, tracking progress on litigation or advisory matters, and ensuring key deadlines are in hand. End the day knowing your work has strengthened decisions, protected the Council; which ultimately benefits the borough of Stockton-on-Tees.



Our transformation programme



The Powering Our Future programme is an ambitious long-term vision for the future of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

It is a new way of working for the Council which will see us work with our partners and communities to put in place new and innovative approaches that provide excellent services and value for money.

This will allow us to not only save money but also reshape what we do for the better and in the best interests of our residents.

Together with our partners we will make sure Stockton-on-Tees is a fair and equal place, where everyone is proud to live, work and enjoy. A place where our communities flourish and people feel they belong. We want everyone in our Borough to participate in building a brighter future for all of us.

Powering Our Future sets an outcome-focused direction for the Council and is based around 5 key missions:

- Colleagues
- Communities
- Partnerships
- Transformation
- Regeneration





Values

One Team: We work together across the Council, showing leadership at all levels, collaborating with partners, and supporting each other with clear, open communication.

Community Focused: Our communities are at the heart of every decision. We listen, understand what matters most, and strive for customer service excellence.

Inclusive: We embrace diversity as a strength, challenge barriers to inclusion, and ensure equality across our workforce. We support positive work-life balance and value what matters to others.

Ambitious: We aim high every day; being bold, innovative, and open to change. We seek opportunities to learn, develop, and inspire others.

Accountable: We deliver on our promises with honesty and transparency. We take ownership, manage resources responsibly, and make a positive difference for colleagues and communities.

Our vision for the Borough

Stockton-on-Tees is home. A warm and friendly place where we welcome others and come together as a single community. We are a diverse and inspiring Borough, culturally rich and with confidence in a future that we can all share and be proud of. At the economic heart of Tees Valley, we are a dynamic, safe and healthy place, where everyone can grow and succeed. We work together to reduce inequalities and remove barriers to opportunity. We are Team Stockton-on-Tees.

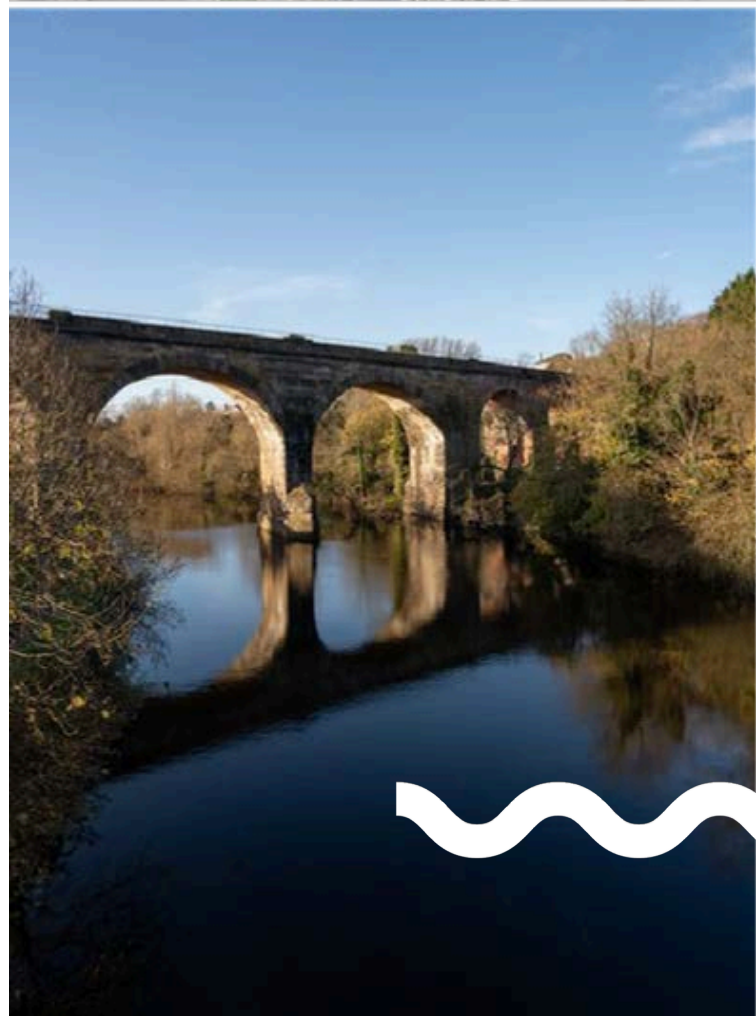


STOCKTON ON TEES

Stockton-on-Tees is more than just a place. It's a vibrant, welcoming and affordable community with a rich history and stunning landscapes. Embrace the warmth of its people, explore the nooks and crannies of its past, and bask in the splendour of its natural surroundings.

A growing population of over 200,000 people call one of the six towns here "home", and with beautiful parks, open spaces and towns set against the backdrop of the River Tees, a world-class year-round events programme and excellent housing and schools, it's easy to see why.

We're famous for innovation. We've innovated in the past, we're innovating right now, and we will continue to innovate in the future. 5,500 businesses operate here, contributing £4billion to the economy every year.



We are very proud to be home to six thriving towns, each of them unique. Take Yarm for example with it's Georgian High Street, cobbled wynds and 43-arch viaduct. Here you can enjoy an array of independent shops and national chains, award-winning restaurants, artisan coffee shops. You can try an escape room or just relax on the River Tees.

Compare that to Stockton High Street where bold work is happening to create a visionary riverside urban park, joining our retail offer to the River Tees. The development will offer events spaces, play areas, heritage influences and opportunities for pop-up concessions across a flexible, accessible park that will link the High Street to Stockton riverside. Set to complete in 2026 and with open spaces for community and large-scale events for people of all ages, Stockton Waterfront will be a hub of activity for both residents and visitors to enjoy.

