

BRANCH EVENTS



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Things to consider before you start to plan your event:

- What are your objectives and outcomes for the event?
- How are you going to measure if your event was successful or not?
- Is this something your branch members will support?
- Does your potential date(s) and time clash with any major/national events such as bank holidays, religious festivals and major sporting events? Depending on the type of event it is also worth avoiding any school holiday periods.
- Agree a clear budget before you start and try to work out how you are going to spend it.
- Venues and catering are going to be your most expensive overheads. Try and negotiation on all your costs, make sure they are aware that your branch is a voluntary organisation, operating locally on a not for profit basis.
- For larger events (dinner dance, for example) could you obtain any sponsorship, perhaps from local companies or affiliated organisations?

Event suggestions:**Professional Development / Networking Opportunities**

Being part of the Branch, particularly the Committee, offers individuals leadership and management opportunities that may not be available to them in the workplace. Promote this, encourage people to join your committee to help themselves, rather than to help you.

Often events that you are organising will be relevant to other professional groups, think about this when marketing to ensure you reach as many potential attendees as possible. Offer to promote events on your branch microsite page. The more you promote the more likely your members will be to regularly check your events page and sign up to your mailing list.

Networking is not always about the individual. Often employers will encourage their staff to attend regional networking events, contact local firms and let them know that you exist. Your CPD/networking events might be of interest to them and their staff some of whom may not yet be aware of CILEx.

Continuing Professional Development - Workshops/Seminars

The CILEx CPD deadline date is the end of September. Organising workshops throughout the year will be of great benefit to your members. Don't forget to ask members what they would like covered to ensure you are providing a service that members want, not just what you think they want. District Judges and Barristers' Chambers are usually happy to be invited to give talks or training sessions on aspects of law.

Connect with other professional bodies e.g. CIM, CIPD to find out what their local branches are doing. Consider offering them the opportunity to deliver CPD workshops/seminars to your members.

Other presentations and workshops to consider are on Practice Rights, Entity regulations, judicial appointments and business skills, such as social media training.

Suitable venues: A meeting room in a law firm or local centre

The same style event could be organised to help Graduate or Associate members with their work based learning portfolio.

Suitable venues: A meeting room in a law firm, local chambers or local accredited centre

Student Support

Welcome the new members

Working with your local CILEx centre is a great way to meet and greet prospective new members. Try and link up with a centres open day and ask to have a stand to promote the branch to get new members. When courses start, offer to attend student induction sessions and let the members know that your branch exists and what support you can offer to them in addition to the support available to them from the CILEx Membership Directorate.

Suitable venue: At your local accredited CILEx centre

Celebrate the good, and help them through the tough, times

CILEx exams take place in January and June, organising revisions session might be useful prior to these dates. Ask your members what they would like the revision sessions to cover to ensure what you are offering is appropriate.

Getting in a speaker relevant in the area of revision might be a good way of engaging with your members and a beneficial way of learning.

CILEx course tutors and centres are usually very keen to be involved with branch activities; they can help with revision sessions and often want to belong to the branch as an Associate member.

Suitable venues: A meeting room in a law firm or local centre

Exam results are released in March following the January exams and in August for the June exams. A follow up celebration event after results have been received would be great for your branch members. For example put on some food and drink and hold a small reception style event.

Suitable venues: local pub or restaurant might be nice if they have a private area you can use.

Sometimes exam results are not the news hoped for. Set up a mentoring/buddy scheme to support all learners. Branch members have all experienced the positives of CILEx, but you also have hands on knowledge of the challenges and difficulties that members may experience. Be there for your local members, be aware of the support that CILEx Membership Directorate can offer and together we can help everyone succeed.

LawCare is an advisory and support service designed to help lawyers, their immediate families and their staff to deal with issues such as stress, depression, addiction, eating disorders and related emotional difficulties.

They offer the opportunity to discuss such problems which are interfering with, or have the potential to interfere with, work performance and/or family life and to seek help in resolving them in their early stages.

They are normally happy to give a talk on what they can offer and how it can benefit members who require such advice.

Suitable venues: A meeting room in a law firm or local centre

Career Development

Careers events in the local area are popular. Careers advice sessions such as CV clinics or presentation skills could be of great benefit to some of your members. You could liaise with local employers or recruitment agencies to ask them to deliver presentations which can offer members guidance on what the local sector recruitment situation is. . .what's hot and what's not and suggested career development options.

This does not have to be about encouraging member to leave their jobs! It can be used to encourage them to use the opportunities available to them to enhance the role they currently have or to progress in their current firm.

Suitable venue: depends on whether you are attending a pre-arranged one or organising one yourself. If organising one yourself why not liaise with your local centre and maybe run one as a joint venture

AGM

CILEx branch Annual Returns should be sent to CILEx by the end of February, after which an AGM must be organised. To encourage members to attend the AGM promote the benefit of branch membership to them. Why not provide some food and drink along with a networking or CPD session afterwards. Alternatively you could follow up with a social event such as a quiz night.

