



UK PRO BONO WEEK

Law Firm Guide to Pro Bono Week 2026

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About UK Pro Bono Week

Each year, UK Pro Bono Week gives the legal profession a valuable opportunity to come together, celebrate what has been achieved and encourage even more people to take part in pro bono work.

Law firms of every size and specialism play an important role in improving access to justice by helping individuals who might otherwise be unable to access legal advice, and supporting charities and community organisations.

Whether your firm has a long-established pro bono programme or is just beginning to explore how it can contribute, UK Pro Bono Week is a positive moment to reflect on achievements, engage colleagues, share stories and inspire future action.

Not every firm is at the same stage of its pro bono journey. Some have dedicated teams and sophisticated programmes. Others are looking for ways to increase participation or taking initial steps to launch their first initiative. You may be the only solicitor at your firm undertaking pro bono work and are looking for ways to encourage your colleagues to also get involved.

Wherever your firm is today, the most important step is the next one you choose to take.

This guide is designed to help you take practical, achievable action during Pro Bono Week. You do not need to do everything. Choose one activity, several initiatives, or an ambitious programme of events. Every action, however small, helps to strengthen the culture of pro bono across the profession and increase access to justice for those who need it most.

Celebrating 25 Years

Pro Bono Week takes place between 2–6 November 2026.

2026 is the 25th anniversary of Pro Bono Week and this year's theme is:

Celebrate a tradition. Inspire action. Shape the future.

1. **Celebrate** the legal profession's long tradition of pro bono, and reflect on 25 years of sector progress in supporting access to justice.
2. **Inspire** lawyers to action pro bono going forward, by showcasing both how pro bono impacts lives and has professional benefits.
3. **Discuss** how pro bono should be delivered over the next 25 years to address unmet needs in a changing legal landscape.

During UK Pro Bono Week, we aim to:

- Celebrate the contribution made by pro bono volunteers across the legal profession.
- Raise awareness of the importance and impact of pro bono work.
- Encourage greater participation from lawyers and legal professionals, including through events like [Pro Bono Zero to Hero](#).
- Share best practice and innovative ideas.
- Strengthen relationships across the pro bono community.
- Inspire firms to invest and participate in sustainable, impactful pro bono programmes.
- Highlight the positive outcomes achieved for individuals, charities and communities.

Why Law Firms Matter

Every year, law firms make an enormous difference by contributing thousands of hours of legal support, helping individuals navigate complex legal problems, assisting charities and social enterprises, supporting community organisations and helping to bridge the justice gap.

UK Pro Bono Week offers firms a practical and inspiring opportunity to:



Raise Awareness

Help colleagues see why access to justice matters and how their skills can make a meaningful difference.



Improve Pro Bono Practice

Share learning, explore new opportunities, and strengthen existing programmes.



Celebrate Success

Recognise volunteers, showcase achievements and share impact stories that encourage others to get involved.



Increase Engagement

Encourage more lawyers and business services professionals to get involved, build confidence and create a stronger culture of giving back.

Every Pro Bono Story Matters

Behind every pro bono matter is a story; the stories demonstrate why pro bono matters. They put people at the centre of legal practice and show the profession's commitment to serving society.

A family securing stable housing.

A charity receiving the legal advice it needs to continue serving its community.

A small organisation overcoming a legal obstacle that threatened its future.

A junior lawyer gaining confidence through their first client interaction.

Not every firm is at the same point in its pro bono journey, and there is no single model for success.

You certainly do not need to do everything to make a meaningful contribution.

This guide offers top tips and a range of ideas and resources that you can adapt for your firm to use during UK Pro Bono Week.

Whether you choose one activity or ten, every action helps build confidence, encourage participation and strengthen a more engaged and impactful pro bono community.

The important thing is to start, and to build from there.

Five Top Tips for All Firms



Start Planning Early

Engagement is easier to build when communications and events are planned in advance, giving colleagues time to understand, support and take part. Notify info@probonoweb.org.uk about your event ASAP!

Keep Messaging Simple

Focus on one or two key messages that colleagues can easily understand and support.

The [UK Pro Bono Week website](https://www.probonoweb.org.uk) has lots of media resources to help you spread the message.

Make Participation Easy

Provide ready-made assets, calendar invites, links and clear calls to action so colleagues feel confident about taking the next step.

Celebrate People

Recognition is one of the most effective ways to make volunteers feel valued and encourage long-term engagement.

Think Beyond One Week

Use UK Pro Bono Week as a catalyst for sustained activity, new conversations and continued momentum throughout the year.

No matter what you decide to do, don't forget to incorporate a Legal Bake into your event, allowing you to celebrate UK Pro Bono Week and raise important funds for the Access to Justice Foundation.

Simple but Effective Activities



Host a Lunch and Learn

A Lunch and Learn is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to engage colleagues. It involves minimal cost, is accessible to large numbers and can create lively discussion, shared learning and renewed enthusiasm.

The event could feature a pro bono partner, pro bono manager, charity client, junior volunteer or external advice organisation.

-  **6 weeks before:** Secure speakers, book meeting rooms or virtual platforms, and confirm the format. Decide on catering if applicable.
-  **4 weeks before:** Launch invitations, publish internal promotion and create a registration process. You can use our template poster to help.
-  **2 weeks before:** Share the speaker profiles, prepare any slides or materials, encourage questions in advance, and promote the event through leadership channels. You can use the template slide deck as a starting point.
-  **During the event week:** Deliver the session, capture photos and record the key takeaways.
-  **After the event:** Share the recording (if applicable), publish a summary article or social media post, and signpost attendees to volunteering opportunities. Use the [Pro Bono Week UK media resources](#) to help you do this.

