

Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer

The Official Journal of Leeds Law Society

 **Leeds**
Law Society

December 2022
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New beginnings

As a busy year comes to an end, Leeds Law Society
and its members look ahead to 2023

Leeds JLD

Ellie Stansfield reflects on becoming qualified and what comes next

News

JWP Solicitors continues its Yorkshire expansion as another firm opens the doors of its first office in Leeds

Society

Bring colleagues, clients and friends to join us at Leeds Law Society's flagship black-tie event on 18 May 2023

Last Word

Marcus Armstrong on his firm's recent arrival in Leeds, emerging business trends and the attraction of Yorkshire

Comment

In his latest column, Patrick Walker chuckles over his hens



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New beginnings



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

As I write this article, I am looking out over a very frosty Leeds city centre. There is no denying that winter is well and truly here. With the festive season fast approaching and 2022 drawing to a close, I find myself reflecting on a busy seven months as president of Leeds Law Society.

Since I was elected to the post in June, I have had the pleasure of seeing Leeds Law Society hold countless events that have brought many of us together for the first time since the pandemic began. Now more than ever, Leeds Law Society strives to constantly find new ways to meet the needs of its members and work to remain ahead of the curve to ensure that it continues to influence the ever-changing landscape of the law.

In August, Leeds Law Society attended Leeds Pride with its largest group of participants to-date from various member firms. It was very humbling to see so many of our members come together to show

support for the LGBTQ+ community. I for one will remember Pride 2022 for many years to come.

In October and November, I was honoured and privileged to represent the legal practitioners of Leeds at the Opening of the Legal Year Ceremonies at both Westminster Abbey and York Minister. Both ceremonies are steeped in history and serve as a reminder of this sector's heritage and our responsibility as respected and trusted legal advisers.

It is hard to believe that I have already passed the half-way point of my presidential term, however, I do not want to simply reflect and look back on the achievements of the past seven months but rather look forward at the exciting things your society has in store for the remainder of my tenure.

Over the coming weeks, Leeds Law Society will be launching our new pricing structure. This new system will no doubt benefit many of our members during these challenging times.

In 2023, Leeds Law Society will continue to deliver high quality events for the benefit of its members. We will continue to build on the success of our Back-to-Basics networking event, which was held in September, with some more dates to be announced in the New Year.

For the remainder of my term as president, Leeds Law Society will concentrate on diversity and inclusion (D&I) within the Leeds legal sector by continuing to support our nominated charity, Out Together, as well as holding a series of events focussed on a variety of D&I strands.

On 18 May 2023, Leeds Law Society will once again host its Annual Dinner at The Queens Hotel, which will bring together legal practitioners from across Leeds and the surrounding districts. While I do

not want to give too much away, I can assure you that there will be some exciting changes to this year's dinner—it will not be one to miss! I urge you to book your tickets now to take advantage of our early bird offers and to pencil the date in your diary.

In the New Year, we are also planning a treasure hunt, which Leeds Law Society will run in conjunction with Out Together to raise vital funds to support their brilliant ongoing work. Do keep your eyes open for further information as and when it is announced.

The New Year will not only bring exciting things for Leeds Law Society and its members, but it will also be a momentous year for me on a personal level because, in early January, I will be getting married. Words cannot begin to describe my joy and excitement. I am very much looking forward to writing to you all in the next issue having started a long and happy life together with my husband.

As I finish my last article of 2022, I am reminded that for many of us, this will be the first time since the start of the pandemic that we will have had the opportunity to celebrate the festive season and to meet with extended family and friends. While this is undoubtedly a cause for celebration, we find ourselves in very challenging times and for many, this festive season will carry with it a heavy burden and causes for concern.

While Leeds Law Society will of course continue to support you all in whatever way that it can, I urge as many of us as possible to look after and care for one another. You never know the struggles that people are facing, which are often amplified at this time of year.

Finally, season's greetings to each and every one of you and my sincerest wishes that 2023 brings health and happiness to you all.

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Join us for the 2023 Leeds Law Society Annual Dinner

Celebrating Leeds as a centre of legal excellence at
The Queens Hotel on 18 May 2023

Leeds has a bright future—let's take a moment and celebrate that!

Bring colleagues, clients and friends to join us at Leeds Law Society's flagship black-tie event on 18 May 2023, hosted by the president of Leeds Law Society, Matthew Jones.

This will be a spectacular evening at The Queens Hotel in Leeds, with speeches from highly acclaimed guests

A welcome drink will be available on arrival followed by a scrumptious three-course meal. Each table will be provided with a 1/2 bottle of wine per person.

Ticket prices and details are below. Book before 31 January 2023 and receive a 10% discount on all tickets. See the Leeds Law Society website for all terms and conditions.

Individual tickets

- Members: £100 + VAT
- Non-Members: £130 +VAT

Please book online via: https://my.leedslawsociety.org.uk/calendar_detail.html?eid=F69AEE05-D645-474F-BB7B-F90789999D12.

