

## Birmingham Law Students win UKELA Moot Competition

Posted on Wednesday 3rd July 2013



Two Birmingham Law School postgraduate students have won the prestigious 2013 UK Environmental Law Association (UKELA) Student Prize Moot.

The UKELA is a registered charity, which aims to make the law work for a better environment and to improve understanding and awareness of environmental law. The tournament is one of the most prestigious mooted competitions in the UK and we are very proud that two of our students, Ben Leb, and Richard Murtagh, both studying for the degree of LLM International Law: Crime, Justice and Human Rights, were victorious this year in an exciting final against the University of Aberystwyth. The final was judged by Lord Carnwath of Notting Hill, president of UKELA, Justice of the UK Supreme Court,

and a former President of the Holdsworth Club (2004-05).

The final was held in June at UCL and this year's moot problem concerned landfilling — that is, the lawful treatment and disposal of household rubbish at regulated dump sites.

We spoke to Richard and Ben about their experience:

Richard:

<http://www.ukela.org> "The UKELA tournament is one of the "Big Five" mooted competitions held each year, and it felt incredible to bring the trophy home to Birmingham. We had to be extra-prepared because Lord Carnwath had actually decided and written the main precedent that was against us in the moot! Suffice to say, the questions came thick and fast... and there was absolutely no room for bluffing! However, once the courtroom drama had subsided, it was a real pleasure chatting to Lord Carnwath and listening to his feedback. The experience has boosted my confidence as an advocate, and has opened my eyes to environmental law — both study and practice. Indeed, I am now considering the possibility of writing my LLM dissertation on an environmental topic."



Ben:

"Appearing before Lord Carnwath in the final was a brilliant opportunity to improve my advocacy skills. Our competitors were exceptionally well prepared and it was a real pleasure to moot against such skilled public speakers. While environmental law is not one of the best-known areas of law, it is a unique mix of public, private and EU law. I would definitely recommend it to anyone looking for an intellectual challenge.

"We'd both like to thank UKELA again for the excellent organisation, the judges for their time and everyone else involved, for this entire event has been a fulfilling experience."

The winning team brought home an engraved trophy for the School, a year's membership of UKELA and a mini-pupillage at No5 Chambers, who sponsored the competition and provided preparation and training for the participants.