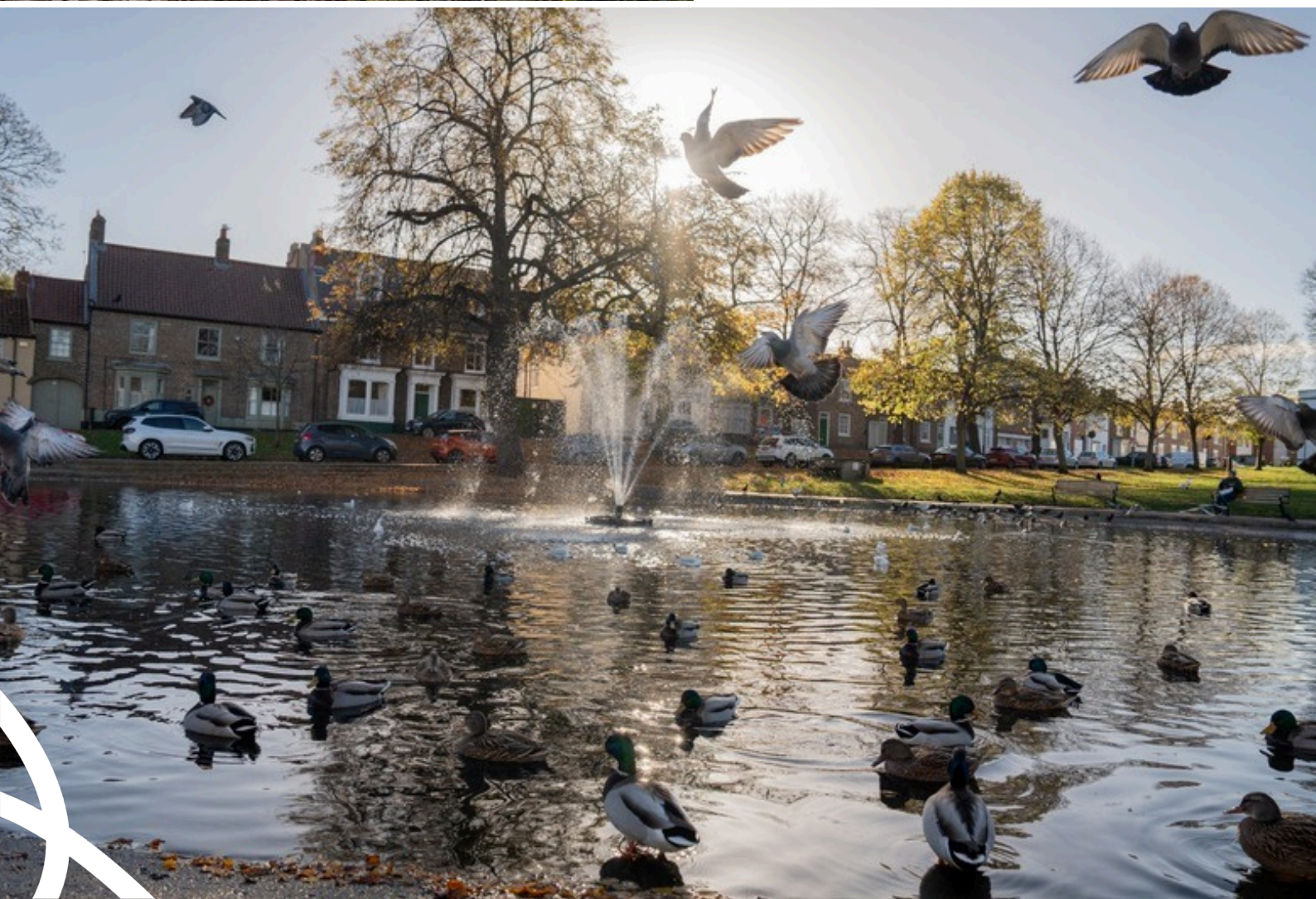




There's always something going on in Stockton-on-Tees including entertainment, shopping, theatre, museums or leisure attractions. A packed programme of festivals and events throughout the year includes Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF), an annual free outdoor arts and street theatre festival that brings together some of the finest street theatre, dance, music and arts acts from here and overseas.



Following a multi million-pound refurbishment, Stockton Globe is now bringing the world's biggest names in music and comedy to the North East of England. A major restoration project saw this beautiful art deco building transformed into an event venue fit for the 21st Century.



Location

Dunedin House is our modern and energy efficient Head Quarters. Located on the south bank of the River Tees on Teesdale Business Park, with close proximity to Stockton Town Centre. It's easily accessible by car via the A66 and A19 trunk roads, with free staff parking on site. There's lockable and fully contained bike storage lockers if you'd prefer to cycle here.

By train, the closest station is a 15-minute walk away, and frequent bus services run to Stockton High Street, just across the river, less than 5 minutes walk away.



Benefits

Pay



Competitive pay, offering incremental progression. We are a living wage employer.

Balance



Life continues around your career, and we understand that. We offer agile working, flexible hours and carers leave.

Perks



Stretch your pay further with discounts on over 1000 retailers.

Health



Online GP appointments, access to mental wellbeing resources and lifestyle savings.

Holidays



Up to 32 days of annual leave plus bank holidays, and the option to buy even more.

Recognition



An Annual Colleagues Award Ceremony where we can celebrate your achievements.

Pension



You'll join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) - one of the most generous and secure pension schemes in the UK.

Family



We know how important family is, which is why we offer enhanced maternity, paternity, and adoption pay.

Transport



Get moving with access to the NHS Fleet Car Lease Scheme and Cycle to Work scheme.

Community



Take paid time out of work to volunteer locally with our Employee Volunteering Scheme.