

# Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer

The Official Journal of Leeds Law Society

**Leeds**  
Law Society

June 2022

Issue 176



## A great celebration of getting back together in person

The Leeds Law Society Annual Dinner took place in May—the first time the event has been held for two years

### Local

Leeds JLD looks at what networking and business development actually mean for junior legal professionals

### News

Brabners is expanding into Leeds and will open a new office at a landmark city centre location this summer

### Society

Matthew Jones, an associate solicitor in the real estate team at Weightmans, is the new president of Leeds Law Society

### Last Word

Chris Smith, partner in the personal injury team at Stewarts in Leeds, on becoming a better lawyer, and more

### Comment

Patrick Walker cycles around Northern Ireland and gets to grip with cake but not with politics



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## Society

### President's column.....04

Creating a diverse and inclusive profession

*Matthew Jones is an associate solicitor in the real estate team at Weightmans and president of Leeds Law Society*

### Events.....06

A great celebration of getting back together in person

### Events.....11

For the first time since 2019, the city of Leeds will be celebrating Pride!

## News

### Business development.....08

- Myton Law advises Mimir Marine on diver decompression chamber contract
- Irwin Mitchell supports care provider's acquisition of Whitby nursing home
- Womble Bond Dickinson launches combined retail and hospitality offering, appoints Claire Wilkinson to lead it
- Wake Smith oversees Warrington industrial park deal

### Community.....10

- Mills & Reeve Leeds office reveals growth ambitions as new leader takes charge
- Exchange Chambers achieves record turnover of £41m
- Brabners to enter Yorkshire with office in Leeds
- Hall Brown Family Law opens office in Leeds

- Taylor&Emmet rewards talent at first conference

### Appointments.....20

The latest promotions and appointments from across Leeds and Yorkshire

## Focus

### Networking.....24

A journey to networking

*Leanne Gibson is a trainee solicitor at Ramsdens Solicitors and an events officer for Leeds JLD*

### Comment.....25

I'm definitely not a sausage!

*Patrick Walker is an independent mediator*

## Last word

### Ison Harrison.....26

Serious injury litigation is constantly evolving

*Chris Smith is a partner in the personal injury team at Stewarts in Leeds*



# Creating a diverse and inclusive profession



Matthew Jones is an associate solicitor in the real estate team at Weightmans and president of Leeds Law Society

I write this introduction with the honour and privilege of taking the distinguished role of president of Leeds Law Society as an openly gay man and the first openly LGBTQ+ practitioner to do so in the society's 150-year history.

When I first started my career in law more than 10 years ago, I was not openly gay. I made the conscious decision not to disclose my sexuality in the workplace. This was a stark contrast to my time at university where I had been openly "out". The reason for going back into the closet was simple: I did not want my sexuality to have a detrimental impact on my chance to obtain a training contract. I was fearful that by being openly gay, I would be looked at less favourably by the decision makers in the firm who had the ultimate say as to which applicants would be successful.

This fear may or may not have been irrational but, nevertheless, it prevented me from being my true self in the workplace.

As a young, fresh-faced law graduate, I would never have imagined that a practicing LGBTQ+ solicitor would have been afforded the opportunity to hold such a prestigious position. It is a demonstration of the progress that the legal sector has made in diversity and inclusion that I sit here writing this article.

The legal sector has a duty to be inclusive and diverse. Those who work in this wonderful profession should be able to be their true selves while those wishing to enter the legal sector should not be dissuaded from doing so because of the preconception that it is not inclusive or diverse.

Leeds Law Society has made substantial progress to create a more inclusive and diverse profession. In 2017, we held our first LGBTQ+ event, fast forward five years and we have a diversity and inclusion sub-committee organising events such as our flagship Diversity and Inclusion Conference, which attracts esteemed legal figures such as Sir Terence Etherton, Master McCloud and Baroness Hale. As a society, together with representatives from firms across Leeds, we have taken part in the Leeds Pride Parade in 2018 and 2019. We have also held numerous diversity and inclusion events ourselves.

Collectively, the work of our passionate directors and the involvement of you, our members, have, in my humble opinion, made Leeds Law Society the forward-thinking society for diversity and inclusion outside of London.

There, is of course, more work to be done, which

is why this year I intend to build on the sterling work we have already undertaken and make the legal profession in Leeds the most diverse, inclusive and accepting it can possibly be.

To achieve this, there are exciting plans in the pipeline. We will once again be hosting our popular Diversity and Inclusion Conference, with further details to be announced in due course. We will also be holding more diversity and inclusion events throughout the year, including our quarterly best practice forum where we will be inviting representatives from firms to discuss diversity and inclusion within their respective organisations.

Perhaps the most anticipated event, however, is Leeds Pride, which makes a welcome return to the city after a two year hiatus. I am proud to confirm that the society will once again be taking part and there is information on p11 as to how you and your firm can register. We will be joined in this year's parade by some very special musical guests and while I cannot divulge any more information than that at this stage, I can safely say that they are fabulous. I can speak from experience that the Pride Parade is an event not to be missed and I encourage all of our members to take part with us to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community.

As part of our ongoing support for the LGBTQ+ community in Leeds, I am thrilled to announce that we will be partnering with local charity, Friends of Dorothy.

Aside from diversity and inclusion, we will continue to focus on the promotion of Leeds as a centre for legal excellence at the forefront of legal technology and as a thriving legal community. We continue to work with and collaborate with law firms, government bodies, the judiciary, the bar, universities, and our council to shape the legal environment and remain ahead of the curve to ensure that we continue to influence the changing landscape of the law.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Catherine Woodward for her remarkable work over the past 12 months. Her dedication to the role has been admirable and I look forward to working with her during the next year as our immediate past president.

I hope to see and meet as many of you as possible over the next 12 months, whether virtually or in person, and I do hope that I will have the pleasure of welcoming many of you to our Pride events during August.





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# A great celebration of getting back together in person

**The Leeds Law Society Annual Dinner** took place in May—the first time the event has been held for two years

On 12 May, the annual Leeds Law Society dinner took place at the newly refurbished Queens Hotel in the centre of Leeds. The dinner marked a celebration of the Leeds legal community and a long overdue chance for an in person get together.

I Stephanie Boyce, President of the Law Society of England and Wales and speaker at the event, commented: "All my interactions with Leeds Law Society so far have been virtual so it's been great to finally meet in person."

The sell-out event brought together nearly 400 of the society's members, directors, sponsors and special guests. The evening kicked off with a drinks reception followed by speeches and dinner in the Queens ballroom.

Attendees heard from I Stephanie Boyce as she talked about the current legal aid crisis and what role legal professionals can play in championing this important cause. Lord Justice

Snowdon also inspired the assembled audience as he talked about his own experience and how we can all support the access to justice.

Stephanie Burras, CEO at the Ahead







carefully chosen as they all have such fantastic benefits which they can offer our members."

Our sponsors for the evening were: Landmark Information Group, Landmark Academy, the University of Law, St Philips Chambers, BPP Law School, Advanced, Leeds Law School, Marsh, Arena Group, Conveyancing Data Services, The College of Legal Practice and Shard Capital.

Presidents from the law societies of Sheffield, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool were in attendance, as was the president of the ICAEW and the Junior Lawyers Division, and representatives from the Yorkshire Union of Law Societies. The Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of West Yorkshire, as well as Honourable Judges and District Judges from Leeds Combined Courts, were also present.

Matthew Jones, who has taken on the role of President of Leeds Law Society from 1 June this year, commented: "The dinner is such a great chance to bring the Leeds legal community together, to celebrate our successes and champion diversity in the profession, which is something I am passionate about taking forward in my presidency."

