

Leeds & Yorkshire Lawyer

The Official Journal of Leeds Law Society

 Leeds
Law Society

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Celebrations all round

**From heritage to pride:
a summer of celebrating diversity**

Leeds JLD

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Yorkshire Union

Natalie Cosgrove on making sure legal talent has access and opportunity in Yorkshire





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Shanika Haynes is a partner at Stowe Family Law and president of Leeds Law Society

The past few months have been extremely busy for lots of us. With schools breaking up, annual leave, and the anticipation of better weather on the horizon (which we await with bated breath) it has felt like change is in the air.

Over July and August many celebrated South Asian Heritage Month. The Leeds Law Society featured a Sri Lankan Barrister who is the youngest ever diverse minority Crown Court Judge in July's spotlight and held a South Asian food tour around Leeds. I was so pleased to see many of our member firms participating in the celebrations by holding their own events including guest speakers, sharing lived experiences, henna artists, and dance lessons to name a few. I'm personally on a journey to learn more about my heritage so to see so many doing the same was heart-warming.

Last weekend saw those in Leeds and the surrounding area gather en masse to celebrate Pride. Whilst I couldn't be there myself it was great to see LLS and its members representing the legal community with open hearts, enthusiasm and plenty of glitter and sparkles.

The legal sector hasn't always been

Celebrations all round

known for its diversity and most of us will agree that there is a lot of work to be done. However, it's also important to take a minute to reflect on how far we have come and the effort and care I have seen over the past month put into celebrating Pride and SAHM fills me with joy and most importantly hope. I say this in the context of knowing how hard we all work and how much our day job fills our time, so the fact that so many of our members have given their spare time to these events, I know will mean a lot to many.

The above celebrations are intrinsically linked to our identity, how we perceive ourselves and where we fit into society. Leeds and Yorkshire in particular have a strong identity. Having lived in numerous places across the country I have never encountered such pride and love for an area as I have up here.

This pride extends to the legal sector, we push boundaries, innovate and represent a large proportion of the sector outside of London. I was reminded of this throughout the judging process for the Yorkshire Legal Awards which I took part in recently. Everyone who entered, not just those who have been shortlisted, should be immensely proud of what they have achieved. It was an honour to read the submissions and I was blown away by the extent of the talent we have locally and the thought and effort given to what we give back to the community as a sector.

Another exciting announcement was that Leeds would be holding the first ever regional Admissions Ceremony in conjunction with the Law Society of England and Wales. Usually, this special occasion is held in London, but for many that can be limiting in terms of time and cost. I am therefore extremely proud that we are able to make this event more accessible. Everyone should have the opportunity to celebrate the years of hard work and determination they have put into becoming a Solicitor. I am looking forward to meeting the delegates and

their loved ones and being part of this special day for them, alongside the President of the Law Society, Lubna Shuja.

Many of our member firms took part in the World of Work day last month with the Ahead Partnership. I was able to join in on the fun and attended a local primary with several other lawyers to talk to school students about what it's like to be a lawyer, why we go to work, and help them think about their futures. Initiatives like this are extremely important as they ensure that children from all backgrounds have access to different professions and are able to meet a large range of role models they otherwise probably wouldn't. I would encourage firms to sign up next year.

Looking forward, the LLS has a number of events planned over the next few months, including the first with my charity of the year, Smart Works. This is a great charity who provide unemployed women with a full outfit, coaching and help with interview preparation to assist with their transition back into employment. I am sure like me, many of you have wardrobes full of workwear that is surplus to requirement, so please do look out for details of our first event.

In the spirit of not limiting our celebrations of different cultures to one month or a certain time of the year, the Leeds Law Society is going to ensure that moving forward we celebrate our diversity consistently throughout the year. Please do keep an eye out for future events. In this same vein we are also putting a concerted effort into making our events less centred around alcohol as we appreciate that this excludes a large number of our membership for various reasons. We are continually seeking feedback and input on events so please do get in touch.

I hope to continue to meet with our members over the next few months. If you are at the Yorkshire Legal Awards, please do come and say hello. In the meantime, enjoy the rest of your summer, which will hopefully arrive soon and last more than five minutes!



Leeds Pride 2023

The Leeds Law Society took part in the walk through Leeds city centre as part of Pride celebrations

Thank you to everyone who attended and walked with us for Pride 2023 which was once again a fantastic day with Arena Group, A Xerox Business Solutions Company and Selborne Chambers, Gordons LLP, Capsticks LLP, Spire Barristers, Leeds Junior Lawyers Division, Stone King LLP, Ridley & Hall Solicitors, Weightmans, Broadway House Chambers, Morrish Solicitors LLP, Ison Harrison Solicitors and BARE BRASS BAND LTD.

Can we also say a special thank you to our Sponsors for Pride Arena <https://www.arenagroup.net/> and also Selborne Chambers <https://selbornechambers.co.uk/>



Leading East Yorkshire firm completes 'coup' with acquisition of criminal law solicitors

Leading East Yorkshire firm, Williamsons Solicitors, has recently completed the acquisition of a Hull-based criminal law practice, Amber Solicitors LLP, in a deal that has been widely hailed as a 'coup'.

Amber Solicitors LLP, comprising well-known solicitors Ian Phillip and Richard Fowler, became part of Williamsons on 1 August. The acquisition has created East Yorkshire's most experienced defence advocacy team. This acquisition is expected to create a powerhouse of legal expertise, benefiting clients from both firms.

Marc Pollard, the acting head of Williamsons' criminal law department, said: "Both Ian and Richard have a fantastic reputation and they will fit in perfectly as we have a shared ideology and an established relationship through many years of working in Hull and surrounding areas. It's a real coup for us and we are very excited to have them on board."

Richard and Ian, who founded Amber Solicitors in the late 1990s, have gained recognition for challenging authority and passionately fighting for the underdog. Ian became one of the youngest solicitor advocates in the city and has worked on many high-profile cases, with Richard mainly working 'at the coal face' of criminal law.

Richard said: "We are very proud of our reputation, so it was important that we became part of an equally well-respected and principled firm.

"It will also provide Ian and I with the opportunity to give back a little by helping a new generation of criminal lawyers through Williamsons' excellent training schemes."

He added that joining Williamsons would allow for expansion and the ability to provide clients with 'global' representation through Williamsons Solicitors' wide range of law services.

Keoghs expands with new office in Leeds



Insurance law firm Keoghs is opening a new office in Leeds as it continues expansion plans in Yorkshire, the Humber and surrounding areas.

