

Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer

The Official Journal of Leeds Law Society

 Leeds
Law Society

April 2021

Issue 169



Supporting Yorkshire's SMEs

Brexit and the pandemic are putting huge pressure on small businesses, and they need support

Local

Bradford and the prosperous future that awaits the city

News

Switalskis continues acquisition spree with deal for Pryers Solicitors

Society

After a year as Leeds Law Society president, Nicholas Emmerson offers his thoughts on society activities

Last Word

Richard Jobs of Schofield Sweeney on the future of the property market and the legal profession

Comment

Patrick Walker goes in search of a Roman villa and wild garlic





EMBRACE FREEDOM

LAUNCHING APRIL 2021

Get ready to rethink the way your law firm operates with an unrivalled suite of complete software solutions - freeing your people to do what they do best.

Scan the QR code to discover more or visit:
theaccessgroup.com/EmbraceFreedom

#PrepareForFreedom



Leeds Law Society
62 Wellington Street, Leeds,
LS1 2EE
DX 12079 Leeds
Tel: 0113 245 4997

EDITORIAL

Editor: Mark Dugdale
01423 851 150
mark.dugdale@barkerbrooks.co.uk

Founding Editor:
Ian McCombie

PRODUCTION

Head of design:
Compton Sheldon

ADVERTISING

Project manager:

Matt Gotting
01423 851 150
matt.gotting@barkerbrooks.co.uk

Published by:

Barker Brooks Communications Ltd
26 Airedale House, 423 Kirkstall Road,
Leeds, LS4 2EW
Tel: 01423 851 150
Fax: 01423 740 704
www.barkerbrooks.co.uk
info@barkerbrooks.co.uk

PRINT:

Buxton Press

© 2021 Leeds Law Society & Barker Brooks
Communications Ltd. All rights in and relating



to this publication are expressly reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any

means without written permission from the publishers. The views expressed in Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer are not necessarily those of the Leeds Law Society or the publisher. While the publishers have taken every care in compiling this publication to ensure accuracy at the time of going to press, they do not accept liability or responsibility for errors or omissions therein however caused.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Subscriptions are available to Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer at £70 for one calendar year (10 issues). Unless requested otherwise, your subscription will start with the issue following receipt of your payment. To subscribe contact publishers Barker Brooks Communications on 01423 851 150, or email accounts@barkerbrooks.co.uk.



Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer

The Official Journal of Leeds Law Society

April 2021 | Issue 169

Society

President's column.....05

After a year as Leeds Law Society president, Nicholas Emmerson offers his thoughts before passing chain of office on to his successor

On the agenda.....06

A list of upcoming online events from Leeds Law Society

News

Business development.....08

Wake Smith helps secure new owners for historic Scarborough railway, Schofield Sweeney survey reveals employer concerns ahead of return to work, McCormicks advises on acquisition of Atlas Helicopters, Keebles corporate team completes £135m of deals, Thrive Law celebrates third birthday, Blacks Solicitors supports Augment Partnership in its community development mission, Appleyard Lees partners with NorthInvest and appoints COO, Ramsdens marks 2021 with an appointment and a job well done

Community.....12

Switalskis continues acquisition spree with deal for Pryers Solicitors, New managing partner for McCormicks, New Silk Family Law appointments enable firm's Yorkshire team to help more clients, Progeny expands into real estate conveyancing with acquisition of Watsons Law, Clarion apprentice completes paralegal apprenticeship

Appointments.....16

The latest promotions and appointments from across Leeds and Yorkshire

Focus on

Sponsored editorial.....20

John Espley, chief executive officer of LEAP legal software, details five key challenges currently being faced by family law firms

Interview.....22

John Alderton, Leeds managing partner at Squire Patton Boggs, on the EU Exit Legal Clinic and its work with Yorkshire's SMEs

Local.....23

Manjit Virdee, president of Bradford Law Society, on the rich legal history of Bradford and the prosperous future that awaits the city

Column.....24

Patrick Walker goes in search of a Roman villa and wild garlic

Last word

Schofield Sweeney.....25

Richard Jobs, partner and head of the property litigation team at Schofield Sweeney, on the future of the property market and the legal profession in Yorkshire





Legal practice
management software.

Shaping your law firms
digital future.

leap.co.uk/work-remotely

Highs, lows, and local and national changes



Nicholas Emmerson,
president of Leeds
Law Society

After a year as Leeds Law Society president, Nicholas Emmerson offers his thoughts before passing chain of office on to his successor

My year as president of Leeds Law Society concludes in May. It ends as it began, sitting in front of my computer at home in 'leisurewear'.

We all have a lot of catching up to do when we are finally let back to work in Leeds. I look forward to grabbing a coffee at Pret and to Greek Street being back at its buzzy best. Hope to see you there.

The highlight of my year was the online Diversity & Inclusion Conference that we put on in September 2020, in partnership with the Law Society of England and Wales. Applauded by many, it will take place again this year and be bigger and better.

The conference gives its speakers the space to tell their own diversity and inclusion stories and share their experiences. We are delighted that Baroness Hale has agreed to speak this year.

The low point of my year was shutting our office and furloughing our staff. We are ready to open when permitted and look forward to serving our members from our offices in Leeds again.

Changes are coming to our website as we recognise the legacy of the pandemic and how we can reach even more members virtually. Going forward, we anticipate providing both online and physical events and, where possible, offering both at the same time.

We now have a new committee structure that breaks down the work of Leeds Law Society into dedicated groups of committed individuals. These include Diversity & Inclusion, Court Liaison, Legal Tech and Access to Justice, among others. Please feel free to join in or propose a new committee that we can support.

National news

As I hang up my chain of office (that I never got to wear and was last seen at the bottom of my predecessor's handbag), I will continue my work as the Law Society of England and Wales council member representing Leeds. I also sit on the board and audit committee of the national law society, so please let me know if I can be of assistance navigating the society or highlighting any issues.

The national law society recently welcomed

Stephanie Boyce as its 177th president. Stephanie is the first president of colour and only the second in-house solicitor to hold the post in 50 years. A huge step forward.

In the coming months, you may see reference to a new legal entity, Solicitors Regulatory Authority Limited, for the SRA as it formally separates from the national law society.

To cut a long story very short, the national law society lost most of its regulatory powers to the SRA in 2007, but the SRA continued to sit as a division of the society in spite of being the independent regulator for the solicitors' profession. Backed by the Legal Services Board (the overarching legal regulator), the SRA pursued a formal separation from the society so that the distinction between the SRA's regulatory function and the society's membership function was clear. At the March council meeting, the go-ahead was given.

As your national membership body, the Law Society of England and Wales is working hard to deliver tangible benefits to its members. The move online during the pandemic has opened up its events to a much wider audience and member engagement has never been higher. There is a new website and the ability to personalise your interaction with the society through signing up to "My Law Society". Please let me have any feedback or let me know of any other membership benefits that you would like the law society to provide.

The Law Society of England and Wales is also undertaking a local law society strategic review to reassess the membership body's relationship with local ones, with a view to better supporting each other and their mutual members. Leeds is leading on this and working closely with the Joint V, being the largest five local law societies (Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester), with the aim of better serving our members.

I end by thanking the staff and directors of Leeds Law Society for all of their inspiring ideas, refreshing spirit and good humour throughout a challenging year. Thanks too to our members without whose support we could not exist. My successor as president, Catie Woodward, will do a grand job.

What's on the agenda at Leeds Law Society

A list of upcoming online events from **Leeds Law Society**

SRA Accounts Rules hosted by Armstrong Watson

Date: 14 April 2021

Time: 9.30am to 12.30pm

Price: £150 (Members) and £175 (Non-members)

Book: <https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/eventdetails.aspx?eidQS=DA20F513-6ED3-4754-B014-E44DB5ADE020>

The new SRA Accounts Rules are enforced from 25 November 2019. They are substantially changed from the 2011 rules, following a major review by the SRA.

It is vital for partners, fee earners and accounts/cashier staff to remain fully up to date. As well as addressing the new regulatory requirements, this formal but interactive training course aims to improve efficiency, cash flow and profitability, and covers:

An overview of the 2011 and 2019 rules

- The recent changes to the rules

- Advice on how to comply with the rules in a practical manner, the necessary systems to implement and how fee earners should work effectively with accounts staff
- Common breaches and how to avoid them
- What the reporting accountant and the SRA will be looking for
- The role of the COFA

10 good habits when dealing with easements

Date: 11 May 2021

Time: 11am to 12pm

Price: From £15.00 (Members) and from £30 (Non-members)

Book: <https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/eventdetails.aspx?eidQS=3F24B60F-630D-412A-84E3-D2EF5D60EBE7>

This intermediate webinar explores the impact of easements in the conveyancing process. The event is

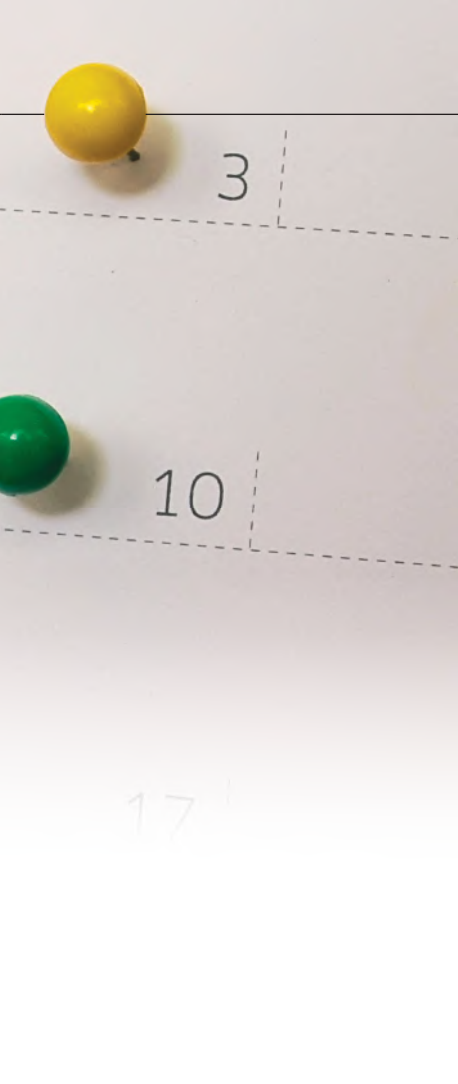
suitable for residential conveyancers and commercial property lawyers.