More Ideas

Remind those on 20+ pro bono hours of the Pro Bono Recognition List's 25 hours target, so they have time to reach it before the end of the calendar year.

Promote Pro Bono Week on social media. You could share volunteer stories, impact statistics, photos from events, or messages from firm leadership.

Work with your communications team and consider internal news articles, intranet features, video interviews and client-facing stories where appropriate.

Create a pro bono Teams/Slack channel so you have a dedicated space to share opportunities, promote events and build community among volunteers.

Practical but Impactful Activities

Launch a Pro Bono Leaderboard

-  Determine what information can be safely and accurately reported from your time-recording systems.
-  Set the parameters of the leaderboard, e.g. individual hours, practice group participation, office participation, most improved team, or first-time volunteers.
-  Obtain all relevant internal approvals (leadership, finance, HR, compliance).
-  Give advance notice so colleagues understand the purpose, the methodology and how results will be communicated.
-  Plan how and when during the week the leaderboard will be unveiled, e.g. Teams call, Legal Bake coffee morning, Lunch and Learn event.

Top tip: Focus on celebrating participation, rather than creating excessive competition.



More Ideas

Set up a pro bono working group or committee, either internally or within your community, and host the first meeting during Pro Bono Week. A working group helps create ownership, generate ideas and maintain momentum.

Publish a firm-wide pro bono impact story, celebrating hours recorded, volunteer participation, matter highlights and positive client outcomes.

Deliver pro bono project training, using UK Pro Bono Week as an additional motivator to help people feel prepared, supported and ready to volunteer.

Use UK Pro Bono Week as an opportunity to publicly recognise colleagues who have made significant contributions. You could do this on LinkedIn, through leadership messages or in internal articles, helping volunteers feel valued and inspiring others to take part.

Ambitious but Transformative Activities



Hold a Pro Bono Awards Ceremony

Recognition drives engagement. An awards ceremony creates a powerful opportunity to celebrate contributions, thank volunteers and reinforce the importance of pro bono across the firm.

You do not need a large budget or formal black-tie event. Awards can be presented during a Lunch and Learn, firm meeting, Legal Bake or standalone ceremony. The key objective is to celebrate those contributing to pro bono, showcase the impact their work is having and encourage others to get involved.

- 🏆 **Eight weeks before:** Agree the categories and launch the awards. Categories could be based on job title – e.g. pro bono associate of the year, or impact focused – e.g. community impact award, etc. Launch the awards and request nomination submissions. Book a room or set up the virtual platform for the award ceremony.
- 🏆 **Six weeks before:** Form judging panel and provide them with the nominations to review. If you are hosting a larger event, invite firm leadership, community partners or charity representatives to participate.
- 🏆 **Three weeks before:** Confirm the winners and highly commended nominees, before arranging the certificates/prizes. Notify the winners if advance preparation is required, e.g. a short acceptance speech or tech checks.
- 🏆 **Two weeks before:** Finalise the event programme and prepare a slide deck if one is needed. Consider incorporating volunteer testimonials, client feedback or impact statistics throughout the presentation. If the event is virtual, test the technology and brief presenters and award recipients.
- 🏆 **One week before:** Share final reminders and build excitement through internal communications and encourage colleagues to attend.
- 🏆 **During event week:** Host the awards ceremony and make sure to capture photographs and videos.
- 🏆 **After the event:** Publish a celebration article, share the winner's profiles and success stories. Use the momentum to promote future pro bono opportunities. Use the [UK Pro Bono Week media resources](#) to help you do this.

More Ideas

To increase attendance at the awards and have an opportunity to raise money for the Access to Justice Foundation, combine the awards ceremony with a Legal Bake.

Host a pro bono summit/roundtable bringing together lawyers, clients, advice organisations, charities, universities and community partners.

UK Pro Bono Week can provide an ideal launch platform for advice clinics, community partnerships, charity support programmes, specialist legal projects and cross-firm collaborations, helping turn good intentions into practical action.

Create a pro bono mentorship programme to support junior volunteers, build confidence and strengthen programme sustainability.

Capture pro bono video stories to share internally and externally. Keep videos short, authentic and accessible – you could ask volunteers why they do pro bono, what their most memorable pro bono matter is, or what advice they would give to first time volunteers?

Organise a pro bono roadshow to bring opportunities directly to colleagues and make it easier for them to ask questions, understand what is available and feel encouraged to take part. You could visit different offices, floors, practice groups or teams.

You can also look on the [UK Pro Bono Week website](#) for more event ideas and tips.

Thank You

UK Pro Bono Week is ultimately about people:

- The individuals who volunteer their time.
- The organisations that create opportunities.
- The communities that benefit from legal support.

Whether your firm chooses a simple awareness campaign or launches a major new initiative, every action helps build a stronger culture of pro bono and expand access to justice.

Start where you are. Build on what you have. Celebrate progress. Use UK Pro Bono Week as an opportunity to encourage colleagues, strengthen your programme and write the next chapter in your firm's pro bono story.

And don't hesitate to take part in the [brilliant events](#) others are organising across the UK – and encourage your colleagues to do the same!

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