Vice President Shanika Vargas added: "It's great to be back to in person events and meeting friends and colleagues in person has been amazing. Our focus is on building the membership of Leeds Law Society and making sure we appeal not only to large firms, but also the smaller



practices and sole traders who play such a pivotal role in Leeds."

Post-dinner entertainment came in the form of retired judges Scott and the Antartics, who rounded off the evening with their upbeat renditions of some dancefloor classics. The evening was a fantastic reminder of the great legal community in Leeds and after not being able to hold the event last year, a great celebration of getting back together in person!

Follow this link to watch the highlights from the Leeds Law Society Annual Dinner: <https://player.vimeo.com/video/713899164?h=3a15f01a2d>

Partnership, the charity partner for Leeds Law Society for 2021/22, gave an overview of their work, including information on Education Week, which ran from 6 to 10 June. Both local firms and individuals can get involved in helping to educate and inspire our next generation of lawyers.

Burras commented: "The enthusiasm in the room following our presentation was fantastic—it was great to meet so many passionate individuals who are committed to giving back to the city of Leeds."

Catherine Woodward, Immediate Past President of Leeds Law Society, commented: "We are so grateful to all our wonderful speakers for giving up their time to attend and also to our sponsors, without whom the evening would not be possible. Our sponsors have been

## Myton Law advises Mimir Marine on diver decompression chamber contract

Yorkshire specialist shipping, rail and transport law firm Myton Law has advised Hull-based Mimir Marine on a contract for the urgent supply of a port-side hyperbaric reception facility to Baku, Azerbaijan.

The 80-ton life support chamber complex, rated for a depth of 300 metres, provides a shore based safe-haven for the controlled decompression of deep-sea divers. Developed by Mimir Marine in Hull, the unit is suitable for multi-day decompression of up to 24 divers.

The unit (pictured) was dispatched by Mimir Marine for

urgent delivery after damage to an existing facility at Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, which is located on the Caspian Sea. It was air lifted via East Midlands Airport on board an Antonov 124 airplane designed in Ukraine for heavy cargo. The equipment arrived in Baku within 12 hours of leaving the UK.

Myton Law's John Habergham commented: "Myton Law was delighted to advise Mimir Marine against tight deadlines on such a complex, multi-faceted contract in negotiation with a major oil and gas company for this urgently-required, high value kit."



## Irwin Mitchell supports care provider's acquisition of Whitby nursing home



The Leeds office of Irwin Mitchell has supported Scarborough-based care provider Saint Cecilia's Care Group's acquisition of a nursing home in Whitby.

Saint Cecilia's acquired Oakland Nursing Home, located on White Point Road.

The Irwin Mitchell team was led

by real estate senior associate Clare Davitt (pictured), with partner Gavin Maddison advising on corporate matters and partner Padma Tadi on employment issues.

The acquisition has prevented the closure of the home and not only means continuity of care for its residents, but the deal has also secured the jobs of 25 members of staff.

Saint Cecilia's is also looking to recruit extra staff for various posts at the home. It views the acquisition as a great

opportunity to improve the home and offer quality care.

With the addition of Oakland, Saint Cecilia's now runs two nursing homes, three care homes and a day-care centre in North Yorkshire, with plans to continue growing. The purchase of Oakland is part of its strategic growth programme.

Mike Padgham, managing director at Saint Cecilia's, said: "We are grateful to Irwin Mitchell for their guidance and support through this acquisition. These are challenging times for care providers, and it is a difficult market-but this acquisition makes us a stronger provider and it is excellent news for Oakland and for its residents, staff and the Whitby community it serves."

Davitt from Irwin Mitchell said: "We are delighted to have worked alongside Saint Cecilia's on yet another acquisition in the care sector."

"The issues facing the sector are well known in terms of rising costs and a shortage of staff and many private operators have had to leave the sector-leading to further shortages of quality care homes."

"Saint Cecilia's has a great reputation for providing quality care in a warm and friendly environment, which is greatly needed. We are proud to be associated with its growth programme."





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## Womble Bond Dickinson launches combined retail and hospitality offering, appoints Claire Wilkinson to lead it



Womble Bond Dickinson is refreshing its sector offering with the launch of a combined retail and hospitality team and the appointment of a new head to lead it.

Leeds-based partner Claire Wilkinson (pictured) has been appointed to the role and is bringing together its longstanding retail and hospitality teams, in response

to increasing connectivity between the sectors and to ensure high standards of client service.

Wilkinson explained: "For some time we've noticed our retail clients taking inspiration and advice from our hospitality clients and vice versa. The more Womble Bond Dickinson can look at and understand our clients as a whole, the better we can anticipate their needs."

"As an innovative business we're keen to 'horizon spot', to look beyond traditional 'silos' and to flex our offering in response to market trends. We're confident both our lawyers and our clients will benefit from improved connectivity and pooling our retail and hospitality expertise."

Wilkinson, who is a commercial real estate specialist, has

extensive experience in the retail and hospitality sectors. For more than 20 years, she has advised investors, occupiers, landlords and developers on all aspects of transactions.

A partner at Womble Bond Dickinson for more than four years, Wilkinson routinely leads multi-disciplinary and multi-locational teams.

Commenting on her appointment, Wilkinson said: "I'm delighted to be appointed as retail and hospitality sector head. To properly service our clients, we need to understand their businesses inside out. Our sectors cut across practice areas meaning our lawyers go out of their way to learn the nature of our clients' businesses and Womble Bond Dickinson is a 'one stop shop' for all their legal needs."

She added: "The pandemic had a profound effect on retail and hospitality. Businesses in the sector were hit particularly hard by restrictions, they had to pivot and innovate at an unprecedented speed. Womble Bond Dickinson's dedication to retail and hospitality allowed us to support our clients through their toughest challenge, it's great to see them bouncing back and to help them seize post pandemic opportunities."

"I look forward to further developing our sector offering to provide innovative solutions which support our client's specific and increasingly complicated circumstances and issues."

## Wake Smith oversees Warrington industrial park deal



Sheffield's Wake Smith Solicitors has advised London & Associated Properties in the expansion of its industrial and logistics portfolio with the £2.3 million acquisition of a multi-let industrial park in Cheshire.

Adlington Court in Warrington (pictured) includes two blocks, configured as 18 industrial units.

LAP acquired 25,251 sqft in four units between 5,000 and 7,500 sqft, with dedicated yards and car parking and the whole of the common areas of the estate.

All existing units are currently let to tenants including The Lowton Motor Company, A T Plant Services and Drivetrain.

Wake Smith acted for LAP, with commercial property director Neil Salter handling the acquisition. It also includes the freehold reversionary interest in a Day Care Centre with grounds on a long lease to Warrington Borough Council.

The park, which was purchased from Cordatus Property, is located approximately a mile from Junction 11 of the M62 motorway.

John Heller, chief executive at LAP, commented: "This acquisition represents significant opportunities for LAP with strong rental demand and a history of owner occupier interest as demonstrated by the units already sold."

Salter, head of the commercial property team at Wake Smith, said: "We have a very well-established relationship with LAP and we were delighted that LAP chose us to act on this important acquisition for them."

"It was great to work with John and his team to get the deal over the line in a relatively short period and we look forward to working on the management of this asset."

# For the first time since 2019, the city of Leeds will be celebrating Pride!



## Matthew Jones, president of Leeds Law Society, previews the return of Leeds Pride on 7 August

Pride is not only a celebration and about showing your support for the LGBTQ+ community but also an event aimed at achieving equal justice and equal opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning individuals.

For those of you who may not have attended Leeds Pride before, I can safely say that it is a wonderful experience. There is a parade that starts at the Rose Bowl and finishes at Lower Briggate. The city is a riot of colour and there are numerous stages set up throughout the city with live music and artists. It really is an event not to be missed!

This year, Leeds Law Society will once again be taking part in the Pride Parade itself!

The focus of Leeds Law Society is to achieve a more diverse and inclusive



profession and we would like to make this year's Pride the biggest and best for the society.

The event will take place on 7 August from approximately 11:30am and ending at around 3pm (exact timings to be confirmed). This year, Leeds Law Society is also going to have some special musical guests joining us in the parade, and there is also going to be a private drinks reception following the event sponsored by the society.

The event is open to all member firms and we are looking for as many people as possible to join us.

If you are interested in taking part, please register your interest using the following link: [https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/calendar\\_detail.html?eid=594B1DAC-8A47-4690-84FE-5DDA4621A64E](https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/calendar_detail.html?eid=594B1DAC-8A47-4690-84FE-5DDA4621A64E)



## Mills & Reeve Leeds office reveals growth ambitions as new leader takes charge



The new head of the Leeds office of law firm Mills & Reeve is looking to build on its growth and boost its share of the Yorkshire legal market.

Corporate partner Paul Johnson is taking over the role from Philip Way, who, after 14 years as head of the Leeds office, is stepping down but continuing to lead the firm's family team in the city.

Johnson (pictured), who is a well-known figure in the Yorkshire deals market, has been at Mills & Reeve for seven years. He started his career at Eversheds Sutherland and has more than two decades experience in the corporate sector in Leeds.

Now, in his new position, Johnson has ambitious plans to grow the office and enhance the Mills & Reeve brand in the Yorkshire market.

The office has seen strong growth recently through client wins, high-profile lateral hires and has strength and expertise in private wealth, real estate, litigation, corporate, IP/IT, commercial and employment. In recognition of this, last year, the office won the coveted Law Firm of the Year: Large award at the Yorkshire Legal Awards.

Throughout the pandemic Mills & Reeve has continued to support clients and expand its teams, demonstrated in the growth in fee income. In the 21/22 financial year to date, fee income is up 19% while headcount has increased 8%.

Johnson said: "The Leeds office has seen exceptional growth since opening back in 2008. We have launched several new practice areas and significantly expanded

our presence in the key sectors of technology, food and agribusiness, health and care, education, real estate investment and private wealth after winning new clients and developing our teams."

"We have also profited from our mid-market strengths which has led to several new client wins. The corporate 2team has been boosted by the arrival of partner Joanna Jowitt and principal associate Alex Kenworthy who relocated from the Cambridge office. The team has been very busy in recent months, and we have an excellent deal pipeline. Our commercial expertise has been boosted by the recent appointment of partner and IP specialist Alex Newman."

He added: "Philip has done an excellent job over the last 14 years. Fee income has risen significantly, and we have recruited several high-profile partners and are continually winning new clients."

"The Yorkshire legal market is fiercely competitive, and firms need to stand out from the crowd. My role as head of the office is to capitalise on the firm's reputation for culture, innovation and sector expertise and further build the Mills & Reeve brand in Yorkshire with the help of our highly skilled and motivated team.

Way commented: "After 14 years at the helm I'm delighted to hand over the reins to Paul. It has been a great pleasure to lead the office through a period of tremendous growth and achievement. We are in an excellent position to expand further our presence in the regional market and Paul is ideally placed to take the office on its next stage of development."

## Exchange Chambers achieves record turnover of £41m

Leeds-based Exchange Chambers is poised for further growth after announcing record turnover.

Buoyed by the arrival of 38 new members since the beginning of 2020, Exchange has achieved record year-end turnover of £41 million for the 2021/22 financial year.

This represents a rise of 32% on Exchange's 2020/21 turnover figure of £31 million. By way of context, its pre-pandemic turnover in 2019/20 was £33 million.

"The strong performance of the business is a credit to our outstanding barristers, clerks and staff," said Jonathan l'Anson (pictured), chief executive at Exchange, which currently has 200 members, including 24 silks, based in Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester.

l'Anson continued: "It has been an exceptional effort, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are seeing high quality instructions across all practice areas."

Exchange has also announced that average member earnings have increased significantly over the last two years from pre-pandemic levels across all practice areas, while members' contributions remained low at an average of 12% of individual earnings.

"Our expansion strategy is based on attracting the highest quality work and the highest quality barristers," said l'Anson. "This is fuelling our growth and attracting applications from barristers from all over the country."

l'Anson took over as Exchange's chief executive as the pandemic first took hold in 2020. Talking about its strategy during the pandemic, he explained: "Having previously worked as a partner in a large corporate law firm, I distinctly remember how certain businesses reacted to the challenges of the 2008 financial crash and learned some significant lessons."

"As a board, we applied those lessons to our Covid recovery plan."

"From the very beginning of the virus we were determined not to pull the shutters down. We stayed on the front foot in terms of plans for growth, investment in the business, marketing, business development and recruitment."

He continued: "We have focused on recruitment, bringing in a 15-strong family law team from Chavasse Chambers and a number of silks from other chambers, including Simon Gorton QC and Anesta Weekes QC."

This strong focus on recruitment has seen Exchange take on 38 new tenants since the onset of COVID-19 two years ago, as well as at least six pupils a year but often more.

Exchange also renegotiated and signed new 10-year leases in both Leeds and Manchester while continuing to invest in all areas of the business, particularly technology.

l'Anson added: "We maintained our marketing push and our training initiatives for solicitors were also scaled up with over 11,000 delegates booking on to our webinars and seminars over the last 12 months. All of that has meant that we have emerged from the last two years in an extremely strong position."

Furthermore, Exchange has a good track record providing its members with outstanding practice



development support tailored to their individual aspirations.

This year, Lisa Linklater QC and Chris Barnes QC have both taken silk while Mark Rhind QC, Giles Maynard-Connor QC, Imran Shafi QC and David Temkin QC did likewise in 2021. Former members of Exchange have also recently been appointed to prominent judicial positions.

Head of chambers Bill Braithwaite QC said Exchange is targeting further growth across all locations and practice areas, while always being open to new opportunities.

He said: "As one of the largest and most well-resourced chambers, we are committed to implementing our Northern powerhouse expansion strategy."

"We have been proactive in responding to the changing environment by supporting our members and delivering the very highest levels of service to our clients. We also recognise the importance of supporting members who wish to work flexibly while promoting equality and diversity at the Bar."

## Brabners to enter Yorkshire with office in Leeds



Law firm Brabners is expanding into Leeds and will open a new office at a landmark city centre location this summer, marking a major milestone in its strategic growth plan.

The move will facilitate the creation of a full-service team based in Yorkshire as the firm continues to invest in its future, having grown turnover by more than 30% since the launch of its new strategy in 2017.

With the office opening planned in a few months, the launch of Brabners in Yorkshire takes immediate effect with former Shulmans corporate partner Marcus Armstrong joining on 3 May.

Armstrong's arrival will be swiftly followed by other partner hires across a range of disciplines. He joins from Knights following its acquisition of Shulmans in 2020.

The office opening represents the law firm's third major real estate investment in the past 12 months, after the firm recently relocated its Preston office to Walton Summit. It will also open its new 20,000 sqft office at Manchester's Barbirolli Square this summer, complementing its base in Liverpool.

Robert White (pictured, right), chief executive officer at Brabners, said: "Our entry into the Leeds market marks a significant milestone for our firm and follows five years of consecutive growth. We are looking forward to building our presence in the market over the coming years and to playing our part as an integral member of the Yorkshire

business community."