Situated in the centre of the city, the new office will house teams from Keoghs corporate and sector risk practice, which is led by partner Andrew Evans.

The office will also house several other teams, including the credit hire group led by partner Gary Herring.

The opening of the Keoghs Leeds office will allow the corporate and sector risk team to position, integrate and align its single source services more closely for major and mid-market corporates and the associated broking and insurer markets across the region.

The announcement follows the recruitment in 2022 of corporate and sector risk partners Sally Richmond and Jo Francis, along with a team of 20 from rival firms.

Commenting on the new office, Evans said: "Client and market demand has meant that we have wanted to be in Yorkshire, the Humber and surroundings markets for the past couple of years and we are delighted that this aspect of our strategy is now being realised.

"It's great to be here, making a positive difference in this region and enjoying our work and the area as we do so."

Connie Cobb, a partner at Keoghs, said: "The opening of the new Leeds office will allow us to seamlessly integrate with our insurer clients based in and around the city.

"Being in close proximity on a more regular basis will help us to continue to support our clients with added-value activities such as case clinics, strengthening our existing relationships and evidencing our on-going commitment to the insurance industry."

Gordons lands conveyancing role for Honey development

Sheffield-based housebuilder Honey has appointed law firm Gordons to handle the residential conveyancing on its first development, a 50-home scheme in South Normanton, Derbyshire.

A team from Gordons led by partner and head of residential development, Mike Finnett, will handle the conveyancing on all homes at Amber.

Avant Homes chief executive officer Mark Mitchell founded Honey in October last year. The company is backed by private equity firm Alchemy Partners and its Alchemy Special Opportunities Fund IV, which has £937m of fully committed capital.

Mark Mitchell, chief executive at Honey, said: "As a fast-growing entrepreneurial housebuilder, Gordons is the ideal law firm for us. Mike and his team will help ensure our buyers enjoy a smooth conveyancing process which will be an important part of their customer experience journey with us.

"This is our first development and we have many more planned. We hope to continue to develop our relationship



with Gordons as we expand further throughout Derbyshire and Yorkshire."

Finnett commented: "Mark and the team at Honey have got off to a flying start and we are very pleased to have been appointed to help deliver their sales."

Axiom Ince rescues Plexus Law from administration

Axiom Ince has acquired Leeds-headquartered Plexus Law out of administration for an undisclosed sum, saving hundreds of jobs.

In total, the deal safeguards 540 jobs without the need for any redundancies and adds to the 359 qualified lawyers and 442 other staff already under the Axiom Ince umbrella.

Axiom Ince is the result of acquisitions and mergers with Ince & Co, Wiseman Lee and DWFM Beckman.

Those transactions gave the business presences in London, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Birmingham and Swindon, as well as Dubai, Hong Kong, Cyprus, Greece and China.

With its acquisition of defendant insurance law firm Plexus,

Axiom Ince has now arrived in Leeds.

Commenting on the acquisition, Pragnesh Modhwadia, global chief executive officer of Axiom Ince, said: "We are excited to have the Plexus family join our fast-growing legal services business.

"We look forward to welcoming our new Plexus colleagues and working closely with them. We would also like to thank the team at [administrator] Interpath Advisory for their stellar work in delivering this complex transaction as quickly as they have."

Plexus reportedly ran into trouble after a major investor withdrew its support.

Clarion family lawyer qualifies as children arbitrator

Jane Ingleby, a partner in the family team at Leeds-based Clarion, has become one of Yorkshire's only fully qualified child arbitrators.

Ingleby joined Clarion in 2016 and has more than 25 years of experience in all aspects of family law. She recently became a partner.

As a children arbitrator, approved by the Institute of Family Law Arbitrators, Ingleby is now able to be appointed to help resolve disputes between parents regarding child custody and access arrangements.

As well as being highly experienced and skilled legal professionals, children arbitrators undergo specialist child and

family arbitration training which she completed earlier this year.

"Given the pressure the courts are currently under, it's more important than ever that families can access an alternative, less adversarial form of dispute resolution," Ingleby explained.

"In child cases, which are often emotionally charged, the less formal setting of sitting in a normal room with an experienced and objective children arbitrator hearing your case is a lot less intimidating and stressful.

"I am pleased to be able to use my long track record in complex children's proceedings to move into this role which can only be undertaken by lawyers with the experience to understand the impact of their decisions on the entire family.

LCF Law helps The Peace Museum secure new Salts Mill premises

Harriet Thornton, head of real estate at LCF Law, has advised The Peace Museum in Bradford on its relocation to one of the UK's most famous mill complexes.

The Peace Museum is relocating to Salts Mill and will reopen in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Saltaire next summer. It was previously in Bradford's Piece Hall Yard.

The UK's sole museum devoted to peace opened its doors in 1998. It is crammed with fascinating artefacts from the peace movement's history, including protest banners, flags, and posters. The new museum will open in the summer of 2024,

just before Bradford's City of Culture year begins in 2025.

Clive Barrett, chair of trustees at The Peace Museum, said:

"This project will be transformational for The Peace Museum.

"This is particularly exciting in light of Bradford receiving City of Culture for 2025, as we'll be able to welcome visitors from all over the world to our brand-new museum in the heart of the district."

Thornton from LCF Law commented: "It's been a privilege to work with The Peace Museum and help them secure new premises in one of the UK's most famous mill complexes."

Optima Legal owner PEXA expands presence in Yorkshire

Australian tech company PEXA, owner of Leeds-based law firm Optima Legal, is expanding its presence in the UK and locating its headquarters in Leeds.

The company's new UK headquarters will be located at 114 Wellington Street in West Village, Leeds. With the site due to open in the autumn, PEXA has taken more than 8,100 sq ft at the newly transformed development.

PEXA launched in the UK last year. Its electronic platform streamlines the traditional methods and documentation in property exchange, for lenders, conveyancers, and other stakeholders.

Following its acquisition of Optima Legal in 2022, PEXA is a significant employer in Yorkshire, with 65% of its 380 UK employees based in Leeds and around the region.

Optima Legal is a law firm focusing on technology-led volume legal property services and supports nearly 200,000

customers each year with remortgage and property transactions.

PEXA Group chief executive officer Glenn King, who visited the site of the new company's new UK headquarters on 19 June with Optima Legal managing director Tom Trevorrow and Tracy Brabin, West Yorkshire's mayor, called the city and region "central" to the company's plans.

