

Melanie Sewell-Rutter BA (Hons) Law



Melanie joined SVM as a Legal Research Assistant in 1997 however her role has evolved and now includes a more in-depth involvement in the legal process. Melanie graduated from University in 1997 with an Honours Degree in Law. After an initial placement with a Solicitor's firm in Wycombe, she was employed by SVM in a major litigation case to the value of £17M.

After spending ten years working in a Consulting Engineering firm she has developed a greater appreciation of the basics of both Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and has interspersed her work between legal and engineering duties. Working on projects such as the Y2K problem for large clients such as the Nationwide Building Society whilst also working with a number of Solicitors to research Points of Claims for mutual clients. As well as her Expert witness work she has also assisted SVM with its internal legal requirements for example the compilation of Standard Terms and Conditions for use on major projects.

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) - Law

Instructing Solicitors

Include:

- Beale & Co
- Berrymans Lace Mawer
- Cameron MacKenna
- Lee Crowder
- Davies Arnold Cooper
- Masons (London)
- Wragge & Co

Dispute Resolution

Electrical Defects

Initially Melanie worked on a major litigation case to the value of £17m. This involved the compilation and collation of all the project documentation, some 2,500 lever arch files and 6,000 drawings, in preparation for the case. She also assisted in briefing the solicitors, experts and assisted junior and leading counsel in the preparation of defence documentation, listing of the documents for discovery and the compilation of witness statements. This included spending many days in court assisting the experts, solicitors and Counsel. A favourable judgement was given at the end of the case.

Instructing Solicitors:
Berrymans Lace Mawer 1997-98

Poor Maintenance

Melanie assisted Expert witnesses in a landlord/tenant/maintenance contractor High Court action over the allegation of poor and insufficient maintenance over an 18-year period. Value of claim ~ £2.5M. Produced preliminary analysis of documentation and relevant data to ensure that experts had proof for the basis of the claim. Matter settled out of court.

Instructing Solicitors:
Masons (London) 1998

M&E Co-ordination

Assisting the solicitors acting for the project management consultant, Melanie reviewed a large quantity of documentation related to a complex claim that the consultant had failed in their duties with regard to the construction of a new, prestige hospital. Melanie assisted with the initial disclosure of the documentation to aid the Experts in their preparation of an interim report that was aimed at achieving a settlement in mediation proceedings. Value of claim £5-10M. Case is currently adjourned.

Instructing Solicitors:
Davies Arnold Cooper 1998-onwards

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Hospital Specifications

Acting as assistant to Michael Carver in a claim, involving malfunctioning incinerators. Her tasks involved data analysis and presentation.

Instructing Solicitors:
Cameron MacKenna 1999

Theatre Ventilation

Melanie was engaged in arbitration, which involved an allegedly badly designed ventilation system in an auditorium. Her role involved the management of all documentation, which included data analysis, document disclosure and attending the few hearings that occurred before the case was successfully settled.

Instructing Solicitors:
Beale & Co 1999-2000

Cost Overrun in Two Theatres

Melanie has recently concluded her involvement in a multimillion pound claim involving the design and construction of two large theatres, which went over time and budget. She was involved from the very outset in organising; the analysis of preliminary claims, production of reports and analysis of statements produced both by the instructing solicitors and the opposing solicitors.

As the case progressed she became more deeply involved in the day to day running of the case, at which point, due to her familiarity with the documentation, she was partially seconded to the solicitors to assist them. Once the case reached arbitration she attended the International Dispute Resolution Centre on a daily basis to assist the solicitors with case management, liaising with all of the Experts involved as well as Michael Carver. After six months in arbitration, the case finally settled.

Instructing Solicitors:
Lee Crowder 1999-2001

Documentation Management

Currently Melanie is involved in the databasing and data analysis of documentation for a large Hospital dispute. She was heavily involved in the creation of a fully searchable image database with report capabilities for use by all parties involved in the proceedings. This case is currently in negotiations.

Instructing Solicitors:
Wragge & Co 2000/-

Hospital Design

Melanie is also involved in a case concerning the design and construction of a major acute hospital in the Home Counties. SVM is acting for the defendant engineering services consultant in an ongoing litigation case. Melanie's work involves the analysis of documentation in regard to various points in the Particulars of Claim, for inclusion in the Draft Expert witness Report on alleged liability. Value of Claim ~ £2M.

Instructing Solicitors:
Berrymans Lace Mawer 2001/2

Conflict of Interest

With SVM being actively involved in the design and management of engineering services for many clients, there are inevitably occasions when a conflict of interest can arise. Melanie maintains comprehensive databases of clients and projects and is always able to readily check and identify potential conflict of interest at an early stage prior to full knowledge of any particular dispute.