

Stop hosting work socials at pubs to include Muslim staff, law firms told

From the [Telegraph](#)

City law firms have been urged to stop hosting work socials at the pub over fears they exclude Muslim staff.

A report by Rare, a UK graduate recruitment company specialising in diversity, said the legal profession's "big drinking culture" is unfair to those who abstain from alcohol.

It suggested that law firms [introduce more cooking, painting or pottery classes to boost team bonding](#), rather than hosting events centred on booze.

As part of its research, Rare interviewed 10 aspiring lawyers of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, many of whom had worked for law firms as interns.

One Muslim interviewee, named Rabia, said she felt forced to drink alcohol at legal networking events to fit in.

Some complained that they weren't seen as "fun" among their colleagues if they did not drink, and were not invited to socialise as a result.

They also recalled feeling uncomfortable at formal [social events held in pubs or bars](#), with many choosing to miss out because of their religious beliefs.



In particular, Muslim women wearing hijabs were found to be at greater risk of family and community disapproval if seen at

bars or pubs.

The interns claimed alcohol-fuelled events stopped them from building the relationships needed to secure coveted training contracts, many of which come with the promise of six-figure salaries upon completion.

I would say the opposite happened in the Civil Service. Management were so keen to make alcohol unacceptable that I can remember standing at one 'do' with 3 old friends and realising that we were the only ones holding a glass of beer. Everybody else had a glass of sparkling water. This was a challenge and we got the devil in us and 'liberated' several bottles of unopened wine for our own Christmas party later that year (after hours of course; we were not so irresponsible as to work inebriated). Strangely some of those holding the fizzy water were reputed to indulge in the odd white recreational substance. I'd rather support honest English brewers myself.

Illustration left, the former Wig and Pen club opposite the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand. Built in the 17th century, one of the few buildings to survive the Great Fire of London. I never got inside as it was members and guests only. Now I could go in as it is a [Thai restaurant](#). While it serves food and hospitality to the public it isn't dead. And could be a pub again.