

# Introducing new Wellington Central Districts Branch President

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Stephanie Bishop

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*New Wellington Central Districts Branch President, Stephanie Bishop spent 20 years working as a legal executive in the City of London before emigrating to New Zealand with her Kiwi husband in 2007.*



"I love the law, in particular property law," says Stephanie. "In London, I worked for mostly large firms – Dentons, Nabarro Nathanson (now part of CMS) and Withers and, in between, for a small firm specialising in property law. I have worked on huge property developments such as apartment blocks in London's Docklands and housing estates on London's outskirts. I became used to dealing with property work on a massive scale.

"My favourite development is The Knightsbridge where the penthouses sold for £17 million each in 2007; it provides five-star hotel style services for apartment owners. I believe one penthouse recently sold for £90 million – if only! Many of the developments I worked on were sold off-plan to foreign buyers and I was lucky to attend exhibitions in Singapore and Hong Kong; it certainly made life interesting."

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## Seeking a kiwi lifestyle for family

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The lure, however, of a Kiwi upbringing and more space for their family (a lifestyle block vs a terraced house) saw Stephanie and her husband, Dwayne, move to Whanganui 16 years ago. Stephanie recalls it being a bit fraught packing up a house and flying half-way around the world with a small daughter, four-week-old twins – and recovering from a caesarean section. "Well, you just get on with it!"

Despite loving her family life and being at home, Stephanie says something was missing. "I needed to get my teeth into something that wasn't related to my family. Serendipitously, my husband was tiling the hallway of a house in Whanganui, the owner of which was Dennis Brown, a consultant at Horsley Christie. They got talking and, to cut a long story short, Dennis invited me to contact the firm when I was ready to return to work – perfect timing. I was asked to undertake a project to review all the firm's trust files. It was a great introduction to working

life in New Zealand and I could build up my work hours as my children grew up. Horsley Christie was, and continues to be, a very family-friendly firm."

Stephanie's practice still includes property law (not quite on the scale of London) and now also trust administration, wills, powers of attorney and estate administration. "I very much enjoy my job and the responsibilities I have. I feel as though I'm making a difference," says Stephanie.

Stephanie says she relishes the client contact in her job. "I like people and helping them out when they come to Horsley Christie." She is also the firm's AML compliance officer which she says is quite a contrast – soft skills vs hard detail. "I'd had experience of AML in my City of London days, so I was happy to spearhead this for Horsley Christie. I get a great deal of satisfaction from the firm having top-notch compliance."

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## LENZ

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Stephanie has willingly stepped into former Branch President, Nicole Mangin's shoes after a year as vice president. "Nicole did an excellent job as branch president during the three years of Covid and several lockdowns when it was difficult to meet face-to-face socially and for CPD. Astonishingly, Nicole is also studying



Whanganui at night.

for an LLB – I salute her for her energy and focus. I don't know how she simultaneously managed her day job, her LENZ role and some high-level study," says Stephanie.

Stephanie's focus as branch president is to encourage branch members to enjoy as many events as possible. "Our roles as Registered Legal Executives flourish with social and professional contact; that collegiality helps us do our jobs better and enjoy our working lives. I look forward to meeting as many branch members as possible during my term."

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## 'Spare' time

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Ensuring not a minute of the day is wasted, Stephanie follows her children's sport and other activities. She is chair of Whanganui Collegiate School's Parents & Friends Association; in earlier years she sat on the local Montessori board and that of her children's primary school as well as Women's Refuge. She says, however, at the end of the day "I love to dance and enjoy music – that is huge relaxation for me." ■

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