Tables of 10

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Roche Legal launches international probate service

Rachel Roche, founder and managing partner at York-based firm Roche Legal, has launched a service to solve probate problems for American clients with UK assets.

The service has attracted provisionally approved funding from the UK Department of Trade and Industry. It is also available to clients living in France, South Africa, Australia and Spain.

Roche (pictured) discussed the new offering at last month's New York State Bar Association Global Conference in London, where she jointly chaired a panel entitled: Cross-Atlantic Estate Planning: Wealth Transfer Planning and Administration in an Internationally Challenging Time.

Ahead of the event, Roche said that the new service was launched "in response to the legal contacts I have established around the world and they come to us when they need to be in the world and this started with a number of cases involving France, as I am a French speaker."

She continued: "We administer the UK property and assets and repatriate the funds to wherever they need to be in the world and this started with a number of cases involving France, as I am a French speaker."

"Our point of difference at Roche Legal is that we offer this service as a package to deal with the UK element of a probate and we can take care of the legal situation in this country. So, we are dealing directly with other law firms overseas."

"I am also undertaking business financial training in America that I will be able to implement into the work we do here at Roche Legal."



Lupton Fawcett puts spotlight on mediation in Good Divorce Week

Lupton Fawcett has supported a national campaign to raise awareness of the ways in which divorcing couples can settle their disputes away from the court system.

Good Divorce Week, which took place from 28 November to 2 December, was established by Resolution, a community of family justice professionals who work with families and individuals to resolve issues in a constructive way.

Richard Buckley is a member of Resolution and an associate solicitor, mediator and collaborative lawyer at Lupton Fawcett, which has offices in Leeds, Sheffield and York.

He specialises in promoting a constructive and non-contentious approach to family law through alternative methods of dispute resolution that take place outside the court.

Buckley said during Good Divorce Week: "The family courts are facing large backlogs, which means families are frequently left waiting long periods of time to sort out finances and the arrangements for children, resulting in unnecessary stress and making it difficult for parties to move forward positively."

"Many separating couples are unaware of the array of alternative options available to them to help them reach a settlement outside of court, such as mediation, meaning more cases end up in court than are really necessary."

Mediation is one of the best-known non-court approaches to dispute resolution and involves a neutral mediator supporting both parties, bringing them together to explore their options and providing information that helps them agree on arrangements for their children and/or how to divide their assets.

Another option is collaborative law, where each party appoints their own collaboratively trained solicitor and both clients and solicitors come together to work things out face to face, alongside experts such as a financial adviser or child specialist where these are required.

One of the most recent developments in dispute resolution is hybrid mediation, which involves a mediator working with both parties, with the ability to have confidential discussions and often involves including the parties' solicitors in mediation meetings.

With solicitors providing support and advice to their individual clients, the mediator helps the couple reach agreement on points as they arise.

Buckley, who is one of just a handful of solicitors in the north of England trained to act as a hybrid mediator, said this and other non-court approaches are growing in popularity as a way of achieving positive outcomes and faster resolution.

He said: "Divorce is like getting to the top of a mountain—no-one expects it to be easy but your experience of it will depend on the route you take and the choice of vehicle you choose to get you there."

"Mediation, hybrid mediation and collaborative law can enable people to retain more control of the divorce process, rather than having to put things in the hands of the court."

"The flexibility and constructive nature of these approaches mean creative solutions can be found, often allowing both parties to achieve more of what is important to them while freeing up the courts to focus on the cases they are best-placed to manage."

Clarion advises on MBO for Bingley home and recycled garden products business



Clarion has advised Primeur, a Bingley-based supplier of doormats and recycled garden products, on a management buy-out (MBO) that will see the third generation of the family, along with one of its long-serving directors, taking the reins.

Caitlin Hare and Sarah Harrison from Leeds-based Clarion provided legal advice to Primeur, while Neil Sengupta from TC Murray Harcourt advised on the tax implications of the MBO.

The MBO includes former sales director Jenny Douthwaite, who becomes managing director after more than 19 years in the business, supported by buying director Rebecca Keighley and her brother, fellow director Edward Keighley.

Former shareholders James Keighley and Ian Brazier will continue in their roles of chair and finance director, respectively, as part of a phased retirement plan.

Founded in 1968 by James Keighley's uncle, David Clayton, Primeur has become a market leader of domestic doormats in the UK, supplying most of the major retailers while its recycled garden products division has seen significant growth and also serves many independent garden centres.

In addition to its head office and a 50,000 sqft warehouse in Bingley, the company has recently invested in additional warehousing in Skipton to provide extra capacity for the garden products division. Primeur has grown to a 70-strong team.

Brazier (pictured, right) commented: "The MBO will enable a seamless transition with James and I on hand to mentor and support the new team in order to provide continuity for our loyal customers, suppliers and colleagues."