"This latest move for our firm represents an important step-change for the business. It complements our existing locations in Liverpool, Manchester and Lancashire; strengthens our presence in the North; and ultimately extends our reach, allowing us to continue to support a diverse range of regional and national clients."

White added: "Leeds represents one of the UK's fastest growing legal markets and is one of the pre-eminent markets outside of London, which makes it an ideal next step for us as we continue to deliver our strategic growth plan."

Nik White (pictured, left), managing partner at Brabners, commented: "People and culture have been at the heart of our success for many years. Launching in Leeds with a stunning new office reflects our commitment to keep driving our firm forward with ambition and positive intent, whilst maximising our opportunities to secure the best available talent and also providing outstanding facilities for our teams."

"In Marcus, we are welcoming one of the city's leading lawyers who will undoubtedly help us scale our team in Leeds at pace. With the office opening and our long-awaited Manchester move due this summer, we're anticipating an incredibly exciting few months ahead."



## Hall Brown Family Law opens office in Leeds



Hall Brown Family Law has opened an office in the centre of Leeds. It's the firm's fourth location within six years of opening its doors for the first time.

Partner Laura Guillon (pictured, right), one of Hall Brown's first appointments, has been chosen to lead the second Hall Brown office to open in Yorkshire within the space of two years.

Guillon will be joined by new recruit and consultant partner Suzanne Smales (pictured, middle), who has handled family law cases in England and Wales as well as abroad over the course of a 30-year legal career.

The Leeds office launch team is rounded out by associate Sarah Hewitt (pictured, left) and office manager Sidney Hagan.

Guillon explained that the decision to establish a presence in Leeds was a direct response to a "considerable" rise in the number of clients based in Yorkshire.

She said: "The volume of work which we handle nationwide has continued to increase without pause, even during the COVID pandemic."

"A key part of that pattern is down to the number of clients from Yorkshire who have asked us to represent them because of the quality of support which we provide."

"However, as well as giving the best possible standard of service, we are conscious of the need to offer as much convenience to clients as we can."

"That doesn't just rest in our experience dealing with what might be described as the traditional divorce model."

"As a firm, we are keen proponents of alternative dispute

resolution, such as mediation and arbitration, not least because it provides a more rounded service and means that clients have different ways to resolve their issues."

"Suzanne, Sarah and myself are also all from Yorkshire and have previously worked here for many years between us. We understand the area and what kind of help people require."

"It's that degree of local knowledge allied to the expertise which Hall Brown possesses that we believe can be of real benefit."

Guillon joined Hall Brown as an associate solicitor in April 2016 and recently became one of the firm's partners.

She is renowned for having substantial experience across a range of complex family law matters, especially those featuring individuals with high net worth and a high profile, including many Premier League footballers.

Smales started her legal career as a barrister at chambers in Park Square having been called to the Bar in 1990.

She has since worked as a lawyer and law lecturer in Hong Kong and Australia, where she also qualified as a family mediator.

The launch of its Park Square office is the latest indication of Hall Brown's commitment to Yorkshire.

The firm already boasts premises in Sheffield as well as headquarters at Ship Canal House in Manchester and a London team based at Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Hall Brown, which employs a total of 50 people, 39 of whom are fee earners, saw its turnover increase from £4.1 million to £5.4 million in the last full financial year.

## Taylor&Emmet rewards talent at first conference



Taylor&Emmet has celebrated the achievements of the individuals and teams helping to drive the Sheffield law firm forward.

Awards were presented to stand-out performers in seven categories at the firm's inaugural annual conference, held at the city's historic Cutlers Hall.

The conference, which was attended by more than 200 Taylor&Emmet staff and external contacts, honoured those who embody the firm's core values—approachability, integrity, excellence and community—as well as recognising a star of the year, department performance and new starters.

Clinical negligence specialist Sam Sims was named the law firm's star performer for exceeding expectations professionally and in her support of community projects, and garnering consistently positive feedback.

Inger Roby and Joel Knight, from business legal services and accounts, respectively, shared the new stater accolade. Both have quickly established themselves within their teams and are exceptionally supportive of colleagues, according to Taylor&Emmet.

Sharna Poxon (pictured, far right), HR director at

Taylor&Emmet, said: "We are extremely proud of the individuals and teams whose work in the last 12 months secured them a spot among our award winners. It was great to see the entire firm coming together to celebrate excellence and learn more about the exciting plans we have for the future."

This is the first time Taylor&Emmet has gathered its entire workforce to share its vision for the development of the firm, discuss ongoing projects and acknowledge the efforts of its team.

The event included information about ongoing growth and new initiatives, such as its commitment to raise £10,000 in this financial year for four local and national charities.

Steve Hinshelwood (pictured, far left), chief executive at Taylor&Emmet, added: "Organising an event on the scale of our annual conference was a first for Taylor&Emmet, but it was well worth the effort!"

"After spending so long separated from our colleagues, it was a fantastic opportunity to explain just how far we've come during the pandemic, set out our ambitious plans for the future and reward everyone for their continued hard work and dedication."

## Maureen Cawthorn marks three decades at Wilkinson Woodward



Solicitor Maureen Cawthorn is celebrating after marking 30 years of service at West Yorkshire law firm Wilkinson Woodward.

After studying at Manchester University and the College of Law in Chester, Cawthorn (pictured) qualified in 1989, specialising in litigation and

employment law.

Following short spells at legal practices in Manchester and Leeds, Cawthorn joined the litigation department at Wilkinson Woodward in April 1992.

In 2007, Cawthorn achieved her notarial qualification from Cambridge University, making her one of just a handful of notary publics in Calderdale.

Over the past 15 years, she has built up a busy and

highly regarded notary practice, working with both private and corporate clients from Kirklees, Calderdale and further afield.

Towards the end of 2007, Cawthorn became the firm's managing partner, guiding the independent legal practice through a period of significant growth and evolution.

In the past decade, Cawthorn has overseen two mergers: the first, in 2012, with Huddersfield legal practice Norcliffe and Co, and the second, in 2013, with Beadders Solicitors of Brighouse.

Today, Cawthorn divides her time between her management responsibilities and a substantial caseload of notary, employment and litigation work. She is a member of the Employment Lawyers Association and the Notary Society.

Outside work, Cawthorn is a trustee of The Next Step Trust, a Halifax-based charity for young adults with complex needs.

## Inspire Legal Group eyes its third office in Yorkshire



Inspire Legal Group, a law firm set up during lockdown just over two years ago, is planning to open its third office in Yorkshire.

The law firm is headquartered in Scarborough, opened a second office in

Leeds last year, and is now on the lookout for premises in Hull. It also has a London hub.

Formerly Foster Clay, the firm, which relaunched under its new name last month, offers lawyers of all disciplines the chance to work as consultants, building up their own practices and retaining 70% of their fees, while Inspire takes care of issues such as compliance and insurance.

Inspire operates as a 'virtual first' business meaning its staff can live and work from anywhere, but founders Natalie Foster and Isabel Bathurst (pictured), both originally from Yorkshire, said it is already opening up opportunities for people in the region.

Foster, a former business manager at Barclays Bank, still lives in Scarborough where the firm first opened in March 2020 in the old county courthouse. Eleven support staff also work there, providing back-office assistance to the 23 consultant lawyers currently on Inspire's books, a number it is hoped will double by

the end of the year.

She said: "We could have chosen to run everything from a city, but I think Scarborough has been very underrepresented in the legal market for a long time and there has been a real lack of opportunity for anyone wanting to get into the profession."