He said: "We have ambitious plans to transform the UK's property market for the better, and investing in our offices, technology, and people in Leeds and Yorkshire is central to executing those plans."

Trevorrow added: "We have had tremendous support from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to date, and we look forward to working with them closely as we select a new site for all our operations in the UK, including Optima Legal, and building closer ties with the city."

jmg l e n d i n n i n g

Professional Risks

Gareth Milner,
Managing
Director of JM
Glendinning
Professional
Risks, comments
on the solicitors'
PII market for
2023



The Professional Indemnity market begins to improve

In recent years, almost all law firms have encountered significant increases in their professional indemnity insurance (PII) premiums. PII is normally one of the highest expenses for solicitors and any increase in the premium flows straight through to your bottom line, so controlling this cost is vital.

We're pleased to report better news in relation to PII for 2023. There is still a little uncertainty from the volatile wider economic conditions, but it seems that the tougher measures imposed by insurers over the past few years have now stabilised the market somewhat.

On 1 April 2023—when around 30% of law firms renewed their PII—most insurers offered flat rates, meaning any premium increases were purely in line with increases in fee income. Any rate increases applied were in the low single digits, usually for practices with higher risk work such as conveyancing. Predictably, the exception to this was for firms with a poor claims record, where insurers still sought above average rate increases.

For the 1 October renewal season, we are expecting this rating trend to continue. We are also seeing an increase in insurers' appetite for new business, which will serve to create more competition. This in turn also naturally regulates premium.

We are also likely to see at least one new participating insurer writing solicitors' PII before October. Any appetite from new insurers remains to be seen, but we expect their initial approach to be 'easy does it' to ensure sustainability in the market. So, while new capacity is always very welcome, it is likely to be 2024 before we feel the full effects.

If your firm has its PII renewal due on 1 October, how should you approach the market?

Firstly, we must make clear that the softening market conditions are very much in their infancy, so the chances of cutting great swathes off last year's bill are unlikely.

Through sensible negotiation, the chances of striking a

better deal are much improved this year, either with your existing insurer or an alternative. During the recent hard market conditions the majority of law firm stayed with their existing provider and while there are many benefits to that continuity, it is good governance to periodically test the market. The next year or two are likely provide the right timing for that market check.

When the market starts to improve, the potential for leaving money on the table is greater, so you must ensure that any market exercise undertaken by your broker is transparent. Agree beforehand which insurers have been approached and then collate each of their responses, so you know that when you sign up for another renewal, you are getting the very best deal available. Ask your broker whether they are tied to any exclusive deals with insurers or if they are giving you a truly independent, balanced view of the market.

More insurers are now prepared to offer 18-month terms, too. If you are interested in having an extended period, ask your broker if this is available and check what the terms of any extended deal would be.

The quality of risk information provided could be the difference between an insurer choosing to quote or not, so when submitting your proposal ensure that you include as much positive information about your firm's processes and attitude to risk as possible. Key areas of focus for insurers are the financial management of the business, staff training and culture, and how cyber risk issues are mitigated.

With the correct approach to renewal, we do believe that most firms should be able to contain premiums and increase competition among insurers for their business during 2023 and beyond.

If you would like a discussion regarding your PII renewal, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me on 07923 246 237 or gareth.milner@jmginsurance.co.uk.

MD Law solicitor secures recorder appointment



A Sheffield lawyer from MD Law has been appointed as a recorder in the civil jurisdiction.

Carl Jones, a partner at the boutique firm and who specialises in insolvency litigation, starts his formal induction as a recorder in September and should begin sitting by the end of the year—all before he turns 35.

Jones was surprised to learn of his recommendation for the position after deciding to apply on a speculative basis.

He said: "I am so pleased to have been appointed. I was very surprised to learn I was being recommended for appointment. I'll be 10 years qualified in September, so I

thought it was more a speculative application.

"It's something I wanted to do, but applying was as much about getting experience and going through the process. To actually get appointed, I was very pleasantly surprised."

Jones was appointed a deputy district judge in 2020 and the following year was authorised to sit in the Business and Property Courts in Leeds and Newcastle.

He added: "I see this appointment as a recorder as the next step in the judicial ladder. It's my ambition to become a full-time judge eventually."

Matthew Dixon, founder and partner of MD Law, said: "We warmly congratulate Carl on his recorder appointment. Allowing our lawyers to pursue their judicial ambitions means they can broaden their knowledge and experience, and that can only help enhance the firm's reputation."

Switalskis celebrates three decades in business

Switalskis has marked 30 years of providing legal support to people and businesses across the region and beyond with an event to thank its employees.

Founded by Stephen Switalski in 1993, the firm is now a £28m turnover group with more than 400 staff across 12 offices in Yorkshire.

Managing director John Durkan joined Switalskis in 2001. He attributes the firm's success to its focus on people and "never standing still".

He said: "People are at the centre of everything we do, whether it's helping clients, attracting new talent or developing the team from within. We aim to instil a can-do ethos across the firm, where everyone is given the opportunity to progress, and we never stand still. We are always looking to evolve and push the business forward, while making sure it continues to be a great place to work"

In 2021, Switalskis acquired Doncaster law firm Atherton Godfrey and completed the acquisition of York-based Pryers Solicitors in 2021, expanding its clinical negligence and personal injury specialisms and creating a £28m turnover group.

In 2022, Switalskis expanded into the capital, opening a

London office led by director David Thomas and expanding its clinical negligence team.

The Switalskis team came together this month at an event at Chow Down in Leeds to celebrate 30 years in business.

Joining the celebrations were long-standing team members Suzanne Munroe, who started her legal career as a trainee working alongside Stephen Switalski in 1988, and Lorrette Law and Rob Casey, who started work at the firm in 1995.

Rob Casey, a director in the child abuse compensation department, recalls Switalskis's first office in Wakefield as "a two up, two down".

He said: "Having moved to larger offices, we were the first legal firm on Cheapside, and many more have since followed suit, making it a legal district in the city. Switalskis is a great place to work—hand on heart I haven't once thought about leaving in all the years I have worked here."

John Durkan concluded: "Looking ahead, we plan to continue our growth and evolution; to further integrate the Pryers and Atherton Godfrey teams into the group, and to continue growing through a blend of organic growth and the acquisition of people, teams, and firms."



