



November 2023

# the Messenger

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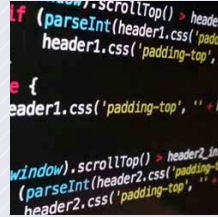
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## MLS Future Stars Programme

For the last eighteen months or so, the Future Stars Committee at Manchester Law Society has been working hard to build and launch our Future Stars Programme.



Matthew Taylor

There have been two elements to this work:

1. working with the Charity Commission to provide flexibility in our ability to use the monies held in the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation; and
2. finalising our materials and implementation plan for the Future Stars Programme itself.

On the monetary position, as we reported in the Messenger last year, the Stephen Heelis Prize for students under the age of 26 who were articulated in Manchester or Salford and who achieved the best examination results

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# From the President

**Nick Johnson, President**

It has been a busy month as President of Manchester Law Society with me attending a large number of engagements. This has given me the opportunity to promote the work of the Society and to maintain our high profile within the country as a whole and the legal sector. I am pleased to say that our Society is highly respected and seen as having an important voice.

From a ceremonial perspective my attendance at the opening ceremony of the Legal Year at Westminster Abbey was the highlight. This was a ceremony attended by all the senior judicial appointments within government along with the judges from the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and lower courts. There were also representatives from the European Court of Justice and other jurisdictions around the world. In addition, there were also representatives from the bar and other people of importance from the Commonwealth. Besides being a grand occasion, it demonstrated the importance of our judicial system within the world and that the work we do as being fundamental to maintaining a stable and just society. Being invited as your representative demonstrates the respect our Society holds.

Then within a few days I then attended our own opening of the Legal Year in Manchester which was again well attended by local dignitaries including our own Lord Mayor and those of the surrounding district. This was held at Manchester Cathedral and supported by the Judiciary, the bar and those in the legal profession. Again this event demonstrated the importance our profession plays within our society. While writing this column I would like to thank Christopher Tetlow former Judge in Manchester who has organised this well-run event over many years.

I also attended the inaugural speech at Chancery Lane of Nick Emmerson the new President of the Law Society. As a former President of Leeds Law Society who are members of the Joint V I thought it was important to show our support which I also did a week later when I attended a reception to celebrate his appointment in his hometown of Leeds. Nick made a confident speech and he clearly has a grasp of the issues and challenges facing the profession and I wish him well. He has indicated he will be visiting us in his year. At the event at Chancery Lane our own Jeff Lewis was there supporting the occasion in his role as a member of Council and I thank him for that.

There was then a meeting organised at Westminster by the Attorney General looking at what is being done nationally with Pro Bono. This meeting was chaired by the Solicitor General and I was accompanied by our own Sophie Cartwright KC. This was an opportunity to see what other groups across the country are doing with Pro Bono and how we can share in good practice. I never ceased to be surprised by the good work being done by our profession and the support many firms make. Here in Manchester we are trying to coordinate the various offerings so we can make the biggest impact where many people are not getting the legal representation they deserve. There are many vulnerable people whose legal rights are not being respected due to the lack of funding and so the work of this group is important.

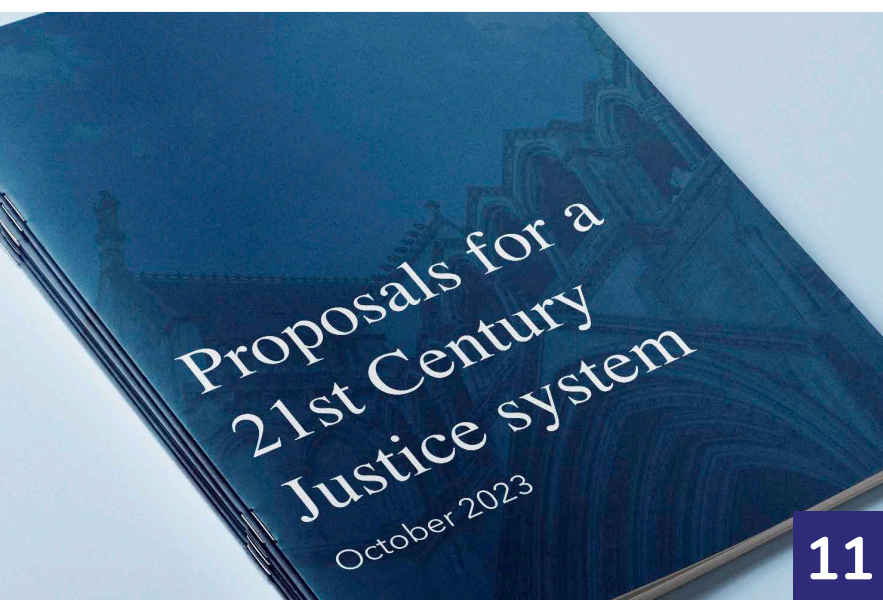
On a final note I would like to thank Fran and the team who are working on our new web site and app which will be announcing shortly as well as continuing to run our successful events such as the Family Law Conference which was well attended.



# the Messenger

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The Society welcomes articles and letters from members on any topic and items should be sent to [messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk](mailto:messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk)

The views and opinions expressed in The Messenger are those of the individual contributors and not of the Manchester Law Society

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Deadline for  
the Dec 2023  
edition of  
The Messenger

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# Upcoming Events

Wednesday, November 01, 2023

**Communications Committee Meeting**

Thursday, November 02, 2023

**Future Stars Committee Meeting**

Thursday, November 02, 2023

**Firewalk for We Love MCR Charity - come support the MLS Team!**

Tuesday, November 07, 2023

**MLS Council Meeting**

Wednesday, November 08, 2023

**Regulatory Conference**

Wednesday, November 08, 2023

**MLS Ambassadors Meeting**

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

**Webinar: Cybersecurity for Law Firms: Managing Risks & Busting Myths**

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

**Webinar: Personal Branding for Legal Client Acquisition: Strategies to Attract and Retain Clients**

Thursday, November 16, 2023

**Past Officers Dinner**

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

**MLS Officers Meeting**

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

**Legal Education Committee Meeting**

Friday, November 24, 2023

**Webinar: Managing your Stars, Steadies, and your Underperformers**

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

**Family Law Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

**Private Client Committee Meeting**

Thursday, November 30, 2023

**Leadership Conference**

Tuesday, December 05, 2023

**Council and AGM**

Wednesday, December 06, 2023

**Communications Committee Meeting**

Thursday, December 07, 2023

**President's Council Dinner**

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

**COLP, COFA & MLRO Forum Meeting**

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

**Employment Law Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

**Civil Litigation Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

**Webinar: The Art of Networking: Leveraging Personal Branding to Expand Your Legal Connections and Opportunities**

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

**MLS Officers Meeting**

Friday, December 22, 2023

**MLS Office Closes until 2 January 2024**

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Join LexRex Communications on **Tuesday 14 November** 10.30am - 12.30pm at Eversheds Sutherland, Manchester, for an exclusive Ask Chambers and Partners live event.

LexRex Communications invites you to an insight-packed Q&A session with Chambers and Partners' Principal Research Specialist, Lydia Burt.

Chambers and Partners has been one of the leading sources of legal market intelligence for over 30 years. Their 85 experienced researchers annually rank law firms and solicitors in the UK, providing a wealth of localised knowledge and trusted market insight.

### SUPPORTED BY

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**Tuesday 14  
November 2023****Eversheds Sutherland**  
6 Stanley Street  
Manchester M3 5GX**BOOK HERE****10.30 AM -  
12.30 PM**

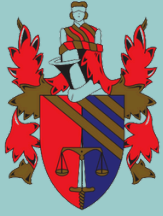
This relaxed event will be hosted by LexRex managing director and resident legal directories specialist, Victoria Moffatt and will see her interview Lydia, sharing a range of her own and the audience's questions about the Chambers and Partners UK Solicitors' Guide's research methodology and process.

Attendees will have opportunity to submit their questions to Lydia and Victoria in advance and during the event. The aim of the session is to answer your pressing queries about any aspect of the Chambers and Partner's research process, methodology, rankings and editorial calendar.

**[Spaces are limited so click here to register your place.](#)**

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# REGULATORY CONFERENCE

[For more  
information  
or to book  
your place  
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Join us for the 2023 Regulatory Conference.

The programme will feature:

- A practical update on the developments and risks in economic crime
- SRA: Anti-money laundering and sanctions supervision and useful tips on compliance
- Risk Management for Law Firms: Mitigating Potential Pitfalls
- Advice on adhering to the new regulations on harassment and bullying prevention
- Legal Ombudsman update - the impact of the new scheme rules
- A panel on cyber security

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**WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER**  
**09:00 TO 15:35**



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**09:00 Registration and refreshments**

**09:30 Opening remarks from the Chair**

Michelle Garlick, Compli at Weightmans

**09:35 Economic Crime – a practical update on developments and risks**

Bion Behdin, CRO and Co-Founder, First AML

Andrea Cohen, Compli at Weightmans

**10:15 Risk Management for Law Firms: Mitigating Potential Pitfalls**

- Update on Solicitors Accounts Rules
- What risk management is and why firms need to prioritise it
- Three step risk audit for your law firm
- Improving efficiency and data accuracy
- How to deal with reputational risks
- Steps to ensure compliance and resilience in your law firm

Alex Holt, Chief Revenue Officer, The Cashroom

**11:00 Refreshments and networking**

**11:30 SRA: Anti-money laundering and sanctions supervision and useful tips on compliance**

Mandeep Sandhu, Head of AML Proactive Supervision, SRA

**12:15 Legal Ombudsman: exploring the impact of the new scheme rules**

Jason Chapman, Legal Ombudsman

**13:00 Networking lunch**

**14:00 Cybersecurity panel**

Dan Giannasi, North West Cyber Resilience Centre

Kerrie Machin, Mitigo

**14:45 Adhering to the new regulations on harassment and bullying prevention**

Bryn Doyle, Partner and Head of Labour & Employment Practice (Manchester),

Squire Patton Boggs and Co Chair of MLS Employment Law Forum

**15:30 Closing comments**

**15:35 Post-conference Drinks Reception & Networking**



# For the collector, the curator and the simply curious

Manchester Art Fair is a uniquely diverse mix of acclaimed galleries and independent artists, with a rich programme of artist talks, panel discussions, performances and installations.

As the home of The Manchester Contemporary, a collegiate platform for young galleries, artist-led spaces, charitable organisations and partner institutions it

provides a critically engaged environment for artistic exploration and development.

Manchester Art Fair blurs the boundaries between the traditional and the contemporary, creating a friendly and unpretentious Northern art-buying experience. Immerse yourself in art on 18-19 November 2023 at Manchester Central. [Click here to get yourself a pair of weekend tickets](#)

M A N C H E S T E R | A R T F A I R 2 0 2 3

17/18/19 NOVEMBER  
MANCHESTER CENTRAL



# The Law Society Green Paper: Proposals for a 21st Century Justice System

The Law Society have a Green Paper entitled 'Proposals for a 21st Century Justice System', following the establishment of its 21st Century Justice project to develop some practical policy proposals that address some of the problems in the civil justice system affecting individuals on low incomes and small businesses. The five areas of focus identified are:

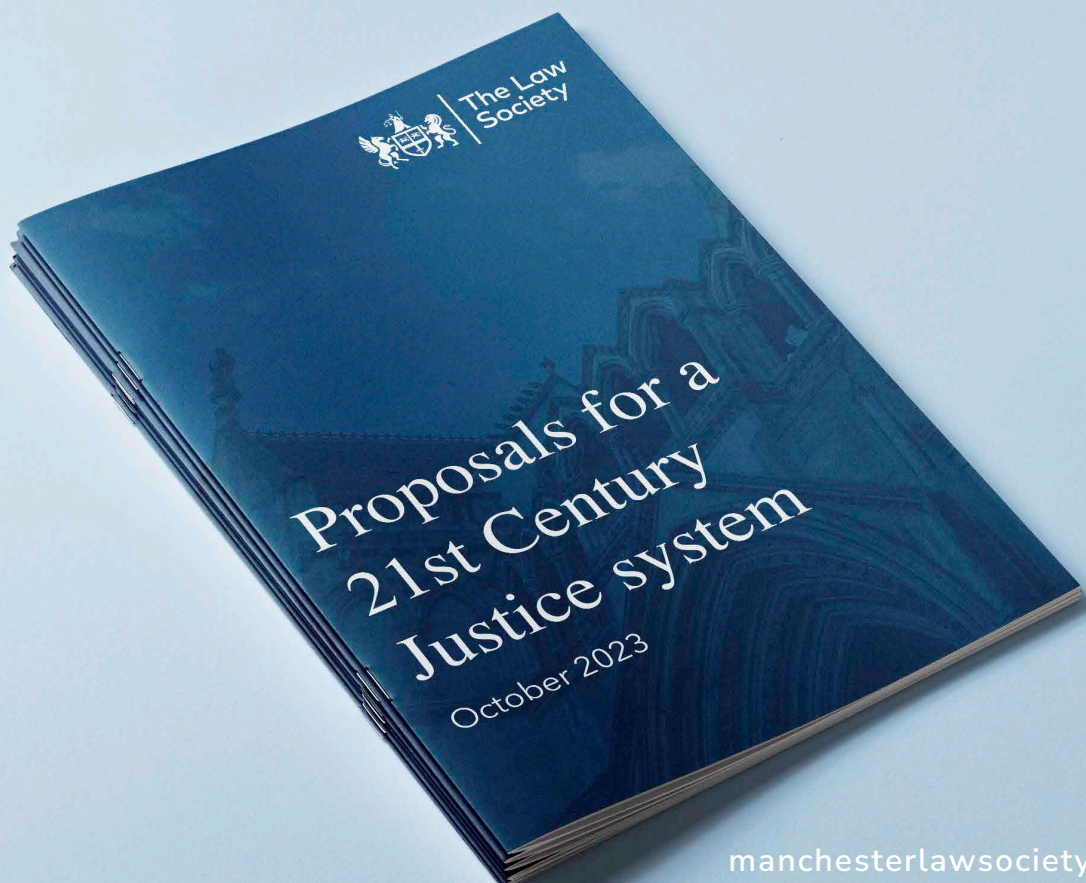
- Improving the Alternative/Non Court/ Integrated Dispute Resolution landscape
- Making legal services more affordable
- Reforming civil legal aid
- Making online court systems work better for end users
- Big data and access to justice