It will examine:

- Key issues when creating or reserving new easements
- How to ensure existing easements are enforceable
- Dealing with rights of way
- Problems with prescriptive and implied easements
- Connecting easements with client objective

The webinar will explore potential traps for transactional property lawyers as well as commonly encountered problems and how to deal with them

The webinar will be delivered by Ian Quayle of IQ Legal Training, who has delivered more than 1,500 webinars and training courses to the legal profession. His style is relaxed, engaging and informative.



The workshop not only teaches participants how to arrange and develop a persuasive speech, it also imparts classical acting techniques, thereby boosting courtroom presence along with confidence. By the end of the workshop, delegates will know how to:

- Arrange a persuasive speech that flows
- Edit material to avoid pointless repetition/waffle
- Introduce an analogy to reinforce an argument
- Sight-read, so they are always able to make quality eye-contact with the judge
- Use pace effectively
- Project their voices and enunciate clearly
- Use pitch and other stressing techniques to enhance their arguments

Emma Taylor is a public speaking trainer who has successfully coached MPs, councillors, CEOs, solicitors, lecturers and entrepreneurs for more than 15 years. She is a trained actor and also works as a scriptwriter. She brings elements of these disciplines to her coaching. Her workshops are noted for being highly enjoyable, something that she's very proud of.

10 Good Habits when dealing with restrictive covenants

Date: 25 May 2021

Time: 11am to 12pm

Price: From £15.00 (Members) and from £30 (Non-members)

Book: <https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/eventdetails.aspx?eidQS=53160847-4BBF-40D8-905D-7139E0251EDF>

This intermediate webinar will consider how to deal with restrictive covenants in commercial and residential conveyancing transactions.

It will examine:

- How to create and enforce restrictive covenants
- Dealing with the variation and removal of covenants
- Recent cases such as Alexander Devine Children's Cancer Trust v Housing Solutions [2020] UKSC 45 and 89 Holland Park Management Ltd v Sophie Louise Hicks [2020] 6WLUK 198
- The use of defective title insurance

Extensive notes will be provided and delegates will have the opportunity to pose questions.

The webinar will be delivered by Ian Quayle of IQ Legal Training, who has delivered more than 1,500 webinars and training courses to the legal profession. His style is relaxed, engaging and informative.

Tell it to the judge

Date: 20 May 2021

Time: 10am to 1pm

Price: £50.00 + VAT (Members) and £75.00 + VAT (Non-members)

Book: <https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/eventdetails.aspx?eidQS=24641CF2-934C-4FE6-B2C7-41E96C31BF3A>

Following the fantastic reception of last year's 'Tell it to the judge', the society is delighted to invite back esteemed public speaking trainer, Emma Taylor, to deliver more sessions.

'Tell it to the judge' is a workshop that equips solicitors who speak in court with the public speaking skills required to present clear and compelling arguments. It's a 'must-attend' for recently trained lawyers, solicitors who have moved into advocate roles and all diligent lawyers who don't relish the limelight.



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CONFERENCE 2021

By popular demand and following the successful event held in 2020, the Leeds Law Society in conjunction with the Law Society of England and Wales will once again be holding a virtual Diversity and Inclusion Conference to mark National Inclusion Week from 14th September 2021 to 30th September 2021 (Tuesdays and Thursdays and at various times of day).

The conference will consist of virtual events across six days, with recorded sessions being released at the same time. Each will focus on a particular strand of diversity and inclusion: Mental Wellbeing, Social Mobility, Gender, Disability, LGBTQ+, Religion, Age, Race and Ethnicity.

This national conference will range from panel sessions made up of leading figures within a particular strand of diversity and inclusion to individual talks from experts within their field, as well as contributions from various other organisations. The events will also offer guidance on the business case for diversity and inclusion, as well as offering firms and other organisations hints and tips on diversity and inclusion best practice.

The conference will once again look to tackle the complex and difficult issues facing individuals, firms and organisations across a variety of diversity and inclusion strands, as well as the promotion of diversity and inclusion within the legal sector.

The event will build on the themes of last year's conference and, with a host of contributing speakers from across the county, looks set to be the biggest and most ambitious event of its type yet.

Please save the dates of the conference in your diary now to avoid disappointment and watch this space for further information on timings and how to register in due course.



Supported by




Wake Smith helps secure new owners for historic Scarborough railway



John Kerr with Peter Bryant and David Humphreys

Sheffield firm Wake Smith Solicitors has made sure exciting plans to preserve a North Yorkshire heritage railway for future generations remain on track.

Railway enthusiasts John Kerr and Peter Bryant have become the new owners of the 90-year-old historic Scarborough North Bay Railway.

The duo, who already run the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, will take the popular Yorkshire resort's attraction, the fourth largest tourist hotspot in the town with 120,000 passengers a year, to its centenary and beyond.

Rebecca Robinson, director in the company commercial team at Wake Smith, dealt with the acquisition, including drafting the share purchase documentation, negotiating terms, and liaising with the new and previous owner of the attraction, David Humphreys.

She said: "John and Peter have run the Cleethorpes Coast

Light Railway in North East Lincolnshire since 2014, and bring their enthusiasm and expertise to the North Bay line, including all the additional attractions."

"They have made a real success of the Cleethorpes' venture which has driven ambitious plans for Scarborough. With UK holiday resorts looking to gain market advantage this summer, we wish them the best of luck for the future."

Kerr said: "The railway in Scarborough is an extremely important asset to the town and wider region."

"Before his retirement, David did a fantastic job of revitalising this much loved attraction including the addition of new rolling stock, station buildings and lakeside attractions and we are looking forward to working with his dedicated team to further this. We can't wait to take the railway to its centenary and beyond."

"There is masses of potential to develop with the railway, sky trail and historic water chute. We want to expand its out-of-season trade and the secondary offering, and I am confident we can do that."

Kerr added: "Rebecca at Wake Smith was efficient and professional, taking us through the acquisitions with no fuss, and we have an exciting future ahead."

The 90-year-old narrow-gauge system, first opened in 1931, runs for three-quarters of a mile from Peasholm Park Station to Scalby Mills, with views over North Bay.

It is home to a steam locomotive, as well as four historic diesel locomotives—Neptune, Triton, Poseidon and Robin Hood—all in service since the 1930s.

For many years the town landmark was run by Scarborough Borough Council until privatisation in 2006. The attraction aims to reopen on 12 April.

Schofield Sweeney survey reveals employer concerns ahead of return to work

Almost one in six organisations expect to have staff who refuse to return to work after the Covid-19 pandemic, yet 90% have not developed any policies to deal with this, according to Schofield Sweeney.

The law firm's 'Covid-19: The vaccination challenge and returning to work safely' survey captures the views of senior leaders from businesses, schools and charities at one of the most critical phases of the pandemic—getting people back to work.

In a worrying sign of the wider social impact of the pandemic, around seven in 10 employers (69%) also expect their employees' mental health to have suffered during the crisis.

Other key findings from the Schofield Sweeney survey include:

- 55% of respondents said they didn't know if they had any employees who were unable to have the vaccination on health grounds.
- Over 60% hadn't made and didn't intend to make any adjustments for unvaccinated staff or those unwilling to return.
- 39% had amended or introduced new health and safety policies specifically to deal with mental health.

The survey does show that many organisations have demonstrated remarkable resilience in adapting to the

challenging situation, with 71% of respondents able to operate fully during the crisis as they were either unaffected by lockdown, adapted workplace procedures or implemented a work-from-home policy.

Many will now be conducting or have planned a health survey of their employees.

Simon Shepherd, head of the employment team at Schofield Sweeney, commented: "As part of a health questionnaire, an organisation might ask an employee if they've had the vaccine or will have it, but it's tricky to ask why they are not having it:

"An employer would need a good reason to ask this question and it will depend on the sector and nature of the work undertaken."

Craig Burman, head of the environmental and regulatory team at Schofield Sweeney, said: "Employers will have to keep clinically vulnerable staff safe as we return to normal and social distancing measures are relaxed. Those unvaccinated staff



who remain at a high risk from the virus will need all reasonably practicable measures to keep them safe, and this will also extend to staff who live with clinically vulnerable family members."

McCormicks Solicitors advises on acquisition of Atlas Helicopters



Jack Schofield, Jason Schofield, James Towler and Emily Steed

McCormicks Solicitors has advised a Harrogate-based family-run helicopter private charter and management company on the acquisition of a second business.

The Helicopter Company has acquired Hampshire-based Atlas Helicopters, giving it a new base with access to the London and Southeast markets, as well as a medevac contract for the Isle of Man TT and other motorcycle races on the island.

The Helicopter Company was established in 2008. In 2016, Jason Schofield bought the interests of the other shareholders and his son, Jack Schofield, joined the company. It already has bases in Scotland and the East Midlands, as well as North Yorkshire.

McCormicks advised on the acquisition of Atlas, with head of corporate and commercial James Towler and colleague Emily Steed overseeing negotiations and carrying out due diligence. Sagars advised on corporate finance.

Towler said: "We were delighted to work with the Schofield family, with whom we have a long relationship, and it is great

to have secured this acquisition which will allow them to grow their business and target the market in and around London from Atlas's base in the south of England."