"Location is not the obstacle it once was. We attract clients from all over the world and consultants too—we have one lawyer who splits her time between Bermuda and New York."

Inspire Legal Group also includes Inspire Crypto, a business that will develop tech products enabling property transactions to proceed via blockchain, and Inspire Legal Academy, offering training in-house. Lawyers can also access business coaching.

The alternative business structure, licensed by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, is open to lawyers of all levels including solicitors, licensed conveyancers and paralegals, as well as legal entrepreneurs and engineers who need support to create their own tech products.

Bathurst, an experienced complex injury and clinical negligence solicitor, who grew up in Sheffield, added: "It's not about growth for growth's sake—it's about inspiring lawyers to see there are many different things they can do in practice and to find new ways of delivering legal services."

"We are a group of colleagues where everyone has a stake in the success of the business."

"Our goal is to provide a supportive yet virtual, flexible working environment for lawyers and other professionals, with a focus on technology and modern, innovative working practices."

## Hudgell Solicitors expands its executive team

Hudgell Solicitors has appointed two new members to its executive team to steer the firm into further growth.

Michelle Maltby has been appointed to the role of chief operating officer and Jonathon Wells joins as chief financial officer.

They will support owner and executive chairman Neil Hudgell, and chief executive officer Rachel Di Clemente, as part of a four-strong executive team to lead strategic development.

Maltby has vast experience of the Hudgells business and played a huge part in the firm's development throughout its first two decades in the role of head of operations, before leaving in 2017.

Wells is a highly respected finance director who has held senior positions in the legal, food, IT and media sectors, as well as being treasurer and trustee of a number of charity organisations.

The appointments come on the back of two years of growth for the business, and according to Di Clemente, as ambitious new targets have been set for further progress over the coming 12 months.

She said: "We're delighted to have added two highly-experienced senior professionals to our team in Michelle and Jonathon."

"We believe that we have a great opportunity to build on the success we have enjoyed over the past 24 months to further grow the business. However, we recognised that we needed to strengthen the leadership team to ensure that our ambitions could be achieved."

"We were very clear in our recruitment for these roles as we wanted experienced people, but importantly people who share our vision and passion for what we believe the firm should be doing, the people we should be representing, and how we go about doing that."

Di Clemente continued: "Given she spent almost two decades working alongside Neil and establishing our reputation for excellent client care, Michelle was an obvious choice for us as she has a great understanding of the firm and its values, and has returned with great enthusiasm for the plans we have set out."

"Jonathon joins with us an exceptional career already behind him and a track record of improving financial performance, processes, management information and in developing and re-organising commercial structures."

"Importantly, he shares our confidence and ambition to build upon our success over the past couple of years and to help us grow."

Di Clemente added: "Whilst we have been through a period of transformation over the past two years, we have also enjoyed phenomenal success in that time in terms of growth of work and reputation, thanks to the quality of people recruited and the success we have had in many high-profile cases."

"Our growth and recruitment in both Hull and Manchester over the past 12 months has demonstrated to us that there are strong opportunities to build upon our recent success, and that may include further recruitment and additions to our legal teams, or acquisitions."



# Submissions are being accepted for the Yorkshire Legal Awards 2022

Visit [www.yorkshirelegalnews.co.uk/yorkshire-legal-awards](http://www.yorkshirelegalnews.co.uk/yorkshire-legal-awards) to begin the submissions process

## Key dates for your diary

Entry deadline: 01 July 2022

Awards ceremony: 06 October 2022

## FAQs

- **What is the dress-code?**  
Black-tie and formal wear.
- **What time do the awards begin?**  
7pm sharp, until late.
- **What is the structure of the evening?**  
The evening begins with a champagne reception. Dinner follows, with the awards ceremony and then entertainment to end the evening.
- **Is there a set menu?**  
Yes, across three courses. But individual dietary requirements are catered for. Let us know when you book your tickets / confirm who will be attending.
- **What if my question isn't covered here?**  
Get in touch with Harry Thomas via [harry.thomas@barkerbrooks.co.uk](mailto:harry.thomas@barkerbrooks.co.uk).

The Yorkshire Legal Awards brings together the region's legal community to recognise and celebrate its many achievements.

Launched in 2000 to recognise the outstanding talent across our region, this is a key date on the calendar and offers professionals the chance to come together for a memorable evening of networking, socialising and celebrating. The award categories cover everyone from the biggest corporate firms to leading barristers, from senior partners to rising stars, and

## Meet the sponsors



the event itself is a glittering black-tie affair, and always sells out—so early booking is recommended.

## 2022 categories

The Yorkshire Legal Awards is open to individuals and teams in private practice and in-house, at law firms and companies across the region. Each category is designed to recognise the outstanding achievements of the entrant. Of course, if there is something you'd like to mention but isn't covered in the criteria, make sure that you include it anyway. The deadline for submissions is 1 July 2022.

## Organisations

*Suitable for law firms, barristers' chambers and in-house legal departments*

- Chambers of the Year
- Diversity & Inclusion Award
- In-House Team of the Year
- Law Firm of the Year: Small
- Law Firm of the Year: Medium
- Law Firm of the Year: Large

- Lawtech Initiative of the Year
- Niche Law Firm of the Year

### Individuals

*Suitable for individuals practising within Yorkshire, in private practice. In-house lawyers are eligible to enter all but Partner and Managing Partner of the Year*

- In-House Lawyer of the Year
- Managing Partner of the Year
- Partner of the Year
- Rising Star of the Year
- Trainee Solicitor of the Year
- Yorkshire Lawyer of the Year

### Practice areas

*Suitable for individuals and teams*

- Banking & Finance Law
- Commercial Property
- Corporate & Commercial
- Criminal Law
- Debt Recovery
- Employment Law
- Family Law
- Intellectual Property
- Litigation & Dispute Resolution
- Private Client
- Regulatory & Compliance
- Residential Property

### Judging

The awards are judged by a prestigious independent panel made up of experts from across the Yorkshire legal community. Representatives from the region's leading societies, business groups and local public bodies lend their expertise and experience to assess hundreds of written and video entries, and decide who should be recognised as Yorkshire's leading legal lights. The panel is reconstituted every year to ensure variety in views and backgrounds, and is bound by confidentiality and conflict of interest requirements to ensure its integrity and independence.

### How to enter

Entering the Yorkshire Legal Awards is easy and free. Follow these simple steps and you'll produce a submission that our independent panel of judges will find clear, concise and memorable.

**Pick your categories:** There are lots of categories to choose from. Read the criteria carefully for each and decide which will give you the best opportunity to demonstrate your strengths.

**Choose the form of your submission:** We accept written submissions of

between 250 and 1,000 words per category. Written submissions are at their best after several drafts, with input from everyone involved. Remember that your entry needs to stand out from the crowd, so keep it active, free of jargon, and don't forget to proof your words before entering. Alternatively, you can enter a video submission. You'll have a maximum of three minutes to demonstrate why you, your team or business should win the particular category. Videos are easy to digest and revisit, and they allow the judges to put a face to a submission.

### Submit online via the form:

Submissions can only be accepted via the online form. Fill out all of the required information, and make sure you choose the correct category from the list. The form must be filled out and submitted for every category. The form removes all formatting, so don't worry about italics, bolding, underlining or hyperlinking, as these won't make it through our system. Furthermore, no supporting documents and attachments are allowed, so don't use the attach buttons for CVs, promo videos, PDFs and Word docs—these won't make it through our system, either. Client testimonials must be collated by you and included within your written submission (and are included in the word count). Anything sent separately will not be accepted. For video entries, fill out the form as normal, mention that you are submitting a video, and submit the video file via a service such as WeTransfer.