The AGM is also a good opportunity to recruit new committee members if required and encourage potential new members to attend to hear more about the branch and what professional development opportunity that branch management offers to them.

Suitable Venue: local pub or restaurant with its own private area, a meeting room in a local hotel or a community hall. You could also hold it a local law firm.

Social event ideas:

The events you run don't just have to be for development, CPD and learning they can also be just for fun!

Dinner dances are a very popular social event that many branches already successfully run. They are a great evening of celebration and some branches incorporate awards, such as student of the year. Wherever possible, senior CILEx staff /CILEx Council Members will attend your branch event so please give plenty of notice to CILEx HQ.

The incoming national president represents a regional constituency. Often their local branch will organise a welcome event after their inauguration. This is a great way to get the president involved in your branch and introduce them to the work you have done. Events such as historical tours and river trips have been arranged in the past

The Access to Justice Foundation works with a network of Legal Support Trusts which operate across England and Wales. The Trusts support the provision of free legal help through law centres, advice agencies and Citizens Advice Bureau by providing them with funding and other support.

LST's organise annual events such as sponsored legal walks to raise funds to support these advice agencies. For more information please contact us at branchsupport@cilex.org.uk. Alternately please contact Martha at The Access to Justice Foundation on marthadelaroch@atjf.org.uk

Becoming involved in the work of your local LST is a great opportunity to promote the work you do, support local access to justice and interact with other regional legal organisations. CILEx HQ can provide you with branded T-shirts so your branch members can stand out!

- Other suggestions
- Summer BBQ's
- Quiz nights
- Christmas party or Christmas meal
- Networking sessions

Don't forget, CILEx has a network of regional branches. All of whom have valuable information and best practice to share. Have a look at their microsites, contact them and get some ideas... you don't need to reinvent the wheel. Resources and experiences can be shared. If you are geographically close enough, you might even consider attending other branch's events.

If you need any support, help or advice with any of your events, please contact branchsupport@cilex.org.uk.

Example event timeline for organising a Dinner/Ball**Before your event****6-12 months****Action**

- Outline objectives and outcomes for your event
- How are you going to measure the success of your event?
- Establish the budget for your event. If charging confirm your ticket prices as this could affect your budget, also consider how you are going to take payment. Your ticket price should reflect your outgoings; you should be looking to at the very least break even.
- If inviting the President or Chief Executive contact the CEO's PA to check your event does not clash with any other and ask Helen Volichenko to enter the date in their diaries.
- Invite local Council Members
- When deciding on a date make sure it doesn't clash with any key dates such as bank holiday religious festivals, elections etc
- Complete the 'Branch Events Checklist –Equality and Diversity', form in Annex M and review throughout the organisation process.
- View potential venues, assess against any equality and diversity requirements. You must also consider costs of venue hire and the menu, how easy it is for your guests to get there, is there enough parking, cost of any additional equipment you require, i.e lectern microphones, PA system, screen and projector etc. Is the venue suitable for your numbers and the layout you require
- Book chosen venue and confirm the reservation in writing.
- Is a deposit required?
- Tell the venue you are a Not for Profit Voluntary organisation, some venues may agree to a larger discount.
- Give provisional numbers to the venue.
- Do not contract to dinner or room numbers

until much nearer the time. Problems can occur regarding payment if numbers are less than expected. You may have to pay for contracted numbers, no matter what.

- Keep a note of everything that is included within the cost, e.g. welcome drink, table decoration, use of sound equipment, etc. If appropriate see if you can get an all-inclusive charity package, which includes everything you require.
- Do you need to book any accommodation, negotiate a group rate if appropriate. If you are holding your event in a hotel you may be able to get a better discount on the hotel rooms if required. Advertise the appropriate guest rate and discount code if applicable to ensure your overnight guest benefit from this rate.

6 months

- Research and book your event speaker
- Book the band/disco or entertainment.
- Book the toastmaster if appropriate. You may have a branch member that can do this role for you and save money. They are quite expensive so be sure you require one before you book.
- Ask the venue if they have a preferred supplier list as this might save you money on your entertainment, florist and toaster master
- Tell Branch Members and key personnel to 'save the date'

Ongoing

6 months

- Stay in touch with your venue to let them know how your event planning is going
- Remember to always check your budget!
- Book your photographer. If you are using a photographer for the first time ensure you are happy with their prices and end products. Photo booths are a great idea and you could create your own to save money. Some photographers will also give you commission on items sold, so this is worth asking.
- Cost per hour?
- Cost for photographs (various sizes)?
- Any other extras – do you have to pay for their travel or food and drink on the night?
- Take appropriate action to ensure your

event is publicised on your branch's microsite. An advert template poster can be found in Annex N. Email Ellen Birch on ebirch@cilex.org.uk to advertise your event online.

- Are you having a theme? If so make sure the theme is consistent throughout. This will also have an impact on your budget.