Jason Schofield added: "We are very pleased to have acquired Atlas, which enables us to grow our business in the south of England. Atlas is well established with good clients and a great team, led by Mike Burns, who will continue as a director and chief pilot."

McCormicks has a thriving corporate and commercial department that offers clients advice in all areas of law, including buying and selling companies, as well as advising on commercial agreements.

The McCormicks team has both the legal and industry expertise to offer clients common-sense advice tailored to the needs of their businesses.

The Helicopter Company offers private charter for both business and leisure, as well as aircraft management and a helicopter purchase service.

Keebles corporate team completes £135m of deals



Keebles completed more than 20 deals in just two weeks during February, as the business world continues to overcome the challenges caused by the pandemic.

The transactions saw the corporate department at Keebles

bring in deals worth £135 million, including advising the management of Birmingham-based fire and security services provider CCSS as it was acquired by EA-RS Fire Group.

Keebles, which has offices in Sheffield, Doncaster and Leeds, also advised on deals across the recruitment, retail, real estate, logistics, healthcare, engineering and financial services sectors.

Having already completed a high number of deals in 2021, the corporate team, led by Keebles partner Matt Ainsworth, is predicting another strong year.

Ainsworth (pictured) said: "We have seen a general spike in deal flow over the last few months in the wake of uncertainties around the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic."

"Our team has risen to the challenges of this demanding period which comes on the back of a strong 2020 in which we completed more than £250 million of private equity, M&A and fundraising deals and is a positive start to 2021."

"With the UK now expected to begin recovering from the effects of the pandemic, we are confident that the demand for our services will continue and 2021 will be another successful year for our continued growth."

Thrive Law celebrates third birthday



Leeds-based employment law firm Thrive Law, led by solicitor and mental health campaigner Jodie Hill, recently celebrated its third birthday.

The firm experienced a surge in enquiries as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and following Hill's active media presence as the go-to expert for employment law.

Thrive Law's recent successes clearly demonstrate a strong regional and national need for high-calibre specialist employment and HR legal advice, driven by concerns from businesses and individuals about the government's furlough provisions, as well as discrimination and redundancy issues.

On the back of this surge in enquiries, due to an investment in its marketing strategy, Thrive Law has seen a 177% increase in website enquiries over the last 12 months, evidenced by 2.1 million website impressions, resulting in a 300% increase in clients.

These headline statistics have culminated in a 56% increase in the firm's turnover, requiring a doubling in its staff of qualified solicitors, to six in total.

Over the last 12 months Thrive Law helped deal with more than 3,000 enquiries to its dedicated coronavirus helpline—a service which the firm successfully operated free of charge since the first wave of the pandemic and continues to provide support on a daily basis for those who cannot afford it.

Lockdown 3.0 has been incredibly tough for many and Thrive

Law, in a bid to support people with their mental health, helped businesses and individuals by offering free access to its mental health wellbeing subscription service, Thrive Wellbeing.

This has provided free training and support on mental health in the workplace to hundreds of small businesses and employees. More details of this service are available at the Thrive Law website.

Headquartered in Leeds but with a national reach and with some of the senior team based in the South, Thrive Law already provides services across the region and beyond on all aspects of employment law, with a special interest in mental health wellbeing and diversity and inclusion.

The firm's managing partner, Jodie Hill, is a passionate mental health campaigner, having instigated the #OneMind petition, designed to require the government to make mental health risk assessments mandatory in the workplace.

The petition gained support from local MPs and businesses, in a bid to encourage the government to look after employee wellbeing and mental health as the UK emerges from lockdown.

Commenting on the third birthday celebrations, Hill said: "When I started Thrive Law, I wanted to create a working environment where everyone could show up as their true self, a truly inclusive workplace, with me leading by example and practising what I preach."

"As a result, we have created a positive, effective, best-practice specialist law firm that provides world-class advice, support and assistance to an increasing tally of enlightened regional, national and global businesses. It has attracted top talent, for example, Tom Stenner-Evans, who joined only three months ago as our first partner, and was attracted to Thrive because of our values and passion."

"The amazing success we have seen as we turn three is testament to the hard work and dedication of all our team, especially during the current challenges."

Blacks Solicitors supports Augment Partnership in its community development mission

The commercial property team at Blacks Solicitors has helped coordinate a licence to underlet and underlease for community interest company Augment Partnership.

The team advised Peter Smith, director of Augment Partnership, on the licence to underlet and underlease the first floor of Crescent House in central Skipton (pictured) with Craven College for nine months. The space was previously used as an adult educational training centre by Tyro Training.

Augment Partnership is a community interest company with a mission to resource people, places and programmes to grow thriving communities.

The partnership took on the space to enable the training and development of people in the community.

The space will include Covid-secure private offices, fixed desks and room for coworking, meeting rooms, and a lounge. It is due to open after Easter.

Nick Dyson, head of commercial property at Blacks, commented: "It was great to assist Augment Partnership in taking on this new space in Skipton to allow them to develop

their business and increase their community reach. Peter has been fantastic to work with, and we wish him and the Augment team all the best in their future endeavours."

Blacks was chosen to support the deal due to an existing relationship with Peter Smith, who added: "We are delighted to be finally in occupation of this expansive property. As a social enterprise, Augment will provide wellbeing and mentoring support together with business and digital upskilling to help people recover from the effects of lockdown, so that individuals can grow and our community can thrive. We are most grateful to Elaine Flynn and the commercial property team at Blacks for their advice and professional support in securing a tricky three-way



arrangement that now puts us in a good position to move forward as restrictions begin to ease."

Appleyard Lees partners with NorthInvest and appoints COO



Appleyard Lees has struck a partnership with Leeds-based investment non-profit NorthInvest and appointed a chief operating officer.

The intellectual property law firm is partnering with NorthInvest to offer specialist intellectual property support to technology and digital startups.

John Kushnick, meanwhile, will serve as the law firm's chief operating officer, based in Manchester.

Appleyard Lees, a Leeds-, Halifax-, Manchester- and Cheshire-based law firm with more than 50 patent and trade mark attorneys and litigators, will take part in NorthInvest events throughout the year to connect with the entrepreneurial community and offer them expert advice on how to effectively protect and monetise their intellectual property.

Founded in 2016 by serial entrepreneur Professor Adam Beaumont, NorthInvest is a non-profit investment organisation dedicated to building a stronger and more connected tech investor and startup community across the North of England.

In 2020, NorthInvest increased its impact significantly to facilitate 19 rounds of funding worth more than £9 million and deliver 294 free coaching and mentoring sessions to entrepreneurs and business owners.

Helen Oldham, founding board director of NorthInvest, said: "We're very proud to partner with Appleyard Lees, who can help our network of entrepreneurs and startups to understand how best to protect their intellectual property. This partnership marks an exciting step for NorthInvest as we help northern start-ups reach their full potential."

Paul Beynon, senior associate of Appleyard Lees, commented: "As a firm with a strong presence in the North ourselves, we recognise the importance of bolstering the tech start-up community across the region. We look forward to working closely with NorthInvest to support this community through our range of services and expertise."

New Appleyard Lees chief operating officer John Kushnick, who is also a qualified solicitor, joined the law firm on 1 February.

He will work to advance a firm strategy that fuels further growth, having spent many years at successful law firms and amassing a wealth of operational management experience.

Kushnick said: "This is a dynamic and exciting firm which, vitally, remains friendly and welcoming. It is with this understanding that they can remain human and personal whilst demanding the highest standards, that appealed to me. They are the ideal mix of a firm with a long-established history and the desire and ability to adapt to the ever-changing demands of modern business and litigation."

Ramsdens marks 2021 with an appointment and a job well done

The Ramsdens Solicitors conveyancing and corporate teams are enjoying strong starts to 2021 after the appointment of a new residential property expert in Halifax and completion of advisory work on a Solicitors Own Software share sale.

Residential property expert Emma Gledhill, who previously held a dual role as a director and property solicitor at a local regional law firm, joins the Ramsdens conveyancing team as a senior associate.

Her more than 15 years of experience in the field, coupled with a special interest in landlord and tenant law, and in-depth knowledge on short and long-term leases and issues relating to leasehold titles, significantly strengthens the Ramsdens conveyancing offering.

Commenting on her appointment at Ramsdens, Gledhill said: "I am very excited to join Ramsdens. Coming from Huddersfield, I have seen how the firm has expanded over the years, to become one of West Yorkshire's top law firms. It is an honour to now be invited to work at Ramsdens and to have this opportunity to continue my career as part of their team."

Lindsey Frith, head of the conveyancing team at Ramsdens, commented: "Emma is highly regarded in the local conveyancing community and brings a wealth of experience to our team. As well as being an exceptional conveyancing solicitor, Emma is pragmatic and friendly in her approach. We are thrilled to have her join the Ramsdens conveyancing team and the firm as a whole."

Ramsdens's strong start to 2021 continued with its corporate team, led by senior associate Emma Spragg with support from



Emma Gledhill, Stephen Newman, Emma Spragg and Richard Dean

partners Stephen Newman and Richard Dean, advising the members of Solicitors Own Software (SOS) on the recent sale of their shares to PracticeEvolve Group for an undisclosed sum.

SOS has delivered practice and case management software and services to law firms across the UK since 1987.

Keith Denman, finance director at SOS, said of the Ramsdens corporate team's support: "We chose Ramsdens as our legal advisers because of their wealth of knowledge in commercial transactions and our trust was not misplaced."

"The transaction was incredibly smooth from beginning to end. Emma Spragg was our main contact and she was very commercially minded and hardworking in every aspect of the transaction. In particular her attention to detail was superb. I would recommend Emma for any corporate and commercial deal."

Spragg commented: "We were delighted to have assisted the shareholders of SOS in this sale. All parties wanted to move quickly to secure a deal which will see the group further realise its international growth ambitions."

Switalskis continues acquisition spree with deal for Pryers Solicitors



Switalskis Solicitors has expanded its medical negligence and personal injury specialisms with the acquisition of York-based Pryers Solicitors from Pure Business Group.

This follows the acquisition of Doncaster firm Atherton Godfrey in December, creating a £25 million turnover business with offices

across Yorkshire.

Established in 2002, Pryers represents clients across the UK in medical negligence, personal injury, professional negligence claims and financial Court of Protection matters, further strengthening an increasingly capable Switalskis group.

The sale by Pure Business Group, for an undisclosed sum, will see approximately 70 legal specialists and support staff from Pryers become part of the Switalskis group. The business will continue to trade under the Pryers brand from its existing base in York.

The acquisition will add around £5 million turnover to the Switalskis group and increase the headcount at the firm, which operates from 12 offices across the region, to around 450 people.

John Durkan (pictured), managing director of Switalskis, said the acquisition represents another step forward in in the firm's long-term growth strategy: "Over the last 28 years, Switalskis has grown, both organically and via a series of acquisitions, into a highly successful firm with a strong reputation and many practitioners recognised as leaders in their field, regionally and nationally."

"Pryers is a respected team, with a strong brand and reputation in the medical negligence and personal injury sectors. They will complement perfectly our established teams and add critical mass to the business, building further on the strategic growth that we achieved when we incorporated Atherton Godfrey into the group a few months ago."

New managing partner for McCormicks



Stephen Hopwood has been appointed to the role of managing partner at McCormicks Solicitors in Harrogate.

He takes over the role from Peter McCormick OBE, who will remain senior partner of the law firm.

McCormick was elected to the role of interim chairman of the Football Association last year, following the resignation of Greg Clarke.

He said: "As a result of both the Covid-19 lockdown and of my increased commitments since I was appointed interim chairman of the FA in November, Stephen has taken a lot of responsibility for the day-to-day management of the business so this is a logical transition of duties for the future."

"I remain [the] senior partner and will continue to play a very

active role in the business of the firm alongside my commitments to the Premier League and the FA."

Hopwood (pictured) is a partner and head of the family department at McCormicks. He joined the firm in 2013 and specialises in all aspects of family work, with a focus on finance and children.

He is equally specialist in resolving normal family breakdowns and those with complex elements such as trusts and international elements.

Hopwood is also a member of Resolution and treasurer of the Harrogate and District Law Society, of which he is a past president.

He expressed his delight at expanding his role at McCormicks, adding: "[I] look forward to working even more closely with the great team we have here to ensure we continue to offer the best possible service to our clients."

Newport Land and Law plans to expand nationally



Clive Newport, Emily Coburn-Hall, Anna Newport, Alistair Mason, Chris Walton and Ellen Wood

Yorkshire firm Newport Land and Law is planning to expand nationally after doubling the size of its headquarters and growing its team.

Wakefield-based Newport Land and Law saw its caseload double in 2020 as the property market boomed.

The firm is moving to larger premises at the Nostell Priory and has recruited consultant solicitors Andy Challenger, Leah Gore, Mike Scott, and Emma Morris.

Newport Land and Law is also growing its consultancy offering, to support experienced self-employed lawyers with the backing of an experienced team. The firm believes it is a model that will help provide businesses and individuals with access to expert advice while offering value for money.

The firm offers a range of property and private client law

services and is expanding its dispute resolution practice. New offices are under consideration in Oxford and South Wales, with additional offices planned across the UK.

Commenting on the expansion plans, Anna Newport, founder and director of Newport Land and Law, said: "Over the years we have established a national reputation for our expertise in everything from trusts and wills to estates and property law. We've built a client base with national reach and now is the time to accelerate our ambitions with new offices."

"The development of our consultancy offer will give talented lawyers the flexibility they want with the support of an established operation that shares their values and a focus on client service."

"Despite all the challenges, 2020 provided a strong launchpad for growth. Our caseload in the final quarter of the year was 400% up on the year before, and we've seen the expansion of both our probate services and demand for dispute resolution."

The firm is also expanding its administrative team with the appointment of a full-time office manager, and it is recruiting a junior administrator and communications executive under the government's Kickstart Scheme.

New Silk Family Law appointments enable firm's Yorkshire team to help more clients



Matthew Miles and Julie Gallon

Silk Family Law recently expanded its senior team in Yorkshire to support an increase in the number and complexity of new enquiries the firm is seeing as a result of the changing situation around the pandemic and lockdown—particularly where land, business and other asset valuations have fluctuated.

Recently appointed associate Matthew Miles joined Silk Family Law before Christmas, bringing more than a decade of family law experience working across Yorkshire.

More recently, the firm further expanded its team in Yorkshire with the appointment of legal assistant Julie Gallon, whose experience spans almost 30 years in family law with some of the top law firms in the North of England.

The appointments will further strengthen the Silk Family Law's Yorkshire team. Based at the firm's Leeds and North Yorkshire offices, Miles and Gallon will work closely with colleagues to service a growing number of client instructions across the region.

Miles specialises in all areas of family law, particularly resolving complex financial issues for high-net-worth individuals on divorce. He regularly advises on pre- and post-nuptial agreements and has extensive expertise in children disputes, including applications by parents to relocate overseas.

Prior to joining Silk Family Law, Miles was a senior solicitor at Stowe Family Law in Harrogate, following 12 years working as a lawyer at Leeds-based firms. He has worked exclusively in family law throughout his career.

He is the former treasurer of Resolution for the West & North Yorkshire region and remains an active member of the committee.

Teresa Davidson, partner at Silk Family Law and head of the team in Leeds, said: "Recruiting someone of Matthew's calibre and reputation to work alongside other senior members of the team is already allowing us to build and develop our services in Leeds and across Yorkshire. With Julie's extensive experience also now supporting the senior team, we can maintain the highest levels of service throughout this growth period for the firm."

"These appointments are a key part of our plan to extend Silk's reach in the region, and the firm is delighted to welcome new members to the team during a time when we are building and growing across our three office bases."

Miles commented: "The Silk ethos of prioritising client care aligns perfectly with how I like to work, and I am thrilled to be working alongside some of the most well-respected family lawyers in the North of England to support families with legal issues as we all plan ahead for coming out of lockdown."

Progeny expands into real estate conveyancing with acquisition of Watsons Law

Progeny has acquired Leeds-based Watsons Law, adding the provision of experienced and expert real estate conveyancing to its professional services proposition.

The new service will exist alongside Progeny's current multi-disciplinary offering of independent financial planning, asset management, tax, HR, and private and corporate legal advice and support.

Founded in 2004 and with a team of 10, Watsons Law is a technology and service-driven firm of lawyers, specialising in conveyancing, land and property law.

Julian Watson, managing partner of Watsons Law, said: "This is an exciting new chapter in our history and we're delighted to become part of the Progeny fold. Watsons Law and Progeny share the same values of delivering excellence for the benefit of our clients. Joining Progeny is a natural fit for us."

"A larger firm brings opportunities of scale; becoming part of Progeny's multi-disciplinary business offers unique opportunities for exponential growth. Our clients can now benefit from a vast range of additional services to meet all their legal and financial needs."

Neil Moles, chief executive officer of Progeny, said: "Watsons Law will bring a huge amount of residential real estate conveyancing experience to the business, and with it we can offer another vital and high quality service to our clients."

"Julian and the team have a strong track record of unparalleled expertise and guidance in this space in addition to a quality



client following. We're delighted to be able to welcome them into the business and to include this new discipline in the spectrum of professional services we offer."

A team from Progeny's corporate legal department, led by Alistair Scott-Somers, acted as legal adviser to Progeny on the transaction.

Clarion apprentice completes paralegal apprenticeship

Leeds law firm Clarion is celebrating 22-year-old Casey McGregor becoming the first person to complete her paralegal apprenticeship with the firm.

McGregor is now a qualified paralegal, specialising in Court of Protection costs work. She joined the firm's costs and litigation funding team in 2017 and chose to undertake a paralegal apprenticeship, which included completing CILEx qualifications up to level 3.

When Clarion launched its apprenticeship programme in 2013, it joined forces with training provider Damar in Greater Manchester to support the apprentices as they combine on-the-job learning with academic study. There are currently a total of 14 young people in the firm undertaking a variety of apprenticeships.

Stephanie Kaye, senior associate in the costs and litigation funding team at Clarion, commented: "We are hugely proud of Casey—this is a great achievement, particularly given the

challenges she has faced over the last year with disruptions due to the pandemic."

"We work in a very niche area of the law and realised that the most effective way of building the experienced team we need was to grow our own talent by taking on ambitious, young people who had an appetite to learn, and then investing in training them."

Kaye added: "With seven other apprentices currently in the costs team, Casey has proved that this is a great route into a career in the law—she is now a qualified paralegal with three years' experience behind her and no university debts. She is a big part of the team and we believe that supporting young people like her on their career path will be integral to the continued growth of the practice."

McGregor said: "I really enjoy working at Clarion and know that the firm will help me to progress—I'm already planning to start studying for my level 6 CILEx diploma in law qualification."

Three months in: Launch, Charity of the Year and events for 2021

Chair Kimberley Woodhead provides an update on the Leeds Junior Lawyers Division's past and upcoming events, plus its chosen charity partner for 2021



Our annual launch event saw the personal branding expert, Deborah Ogden, present 'Visibility: The Power of your Personal Brand for a Stand-Out Legal Career' to our members. With more than 100 lawyers registered to attend, it proved a huge hit. In uncertain times, where many of us no longer see our colleagues face to face, the subject resonated with our members

and Deborah was able to provide some useful thoughts and guidance. The event left members feeling motivated and positive.