**Attach your logo:** If you make it to the shortlist, we'll need a high-resolution version of your logo for the ceremony, programme and associated marketing campaigns. We accept the JPEG, .PNG and .PDF formats, but prefer .EPS wherever possible. If you don't have this, don't worry.

**Attach entrant's photo:** This is for the individual awards. Colour photos are preferred, and high resolution JPEG is best.

**Sit back and wait for news:** That's it, you're done! Approximately two weeks following the deadline, our judging panel will convene to make their final decisions. We'll then get in touch with every entrant to give them the news.

## A reminder of the 2021 winners and recipients

- **Chambers of the Year**  
Plowden Chambers
- **Commercial Property Award**  
Addleshaw Goddard
- **Corporate & Commercial Award**  
Gordons
- **Criminal Law Award**  
Howard and Byrne
- **Debt Recovery Award**  
Lupton Fawcett
- **Diversity & Inclusion Award**  
Addleshaw Goddard
- **Employment Law Award**  
Thrive Law
- **Family Law Award**  
Stowe Family Law (Yorkshire Team)
- **In-House Award**  
British Business Bank
- **Intellectual Property Award**  
Appleyard Lees
- **Law Firm of the Year: Large**  
Mills & Reeve
- **Law Firm of the Year: Medium**  
BW Legal
- **Law Firm of the Year: Small**  
Hägen Wolf
- **Litigation & Dispute Resolution Award**  
Switalskis Solicitors
- **Managing Partner of the Year**  
Andrew Meehan, Harrogate Family Law
- **Niche Law Firm of the Year**  
Thrive Law
- **Partner of the Year**  
Ben Townsend, Stewarts Law
- **Private Client Award**  
Bell & Buxton Solicitors
- **Regulatory & Compliance Award**  
Eversheds Sutherland International (Environment, Health and Safety Team)
- **Residential Property Award**  
Lindsey Frith, Ramsdens Solicitors
- **Rising Star of the Year**  
Haleema Ishaq, Addleshaw Goddard
- **Trainee Solicitor of the Year**  
Elle Hirst, Chadwick Lawrence
- **Yorkshire Lawyer of the Year**  
Neil Hudgell, Hudgell Solicitors



# Moving on up

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



Newly merged **Dawson & Burgess and Kenyon, Son & Craddock Solicitors** has welcomed back three local solicitors to Doncaster.

Both Ben Bailey and Vicky Sladdin started their careers in Doncaster before each moved further afield within the Yorkshire region.

They have now returned to join the law firm, which formed on 1 April after the merger of Doncaster-based Dawson & Burgess and Kenyon, Son & Craddock, which has bases in Thorne, Goole and Wakefield.

Bailey, formerly of Graysons in Sheffield, joins Kenyon, Son & Craddock with "a wealth of experience" to drive forward the law firm's personal injury and medical negligence department.

He said: "I'm really excited at the prospect of coming back to work with a local firm in the town where I grew up with the opportunity to support local people who have suffered injury or worse through no fault of their own."

Sladdin returns to Doncaster after working at Emsleys in Leeds. She has "extensive experience" in wills and probate, deputyship and trusts.

The third appointment, Magdalena Musialik, moved to Doncaster from Poland when she was 19. She has lived in the town since then and has always been proud to be part of its Polish community.

Musialik joined Dawson & Burgess in 2013 and qualified as a solicitor in 2019. She went on to work in Newark but returned to the Doncaster firm earlier this year as a commercial and residential conveyancing solicitor, who also deals with corporate matters.

Musialik commented: "I am hoping to connect with individual and commercial clients, old and new. I am also particularly well placed to support Polish speaking clients."

Commenting on the appointments, Gemma Canli, partner at Dawson & Burgess and Kenyon, Son & Craddock Solicitors, said: "We are thrilled to be joined by such talented people and look forward to them playing a key role in our provision of excellent legal services in Doncaster City and beyond!"



Harrogate-based **Raworths Solicitors** has announced two promotions within its commercial team.

Matthew Hill has been named as head of commercial client services and steps into this role following the appointment of Simon Morris as managing partner of the law firm in April.

Hill will ensure the commercial team continues to work together to deliver integrated services, liaising with private client colleagues as client needs require.

Commenting on his appointment, Hill said: "Raworths' commercial team has considerable breadth and our clients benefit from a genuinely collaborative approach. I am looking forward to continuing Simon's great work in overseeing the delivery of outstanding client service."

Hill will continue in his position as head of dispute resolution at Raworths.

In addition, as part of the firm's commitment to nurturing and developing talent to ensure that it is well positioned for the future, Jon Healey has been promoted to partner.

Healey, who leads the corporate and commercial team at Raworths, has made a significant contribution to the firm. He is particularly recognised for his expertise in advising privately owned businesses and entrepreneurs on mergers and acquisitions.

Hill commented: "I congratulate Jon on his well-deserved promotion to partner. Since joining Raworths in 2019, his expertise and leadership have been invaluable to our clients and the wider team."

**Rollits** has promoted five members of its team in Hull and York from associate to partner.

Sarah Adams, Alison Benson and Libby Clarkson, based in the law firm's Hull office, have all been promoted, alongside Suzgo Kaluluma and Lynne Webster in York.

Adams specialises in private capital matters including wills and probate, powers of attorney and trusts. She joined Rollits in 2011 after studying at the University of Hull and York College of Law. She qualified as a solicitor in 2013.





She is also a full member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) and has achieved a distinction in the STEP Diploma for Trusts and Estates.

Benson leads the family team at Rollits. A specialist in the field for 20 years and a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, she deals with all issues arising from divorce and separation with a focus on complex financial cases, including business and farming assets.

She also advises on private children disputes and pre-nuptial agreements and is an accredited mediator whose practice includes direct consultation with children and publicly funded mediation work.

Clarkson graduated from the University of Hull in 2011 and joined Rollits as a trainee the following year, moving into the firm's planning and development team when she qualified in 2014.

Her work includes advising on planning law, planning agreements and infrastructure agreements, buying and selling land for development, and highway, access and title issues.

Kaluluma graduated from the University of Durham in 2006, qualified as a solicitor in 2009 and was appointed a solicitor advocate (high court civil proceedings) in 2011. He is also a member of STEP.

He moved to Rollits from the Wetherby firm Hartlaw in 2019 and joined the private capital department in the firm's York office. He works across all aspects of estate and succession planning and on all stages of the estate administration process and trust administration.

His work includes the preparation of powers of attorney and Court of Protection applications.

Webster has more than 20 years of experience as a commercial property solicitor and is based in the firm's York office.

A graduate of Manchester University, Webster qualified as a solicitor in 1997 and worked for various law firms in Leeds, including Freeths, Walker Morris and Cobbetts. She joined Rollits from LCF Barber Titeleys in Harrogate in 2019.

Webster acts for numerous property investment and development companies and deals with a range of commercial property matters. She also acts for high-net-worth private investors in retail and office space and

residential portfolios.

Commenting on the promotions, Ralph Gilbert, managing partner at Rollits, said: "We are delighted to announce these promotions, which are testament to the calibre of people we are attracting to Rollits."

"It is very pleasing that two of them—Libby and Sarah—who joined us as trainees have now progressed to become partners along with Alison, Lynne and Suzgo who have developed their skills and experience since opting to join us from other firms in Yorkshire."



Leeds-based **Thrive Law** has recently added three new members to its team.

Thrive Law, which focuses on employment law and the workplace, has hired Jo Rowland as people manager and Deyontae James as its newest solicitor.