IDR Law upgrades online referral and support network

Yorkshire firm IDR Law has upgraded the IDRn, an online referral and support network for wills and probate.

IDR Law, which is based in Harrogate, initially launched the referral and support network in February. The upgrade of the IDRn comes after an extensive research project that explored how members were using and engaging with the content.

The free resource is now an "intuitive space" for wills and probate practitioners facing contentious cases, providing everything they need to tackle challenges, according to IDR Law.

The IDRn also provides general resources, guides and commentary for non-contentious issues, which are now searchable.

Martin Holdsworth, founder of IDR Law, commented: "As our referral network grew, we could see that we needed to make everything we had to offer available all of the time. The IDRn provides all of that direct help in one space.

"The IDRn v2 is a fantastic update that has created a much more intuitive support tool for all our network of supporters and referrers, and it's completely free to access."

JWP Solicitors expands with new branch in Huddersfield



JWP Solicitors is continuing to expand across West Yorkshire with a new office in Marsh, Huddersfield.

The new office is the law firm's sixth site in West Yorkshire, following hot on the heels of the opening of an office in Hemsworth earlier in the year.

JWP boasts skills across a range of legal services, including family and children law, wills and probate, and crime.

The new Huddersfield office will offer a number of incentives to make accessing JWP's services as easy as possible, including free first meetings, remote appointments, and fixed fees.

Joanne Whitehead (pictured, right), director and project lead at JWP, said "The new office sits prominently on the main

road through the Marsh area of Huddersfield and provides an excellent catchment to the surrounding areas.

"This is another exciting opportunity for us to develop and grow the business in a new area of West Yorkshire, and we are already recruiting for an additional family solicitor to help us serve the local community."

Whitehead works exclusively in family law. She has a wealth of experience and knowledge in child law and children matters, including conducting advocacy before circuit judges, district judges and magistrates. She is also Children Panel-accredited.

Phoebe Walsh (pictured, left), who works in the childcare team at JWP, will also be based in the new office.

Walsh qualified as a care lawyer in July 2021, having joined JWP following her graduation from Sheffield Hallam University in 2018.

Brabners unveils new Leeds office

Brabners has shared the first images of its new Leeds office to mark its Yorkshire-based team's move into 1 City Square.

The firm, which recently achieved B-Corp status, announced its entry into the Yorkshire market and the opening of its fourth UK office in Leeds earlier this year, having taken space on the first floor of the landmark city centre development.

Brabners joined existing tenants Deloitte, LDC and Shroders at 1 City Square.

The new office, designed by workplace interiors specialist Incognito, represents the firm's third major office investment in 12 months, complementing its move to 20,000 sqft of Grade A office space at Barbirolli Square in Manchester earlier this year; and its relocation to similarly outstanding office accommodation in Lancashire, on the outskirts of Preston.

Robert White, CEO at Brabners, said: "Our move into 1 City Square marks an important milestone in our expansion into Leeds; in our plan to grow our position in the market; and our intention to play a key role in supporting the Yorkshire business community.

"We are confident our stunning new office accommodation will prove to be transformational—providing a flexible, accessible environment that facilitates and encourages



collaboration with our clients and between our colleagues; consistent with our transition to agile working."

Nik White, managing partner at Brabners, said: "Our culture is one of our key differentiators—

whether that's delivering on our purpose, to demonstrate that business can bring about positive change, as reflected by becoming a B Corp; or whether that's by investing in our people and our office accommodation to create the environment for them to come together, collaborate and make the difference for our clients and the communities we serve.

"Having personally worked at Brabners as a trainee solicitor right through to managing partner, it's been incredibly rewarding to see how our team and our clients have benefitted from that approach—with our culture placed front and centre at all times—and how it has enhanced our ability to attract aspiring lawyers that will meet the needs of our clients and lead our firm in the future."

Andrew Jackson tax partner appointed to HMRC's anti-abuse panel

Andrew Jackson Solicitors tax partner Fiona Phillips has been appointed as a member of HM Revenue & Customs General Anti-Abuse Rule (GAAR) independent advisory panel.

Phillips, who is predominantly based in York, will undertake the unpaid appointment for a three-year period alongside her role at Andrew Jackson.

A chartered accountant and chartered tax adviser with more than 30 years of experience advising and guiding private and public companies through all aspects of their corporate tax affairs, Phillips has a special interest in advising property clients on stamp duty land tax (SDLT) and VAT.

Following a competitive process, Phillips has joined the 10-strong GAAR panel of UK-based senior tax practitioners and legal professionals, all of whom are independent of HMRC.

The panel, which was established in 2013 to coincide with the

General Anti-Abuse Rule coming into force, provides opinions on cases and approves HMRC guidance on the question of whether "the entering into and carrying out of the tax arrangements is a reasonable course of action in relation to the relevant tax provisions".