It really has set the scene for the year ahead, so much so that we are inviting Deborah back at the end of March to lead a session on presenting online: 'Own the Zoom'. Thanks again to Deborah and all those who attended.

children have somewhere safe and comfortable to sleep.

We are really looking forward to raising money for this fabulous charity in the weeks and months ahead—and look forward to working with them.

Sports

As gyms are closed, our virtual sports calendar is still up and running. Yoga is continually proving to be popular—the opportunity for meditation and exercise rolled into one is one not to be missed. Our next session is on 6 April, which can be signed up for on our website.

For those who prefer high energy workouts, we are running a monthly Strava competition. We would encourage our members to join the Leeds Junior Lawyers Division club on the Strava app and get involved.

Our sports offering is currently free to members. For non-members, we ask for a small £5 donation to our charity, Zarach. We recognise the huge importance of taking a break from work and looking after your physical and mental wellbeing, especially when the opportunity to get out and about is limited at the moment.

If you are interested in becoming a member, or would like any further information, please do contact us by visiting www.leedsjld.com or emailing us on leedsjld@outlook.com.



Charity of the Year—Zarach Elected

We are pleased to announce that our members have voted for Zarach to be our Charity of the Year.

This local, Leeds-based charity is dedicated to providing children in need with beds and is very much focused on helping ensure all



Helping you to protect your professional reputation

When it comes to arranging your Professional Indemnity Insurance, we bring you independence, experience, in-depth knowledge of the legal profession and in-house claims support.

Finding the right policy for your practice is not as simple as finding the cheapest cover or the largest insurer. We offer full market coverage rather than a selected panel of insurers, and combine technical knowledge gained in the London Market with local, personal service.

For more information or to arrange a quote for your next renewal, contact Jake Fox

01943 876631

jake.fox@jmginsurance.co.uk

www.jmginsurance.co.uk/solicitorspi

jmglending
Insurance Brokers

Moving on up

A round-up of the latest appointments and promotions in Leeds and Yorkshire



Wilkin Chapman has appointed two new solicitors in Beverley. Joining the agriculture team is Charlotte Boyes, while senior solicitor Angela Donovan returns to the firm as a member of its

dispute resolution team.

With a family home in North Yorkshire and having grown up within agriculture, Boyes studied law at Coventry University. She graduated with a first-class degree before successfully undertaking her legal practice course in Leeds.

She joins Wilkin Chapman at its East Yorkshire base from her home area, where she completed her traineeship and qualified as a solicitor in October 2020.

Boyes said: "The prospect of joining such an experienced and knowledgeable team with offices across the region was an attractive one. I am looking forward to putting roots down in East Yorkshire and building relationships with the clients."

"With a rural family background and a working knowledge of agricultural issues, I take pride in supporting clients with the practical issues they face whilst also alerting them to possible pitfalls."

Donovan previously worked in the firm's Grimsby office in the recoveries department, where she dealt with commercial litigation claims for clients, ranging from owner managed businesses to large national companies. She joins the firm in Beverley as a senior member of the dispute resolution team.

Donovan has around 10 years of experience in civil litigation and qualified as a solicitor in 2015.

Her return to Beverley represents an expansion into East Yorkshire for the dispute resolution team, which has previously operated from Wilkin Chapman's offices in Grimsby and Lincoln.

Donovan said: "I am thrilled to have returned to Wilkin Chapman and be part of this fantastic opportunity to help expand the department into East Yorkshire. I am looking forward to working with our clients and establishing new relationships as we work together, with a pragmatic and efficient approach, to achieve a resolution to their disputes."



JWP Solicitors has expanded its private client team with the appointment of Joanna Longfellow.

Longfellow joins JWP from MKB Solicitors as head of the private client department. She specialises in supporting and making a difference to older and vulnerable people and is a fully accredited member of Solicitors for the Elderly.

Her expertise lies with advising clients on their wills, lasting powers of attorney, trusts, Court of Protection issues, probate applications and administration of estates, later life planning, and inheritance tax. She was also shortlisted for the Private Client Award at the Yorkshire Legal Awards in 2019.

Gareth Long, one of four partners at JWP Solicitors, said: "Joanna has a great deal of experience in this arena, and with her addition to the team, our private client department is now stronger than it's ever been."

"We've seen increased interest in this area over the last year, as the pandemic has forced many to consider what measures they have in place for the future, so Joanna is joining at the perfect time."



Switalskis Solicitors has welcomed 11 trainee solicitors to its offices across Yorkshire as part of its 2020/21 training programme.

Rebecca Coupland, Ellie Davies and Lauren Muir have joined as new recruits to Switalskis. The others have been promoted from existing roles within the firm, as part of its commitment to providing career development opportunities.

They are Megan Bedford, Gabrielle Paris-Parker, James Pickles, Lauren Unsworth, Ujala Ahmad, Eleanor Fieldsend, Emma Frank and Maria Watkins.

The trainees will undertake a two-year programme, leading to qualification as a solicitor.

Ruth Coneron, director and solicitor advocate who is head of care and responsible for trainee development within Switalskis, said: "We are delighted with our cohort of trainees. They are bright, enthusiastic, hardworking and keen to progress their careers in law."

"Succession planning is an important part of our growth and business development strategy, which is why we invest heavily in the training programme. We are making big moves forward in a difficult market and we are delighted to be able to offer this valuable opportunity for those seeking to start their careers in the legal sector. We wish them all every success."



Boutique planning law firm **Walton & Co** has appointed Will Swarbrick as a solicitor to complement and strengthen its existing service offering.

Having previously worked for an international firm, Swarbrick is a commercially-minded planning lawyer committed to providing an exceptional level of client service. He is experienced in acting for developers, landowners and public authorities across a range of contentious and non-contentious matters.

He has experience in acting for a broad range of clients, including developers, public authorities, hotel and hospitality operators, investors, statutory undertakers, and private individuals. He advises across various development types, including industrial, commercial and residential.

Commenting on Swarbrick's appointment at Leeds-based Walton & Co, David Walton said: "We are thrilled to have Will on board. The high calibre of our latest recruit is proof of Walton & Co's growing reputation in the planning industry."

"We look forward to the exciting opportunities on the horizon for our growing team."



Experienced residential property conveyancer Liam Gray has joined **LCF Residential**, following a record period of growth at the conveyancing arm of Yorkshire law firm LCF Law.

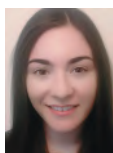
Gray has worked in the legal sector since 2009 and joins from a Leeds-based law firm where was conveyancing manager.

He has nine years of specialist conveyancing experience, having worked on a mixed caseload of freehold, leasehold, lease extensions, right to buy, buy to let, shared ownership, transfer of equity, new builds and remortgages. He also has specific knowledge of dealing with complex and high-net worth residential conveyancing.

Commenting on his appointment, Gray said: "LCF Residential is highly recommended by its clients and gets excellent reviews across the board for its service levels. It has a great team led by an award-winning lawyer and I was keen to join such a successful firm that works for clients in Yorkshire, but also across the UK and overseas."

Julie Davis, head of residential property at LCF Residential, said: "Liam joins us as a senior conveyancing executive as our business continues to expand following a very busy time in the property market."

"We were impressed with Liam's dedication to his clients, the rapport he builds with them and his relationship management skills with referrers. Liam is also very good at managing teams and is very personable. He's a strategic thinker and has good contacts in the property market, and we feel that he will fit in well with our team of 25 at LCF Residential."



Lupton Fawcett has expanded its intellectual property and commercial and private client teams with the appointments of Lauren Waterman and Charlene Vilia.

After graduating from the University of York, Waterman qualified as a solicitor in September 2020. She is experienced in all aspects of intellectual property, including trade mark, copyright and design rights, as well as commercial law.

Waterman joins the Leeds office of Lupton Fawcett and will assist clients to identify, protect and capitalise on the intellectual property they have developed within brands, products, inventions, ideas, designs and creative works. She will also assist clients with commercial agreements.

Clive Lawrence, head of intellectual property at Lupton Fawcett, said: "I'm delighted to welcome Lauren to our specialist intellectual property and commercial team in Leeds."

"She has gained experience across all aspects of intellectual property while completing her training, with notable achievements including success in the Court of Appeal. At Lupton Fawcett, our ethos is about putting our clients ahead, and Lauren is therefore the perfect fit for us."

Vilia joins the firm's Sheffield office as a senior solicitor. She has worked as a private client solicitor since qualifying in 2012. She is experienced in all aspects of private client work and the administration of estates and tax planning advice.

Hugh Thompson, head of private client at Lupton Fawcett, said: "I'm delighted to welcome Charlene to our private client department. She has gained considerable experience since qualifying as a solicitor and will be an asset to our Sheffield team, putting our clients ahead by providing them with first class legal advice."



Laura Milburn is the latest partner to be appointed at **Ridley & Hall** in Leeds, after being promoted from associate solicitor.

Colleagues Loreena Walker, Yasmin Walker, Zuzanna Taithe and Demi Wain were also recognised in the latest round of promotions and appointments.

Milburn has worked in family law for the last 13 years and has specialised as a child care lawyer since 2014, serving four years with the Huddersfield-based law firm. She trained as a barrister and undertakes her own trials and advocacy.

Loreena Walker rises to the position of associate, having joined Ridley & Hall as a chartered legal executive within the family department in 2018. Her expertise includes dealing with complex matrimonial issues and child contact disputes, as well as applications relating to domestic violence.

In addition, Yasmin Walker and Taithe have been awarded two-year training contracts with Ridley & Hall, and Wain has joined as a legal apprentice.

Yasmin Walker joined Ridley & Hall in September 2019 as a residential conveyancing assistant at its Pontefract office where she had undertaken work experience.

Taithe started working with the firm in 2019 as a placement student, through the Legal Advice Clinic, working mostly in the child care and public law department.

Later that year, she was appointed as a paralegal working across the residential and commercial property teams, and in 2020 she moved to the child care and public law team in the role of legal secretary.

Wain has been with Ridley & Hall since 2017, remaining in its public law department after completing an administrator apprenticeship. Last year, she moved to the central services team (CST) and is currently training on the CST Helpline, where she will remain during her apprenticeship.

After two years, Wain will qualify as a paralegal, and after a further four years she could qualify as a solicitor.

Emma Pearmaine, managing partner at Ridley & Hall, commented: "As a firm, we are committed to continuing to nurture talent as we recognise that our people are our strength."

"Despite the disruption of last year, it is vital that we invest in supporting our lawyers in developing their careers with us, and also in strengthening the expertise we offer to clients."

Pearmaine added: "Laura and Loreena's promotions are well deserved recognition of their contribution to the success of the firm, and we are excited to bring three more young people into the team as they embark on their legal careers."

Two University of Hull graduates whose legal learning included work experience spells with **Rollits** have now joined the firm as trainee solicitors.

Rollits, which has offices in Hull and York, has welcomed Zaneta Andraszczyk to its private capital department, with Jordan Collinson



beginning his career in the firm's property department.

Both new recruits are from Hull. Andraszczuk, who speaks Polish and Armenian in addition to English, attended St Mary's College and studied at the University of Hull from 2015 until 2018 for her LLB, which she followed with a legal practice course with a master's at the University of Law in Leeds.

Collinson attended Archbishop Sentamu Academy and Wyke Sixth Form College. He gained his LLB in law and European legal studies with first class honours at the University of Hull in 2019 after a four-year course that included a year at Bayreuth Universität in Germany. He also attended the University of Law in Leeds and gained a distinction in the legal practice course with the integrated LLM in professional practice.

Ralph Gilbert, managing partner at Rollits, said: "As we celebrate our 180th year in business this year it is particularly pleasing to welcome two trainee solicitors who have grown up and went to school in the city and, in common with many of their colleagues, come through the University of Hull."

"Their arrival also underlines the importance of our in-house work experience programme, which played a big part in helping us get to know each other. After last year when we were only able to offer work experience in a virtual format, we hope to bring prospective lawyers into our offices again this year and we look forward to giving more young people essential insight into a career in law."



Caddick Group has promoted Helen Gardner to a newly created position of head of legal and tasked her with recruiting a brand-new team to support the organisation's growth.

Gardner, who has been qualified as a lawyer for 20 years and has worked within Caddick for eight, will spearhead the new department, which will work on projects across the network of companies.

These include Caddick Developments, the Yorkshire-headquartered developer with a 16 million square foot pipeline of industrial and logistics projects and a pipeline of 11,000 new homes; Moda, the national built-to-rent specialist active in many of the UK's core cities; and Oakgate Group, which focuses on property development in and around the historic city of York.

Gardner qualified as a lawyer at Irwin Mitchell in Leeds in 2001. She moved in-house within the property development sector in 2013, before joining the team at Caddick.

As head of legal, Gardner will assume a group-wide legal role to help Caddick's transactions run smoothly. In the coming months, she will build a team of experts to help ensure the businesses needs are adequately catered for, while positioning for further growth.

Gardner said: "It's an exciting time to be involved with the strategic legal process for the next phase of the group's growth. Caddick has some really exciting new schemes in the pipeline, both in the residential and industrial and logistics sectors. By streamlining our approach to legal transactions, we will be able to hugely enhance group wide efficiency and delivery."

"I'm looking forward to building a new team, whilst maintaining our important relationships with our trusted network of external law firms who continue to support our business."



The Leeds office of law firm **Devonshires** has added another solicitor to its growing team in the city.

Real estate specialist Amy Lees joins from Knights, formerly Shulmans. She is the third solicitor to join the firm's Leeds office this year following the arrival of Zoe McLean-Wells from Walker Morris and Geri

Batchelor from DWF.

Lees will work closely with the firm's real estate partner, Elad Yasdi, who recently moved from the firm's London office to expand the real estate team in Leeds.

Lees acts for landowners and regional and national housebuilders and is experienced in land acquisitions and disposals, as well as in the negotiation of conditional contracts, option agreements, coverage provisions, infrastructure and access arrangements, and setting up development sites for plot sales.

She also has specialist experience in the negotiation of affordable housing sale contracts and in setting up estate management arrangements involving one or more developers.

Yasdi, who leads the real estate team at Devonshires in Leeds, said: "Amy is a welcome addition to our growing team in Leeds. We're very excited by the growth prospects we see in the north and I expect to see further hires over the next 12 months as we look to increase our offering to our large northern client base."

Lees said: "Devonshires has a great reputation nationally and I am excited to be part of such a large firm with an ever-growing presence in Leeds and the north. I look forward to working on some exciting projects with leading experts in my field."



Kennedys has boosted its new office in Leeds with the hire of industrial disease partners Darren Goldthorpe and Gary Brankin.

Both join from BC Legal and bring with them senior associates Harjinder Gill and Liam Bedford,

and litigation executive Rachel Durant.

In January, Kennedys acquired a 36-strong insurance team from Langleys that saw the firm open an office in Leeds, its 12th in the UK and 42nd globally.

Goldthorpe, who previously worked at DAC Beachcroft and Beresfords, is an expert in noise-induced hearing loss claims and has a special interest in all aspects of medical causation.

His practice covers claims of higher/lower frequency losses and those that involve exposure from non-traditional sources, alongside a wide variety of disease claims. He has managed a mixed portfolio of disease claims for major corporations.

Brankin worked with Goldthorpe at BCL and DAC Beachcroft. He is primarily focused on managing a team running high-value asbestos litigation in High Court, with a primary focus on the local authority sector.

Both share a keen interest in tech innovation, having worked together to develop IT tools that helped to deliver the lowest average case cost, lowest total claimants costs paid and the highest number of nil settlements, together with the highest repudiation rate of 77% across a portfolio of more than 22,000 noise-induced hearing loss claims.

Last year, Kennedys launched its own technology company, Kennedys IQ, that provides machine learning tools and data-powered analytics to insurer claims functions and large corporates. It is a limited company and is wholly owned by Kennedys Law LLP.

Richard West, partner at Kennedys, said: "We've known Gary and

Darren for a number of years. Both are liked and highly respected within this field, and their recruitment marks our intention to grow our disease practice further. I'm particularly pleased that they share our passion for utilising technology to advance the claims process."



Squire Patton Boggs has promoted two senior lawyers based in Leeds to its partnership.

Abduss Patel (real estate) and Mae Salem (corporate) comprise this year's Leeds-based cohort of newly promoted partners, part of a global promotional round in which a total of 23 lawyers have been promoted as partners within Squire Patton Boggs.

Patel's expertise covers the full range of commercial real estate matters, particularly investments, roadside developments and hospitality and leisure. He acts for corporate occupiers within the retail and hospitality sectors, as well as overseas high-net-worth individuals and investment trust funds.

Salem has considerable experience in advising on private company acquisitions and disposals, in particular in the private equity space. Most recently, she advised Endless on its investment in Amscan International and advised the shareholders of the IDHL Group on their sale to Bridgepoint Development Capital.

Commenting on the promotions, John Alderton, managing partner of Squire Patton Boggs in Leeds, said: "I would like to congratulate Abduss and Mae on their well-deserved promotions. Abduss and Mae are exceptionally talented lawyers who have established a name for themselves in the Yorkshire market and indeed wider afield."

"They have played a major role in the success of this office and the growth of our real estate and corporate practices, and their promotions underline the scale of ambition we share for growing our business in Yorkshire and providing the highest-quality service to our clients."



Ison Harrison has appointed a new senior solicitor to its corporate law division in Leeds.

Corporate employment expert Ben Palmer will be based at Ison Harrison's Leeds City Centre office. He joins the

firm's expanding regional team, having previously been head of the employment division at Oakwood Solicitors.

Palmer brings more than 14 years of employment expertise to the firm and has acted on behalf of a wide range of clients, ranging from airlines, PLCs and pharmaceutical companies to manufacturing businesses, registered charities, schools, and small- and medium-sized enterprises.

He specialises in providing commercially aware and pragmatic HR and employment law advice to his clients, including assisting with mergers and acquisitions. He also has a proven track record of successfully representing clients embroiled in complex and high-value employment tribunal litigation.

As Ison Harrison's new dedicated employment specialist on the firm's corporate team, Palmer's role will see him helping expand the firm's employment offering, while also coordinating with teams of professionals from across the firm's growing network of 15 regional offices, the newest of which opened in Bingley in January.

In his new position, Palmer will once again work with Richard Coulthard, partner and head of corporate services, who he previously worked with at another firm supporting commercial clients.

Palmer said: "I'm looking forward to growing the firm's expert corporate offering and building on its excellent reputation in the employment sector. Ison Harrison is a progressive firm especially in the arena of corporate law and continues to affirm its position as one of the leading firms in the region."

Commenting on the appointment, Jonathan Wearing, managing partner at Ison Harrison, said: "This is the latest in a series of recent strategic appointments and underpins our ongoing commitment to growing the business, building on the solid progress we have achieved in the last few years. With Ben spearheading our corporate employment function, the aim is to fully engage the expertise that the team across our network of regional offices can offer."

"Ben brings a good deal of valuable experience across a variety of client sectors and his addition to the team represents another major step forward for our continued growth plans."



Harrowells has strengthened its private client department's senior team with the appointment of Phillip Williams as an associate solicitor.

He joins from the private capital group at Adleshaw Goddard, Leeds, and is based at Harrowells's York city centre office in St Saviourgate.