HMCTS moving to new space at West Gate in Leeds



HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) in Leeds has signed a 15-year lease for more than 26,000 sq ft across three floors at the newly refurbished West Gate.

The lease will see the government agency that provides administrative support for criminal, civil, and family courts across England and Wales take space in one of the city's most prominent locations and move closer to many of its barristers and solicitors on Park Square.

Before HMCTS moves in, contracting specialist CubicWorks will

redevelop the entire space. This work, which has already begun and is expected to be completed in this autumn, includes the construction of eight modern multi-purpose courtrooms.

The move comes after property management firm Bruntwood's extensive refurbishment of West Gate, which transformed more than 33,000 square feet of space.

Andrew Butterworth, commercial director at Bruntwood, said: "HMCTS' relocation to West Gate is a major milestone for Leeds, reinforcing the status of this building as one of the city's most prominent and sought-after addresses.

"Creating thriving cities where people can prosper is part of our lifeblood, and we are committed to providing the very highest quality workspace in Leeds and across Yorkshire, including ongoing work at our flagship West Village development, a new destination that heralds innovation, collaboration and community."

Graeme Goldsmith, delivery director for HMCTS North East, said: "We are looking forward to moving into our new home at West Gate later this year."

NERL meets for regulatory updates and networking

The North Eastern Regulatory Lawyers (NERL) met recently for the second event of the year. The group aims to meet on a quarterly basis.

Hosted by Mark Thompson of DWF's regulatory, compliance and investigations team, NERL had another strong attendance for its regulatory update sessions and networking.

Edmund Conybeare from Legal Studio and Matthew Breakell from DAC Beachcroft set up NERL more than 10 years ago.

The group brings together a strong community of regulatory solicitors and barristers from across Yorkshire and the Northeast for regular catch-ups, training and networking.

The most recent event saw Park Square Barristers provide useful topical updates on the EU Retained Law Bill, bad character in health and safety prosecutions and a general inquest round-up, particularly regarding the case of



Maughan.

The speakers on these issues included Craig Hassall KC, Janine Wolstenholme and Kirsten Mercer.

Wilkin Chapman launches paralegal apprenticeship



Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire law firm Wilkin Chapman is now accepting applications for its brand new paralegal apprenticeship programme.

This is the first time that Wilkin Chapman has run a dedicated apprenticeship to train candidates to become paralegals and is marketing the opportunity as the first major step toward becoming a solicitor or barrister.

Lisa Boileau, partner and head of the private client division of Wilkin Chapman, explained why the new apprenticeship scheme is so important to the firm: "At Wilkin Chapman, we believe that investing in the next generation of legal professionals is crucial for the future success of our firm.

"Our current trainee scheme has a proven track record, and we're thrilled to introduce our new apprenticeship scheme. We hope to attract talented and ambitious individuals who are eager to learn and grow with us.

"We're excited to see what the future holds for our apprentices and look forward to supporting them on their journey towards a rewarding career in law."

Apprentices on the scheme will earn a salary throughout the 24-month programme while working alongside and learning from experienced legal professionals.

Upon successfully completing the scheme, apprentices will become qualified as CILEX level 3 paralegals, equipped with the practical skills and knowledge to apply to take on paralegal roles within Wilkin Chapman, continue their studies and become qualified chartered legal executives, with the opportunity to become qualified solicitors.

Moving on up

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

Andrew Jackson Solicitors has appointed Andrew Coish as an associate in its shipping and transport team.

Coish returns to the Yorkshire-based firm where he trained and qualified as a solicitor and went on to gain several years of experience and expertise in maritime law.

Commenting on his appointment, Coish said: "I am excited to return to Andrew Jackson where I began my career 26 years ago.

"I have been aware of how the firm has grown over the years and its continued reputation for maritime work and I'm looking forward to playing my part in ensuring that we continue to provide an outstanding service for our clients, which is tailored to their needs."



Michael Cantwell has joined **Schofield Sweeney** as a partner in its corporate team.

Based in Leeds, Cantwell acts on a wide range of corporate matters. A trusted adviser who receives recommendations

from existing clients, law firms and accountancy practices, Cantwell has a particular focus in the gambling and the manufacturing industries.

Commenting on his appointment, Cantwell said: "I'm delighted to join Schofield Sweeney. The team is recognised as a market leader for dealmaking and forging long-lasting relationships with clients. I look forward to working with the team and developing our offering as we go from strength to strength."

Steven Millward, partner at Schofield Sweeney, said: "It's great to welcome Michael as a partner to add even further strength to what is already an incredibly strong corporate offering, featuring year after year amongst the most active advisers in the region."

Huddersfield firm **Eaton Smith Solicitors** has expanded its Commercial Property Team, adding further expertise and support for its clients, both local and national.

The team is led by partner James Burgess and has ambitious plans for further growth in the coming years. James, who took charge of the team in May 2021, boasts extensive expertise in commercial property, covering landlord-tenant negotiations,



acquisitions, disposals, portfolio management, commercial development, secured lending, and property financing.

Senior Solicitor Jamie Humpheson, joining in October 2021, brings specialized advice in the charity sector and property aspects of company transactions. Associate Solicitor Ian Holdsworth, who arrived in January 2022, brings with him over 40 years of qualifications, a diverse career history, and expertise in agricultural land dealings. The team is also supported by Legal Assistants Anne Wilson and Justine Boyes.

The expansion comes after the firm announced the arrival of Afreen Mhar and Rauhill Ahmed to their conveyancing team in July this year.



Jody Evans has joined **Wilkin Chapman** as Director of Risk and Governance, a new role for the firm. Wilkin Chapman has said that the new role will ensure that risk, compliance and governance are represented at a strategic level within the business.

Aside from overseeing compliance, Jody will lead Wilkin Chapman's environmental, social, and governance (ESG) activities, aligning them with the firm's broader strategy. She expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity, saying, "The passion and drive to 'be better' with risk, compliance, and governance being at the heart of this change really came through."

Having started her career in the legal sector in 2006, Jody has an impressive track record in leading legal risk and compliance teams, with significant experience in managing growth plans and acquisitions.

Jody said: "It's a brilliant firm that I'm really happy to be a part of and I'm looking forward to the future."



St Philips Chambers has officially announced the selection of Sara Lewis KC as its new Head of Chambers, succeeding Richard Atkins KC.

Sara Lewis KC brings her extensive expertise and a distinguished reputation in family law to the firm, which has offices in Leeds city centre. She was called to the Bar in 1996 and took Silk in 2021.

Prior to coming to the Bar, Sara was a neuropsychologist, undertaking both clinical and research work. She therefore has unique expertise in matters involving complex medical evidence, mental health issues, problems associated with addiction and cognitive impairment.

Sara Lewis KC said: "I am honoured to take on the role of Head of Chambers and look forward to leading such a talented group of barristers and staff. I take over the stewardship of a thriving chambers and my thanks go to outgoing Head, Richard Atkins KC, who expertly steered St Philips Chambers through the challenges of the Covid years."

Hägen Wolf continues its dramatic expansion: the Leeds-based firm recently announced the appointment of Estella Prince as their new Legal Director.

Estella brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to Hägen Wolf, having dealt extensively with intricate agricultural, commercial, and residential property matters throughout her career.

"We are delighted to welcome Estella Prince to our firm as Legal Director," said Matt Pugh, Managing Partner at Hägen Wolf. "Her exceptional expertise and vast experience will be invaluable in broadening our service offerings and enhancing our ability to provide comprehensive legal solutions to our clients."

"I am thrilled to be a part of the Hägen Wolf team," said Estella Prince. "The firm's reputation for excellence aligns perfectly with my own professional values. I look forward to collaborating with this talented group and contributing to the firm's continued success."



Switalskis director and solicitor Amy Clowrey has been appointed as the Law Society's council member for Yorkshire and Humberside.

With her appointment, Clowrey will give the region a voice at a national level, ensuring that it remains on the map as a growing legal hub. She will also take an active role in ensuring that the profession remains diverse,

accessible, and that talent continues to be harnessed and developed.

Clowrey has worked at Switalskis for seven years. She represents victims of child abuse, with a specialism in child sexual exploitation and grooming.

Born in Rotherham, Clowrey chose to work in child abuse compensation law to support victims of the Rotherham grooming scandal, which had unfolded in her hometown. She now works as part of a team of lawyers dealing with the high-profile grooming scandals in the region as well as child abuse cases nationally.

Clowrey has been involved with the Law Society for more than 10 years. Locally, Clowrey has also held committee roles in Leeds, Huddersfield and presently as the education representative for the Yorkshire Union of Lawyers.

Commenting on her appointment, Clowrey said: "I'm grateful that the region has put its faith in me to represent them. I've enjoyed the challenges and opportunities that working with the Law Society has presented so far and can't wait to get stuck into this next chapter."



Erin Garnham and Lawrence Ofori have qualified at **Morrish Solicitors** and will take up full-time roles with the firm. Both joined Morrish in 2020 as legal assistants and qualified this month. They will both be based at Morrish's head office in Leeds city centre.

Garnham, a graduate of Leeds Beckett University with undergraduate and master's degrees in law, said: "I am thrilled to be qualifying as a solicitor after a long road of university and training."

Ofori, who studied for his undergraduate and master's degrees

in law at Nottingham Law School, added: "I am absolutely delighted and proud to be qualifying into the employment team at Morrish. This journey has been an invaluable experience and I cannot wait to get started, contributing towards the future success of the firm."

Commenting on the new appointments, David Sorensen, managing partner at Morrish, said: "The partners and the whole team at Morrish offer their congratulations to Erin and Lawrence on their qualification."

"They have both proven to be talented lawyers during their training contracts and will be a great benefit to our expanding employment team acting for individual clients, union members, associations and unions."



North Yorkshire law firm **McCormicks Solicitors** has appointed commercial property specialist Claire Baker-Kemp to its team.

Baker-Kemp joins the Harrogate-based firm as a senior associate and brings extensive experience in commercial property transactions.

Since qualifying as a solicitor, Baker-Kemp has acted for the NHS, a major supermarket chain, the Department of Transport, an international shopping centre developer, financial institutions, local authorities, property developers, companies, landowners, partnerships, sole traders and individuals.

Senior partner Peter McCormick OBE commented: "Commercial property has been a busy aspect of our legal work for many years and Claire's background and experience will undoubtedly prove an asset."



Leeds-based law firm **Capsticks** has named Keith Blundred as the new head of its Leeds office.

Blundred, who joined Capsticks as a partner in 2022, has become a visible leader in the team and has worked on various developments with his predecessor, Lisa Geary.

Blundred commented: "I'm pleased to be appointed as the next head of the

Leeds office.

"A close-knit, looked-after team, means our clients have the best client experience."

Martin Hamilton, managing partner at Capsticks, said: "I look forward to the initiatives and plans Keith will be bringing to the table as he takes on this additional responsibility."



HLK has appointed Louise Perkin as a partner in Leeds. Perkin has brought a team of experts with her to HLK.

Acting for a diverse range of clients from startups and SMEs to PLCs and universities, Perkin specialises in non-contentious intellectual property work. For more than 25 years, she has assisted clients in commercial/IP transactions.

Commenting on her appointment at HLK, Perkin said: "When the opportunity to be part of Leeds' leading IP firm at HLK came my way, I jumped at the chance. The calibre of people at HLK, as well as the market leading work that they do, was a decisive factor in my decision to join them."



Lime Solicitors has added a highly experienced family unit of serious and catastrophic injury specialists to its Sheffield team. Partner Rose Gibson-Harper, associate Kevin

Harper, and senior litigation legal assistant Ellie Harper have joined Lime Solicitors from Simpson Millar.

Rose is well-known for her work in complex serious and catastrophic injury claims, such as brain and spinal cord injury, blindness, and fatal accidents.

Kevin has more than 35 years of experience dealing with fatal and catastrophic collisions as a former police officer and family liaison coordinator in South Yorkshire Police's serious road collisions unit. Ellie joined the team in 2021 and has since assisted with cases involving tragic fatalities, brain and spinal cord injuries, severe limb injuries, and amputations.

Tony Hannington, head of Lime Solicitors, commented: "We are delighted to welcome Rose, Kevin, and Ellie to our growing serious and catastrophic injury operation."



Ison Harrison, a law firm with offices across Yorkshire, has announced six promotions to partner status. This follows Ison Harrison's successful conversion to employee ownership in early 2022.

Nicola Hunter, who joined in 2018, will lead the private family offering after working at Ison Harrison's Otley and Guiseley branches.

Natalie Clayton, now at the Leeds City Centre office, started as an apprentice nine years ago and became assistant head of the new build division.

Faye Chadwick, who is a specialist in new construction properties, has expanded the firm's presence in Wakefield as the manager of the Wakefield branch.

Ben Palmer, a corporate employment solicitor, works at the Leeds City Centre office. Palmer joined Ison Harrison's regional team in 2021 and has over 16 years of employment experience.

Jordan Grimbley, who shifted to wills and probate from commercial litigation, qualified as a solicitor in 2020. Since then, he has established a practice in Castleford.

Commenting on the promotions, Jonathan Wearing, managing director at Ison Harrison, said: "This series of promotions is our second of 2023 and continues the successful year we're having.

Since becoming employee-owned, the firm has gone from strength to strength!"



Alex Cartledge, who is studying to become a notary, has joined York-based law firm **Roche Legal**.

Cartledge, a solicitor of 10 years, is currently in the middle of a two-year diploma in notarial practice at University College London (UCL). Cartledge previously worked in Bridlington and Hull. When she completes her course, she will apply to the Archbishop of

Canterbury's office to practise her new skills at Roche Legal.

Cartledge has experience in wills, probate, missing persons and lasting powers of attorney. Becoming a notary broadens an already extensive skill set.

Cartledge said: "At Roche Legal, the cross-border work and missing persons issues deliver a wider scope of work than I have previously experienced and I am incredibly excited to be part of the team."

Rachel Roche, owner of Roche Legal, said: "We are delighted Alex has joined our team and she has shown throughout her career a drive to deliver outstanding client care, and this perfectly aligns with the DNA of Roche Legal."



Brabners has appointed Sara Ludlam as a new partner in its commercial law practice in Leeds.

Ludlam brings 25 years of experience to the firm, having worked with leading brands including Lacoste, Berghaus, Kickers and Sports

Direct. She advises on all areas of intellectual property law.

Her arrival marks the ninth partner appointment for Brabners in the Leeds office since its launch in May last year, and the firm expects to continue to expand in Yorkshire throughout 2023.

Ludlam said: "Brabners has an excellent reputation in the profession as a top employer with a major commercial practice. Joining the firm is an exciting opportunity for me to help enhance its existing services in IP law by further strengthening the team."



Sheffield-based firm **Wake Smith** promoted three members of staff who have worked their way up the ranks.

Tom Weightman and Laura Saul have now reached the director level in the commercial property team.

Weightman is a former Wake Smith trainee who joined the firm in 2012. He said: "It is a privilege to be part of a working environment where what you are doing makes a genuine difference to the firm at each level, and I am delighted to become a director."

Saul joined the firm in 2016 with experience in retail and landlord and tenant work, acquisitions, disposals and lease work. She became an associate in 2019.

Stephanie Chung joined the firm in January last year and has also been promoted to associate in the nine-strong private client team. Alongside her role in wills, trust and probate matters, Chung is responsible for pushing the firm's drive to attract business from the Cantonese-speaking Chinese community in Sheffield and South Yorkshire.

Thank you!



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

Patrick Walker pens his last piece for the Leeds and Yorkshire Lawyer

Have you noticed how many different ways people find to say 'thank you'? My parents' generation were masters of effusive and repetitive but often shallow words. Like the list of thank you letters which we were required to write after Christmas, it was expected, and performed rather begrudgingly. No such problem with many youngsters. In my son's case anything more than a grunt is rare, and a text with the actual words 'thank you' (with or without an emoji) tells me he is over the moon!

Recently a friend did some amazing work in our garden and as a token of our gratitude we bought him a small pair of binoculars. He is very keen on wildlife, and we hoped they would be a good addition to his motorhome. He was a little taken aback, told us we were very kind, and without opening the box or a further glance, put them in the cab of his truck. We hoped he was pleased but there was little way of knowing. We found out later and so will you.

So now it's my turn. How do I scribe my heartfelt thanks to you for reading my column for so many years? You have followed my journey from barristers' chambers to what was then Hammond Suddards.



You have read highs and lows from my part-time judicial work, and you have patiently tolerated by evangelistic messages about mediation. But more importantly you have shared journeys with my elderly father, cycling trips with my long-suffering stoker and spouse, slug safaris with my son (that was 12 years ago!) and countless uplifting encounters in the countryside, usually accompanied by my black labradors. More recently you have followed me into the kitchens at St George's Crypt.

I used to be asked when I would retire. Now I am asked if I am going to retire. I will one day but not now: mediation still feels worthwhile and the people I work with (professionals and clients) usually make it a pleasure. Of course, there are bad days, but let's be honest, there are bad days on a holiday! But it is time for a fresh face on the pages of the Leeds and Yorkshire Lawyer, and a rest from my sanguine observations which were originally intended to be about the law, but rarely have been.

Thank you for reading and thank you particularly for the kind feedback I have had over the years – often with anecdotes much funnier than my own. Thank you too to Rebecca for the cartoons which have brought my adventures to life, and to her predecessor who illustrated me paddling a wooden box across the Atlantic as Hammond Suddards became part of a States-based law firm.

I have had such fun writing for you, and when I do it is a powerful reminder of the beauty of nature, the kindness of so many people, the loyalty of pets, the hope for our future (despite the ravages of war, starvation and global warming), and the laughter which will help us all survive and hopefully thrive.

Oh, and if you were wondering whether I heard anything further about the binoculars, I did. I got a text. It wasn't quite what I was expecting, but it was a thank you which left me in no doubt as to its sincerity. It went like this 'Thank you very much for the binoculars Patrick. Just watching the neighbours trying to bury all their tractors on the moor. Score is one tractor, one trailer, one JCB. Looks like they are going to try to bury another tractor. It's a tad boggy. Thanks again they are brilliant. Cheers.'

I couldn't make it up!



Imposter syndrome

Following the recent Leeds JLD talk from Swush, secretary **Ellie Whitehead** looks at imposter syndrome and what we, as lawyers, can do to address it.

What is imposter syndrome?

Imposter syndrome was first used by psychologists over 40 years ago and is defined as “the persistent inability to believe that one’s success is deserved or has been legitimately achieved as a result of one’s own efforts or skills”. In simple terms, it means that you do not feel good enough or deserving enough and these feelings persist despite evident success. ‘Imposters’ can suffer from chronic self-doubt and a sense of feeling like a ‘fraud’.

Imposter syndrome is said to disproportionately affect high-achieving people, who find it difficult to accept their accomplishments with many questioning whether they are deserving of accolades. Sufferers can often feel as though they are going to be found out; that they do not belong where they are; and that they did not get where they are on merit but more through luck, networking or nepotism.

Who gets imposter syndrome?

Anyone and everyone can get imposter syndrome at some stage in their career. Perceptions of who suffers from imposter syndrome have changed over time and it is now recognised as a more widely experienced phenomenon which can affect anyone no matter their social status, work background, skill level, or degree of expertise.

Why is it important to notice it?

Believing that your achievements are not legitimately deserved has a knock-on negative effect and it can hold you back from clearly seeing, and taking up, opportunities as you may be worried that progression may expose your perceived weaknesses.

Thoughts of doubt and fear consumes energy and can create stress which negatively impacts critical functions of the brain, such as rational thinking, regulation of emotion and the ability to assess. These faculties can become impaired over time if imposter syndrome is not healthily addressed.

Imposter syndrome in the legal industry

The legal industry is no stranger to imposter syndrome, with symptoms being suffered by people at every stage of their careers. However, it is never more rife than when you are first starting out in the industry; applying for open days,

training contracts, vacation schemes. Many will receive countless rejections, if they receive responses at all.

The Leeds Junior Lawyers Division recently had a talk from Austin Merrett, director of Swush Ltd, all about imposter syndrome. Much of his talk resonated with our members.

As a junior lawyer just starting out in your career, you can put certain pressures on yourself to think that you must have a certain level of knowledge and skill to even be taken seriously as a solicitor. The jump from Trainee to NQ can be daunting as qualification does not automatically elevate you to having all the answers; some NQ’s may have only spent six months training in their chosen field. However, as we all know, being a solicitor sets us on a path of lifelong learning in a constantly changing and developing environment. You will never know everything, and you will develop your own individual style as your career progresses.

Some junior solicitors may still be feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For almost two years, most (if not all) lawyers have worked at home, which meant less live, face-to-face time with supervisors, partners and peers. The ability to tap on a colleague’s shoulder to ask for advice, or to listen in on conversations being had around the office, can be invaluable ways to learn and develop.

The question of “Am I good enough?” may well raise its head if you add to this the lack of live interaction, the wait to get a response, and the anxiety around draft emails and letters requiring approval.

How do I address it myself?

There are countless ways to address this and specialists like Austin at Swush who can assist. Here are some top tips the Leeds JLD recently learnt:

1. Being truthful to yourself about it can help you take some appropriate steps to minimise the stress associated with it.
2. Replace your negative self-talk. When you change your thoughts, your feelings change. When feelings change, your action or non-action changes, which then impacts the result.
3. Ensure you have a good support network around you. You will not be the only one suffering from imposter syndrome and together we can beat it.

Denney Lau named president of the Sheffield and District Law Society

The new president introduces himself and puts forward his vision for the future



It is such an honour to become the president of the Sheffield and District Law Society.

My immediate predecessor, Lisa Haythorne, has done such fantastic things on behalf of the members. I knew, deep down, it would be an extremely hard act to follow.

Luckily, my role is made slightly easier as we are now out of lockdown and we are slowly reverting to normality. What is normal is of course for individuals to decide, and I am sure that all of us will never forget the suffering people endured during that time. All I can say is that time doesn't wait, and we must move on as best as we can. But, most importantly, we must learn from it all, and perhaps use it as motivation to power forward.

I have firsthand experience of how negative events can lead to a positive outcome.

I was born in Hong Kong and came to England when I was 10 years old. I was bullied daily because of my race. I was also accused of a lot of things I didn't do. But, at that time, I couldn't speak a word of English, so I couldn't speak for myself. So I can remember after school one day at the age of 12, whilst having dinner with my mum and my sister, I said to my mum: "When I grow up, I am going to

help people by giving them a voice." Due to my personal experience, I knew far too well how it felt to not have a voice, not able to defend myself, not able to put forward my rights.

Fast forward 29 years later. I have been qualified as a criminal solicitor since 2007, qualified as a Higher Rights Advocate since 2018, and recently became a Partner at VHS Fletchers Solicitors. But most importantly of all, I now not only have the honour to speak on behalf of those who are less fortunate daily at Police Stations, Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts, but also provide solicitors with a voice as the President of Sheffield and District Law Society.

During my term as Vice President, I was lucky enough to be invited to discuss the legal aid crisis with Sir Christopher Bellamy KC during his independent review of criminal legal aid. I also attended the City Hall meeting at Law Society in London to discuss local issues that us solicitors face in Sheffield and Surrounding areas with the current Law Society President Lubna Shuja.

On a local level, I have attended the Legal Procession which marked the start of the legal year. This was a great opportunity to speak with other solicitors, barristers, judges and alike. I also attended the Chartered Accountants dinners and was invited to the Cutler's feast by Dame Julie Kenny, which again were great opportunities to speak to other professions. Most recently I was invited to attend the University of Sheffield Law degree graduation ceremony, congratulating many students and providing them with guidance and insight into our profession.

My aim for the society is to continue with its aim and tradition. Particularly, I hope to concentrate on three areas:

- 1) I want to bring our profession closer together and be supportive of each other; sometimes we solely concentrate on looking after others and we forget ourselves. With the help from our Law Society Committee and in particular our manager, Liz French, we will continue to set up training sessions for local solicitors, in addition to social events and the like.
- 2) I want to welcome more people into our profession in Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham and surrounding area. To that end, I will be making contact with universities and junior lawyers groups.
- 3) I also want to support members by listening to their needs. I will feed this back to the main law society and government, to speak up on their behalf.

Lastly and by no means least, our annual Yorkshire Law Banquet & Awards 2024 will be held on 23 February 2024 and it would be a great to see you there.

For membership enquires and events visit www.sheffieldlawsociety.co.uk

Finding our rising stars



Natalie Cosgrove, president of the Yorkshire Union of Law Societies and a partner at Ashtons Legal in Leeds, on access and opportunity in the legal world

We can all say that our entry into law was far from easy, with boundless hurdles and long long nights. Yet, we made it. We may even say we did a good job of it. I certainly thought so until I was fortunate to judge the Yorkshire Legal Awards for perhaps the fourth or fifth year now.

As long as the awards have been going, the 'Rising Star' and 'Trainee of the Year' have always been the most subscribed categories. To say the standard is high doesn't really do justice to the entries. These submissions and candidates are phenomenal, to say the least.