Since GAAR cases began being referred to the panel in 2017, opinions have been issued to the parties and published in anonymised form in 24 cases.

Phillips said: "I'm delighted to be able to bring my expertise to the panel and look forward to working with the rest of the members. Obtaining the opinion from the GAAR advisory panel, which is independent of HMRC, is an important element of the operation of the general anti abuse rule."

John Whiting CBE, GAAR panel chair, added: "I'm very glad to be able to welcome Fiona as a member of the GAAR panel: her expertise will be of real value to our work."

Moving on up

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



Medical Solicitors has recruited solicitor Lynsey Furley in Hull.

Furley will take the lead at the specialist clinical negligence firm's Hull office, which opened at The Deep Business Centre in September 2021.

Medical Solicitors, which is headquartered in Sheffield, was launched by Caroline Moore more than 13 years ago. It also has an office in York and now has a team of nearly 30 people.

Commenting on Furley's appointment, Moore said: "I am very pleased to be welcoming Lynsey to our team. She is a highly skilled, senior lawyer and she is clearly dedicated to helping vulnerable clients who have suffered negligence in their healthcare.

"People are having difficulty accessing healthcare and that's leading to delays with diagnosis and treatment with the result that we are experiencing an increase in enquiries nationwide.

"We have to make sure we can meet that rising demand for our services and Lynsey's appointment will give our lawyers more time to devote to individual clients and ensure we maintain our high level of client care.

"With offices in Sheffield and York, the expansion into Hull completes a 'Northern triangle' of legal services accessibility for our clients."

Furley was born and bred in the city, having gained a law degree from the University of Hull.

The majority of her career has been spent working for a regional law firm in the city and she has been recognised four times in the last five years by The Legal 500 for her positive feedback from clients.

Specialising in surgical errors and delays in diagnosis, Furley has previously secured six-figure settlements for her clients. She is committed to empowering her clients to overcome any psychological impact of their injuries by giving clear, efficient and friendly guidance throughout the legal process.

Furley said: "When I heard Medical Solicitors were opening an office in my local city of Hull, I was keen to join a firm that solely focuses on clinical negligence. I'm thrilled to be joining a great team and to continue to do what I am most passionate about—supporting my clients to obtain answers and compensation that will enable them to move on with their lives."

Furley joins Amy Adkins, who previously worked in the same

field with another law firm and moved to Medical Solicitors earlier this year.

Adkins gained a law degree from the University of Hull and completed her post-graduate diploma in legal practice at the College of Law in York.

She began her legal career in 2012, working in personal injury teams at firms in Hull and Goole, before moving into clinical negligence in 2014. She qualified as a solicitor in November 2018.



Hill Dickinson has appointed construction law expert Anjon Mallik as it continues to build its business services offering in Leeds.

The addition of Mallik to Hill Dickinson in Leeds expands the reach of the firm's national construction team, providing feet on the ground in its fastest growing office location.

The Leeds office now has specialist teams covering health, life sciences, corporate, real estate and construction.

Mallik joins Hill Dickinson as a partner with more than 24 years of experience in providing legal advice to the construction sector.

His key area of expertise involves dispute-related work for developers, main contractors and specialist sub-contractors.

Mallik has considerable experience in handling delay and disruption claims, issues relating to defective work and loss and expense actions, and has an impressive adjudication track record. He has also conducted more than 50 mediations.

Welcoming him to Hill Dickinson, Craig Scott, head of the firm's business services group, said: "I am delighted that Anjon has joined us. Our construction team already serves a large and growing national client base from offices in Liverpool, Manchester and London.

"Anjon's appointment is the next logical step in our national growth strategy and our commitment to invest in Leeds, giving our clients in Yorkshire direct access to a partner who has not only amassed considerable experience in the construction sector but has significant local knowledge of the market."

Mallik said: "I am excited to have joined Hill Dickinson in Leeds, knowing that there are huge opportunities to develop the firm's construction practice here in Yorkshire and to support the teams in Manchester and Liverpool."

He added: "The client-partner relationship is at the heart of the way I do business—and that won't change. I know that it's really important to be fast, dynamic and entrepreneurial and now, with the backing of a full international practice behind me, we can deliver a first-rate service for our clients across all disciplines."



Brabners has made two more senior hires at its newly opened Leeds office, enhancing its corporate and regulatory services as it builds out a full-service team in Yorkshire.

Andrew Bradley has joined the law firm as a consultant within its corporate team. He brings 34 years of experience to Brabners, handling issues such as company mergers, acquisitions and disposals, management buyouts, structuring and banking transactions.

He has previously served as a partner in the Leeds corporate teams at Knights and Shulmans.

Dan Stowers has also joined the firm's now 80-strong partnership, specialising in regulation, business crime and compliance.

Over a 25-year career spent at Shoosmiths, Gordons, Irwin Mitchell and DLA Piper, Stowers has defended some of the UK's most complex fraud cases, with many being multi-jurisdictional in nature—while also undertaking corporate fraud internal investigations and providing financial crime compliance advice.