4 months

- Draw up your guest list, try and invite people you want to influence: Local dignitaries, partners/owners of law firms, employers, centres, media, local law academics, etc. Eventbrite is a great online registration tool <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/>

3 months

- Choose menu and drinks list. Bear in mind the costs difference between sparkling wine and champagne for example. Some meats dishes will be more expensive than others
- Ensure you include a vegetarian alternative (see E&D Checklist) and cater for any specific requests. Also bear in mind what meat dish you choose as this will impact on some people's discussion. Chicken is always the best option.
- Do you need to book any transport?

3 months

- Design invitations and response card or tear-off section, if required. A template can be found in Annex O
- Include RSVP date and ask for notification of dietary or special requirements.
- Design menu cards, if required
- Contact the Membership Directorate team to ensure details of the event is listed on your branch microsite so that it can be promoted early.

Contact: Ellen Birch ebirch@cilex.org.uk Also remember to let Ellen know of any changes so she can keep the website up to date

Fill the Branches Poster/Flyer Template PDF with your branch information. This PDF can also be sent via email for direct promotion to your members or printed for use as paper flyers/posters.

If you want help with flyers/posters, contact CILEx HQ, we can help with this

- Re-visit your estimated budget for the event, based on quotes received.
- Write and send invitations. Make sure you include the dress code, RSVP address and date.
- Prepare a response sheet that can be updated easily and frequently. If using Eventbrite, you can download a list of confirmed attendees which you can cross check with your invite list. It will also record dietary requirements and any other information you may require.
- If appropriate advertise your event on social media sites

6 weeks

- Order flowers for tables and/or bouquets, if required.
- Send reminder emails or letters to invitees who have not replied. Invite extra guests if required.

4 weeks

- If there is a deadline for photographs after the event, agree the deadline in writing with the photographer. This agreed date also needs to be communicated to your guests on the night.

2 weeks

- Give final numbers to the venue, including any dietary requirements and additional meals for the photographer, toastmaster, band, etc. The venue will also want to know where any specific dietary requirements are sitting.
- Start to arrange seating plan. Table place cards need to be used whenever seating plans are required. Make sure key people are seated next to appropriate guests. Do you need a top table?
- Are name badges or table places required? CILEx Badge sheets are available from HQ. Please contact Emma Hargreaves.
- Send guest list, event schedule and menu to toastmaster. It is important they understand how you expect the evening to run to include timings. They will then help on the night to ensure everything runs on

time. This is one of the reasons you have hired them after all.

2 weeks

- Finalise arrangements with Speaker –length of speech, subjects to be covered, audience, when are they expected to speak.
- Make sure you receive a floor plan and event schedule from the venue to avoid any confusion on the day. It is important the venue understand how you want the evening to run including timings, when and how long speeches are etc Contact branchsupport@cilex.org.uk for an example if required

1 week

- Send out joining instruction to all guests, to include a map and confirm time, date, dress code, any special parking or arrival arrangements etc. it is also worth include a contact number encase someone needs to get hold of you in an emergency.

1 days

- If guests are registering formally, print out an alphabetical registration list. If name badges are used, organise them in alphabetical order on a table near the reception/registration area.

Leave this as late as possible as things will always change.

Post Event

- Hold a post event meeting to evaluate the event.
- Email the CILEx Journal team for a post event feature; include a photograph (not from a mobile phone!)
- Email branchsupport@cilex.org.uk a copy of your guest list. For continuity purposes and to help with admin.
- Work with your branches media contact to issue a press release

Please ensure you inform Ellen Birch of all of your events so we can help promote them for you via the Branches website.

Branch Website Amendments



We will be grateful if you will use the template below for ALL future requests for branch microsite updates.

To avoid unnecessary delays/errors:

- Please proof read before submission, checking all dates and contact details
- Please do not submit draft copies*
- Please do not alter font size/colour
- Please do not insert bullets or pictures into the boxes below

* If you would like advice/guidance on your draft submission please email ebirch@cilex.org.uk under separate cover.

1. ABOUT

(NB In this section, we use a standard paragraph for every branch web page. However, if there is anything you would like to add to your individual page, please insert the content below)

2. NEWS & EVENTS

Event:

Event date:

Event time:.....

Event location:

Cost:

Description:

3. CONTACT US

Address information:

Additional information if relevant (e.g twitter/facebook)

4. JOIN OUR BRANCH

(Please provide any information which you feel will attract the interest of prospective branch members. For example: Benefits of joining, membership fees, joining instructions & where to send branch membership forms, feedback requests, suggestions for events)

5. SPONSORSHIP

(Please provide information of sponsorship you may have. Any sponsor's logos should be emailed to ebirch@cilex.org.uk for uploading onto your microsite)

6. BRANCH SERVICES

(Please provide information on the services your branch may offer. For example, study groups, CPD workshops, revision days, social/networking events)

7. COMMITTEE

Chair:

Email address:

Contact address:

Secretary:

Email address:

Contact address:

Treasurer:

Email address:

Contact address:

Other Officers:

Committee Member:

Email address:

Contact address:

Committee Member:

Email address:

Contact address: