

Law firm Clarke Willmott 'devastated' after partner dies

A "much loved" lawyer who played an active role in Bristol's business community has died. Neil Baker, a partner at law firm Clarke Willmott, passed away on Monday (March 11).

The company, which has South West offices in Bristol and also Taunton, in Somerset, said it was "devastated" by the news of Mr Baker's death. He had been with the firm since 1999 and was described as "one of the country's leading planning lawyers".

"He was also a much-loved and valued member of our firm, where he led our excellent planning team," the company said in a statement.

Mr Baker was an active figure in the Bristol business community and particularly well known in the property sector, organising the SW Planning Dinner as well as for his involvement with Bristol Round Table and 41 Club, the firm said.

"Most importantly, Neil was a much-loved member of his family, husband to Sarah and proud father to James and Meggie (Megan). All our thoughts are first and foremost with them at this very difficult time," Clarke Willmott said.

Peter Swinburn, chief executive at Clarke Willmott, said the company's immediate efforts were focused on supporting Mr Baker's family and also colleagues who had worked most closely with Mr Baker.

"It has been a terribly difficult 24 hours for all of us at Clarke Willmott," he said. "In due course we will be able to reflect on the huge contribution made by Neil to our firm and

the broader community in Bristol and beyond.”

It is not known how Mr Baker died.