The appointments came just weeks after Brabners opened its fourth UK office in Leeds at 1 City Square.

Bradley and Stowers and the rapidly growing Leeds-based Brabners team are set to be joined by further additions imminently as the firm continues to scale quickly, complemented by its existing 400+ strong team across Liverpool, Manchester and Lancashire.

Nik White, managing partner at Brabners, said: "Andrew and Dan bring excellent pedigree to our new Leeds office. They're both well established and very highly regarded in their respective fields and will deliver exceptional value to our clients."

White added: "Hiring leading talent forms part of our strategy to build a full-service team for our clients in Yorkshire and across the North. Our ability to do so is reflective of the distinct and strong firm culture which we've further enhanced in recent years for the benefit of our colleagues and clients.

"It's great to see so many of our existing team embracing our launch into Leeds and basing themselves out of our new office there. We're looking forward to announcing more recruits across the board as we increase our presence across the Pennines."

Harrogate law firm **McCormicks Solicitors** has appointed David Birks as a new partner.

Birks joins the law firm as head of the commercial disputes and sports litigation team, which offers a range of litigation services to both individuals and businesses across Yorkshire as well as nationally.

Before becoming a solicitor, Birks led the North Yorkshire



Trading Standards consumer advice and special investigations teams, dealing with regulatory matters and specialising in anti-counterfeiting matters.

He has also spent time working on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry secretary of state, specialising in directors' disqualification and insolvency, and is a member of R3, a trade association for UK insolvency and restructuring professionals.

Senior partner Peter McCormick OBE said: "We are delighted to welcome David on board, bringing as he does in-depth expertise in a complex area of law which is a key focus for the practice."

Birks brings significant experience across a range of disciplines to McCormicks. He has experience in sports disputes, including arbitrations, tribunals and FA, Premier League, and EFL regulatory matters.

His specialisms include insolvency (individual and corporate) and Directors Disqualification Act proceedings.

Birks acts for a range of clients, including insurers, national and international corporates, entrepreneurs, large family estates, insolvency practitioners (and those facing claims by them), charities, the Premier League, Leeds United FC, Norwich City FC, Wycombe Wanderers FC, Harrogate Town FC and the Isthmian League.



Hull and Leeds law firm **rradar** has appointed Emma Yates as its new head of intellectual property.

Yates was previously a senior associate at Irwin Mitchell in Leeds, where she focused on intellectual property and defamation disputes and advisory matters in the UK and EU, prior to Brexit.

Before joining Irwin Mitchell in 2015, Yates trained in London. She studied at University College London and the University of Pennsylvania.

Richard Crabb, chief operating officer at rradar, which also has offices in Glasgow, Birmingham and Leicester, commented: "IP is a high value and fast-growing niche area in the legal landscape, and represents a specialist growth area for rradar that will contribute to the continued expansion of the business and support our vision within the insurance and non-insurance arenas."

Yates added: "I am delighted to be joining rradar at such an exciting time, particularly at a critical part of its growth. After meeting the leadership team, it's clear to me that the firm is committed to offering a different, smarter and competitive way of managing intellectual property issues for its clients."

Blacks Solicitors has added a new senior associate solicitor to its family law team and secured the qualification of a trainee as part of its September 2022 intake.

This brings the total number of family law team members at the Leeds-based law firm to seven, including an apprentice and secretary.

Andrew Foulds has joined the team as a senior associate



solicitor to meet the increased demand for family law services.

He will support the team in divorce, financial settlement, private children proceeding and nuptial agreement matters, as well as act for non-married couples.

Foulds has more than seven years of experience, having qualified as a solicitor in the family law team at AWB Charlesworth Solicitors in 2015.

Commenting on his appointment, Foulds said: "Blacks Solicitors is well known for its range of services and specialisms that are available to clients, and it was an obvious next step for me to join the firm.

"The family team advises individuals through a range of significant life experiences, and I really enjoy supporting new and existing clients through what can be particularly challenging times."

Jack Dodd joined Blacks Solicitors as a paralegal in the commercial property team before becoming a trainee Solicitor in 2020 and qualifying into the firm's family law team this year.

Prior to joining Blacks, Dodd completed an undergraduate degree in English and European law at the University of Leeds and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and undertook a master's in law, business and management.

Ann Robinson, head of family law at Blacks, added: "As a team we have seen a significant increase in the number of clients looking for family law advice. The expansion of the team with Jack's qualification and Andrew's appointment has enabled us to meet this demand and service a growing number of clients."



Three new barristers have accepted offers of tenancy at **Parklane Plowden Chambers** after successfully completing their pupillages.

Bharat Jangra and Sophie Watson have joined the Leeds- and Newcastle-based chambers as tenants, having initially been called in 2021, and will sit within the set's civil law practice areas. Also called in 2021, Andrew Mohamdee has become a member of Parklane Plowden's family practice.

