



The Covid diaries: Day 14 - We Built This City

A daily fly-on-the-wall blog about running a legal business during the Covid-19 crisis.

By **Darren Isaacs** - 02 April

I put on a webinar this afternoon.

It went OK. Actually, I think the content went well, though I was mega-stressed about the setup.

When I do a webinar in the office there is normally a cast of thousands to support me (well, OK, not quite thousands, but at least a few people on-hand). We have someone to collate questions from the audience, co-presenters, an on-site IT person for hardware issues, and a remote IT person for managing the webinar platform. We also put up LOTS of signs in the office announcing that a webinar is in-process (so "can people PLEASE keep any noise to a bare minimum").

Out in the suburbs during a Covid-19 lockdown, it is not quite the same story.

My house is in (north) central London. It is what is known in these parts as a Victorian "mews house" (you can google it). Built in 1894, it was originally a horse stable at the back of a grand building, with the front of the building opening pretty much directly onto a cobbled laneway. The idea in 1894 was that the horses could be stabled directly from the laneway without interrupting the aesthetics of the 5-storey mansion on the main road around the corner.

The original building would have had horses on the ground floor, and then a hay loft where the stable-hand could hang out/sleep etc. Fast-forward to the mid-20th century, and these stables were converted into garages for motor vehicles (logical enough). Fast-forward another generation or so, and they were converted again into ever-so-cute inner-city housing.

So they are basically very cute tiny little cottages, usually just two storeys high, often with lovely roses rambling over them at the front, and typically without any outside space. Open the front door and you are literally on the road (usually a cobbled laneway, as is the case for me).

So presenting a webinar from a home office that sits at the front of the house (like I do) means I am basically 6 feet away from passing cars, deliveries, joggers, and walkers-and-talkers. It's not that there is a steady stream of heavy vehicles or anything, normally it is very pleasant sitting and watching the world go by ... but every sound during a webinar is a test for the nerves. Mine and the audience's.

And today, of all days, some builders decided it would be *great* to start drilling endlessly on a new house being finished up the road (they have been quiet recently, and made a surprise return appearance this afternoon).

Curses.

Possibly the first webinar I have ever thought about giving from what is often referred to here as "the smallest room in the house". Thankfully, it was audio-only.

And even more thankfully, the builders stopped right on time so I could stay in my study.

So, was it worth putting on a webinar so I could write a blog about my house (which I have been itching to do for ages). Absolutely.

If you would like to read our **Covid diaries starting from day 1** please click [here](#).