Khaleeqa Bostan has also returned after originally undertaking a digital marketing apprenticeship at the law firm.

Their appointments bring the firm's total team count to 18.

Jodie Hill, Thrive Law's founder and managing partner, said: "I am delighted to welcome to expand the team, growing their expertise and bringing in employees who share our passion for diversity and incision and are really aligned with our values."



Huddersfield-based law firm **Eaton Smith Solicitors** has appointed Ben Jackson as a partner in its corporate and commercial team.

The hire boosts the corporate and commercial team, which is led by senior partner Deborah Melliush.

Jackson has more than 15 years of experience in mergers and acquisitions, re-organisations, and investment and shareholders'

arrangements.

He has worked on high-value and complex transactions across a variety of sectors, dealing with national and international clients.

Commenting on his move to the firm, Jackson said: "Joining Eaton Smith is a fantastic opportunity, and I am delighted to join this very talented and busy team."

"I am looking forward to helping with the continued growth of the corporate and commercial team's activities and to working with all the remarkable people and businesses that they work with."

Melliush added: "Ben is a great addition to our team. He has years of the type of experience in corporate work that

fits perfectly with the diverse and interesting work that we do here at Eaton Smith for local, national and international clients. We look forward to working with him as we continue to grow and expand."



Leeds-based **Blacks Solicitors** has welcomed back Pete Konieczko-Hansom as senior associate and head of intellectual property in the corporate and commercial teams.

He brings more than 14 years of legal experience, having previously worked a number of firms across West and East Yorkshire, and in London for the Government Legal Department.

Konieczko-Hansom originally joined Blacks Solicitors in 2016 as an assistant solicitor, and became an associate solicitor in 2018 before departing in 2019.

He returns to Blacks after three years to support the corporate and commercial teams in their significant growth plans and to grow the firm's intellectual property offering. His return brings the total number of team members to 17.

Commenting on his return, Konieczko-Hansom said: "I am thrilled to be working at Blacks again. I had the privilege of working with some great people at other firms but the people at Blacks really feel like family to me."

"I am really looking forward to working with Nigel and witnessing first-hand the ambition and rapid growth of the business. Seeing how far the commercial and corporate teams have come in such a short space of time was a key factor in inspiring me to return."

Konieczko-Hansom will act for a range of clients from small startups to large international manufacturers, and will provide advice on corporate and commercial matters such as share sale and purchases, management buyouts, and supply and distribution agreements.

Konieczko-Hansom also brings significant intellectual property experience and will head up the firm's offering. This includes advising on trade mark registrations and licensing.

Nigel Hoyle, head of corporate law at Blacks, said: "Pete is a great fit and his recruitment strongly aligns with our vision for future employment and growth. We are thrilled to welcome him back to Blacks and see his experience and skills strengthen the corporate and commercial teams. His expertise in intellectual property will now enable the team to confidently provide a specialist offering in this field."



**Lupton Fawcett** has strengthened its corporate team with the appointment of Rory Conwill as a partner.

Conwill advises clients on corporate matters such as high-value acquisitions and disposals, private equity investments and share schemes.

He has spent his whole career in Sheffield and will be primarily based at Lupton Fawcett's office in the city. He will also work closely with the whole Yorkshire team across all locations.

Conwill brings particular expertise in the healthcare sector to the firm's growing corporate team, having acted in a range of transactions for care home owners, dental practices and GP practices.

Giles Clegg, partner and head of corporate finance at Lupton Fawcett, said: "I am delighted to welcome Rory to the corporate team."

"Our reputation for providing excellent corporate legal advice and services is demonstrated by the great clients and deals we attract as well as by the strong growth we are seeing in this part of our business."

Conwill said: "I'm very happy to be joining Lupton Fawcett at a time when it is clearly so firmly focused on growth and development."

James Richardson, Lupton Fawcett's managing partner, said "Rory is an excellent operator with a fantastic track record. His is the latest of a series of outstanding appointments we have made at all levels across the firm over the past year."

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Regional law firm **BRM Solicitors** has strengthened its corporate and commercial team in Sheffield with an internal promotion.

Trevor Bird has been promoted to director at BRM. He advises businesses in Yorkshire on corporate finance, fundraising, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, and corporate governance.

Bird is also an expert in startup fundraising, venture capital, and real estate in the care sector.

Commenting on his promotion, Bird said: "I am delighted to be promoted to director at BRM. The promotion is the result of years of hard work and I am looking forward to continuing my work with existing and future clients."



Sarah Rowland, head of corporate at BRM, said: "Trevor is already a key member of the team and will be an integral part of the firm's future growth in the region. [His] strong track record and breadth and depth of experience complement our growing client base."

She added: "Trevor's well-deserved promotion is aligned with BRM's policy to recognise and reward talent and commitment and we wish him continued success with the firm."



Property solicitor Gabrielle Allen has joined **Wrigleys Solicitors** in Sheffield.

Allen qualified as a solicitor in April 2019 and decided to pursue a career in property law. Prior to qualifying, she specialised in civil litigation.

She now specialises in the sale and purchase of freehold and leasehold residential property, financed by mortgages, family loans and 'help to

buy' equity loans.

Allen also advises clients on re-mortgages, transfers of equity and new build property. At Wrigleys, she is also a part of the team in Sheffield who advise on the specialist aspects of property transactions for personal injury trusts and clients subject to deputyship orders.

Commenting on her appointment, Allen said: "When I interviewed with Wrigleys I was told that the firm believed in 'quality over quantity'. I am delighted to say that during my short time with the firm so far, I have definitely found this to be true; Wrigleys have a genuine focus on, and commitment to, client care and providing the best possible service for their clients."

Allen added: "I am thoroughly enjoying the variety of the transactions that I am presently working on. Prior to joining Wrigleys, I mainly specialised in the sale and purchase of residential property, however, I am excited to expand and build upon my knowledge of property law and have the opportunity to get involved in a range of different transactions comprising of both residential and non-residential work."

Rachel Meredith, head of property at Wrigleys, which is

also based in Leeds and Newcastle, commented: "We are delighted that Gabrielle has joined our growing team of dedicated and specialist residential property professionals. Gabrielle has really hit the ground running by providing concise and timely advice already across a whole range of residential property transactions, and we look forward to supporting her as she continues to develop in her career with us."



Regional law firm **Andrew Jackson Solicitors** has promoted eight members of staff, including Jennifer Bradford and Samuel Peake to partner.

Solicitors Sally Price (private client) and Debbie Gibbons (family) are now associates, while Harry Mills (property) and Pippa Collins (private client) have become senior solicitors.

Denika Barnes and Lauren Crabb have also been promoted to paralegal in the Andrew Jackson team.

Andrew Jackson's two new partners, Bradford and Peake, focus on client service and compliance and property law, respectively.

Bradford plays a crucial role in leading Andrew Jackson's client service and compliance team, which advises and supports the firm on its statutory and regulatory obligations, and ensures that high client service levels are maintained.

Peake is a property law specialist who handles a range of commercial property and finance transactions, particularly acting for the firm's banking clients.

Mark Pearson-Kendall, managing partner at Andrew Jackson, commented: "These promotions reflect our continued investment in the hard working team, the development of our client offer and, most importantly, our commitment to the delivery of an excellent service to the businesses and individuals we work with."

He added: "We warmly welcome Jennifer and Samuel to the partnership, both of whom have demonstrated consistently high levels of commitment and expertise in their respective roles, as well as their ability to deliver exceptional client service, which is what we aim for right across the firm."