Jangra becomes a tenant after completing his specialist civil law pupillage at Parklane Plowden under the supervision of barristers Gemma Lieberman and Tim Wilkinson.

Watson, a specialist civil law practitioner with a focus on employment, inquests and personal injury, commenced her pupillage last October. She was supervised by barristers Leila Benyounes, Colin Richmond and Andrew Sugarman.

Parklane Plowden's clinical negligence and personal injury practice director, John Hammond, said: "Bharat and Sophie are both highly talented.

"Their respective pupillages have enabled them to gain exposure to an array of civil law matters, and this experience will benefit both our clients and the set."

Specialising in family finance and private children work, Andrew Mohamdee commenced his pupillage last October under the supervision of barristers Farzana Tai and Lucy Sowden.

Commenting on Andrew's tenancy, Parklane Plowden's senior practice director to the family team, Mark Williams, said: "Andrew is a highly knowledgeable practitioner in family law, so we are very pleased that he has accepted the offer of tenancy.

"He will further strengthen the expertise that Parklane Plowden offers clients across the North Eastern Circuit and beyond."



Gordons is celebrating the latest two graduates of its law apprenticeship.

Eleanor Tordoff and Lauren Wurzal have both qualified as chartered legal executives within the firm's property litigation and corporate specialisms, respectively.

As part of their apprenticeships, Gordons provided Tordoff and Wurzal with hands-on experience and academic study, as well as paying their salaries and course fees, for a five-year period.

Gordons partner and member of the firm's executive board, Victoria Davey, said: "Eleanor and Lauren should be very proud of their achievements, and we are enjoying celebrating their success. We're really pleased for them as they are both talented colleagues and great people to know.

"Our clients feel the same way about Eleanor and Lauren and they both now have the opportunity to further grow their careers with Gordons.

"We remain fully committed to our law apprenticeship as it has been a big differentiator for the firm. It shows our continued dedication to enabling social mobility within the legal profession and reflects our belief that attitude is more important than background. It is something our clients tell us they admire."

Gordons launched the law apprenticeship in September 2011. The Leeds- and Bradford-based firm has recruited 30 apprentices straight from school since its inception.

Transitioning to NQ and a new committee

Ellie Stansfield, a solicitor at Blacks Solicitors, reflects on becoming qualified and what comes next

After years of studying and working within the law (just shy of a decade!), I qualified into the commercial property team at Blacks Solicitors in September.

As a conscientious person, the excitement soon became personal pressure... pressure to know what I'm doing, pressure to do well and pressure that I wasn't good enough—this is completely normal.

Eight weeks on, I wanted to reflect and provide advice to others who are going through the transition to help alleviate some of the pressure that we put on ourselves.

You're not expected to know the answer to everything. As a solicitor, you will never stop learning, developing, and improving just as you did as a trainee solicitor, apprentice or paralegal. Just because you don't know everything 24 hours after qualifying doesn't mean you're any less of a deserving solicitor.

You are good enough. You've worked this hard to get where you need to be and have proven your worth. If someone is providing you with responsibility, that's because they trust that you're more than capable—remember this.

You're not alone. Make sure you utilise your NQ supervisor, speak to fellow NQs, and reach out to your connections in the legal community. Every solicitor started as an NQ.

Clear your diary. At least for the first few weeks, remove any external disruptions



and keep your weekends free for downtime, processing what you've learnt, and doing things you enjoy. Focus on any client events and networking opportunities within

your chosen area of law. You can't do everything so prioritising your time is important.

Enjoy it. And be proud of such an achievement!

It's been a real privilege to have spent the last year chairing the Leeds Junior Lawyers Division (LJLD) as I transitioned to NQ, and the last three years on the committee as a trainee solicitor and paralegal. It's excellent to have seen our hard work, time and efforts pay off and our achievements unfold. I would recommend joining a committee and networking to everyone during their legal career.

This year, LJLD have hosted 27 sell-out events, gained 1,000 followers on LinkedIn, and grown the legal community by doubling our membership from 250 to more than 500 members. In addition, we've raised £2,500 for our charity of the year, Leeds Refugee Forum.

As I step down from the LJLD committee, I am keen to continue with this commitment and dedication as I join the Leeds Young Entrepreneurs Property committee in January.

If you take one thing away from this article, let it be this: you are good enough and you deserve to be an NQ!

The Law Society in Yorkshire

The task of the **Law Society Council** members for the Leeds and Yorkshire constituencies is to represent the interests and views of their constituents



The Law Society is the independent professional body for solicitors in England and Wales and was founded in 1825. It is governed by a Royal Charter granted in 1845 that allowed its incorporation, the establishment of the Law Society Council as its governing body and defined the objectives and powers of the Law Society to govern its affairs.