Williams, who qualified as a solicitor in 2001 and also holds a community mediator qualification, specialises in the preparation of wills, trusts, lasting powers of attorney and making applications for grants of probate.

He is also experienced in advising business owners, high net worth individuals, family offices, trustees, charities and other corporate bodies and has held several senior commercial roles in both established and innovative legal sector businesses.

His appointment follows the promotion of Monika Bone who joined the firm in 2016, to a partner in the private client department.

Williams said: "I am thrilled to be joining a full service law firm with such a fantastic reputation in North and East Yorkshire and to become part of a dynamic team that embraces modern methods while maintaining traditional values around client service, technical excellence and value for money."

Ed Ryder, a partner and head of the private client department at Harrowells, said: "We are very pleased to welcome Phillip Williams who brings a wealth of legal sector and commercial experience to the team and to confirm Monika Bone's promotion, reflecting her expertise and fantastic contribution since she joined."

"Their modern, forward-thinking approach fits how the department approaches client service perfectly, and their appointments reflect Harrowells' commitment to hiring and developing high-calibre lawyers best placed to serve our clients in the coming years, where sound advice about preserving family wealth will be at the forefront of people's minds."

Digital transformation and the evolving family law

John Espley, chief executive officer of LEAP legal software, details five key challenges currently being faced by family law firms



Challenge 1: Maintaining client contact

Many of those seeking the help of family lawyers during lockdown are in a vulnerable position. Often, it is not the right time or place to make private phone calls, so it is necessary for firms to provide their clients a simple, effective, and alternative way for them to get in contact.

Providing a digital gateway and enabling your services to be accessed through an online platform is essential, whether that be via your existing website or a dedicated platform that offers your client self-service capabilities. These portals are ensuring

client privacy, providing access to valuable information and services, and allowing the vulnerable to get in touch when it is the right and safest time for them to do so.

Challenge 2: Marketing family law services

With less social interaction caused by restrictions, we have seen a drop in referral rates for many practices as prospective clients are unable to speak to friends offering referral advice.

To maintain a regular flow of incoming business, lawyers are having to work much harder and invest more of their time in self-promotion.

Given the last year, a key selling point of firms at present is if they can offer fully digitalised support, servicing the needs of the client remotely. If this is the case, they must make this central to their promotion. It will win them business and help the firm



stand out from the competition.

At LEAP, we invest more than £12 million per year developing software that integrates seamlessly with leading providers in their field so that firms can offer their clients tools that provide them a complete and uninterrupted remote service such as video conferencing, secure and personal document sharing, and appointment scheduling during these challenging times.

Additionally, you must review your website. Does it look professional? Has it become dated? Is it easy for clients to submit an enquiry? Does it communicate your services well enough? Does it get across the identity that you want to present for your practice? Having spoken to a number of family lawyers recently, it was interesting to hear how clients value empathy above everything else. If your firm takes pride in listening to, and understanding the needs of your clients, responding appropriately to their individual requirements and concerns, this is something that you must stress in all your promotion.

We recently launched our own accreditation scheme, the Family Best Practice Standard, which encourages firms to achieve a recognised level of service excellence through their use of our software and which ultimately provides real value to the end-user in terms of the service they receive. For firms that have already achieved this accreditation, it becomes a fantastic marketing tool, a certification mark that assures new clients that you are who you say you are, and provides them with confidence that they are dealing with a lawyer who will provide an experienced and competent service.

Challenge 3: Adapting to legal changes

As practitioners are working remotely, keeping abreast of regular changes in legislation can be a challenge. For our firms, a real benefit has been the availability of a large library of up-to-date family forms and precedents accessible within the software, as well as our integration with By Lawyers. This means family law practitioners need worry less about compliance and benefit from real-time access to current legislation, practice changes, and court guidance when working from home.

Challenge 4: Simplifying the Financial Statement, Form E

By way of family form automation, a welcome addition for family lawyers is our latest development streamlining the production of Form E. Traditionally a very time-consuming process, we have created a new solution within LEAP that simplifies the completion of this usually complicated document, meaning firms spend less time chasing for client information. The real game changer for them is that this powerful solution enables the client to complete the details of the form themselves, in their own time, online, and so with less margin for error. Once complete, this data synchronises with LEAP and enables the production of a Form E for the client to sign electronically before submission to court.

Challenge 5: Virtual court hearings

Although more streamlined, the move to virtual court hearings has created several issues. Family lawyers have had to adapt quickly to different ways of doing things and technology has played a big part in enabling them to do this. As well as mastering video conferencing technology (don't be like the American "cat lawyer!"), family lawyers have had to get to grips with e-bundles.

Employing a viable tool that enables bundles to be created in line with court requirements has become essential. This fast adoption of e-bundling has eliminated the need for traditional, time-consuming hard-copy bundles, printed in bulk, duplicated and couriered to all parties involved. The pandemic has greatly advanced the way that bundles are collated and used, bringing a long-term improvement to the court process.

Helping firms to adapt quickly to online court hearings, over the past year we have developed integrations with user-friendly, web-based bundling solutions so that lawyers can, using the information held in LEAP, create professional, presentable, and cost-effective e-bundles in minutes, not hours.

For the client, having to go to court can often cause anxiety, so remote hearings are welcomed by some as it takes the emotional sting out of the hearing and removes face-to-face encounters. However for the family lawyer, although a more efficient use of their time, attending court 'remotely' requires instant access to the latest client, matter and bundle information from one convenient location, accessible when needed, which thankfully for them, LEAP affords.

The last year has been incredibly challenging for the profession and it's vital for family lawyers, especially when working remotely, to continue to provide a comprehensive service to their clients. At LEAP we are committed to developing software to help lawyers help their clients and we offer a fully remote implementation to helping law firms start doing so as quickly and as effectively as possible.

www.leap.co.uk



Supporting Yorkshire's SMEs

John Alderton, Leeds managing partner at Squire Patton Boggs, on the EU Exit Legal Clinic and its work with Yorkshire's SMEs



How has the EU Exit Legal Clinic worked and what has been its impact?

We were appointed by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to provide the services in conjunction with the West Yorkshire and York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) as the government had provided funding to try to help to ensure that small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) had access to commercial and legal support to manage the transition as we left the EU.

The clinic will run until the end of April 2021 and enquiries come in through the West Yorkshire and the North Yorkshire LEPs Business Networks. Any enquiries which are of a specific legal nature come to us and we then have an initial call with the business to identify the legal issue they are facing. We then go back to the business with legal guidance to help them to manage the issue. Where relevant, we will also put the business in touch with subject experts from across our UK and EU platform to assist with more complex issues.

By the nature of the clinic, it is not legal advice as such and where relevant we will either formally engage the business as a client to provide more specific advice, or if appropriate, refer them to another local firm to provide that advice.

What are some of the common issues the clinic has advised on?

Many of the issues that businesses have raised have been

able to be dealt with by a network of other advisers who have been engaged to provide EU exit support for local SMEs. Therefore, the issues which have come across our desk have been very specific legal issues.

These have included questions in relation to immigration, so EU workers being employed by a business in the UK but also UK workers working in the EU for businesses' overseas offices, as well as setting up satellite operations in the EU, rules of origin for goods that are moved between the UK and EU, business travel, and movement and management of data, in particular the way in which the General Data Protection Regulation applies.

As you see it, how are Yorkshire SMEs fairing in the current climate?

Yorkshire SMEs are a resilient breed and so most of the businesses we have been interacting with have adapted well and are getting on with business in the new normal following both our EU exit and also with the challenges of the pandemic.

How collaborative has the Yorkshire legal community been to ensure clients receive the support they need?

One of the most positive aspects of the Yorkshire legal community is that it is collaborative.

As a firm with a strong local offering but also a global footprint, we often receive referrals from firms whose clients need international advice. Equally, we also recognise that there are occasions when a business may be better served by a regional firm.

The last 12 months, in particular with the impacts of the pandemic as well as EU exit, have meant that the collaborative and supportive nature of the legal community has been even more important for the region's businesses.

Do you have any advice for Yorkshire SMEs that require support but are unsure about cost and identifying the right firm?

The EU Exit Legal Clinic continues to provide local SMEs with free and impartial guidance so I would really recommend any SMEs who are facing challenges following the EU exit to make use of the clinic while it is available, until the end of April 2021.

The support provided through the LEPs' programme means that businesses will be able to get wider commercial advice as well, which is often as important as the specific legal support.

From Squire Patton Boggs's point of view, as the managers of the clinic, we are engaged to ensure that businesses get the right level of support and the right firm providing them with the advice going forward. Therefore, we have established a network of firms across the region to provide specific legal advice if it is required at the level and appropriate cost for the business seeking support.

Bradford Law Society and the City of Bradford

Manjit Virdee, president of Bradford Law Society, on the rich legal history of Bradford and the prosperous future that awaits the city



It has been a privilege for me to be part of Bradford Law Society over the last few years. The society's committee is small in numbers and does not have any full-time staff or the resources that some other local societies have, but I am really proud to be part of a committee that wants to put its members first, strives to make a difference, and continues to work hard in supporting them in anything and everything it can.

Bradford Law Society has a distinguished history dating back to 1876 when John Taylor was elected as its first president. Having looked back at the historical list of Bradford Law Society presidents, it is interesting to note that there have been some long-standing family connections in the Bradford legal scene. The Wade family has supplied five of our presidents and nine past presidents came from the families that made up the firm of Vint, Hill & Killick.

Bradford as a legal centre grew with the wool trade that was the basis of the city's wealth and development, and has produced many firms that punch above their weight. It is also the birthplace of some significant firms. For instance, Albert Victor Hammond opened his law firm in Bradford in 1886. It grew into Hammond Suddards and now forms part of the international firm Squire Patten Boggs. Sir Richard Denby, former senior partner at AV Hammond and who was knighted on becoming president of the Law Society of England, was Bradford's president in 1950. Roger Suddards, whose firm Last

Suddards merged with AV Hammond in the 1980s, the event that began the rise of that firm, was resident in 1970. The City of Bradford and its society have a rich heritage!