"We also congratulate our newly promoted associates, senior solicitors and paralegals—Sally, Debbie, Harry, Pippa, Denika and Lauren—and we are delighted that they are progressing their careers with Andrew Jackson."



# A journey to networking

Networking and business development are words often associated with personal and career development, but what do they actually mean for junior legal professionals? **Leanne Gibson**, trainee solicitor at Ramsdens Solicitors and an events officer for Leeds JLD, takes a look

Networking comes in a variety of forms and the importance of who and where you network differs throughout the stages of your career. As a student, you are focused on excelling in your studies but the importance of networking at this stage in your career is often overlooked.

The ability to build your own connections and network is vital to a successful career in law. At this early stage in your career, you are most probably looking to gain work experience or even paralegal and trainee roles. You can use your network to your advantage to show prospective employers that you are a personable individual with the ability to converse confidently with other legal professionals and businesses that link with the type of work the firm does.

My networking 'journey' started when I became a paralegal at Ramsdens. Prior to this, I admit that my focus was on my studies and the word or meaning of 'networking' had not entered my mind.

When you start attending networking events, it is easy to feel uncomfortable and overwhelmed by the sheer amount of conversations you have with new people during a short period of time. Unfortunately, these feelings are all too common and are something that I have had to overcome over the years. It is very easy for someone to be put off by this, but I am a firm believer in throwing yourself into every opportunity available. This is why I always encourage people to begin networking as early as possible. The more networking you do, the more confident you become, the wider your network grows and the more successful you will become.

Networking comes in a variety of forms and doesn't just extend to attending events. While attending networking events is key and introduces you to a variety of different people, you should consider networking internally. Why don't you get in touch with a colleague in another department and grab a coffee? Not only does this allow you to make a good impression internally but it allows you to get your face out there and in turn, you may find that you can benefit from this connection—whether that be through cross-referrals or even just having someone to phone if you have a query.



You will note that there is a theme above and that is that if you have built a strong network around you, your network are likely to recommend you for services and therefore, not only are you building

a good reputation for yourself, you are also bringing business into the firm—and that's why networking and business development are inextricably linked.

## How do you build networking confidence?

The simple answer to this is by throwing yourself into every opportunity available—even when you know that you are likely to feel uncomfortable. It's all about facing the fear and doing it anyway!

You are always networking whether that be with friends, friends of friends or even parents of friends. It is amazing where you can build your network (and reputation!).

I am fortunate that my role at Ramsdens allows me to network regularly as I am provided with countless opportunities but in addition to this, I began attending Leeds Junior Lawyers Division (JLD) events. I wanted to meet likeminded individuals in Leeds and the surrounding Yorkshire region and start making my own connections. I found the events engaging and enjoyable, so much so that I am now one of the events officers on the committee!

Leeds JLD is an organisation for junior legal professionals from Leeds and the surrounding areas that provides the opportunity for networking. We have around 300 members, ranging from students through to five years PQE. We hold events regularly that aim to target different issues but also hold fun informal events such as the Summer BBQ and the Winter Ball.

Leeds JLD is holding an interactive event this September that will focus specifically on networking and business development. Deborah Ogden, a personal branding expert, will be providing members with her top tips to excel in this area—it is not to be missed!

To get involved with Leeds JLD events, visit: <https://www.leedsjld.com/events>



# I'm definitely not a sausage!



**Patrick Walker** is an independent mediator:  
[www.imediate.co.uk](http://www.imediate.co.uk)

**Patrick Walker** cycles around Northern Ireland and gets to grip with cake but not with politics

Although I am no expert on the regulations, I have the impression that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a sausage to enter Northern Ireland. The danger, it seems, is that a relatively innocent chipolata would pretend to go to Belfast, and then sneakily roll across the border into Eire, where it would become sub-standard and unfit for consumption by a true European human.

So although we had no intention of leaving the UK, when I and my stoker pedalled our tandem towards the ferry bound for Belfast from Liverpool, the already heavy panniers were further burdened by a wodge of passports, identity papers, booking documents and tickets. I was asked my name on one occasion, but on both the outward and return voyages and throughout our travels, I was never asked to show any document of any sort. I suppose I could have given my Café Nero loyalty card an outing, but the independent coffee shops, and their stunning cakes, made sure that never happened.

This relaxed attitude was matched by a great friendly welcome everywhere we went, not least in Strabane. It is difficult to

comprehend that the town is noted as the most bombed in the UK or that the border that caresses it has caused so much division. But there are reminders, including recent signs making it clear that British military personnel are not welcome. Down the road, few dare to suggest the city can be called Londonderry, and tributes to republicans (both peaceful and violent) are prominent. There was an interesting reminder of the power and dangers of propaganda and I was intrigued by the museum narrative recalling the 'invasion' of Derry by British Forces in the 1970s. Putin has been rightly ridiculed for denying his invasion of Ukraine, but to use that term to describe British soldiers on territory recognised as part of the UK by governments North and South seems controversial at least.

I suppose these were reminders that the peace and prosperity in Ireland has been hard earned and remains fragile beneath the glossy exterior illustrated by the regeneration of Belfast Docks and the Titanic Building.

As I sat on the dramatic Giant's Causeway, I wondered whether regulation across the Irish Sea is really destroying British

businesses, or whether the greater concern, for unionists at least, is that it is a logical and significant step towards a united Ireland.

I don't know the answer, but I am aware that prior to my visit, I had compartmentalised Irish border news items, as of peripheral relevance, a bit like the Scottish premiership results, concentrating instead on English politics and Huddersfield Town. I will take more notice of issues that threaten not only the future of Black Pudding, but also peaceful co-existence in what just about remains a United Kingdom. Oh, and yes, it is good to know I am definitely not a sausage!



# Serious injury litigation is constantly evolving

**Chris Smith**, partner in the personal injury team at Stewarts in Leeds, on becoming a better lawyer, the uniqueness of each client, wider issues to consider in his practice area, and more



***Congratulations on your recent promotion to partner—what do you put your success as a solicitor down to?***

I have been very fortunate to work with some exceptionally talented people, be that counsel, solicitors or paralegals. Working with great people every day has pushed me to be a better lawyer.

***Speaking of successes, you've recovered damages in excess of £70 million for your personal injury clients since joining Stewarts—how have you shaped and developed your practice to secure such favourable outcomes for this client group?***

It's a privilege to represent such inspirational clients. The client is always the starting point—each serious injury case is different and there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

The aims of the clients often shape the case, whether that's wanting to get back out on their bicycle or using an exoskeleton. Listening to what our clients want to achieve and working with them to reach their goals is what produces the results.

***In terms of wider personal injury law practice, what are some of the trends that you've identified that you think your colleagues and peers need to be aware of?***

Serious injury litigation is constantly evolving, whether

that's with new technology or advances in rehabilitation and medical treatment.

The one thing all personal injury lawyers should be aware of right now is the care crisis and the impact of the rising cost of care on our clients.

***How do you find practicing in Leeds and Yorkshire, and how would you sell the region to a lawyer or graduate considering moving to the region from, say, London?***

Leeds is a fantastic place to work, even if it is on the wrong side of the Pennines! The region is undoubtedly a centre for excellence, with fantastic firms and chambers, providing London-level service and expertise to a regional, national and international client base.

***Are there any modernisations or improvements that you think firms in the region need to implement to better serve clients, either in personal injury or other areas of law?***

We have all learnt to embrace technology a little more since the start of the pandemic and we perhaps shouldn't be as slow to adopt it in the future. The advent of virtual meetings, hearings and trials has made us all more adaptable and changed the way we operate.

As we move back to the in-person setting, a place will remain for technology with the continuation of hybrid trials and hearings.





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