The regulatory powers of the Law Society are supported by the Solicitors Act 1974, Courts and Legal Services Act 1990, Access to Justice Act 1999 and Legal Services Act 2007. Following the review by Sir David Clementi in 2004, the Law Society split its representative and regulatory functions. The regulatory body for solicitors is now the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

The Law Society Council meets six times a year and is chaired by the president of the Law Society. The current president is Lubna Shuja, who was inaugurated as the 178th president, the first Asian president, the first Muslim president and the seventh female president of the Law Society in October 2022. Lubna was brought up in Yorkshire and started her legal career here.

The council sets the strategic direction of the Law Society. Its functions include representing the views of members of the Law Society, setting the practising certificate fee, approving the annual business plan and budget, determining the position of the Law Society on significant policy issues, making changes to the rules of the Law Society, and fulfilling the residual role of the Law Society as an approved regulator.

The council is supported by the board and several committees. The board is responsible for overseeing the effective implementation of the strategy and business plan set by the council, dealing with financial matters and risk management on its behalf, recommending approval of the budget to the council, and ensuring that the Law Society is well governed.

The chair of the board is Robert Bourns, a former president of the Law Society. Four committees report directly to the board. They cover policy and regulatory affairs, membership and communications, finance and investment, and people and remuneration.

There are 96 seats on the council, with 50 members representing 41 geographical constituencies, and 46 members representing work practice and characteristic constituencies.

Council members are elected for a term of four years and can serve for a maximum of 12 years.

Yorkshire is represented by four council members. Nick Emmerson is the council member for the Leeds constituency and David Barraclough, Mark Newby, and Paul Singh are the members for the Yorkshire constituency, which comprises the bulk of the region, excluding Leeds. Like some other major cities, Leeds is deemed to have a sufficiently large number of solicitors to justify having its own constituency.

Nick (pictured, right) is vice president of the Law Society and will become its 179th president in October 2023. Born and bred in Yorkshire, Nick is a past president of Leeds Law Society and is a partner at Lewis Mathys Emmerson, specialising in London capital markets transactions by international companies and public and private cross-border mergers and acquisitions. Nick has been a member of the council since 2015.

David Barraclough (pictured, second from left) is also a past president of Leeds Law Society and the immediate past president of the Yorkshire Union of Law Societies. Now retired, David practised in Leeds for most of his post-qualification career, specialising in commercial property. David has been a member of the council since 2020 and sits on the Membership and Communications Committee. David is also the Under Sheriff of West Yorkshire.

Mark (pictured, second from right) is a past president of Doncaster & District Law Society and is a principal member of Quality Solicitors Jordans based in Doncaster and Sheffield. Mark has gained higher rights of audience (criminal) and his principal area of practice is miscarriage of justice work. Mark has been a member of the council since 2015 and is chair of the Scrutiny and Performance Review Committee.

Paul (pictured, left) is a past president of Sheffield & District Law Society and an associate solicitor with Minster Law based in Wakefield, specialising in employment law. Paul has been a member of the council since 2021 and sits on the Membership and Communications Committee.

The task of the council members for the Leeds and Yorkshire constituencies is to represent the interests and views of their constituents. Contact details for those council members can be found on the Law Society website.

Counting my chickens



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

Patrick Walker chuckles over his hens

Avian flu is no laughing matter. More than 48 million birds were culled in Europe in the last year alone and a deadly grip in the UK is seeing the devastation of poultry flocks and enormous losses of wild birds, too. I am trying to do my bit, so why am I chuckling out loud?

I have embarked on the task of providing my small flock of chickens with an environment that is reasonably safe and secure—and which is compliant with the strict regulations imposed nationally and on every type of bird keeping, from 7 November.

The basic aim is to constrain the chickens indoors or in an enclosure that prevents mixing with other birds, including the provision of a roof. My chickens don't like this. They don't like it all. They are used to roaming free, investigating field and

hedgerow often as far as a mile from their coop. And now they are following me round as I start to stretch the wire over the enclosure frame.