In 1978, the society had its first female president in Miss Margaret M d'Andria and its first Asian president in 2002 with Ram Saroop. Idris Mir was elected as its first Pakistani president in 2011. A number of past presidents have been elevated to judicial office, including Mr A R B Priddin (1948), Terry Walsh (1990) and Ian Underwood (1994). Mr Frederick Mossman (1925) became the first Diocesan Registrar when the Bradford Parish Church attained cathedral status in 1919.

I am very proud and happy to be in Bradford celebrating the city and the legal work that we have been doing over the past years. Bradford has a population of more than 530,000, and has the youngest, fastest growing population outside of London. It was named the world's first City of Film by Unesco, the city of sanctuary and the curry capital of Britain. It is home to Bradford Bulls, one of the most successful rugby league clubs in the world. Businesses are thriving and the entrepreneurial spirit of Bradford's people is there for all to see; there is a lot of great work to be had, it has real a business spirit.

There is real loyalty shown by Bradfordians to law firms in the city and I can see real growth and development here over the next four to five years.

In my opinion, there is a palpable sense of anticipation, of excitement as things change for the better. Bradford is the sixth largest city in the UK and a city of entrepreneurs with a rich cultural heritage, many faiths, and diverse communities.

Bradford is often misunderstood as a city by the rest of the UK and stereotyped by the media. It needs to change perceptions and to rekindle the pride of its people. We need to reposition the role of culture in promoting Bradford as a place to live, visit, work and study.

The Broadway Shopping Centre is one example of serious investment in Bradford; there is a lot happening with Kirkgate Centre, and the council has big plans for redeveloping the city centre. The Odeon, which for many years seemed if its fate had been sealed, now looks set to reopen as a significant concert venue. PWC, one of the largest professional service firms in the world, has chosen to open an operation in Bradford. This is a clear sign of growing confidence in the potential of our city. It feels that these are truly solid foundations for a real transformation. There is also news that a developer has been appointed for Bradford's One City Park development.

All these projects reflect the commitment to deliver growth and prosperity in which everyone in the district can share. These are part of a growing list of exciting schemes and ambitious ideas that could see Bradford being a participant in the second iteration of the roaring 20s!

Caesar's salad

Patrick Walker goes in search of a Roman villa and wild garlic



Patrick Walker is an independent mediator:
www.imediate.co.uk

I like to bring you the latest news and you are the first to be told. Well, first after the residents of my village and by now perhaps most of the population of Ilkley and Otley. My farmhouse is on the site of an exquisite Roman villa with wonderfully preserved mosaics and several ceramic vases stuffed with dazzling gold coins. Except that it is not, or at least not so far as I am aware. But the story has spread and grown, like Jack's beanstalk, from a fragment of a bronze Roman brooch found near the house.

It's a small find but it did excite me, particularly when further detecting revealed a lead whorl, which may date from the same era. And I am learning as I go—I had no idea what a whorl looked like or its use in the spinning process. It is addictive and now I can be seen on my hands and knees, digging optimistically until I unearth another ring-pull or rusty nail.

On a good day I might find a couple of 19th century copper pennies, but even these are a reminder of the centuries of survival, of which the last 12 months have been only one tiny part.

Talking of survival, there is no doubt that

wildlife is thriving through the pandemic. I'm not sure if reduced air pollution plays a part, but the Wharfe Valley is busy with otters and kingfishers, kites and mandarin duck, badgers and hares. Each sighting is a thrill and a privilege for all of us and especially for our neighbours, who have swapped a tiny Battersea flat for the house, lake and woodland where I grew up. Their excitement on the arrival of a carpet of snowdrops amused me until I realised how much of God's country I was taking for granted. I am looking with fresh eyes at every blue tit, primrose and spring blossom. I am also taking a closer look at the wild garlic, but mostly because my new neighbours tell me it costs £5 a punnet in Borough Market!

Our garden is full of the stuff, but I doubt whether it quite adds up to a retirement plan. Perhaps I better pick up my metal detector and go in search of that elusive golden Roman chariot that might yet be waiting to be discovered. I suspect, however, that with my eyes to the ground and my ears in headphones, I will be missing the real gold dust that spring is sprinkling over all of us.



Difficult terrain to navigate

Richard Jobs, partner and head of the property litigation team at Schofield Sweeney, on the future of the property market and the legal profession in Yorkshire

First of all, how are you and everyone at Schofield Sweeney?

I am really well, thank you. I trained at Schofield Sweeney—before spending some time at Eversheds Sutherland and Gordons—and it feels really good to be back. There is a great culture at the firm. It's very friendly and down to earth.

What's the outlook for the firm?

Lockdown has been quite challenging for many of us for a variety of reasons, but the firm has really pulled together and there has been a significant focus on wellbeing. One day while working from home I received a small parcel from work, including a tea bag and some coffee, inviting



me to an online team get-together. It is those small details that make all the difference.

As for the outlook for the firm, activity levels are high across the board. We have had some really great people join the firm in recent months, such as Amanda Berseford in planning, so the future feels bright. There are a lot of opportunities available to us at the moment, we just have to make the most of them. As long as restrictions continue to ease, I think we are all looking forward to spending some face-to-face time with colleagues, clients and contacts.

How have you had to adapt your own property litigation practice over the past year and since joining Schofield Sweeney?

It goes without saying that the pandemic has had a huge impact on the property market. The government has effectively suspended many of the enforcement options once available to landlords, such as forfeiture for non-payment of rent and winding-up proceedings. Effectively, landlords have been left with court proceedings as the only option to recover arrears.

We have had to become quite adept at using debt recovery tools to manage arrears. I have ended up working very closely with our excellent debt recovery team, led by Andy Howard, which is not something I could have imagined saying at the beginning of 2020. The important thing is that we have been able to deliver results for our landlord clients, many of whom are desperate to keep some rents coming in.

It is a difficult terrain to navigate. There are some tenants that genuinely cannot pay. In those instances, it is a case of finding a solution that is manageable. At the same time, there are a number of large retailers that have traded throughout the pandemic and have used it as an opportunity to withhold rents. Those we have to push quite hard. The skill is discerning which is which.

What are the major concerns for landlords and tenants right now? Are the pandemic and its effects front and centre, or are there other significant challenges?

In many respects it is quite an exciting time, even if it is very unsettling for many. Effectively, we have seen a decade's worth of change squeezed into a single year. We have obviously seen a number of major household names leave the high street, such as Debenhams and Thorntons. It has been very bleak for many in the hospitality sector. Equally, it has been a real boom time for online retailers and delivery businesses, such as Hermes.

I think we are going to see a massive change in the make-up of our urban centres. Rather than just rows of retail units, landlords and tenants are going to have to think quite creatively about how some of that space is redeployed for other uses, such as childcare, food and beverage outlets, and even residential. I'd like to think we will see our urban spaces become more focused on offering 'experiences'. This is clearly part of the government's agenda, with greater flexibility around planning use classes. There is even talk about radical

reform to the lease renewal process, but I suspect it will be many years before we see anything like that.

It is, however, impossible to know what sort of impact this will all have on land values and rent yields. For many landlords and banks, it might be quite difficult to navigate the transition, but I think there are a lot of possibilities we should make the most of.

Going forward, what do you think the legal profession in Yorkshire needs to do to support colleagues and clients during the current crisis and beyond?

It is going to be fascinating to see how the profession adapts as pandemic restrictions lift and people start to return to their offices. The pressures of home schooling aside, I think many people have been rather excited to discover how easily they have adapted to more flexible patterns of working. At the same time, a lot of people are naturally eager to see colleagues again and mix with other professionals face-to-face.

The real challenge for all professionals will be trying to adapt to a new model that absorbs some of the things we have learnt. I don't think many want to see a return to spending everyday in the office. There are benefits to avoiding the grind of the daily commute, both mentally and environmentally. For those with young families, the prospect of being able to work from home more frequently has real appeal. If this is not managed well, however, you could see those that spend time in the office progressing up the ranks more quickly. Given that it might be female colleagues that want to work from home more, how do we avoid them being penalised for this?

At the moment, I think we are all a bit fatigued with Teams and Zoom calls, but perhaps we will return to a healthier mix of real world encounters and virtual ones. Maybe that might be the key to making a more adaptable office culture.

Finally, how content are you with the wider profession right now? Are there any changes you want to see for routes into the profession, for example?

Over the past decade we have seen a greater diversity of people entering the profession and there remains a lot to do in that regard. My greatest concern, however, is how that diversity is retained as careers progress. The vast majority of trainee solicitors are female, but is that mirrored among the partners in many firms? I am afraid it is not. We still see far too many tired white males around the top table.

A major challenge remains for those that want to start a family. I think the culture is changing around that, but too slowly. We need to see more fathers picking up the slack when it comes to dealing with family commitments—that is why I am such a fan of shared parental leave.

Greater diversity at the top will be beneficial for all. There remains an unhealthy working culture in too many places, where stress and businesses are worn as a badge of pride. Often it is just the result of poor time-management. We really need to get to a point where people are able to operate productively when at work and feel sufficiently supported that they are able to turn-off when they are not.



EMBRACE FREEDOM

LAUNCHING APRIL 2021

Get ready to rethink the way your law firm operates with an unrivalled suite of complete software solutions - freeing your people to do what they do best.

Scan the QR code to discover more or visit:
theaccessgroup.com/EmbraceFreedom

#PrepareForFreedom





Legal practice
management software.

Shaping your law firms
digital future.

leap.co.uk/work-remotely