Another pause for reflection, as I wonder: are the quality of junior lawyers better than they have ever been before, or, are we expecting too much from our juniors? If it is the latter than I really worry for the profession. I worry about toxic cultures. I worry about burn out with really superb future leaders leaving. And I worry that we are expecting just too much bang for our buck. If it is the former, then, wow, just wow.

I suspect the trust falls in the middle of this: the place where hard work, ambition and ability meet. Whilst the submissions were voluminous, do they reflect the world? Are we a diverse industry? Are we welcoming? Is the mantle to qualify just too high? Do we really pull from a large pool, or are we



pulling from the same pool time and time again, with a few additions here and there to meet an arbitrary quota that we have set for to meet a diversity and inclusion target?

People are not targets. Those 'kids' with endless dreams and endless summers should all have access to the same opportunities and simply suggesting that the world doesn't really work that way doesn't cut it anymore.

Are you opening your doors? Are you recruiting from the same pool? Are you offering vacation placements expecting candidates to be able to afford to make their way in, to be able to afford smart clothes? Does your management board reflect what and who society is, so that our future leaders look to your firm and not only want to work there but see any point in applying?

If we always do what we have always done, then the same cohort will always prosper. This is not an industry for the lucky few who 'make it'. As recruitment is tougher than I can ever recall, who are we waiting for to make the changes we need to keep our profession thriving?

The Yorkshire Union is working on a work experience project and we need YOU. This is an online portal project to give a vital first step to those who couldn't even get to a vacation placement if they wanted to. There is brilliance emerging and we need to harness it. I am now looking for 5 firms across the County to partner with the Yorkshire Union to push this forward. Please contact me or Amy Clowrey of Switalskis, if you want a further chat about how we can grow this: natalie.cosgrove@ashtonslegal.co.uk or amy.clowrey@switalskis.com.



Yorkshire Legal Awards 2023 breaks multiple records

This is, by a considerable distance, the biggest ever year, with records broken in terms of both the number of organisations entering and submissions received



Thank you to everyone who entered the Yorkshire Legal Awards 2023.

This is, by a considerable distance, the biggest ever year, with records broken in terms of both the number of organisations entering and submissions received.

It's fantastic to see the Yorkshire legal community doing so well and the awards team can't wait to celebrate your successes and achievements with you at the ceremony at New Dock Hall in Leeds on 5 October.

We're also delighted to confirm that Helen Skelton is hosting the 2023 ceremony!

The TV presenter and broadcaster is the perfect choice for what promises to be the biggest ever Yorkshire Legal Awards.

As host, Helen will prepare attendees for the award giving and take us through each and every category, in partnership with Roger Tilling, the voice of the Yorkshire Legal Awards.

Helen will also pose for photos on stage with the winners and sponsors.

The shortlist is now available to view at www.yorkshirelegalnews.co.uk/yorkshire-legal-awards/

Tickets to the awards ceremony have now sold out. If you're interested in sponsorship opportunities or attending the ceremony next year, get in touch with Sammy Kinlough via 0113 867 2191 or sammy.kinlough@barkerbrooks.co.uk.

Sponsors of the Yorkshire Legal Awards 2023



Amy Clowrey, Switalskis Solicitors

The director, solicitor, and newly appointed Law Society Council Member sheds light on her aims for Yorkshire's legal community, and insights into child abuse compensation law

Congratulations on your appointment to the Law Society council! You have been involved with the Law Society for more than 10 years—how important is the organisation to the profession, both nationally and here in Yorkshire?

Often we don't recognise what The Law Society is doing behind the scenes to support the profession. The Law Society is an incredibly influential organisation which often puts the Government to task over key issues such as access to justice and the rule of law. More locally, it's a great network of passionate lawyers who want to see positive change in the profession. Personally, I have built a wonderful network of friends through my dealings with The Law Society both nationally and locally.

Now that you've been appointed, what are your key aims?

In a nutshell, to ensure that Yorkshire and Humberside have a voice in Chancery Lane.

My background, having been Chair of the Junior Lawyers Division and holding a number of Education Representative roles locally, along with being the firm's training principal, means that I do have a keen interest in aspiring lawyers and ensuring diversity and equality within our profession. Given that the SQE has recently been introduced and firms are currently grappling with the training of junior lawyers in the new world of QWE, I hope to be able to support firms across the region with this. I will also work alongside Nick Emmerson (Vice President of The Law Society and Council Member for Leeds) and David Barraclough and Mark Newby (both Council Members for Yorkshire) and with our collective expertise we will ensure that Yorkshire and Humberside is properly represented.

What are some Yorkshire issues that you're most eager to raise to the council?

I'd like to continue to push Yorkshire as a growing legal hub, especially given the benefits of hybrid working. We have some exceptional lawyers and firms across the region and all too often London is still prioritised. As I sit on the Yorkshire Union of Law Societies, I often hear of concerns brought to the table by representatives of local groups. Some of the main issues still seem to be around accessing the courts and the probate registry due to delays, legal aid rates and concerns about the changes to education and training.

I am mostly keen to ensure that whatever it is that our members in Yorkshire are concerned about is fed back to council, rather than a specific issue.

How can practitioners and firms in the region provide feedback to support you?

Simply engage with me, your other Council Members and your local groups. If we don't know what's impacting you, we can't help.

Moving onto your day job, tell us about child abuse compensation law right now—are there any practice updates that our readers should be aware of?

Child abuse litigation is still in a state of flux at the moment following the case of Poole Borough Council v GN and another [2019]. This case confirmed that local authorities do not automatically owe a common law duty of care to protect children from harm caused by third parties. Since this case was heard, there have been a number of cases that have attempted to test the boundaries. We're continuing to wade through but hopefully we will have further clarity about what circumstances a duty of care may be owed by a local authority later this year or early next, as a further case, HXA and another v Surrey County Council, is due to be heard in the Court of Appeal in October.

In May 2023 we also had the Government's response to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Within the response the Home Secretary made three key pledges.

Those being:

- 1) a redress scheme and therapeutic support;
- 2) mandatory reporting; and
- 3) the establishment of a Child Protection Ministerial Group.

A number of other recommendations were made, all of which will be consulted on.

Those that work in the realm of child protection and survivors rights feel that these recommendations don't go far enough and a number of child abuse lawyers, led by David Greenwood of Switalskis, are lobbying the Government to take action and ensure real, lasting changes are made that will better protect children and rights/support for those subjected to abuse.

On a more positive note, our field has been protected from the fixed recoverable costs regime, with the help of the Association of Child Abuse Lawyers, so some access to justice still remains.





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