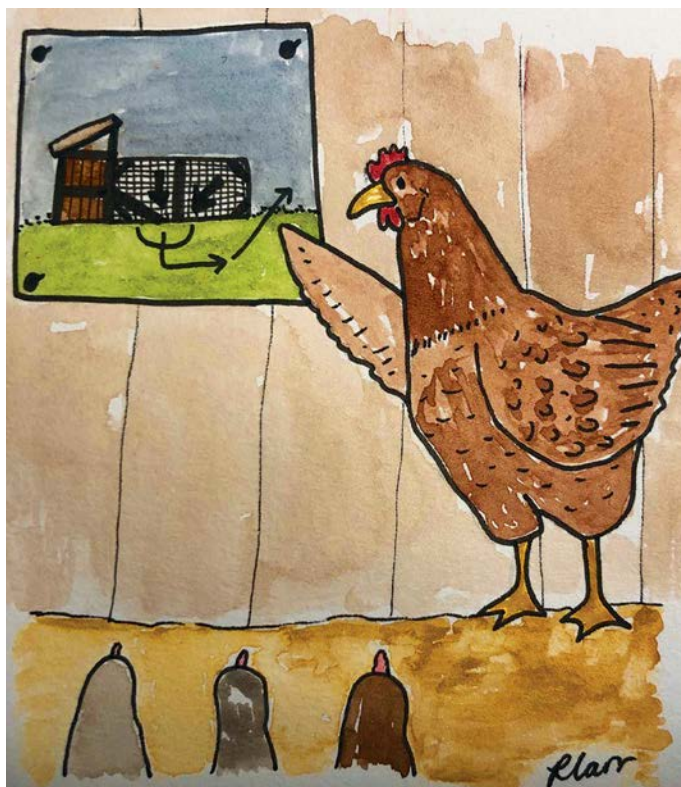
The colonel leads, issuing orders and the adjutant behind takes notes. I have no doubt that this is the first inspection by the hastily convened escape committee. The stretch is not quite even and there is a small gap. Wide enough for the colonel's head, oh and for a second head too—but not quite enough for a whole feathered body. The entourage is growing in numbers and attention has turned to the undulating ground beneath the frame, which looks like a more promising escape route.

At this point I adopt the demeanour of a Colditz sentry, albeit lacking rifle or search light. I know what they are up to and I will foil their little plan. Another roll of netting and a hundred tent pegs later I have created the camp 'from which any attempt at escape is pointless!'

Even so, on the first morning I am keen to have a head count. The entire company trudges through the long wire tunnel from the coop to the grassy parade ground. It is a pleasant area and I have rigged up running water, but each paces the perimeter and looks at me as if I was clutching a halal slaughter knife.

An hour later they protest by somehow disconnecting the water supply from the drinking trough and flooding most of the enclosure. Pleased with their work but reluctant to get their feet wet, they return to the coop for a well-earned rest (I can never fathom how they remain on the perch).

If you have stayed with me this far, you will have realised that you have wasted several minutes following the antics of what are just chickens. I have wasted countless hours but to me they are a source of pleasure and a reminder that even though we choose to eat them, they understand a lot more than we sometimes give them credit for. And while I try never to take things for granted, I am definitely counting my chickens...



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Making a difference for clients and communities

Marcus Armstrong, a partner in the corporate team at Brabners, on the firm's recent arrival in Leeds, emerging business trends and the attraction of Yorkshire



How excited are you by Brabners arriving in Yorkshire?

Opening in Leeds is a really exciting move for Brabners. Yorkshire is the natural next step for us, complementing our existing locations in Liverpool, Manchester and Lancashire.

Our new base in the city further builds our presence in the North while giving us better access to the massive talent pool we have here in Leeds. We've worked hard to create a strong company culture where people are committed to making the difference—whether that's for their clients or the communities they work in.

The firm won Independent Firm of the Year at the British Legal Awards because of that focus, and the ability to act as a force for good is something that's really resonating when we're speaking to new recruits or prospects.

Tell us about your practice area—what do you hope to achieve for clients?

Our corporate team advises northern SMEs through to internationally recognised brands on a variety of deals, including M&A activity, re-organisations, disposals, employee ownership trusts and secured lending.

As a business though, we're focused on growing our position as a full-service partner to Yorkshire's vast business community—drawing on the great strength and depth across the firm—as well as private clients.

What are some of the trends that you've identified in your practice area that you think your colleagues and peers need to be aware of?

One major trend we're seeing is the rise of employee ownership trusts (EOT) in succession planning. Owners and shareholders are increasingly looking at EOTs over a trade sale or traditional management buyout as a way to reward employees, protect culture and to build commercial skills

among their teams. The latest figures show more than 500 EOTs set up in the last year, up from 235 the year prior.

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

There's a lot to like about Leeds. It's a vibrant, busy city with great amenities that's also only a stone's throw away from the peace of the Yorkshire Dales. Most lawyers manage to strike a better work-life balance here than in the capital.

Leeds is also one of the biggest professional services hubs outside of London, with lots of award-winning talent for budding lawyers to learn and develop from. There's something to be said about good Yorkshire folk, too. We're straight-talking people that will call a spade a spade. That's a good quality to have, especially in our line of work.

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

It's becoming increasingly important for firms to work with suppliers and partners that share their values. Businesses and investors want to see greater sustainability and purpose from where they buy products and services.

Brabners has worked hard to create a purpose driven culture, which is nicely encapsulated by our B-Corp certification. That sees us join only a few thousand businesses globally, including the likes of Patagonia and Ben & Jerry's, that are certified for being a business that acts as a force for good.

Our B-Corp success is in part down to initiatives such as the Brabners Foundation investing £50,000 in kickstarter funding to restore environmentally significant peatland in the North Yorkshire Moors.



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