The paper can be found [here](#) .

Jon Hainey, the Chair of the Manchester Law Society Civil Litigation Committee, would be pleased to receive your comments and responses to the paper in time for the next meeting of the Society's Civil Litigation Committee, when our response will be being discussed.

If you are not a member of that committee, but would like to attend as a member of Manchester Law Society to give your feedback, please email [ChandreMay@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk](mailto:ChandreMay@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk)

If you are not a member of that committee, but would like to give your feedback as a member of Manchester Law Society please email your feedback, by 13th December, to [Jon.Hainey@TLTsolicitors.com](mailto:Jon.Hainey@TLTsolicitors.com) by 12th December, 2023.





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**PotentialUnearthed**  
Personal Development

# LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

This joint event from Manchester Law Society and Potential Unearthed will feature sessions on:

- Understanding Imposter Syndrome
- Five Insights to bring Sound Sleep and Boost Health, Happiness and Performance
- Psychological Safety and it's role in success
- A panel looking at the leadership journey of law firm leaders and future leaders
- Make Difficult Clients a Thing of The Past (with the help of your perfectly formed team)

Hosted by Mike Ode it will be a great day to support you in your leadership journey!



Thursday 30th November  
09:00 to 15:45



Manchester Marriott Victoria & Albert Hotel,  
Water St, Manchester M3 4JQ



MLS Members £95.00 + VAT (£114.00)  
Non Members £120.00 + VAT (£144.00)

**09:00 Registration**

**09:30 Welcome and introduction**

Mike Ode, Director, Potential Unearthed

**09:40 Understanding Imposter Syndrome**

- What imposter syndrome is and the most common symptoms.
- The cost of imposter syndrome in the legal sector.
- A simple, powerful practice to reduce imposter syndrome symptoms.

Sally Heady, QCH Therapist and Coach

**10:25 Introduction**

Mike Ode, Director, Potential Unearthed

**10:30 Five Insights to bring Sound Sleep and Boost Health, Happiness and Performance**

- Why I call Sleep the Cinderella of Good Health
- What gets in the way of you and sound sleep
- Five Insights to bring better sleep and boost health, happiness and productivity

Frances Taylor, The Sleep Fixer, Sleep Well Today

**11:30 Refreshments and networking**

**12:00 Panel: Law firm leaders and future leaders**

James Brown, Managing Partner, Hall Brown Family Law

Matt Flanagan-Roberts, Associate, Squire Patton Boggs

Tasnim Khalid, Managing Partner, Private Client Solicitors

Ruth Thomas, Associate Solicitor, Irwin Mitchell

**13:00 Networking lunch**

**14:00 Welcome back for the afternoon**

Mike Ode, Director, Potential Unearthed

**14:20 Psychological Safety – Are you in or out of the circle?**

- What's psychological safety all about and why you need it in your team
- What's going on upstairs? - Learn how your brain and your hormones impact on how you and your team feel and act as a result
- Learn about the 3 levels of Psychological Safety
- 12 questions to ask yourself to help you assess which levels you're on
- Who's part of your 'In Group' and who's on the outside?
- Learn how to create a psychologically safe culture by following 5 simple steps

Mike Ode, Director, Potential Unearthed

**14:55 Make Difficult Clients a Thing of The Past (with the help of your perfectly formed team)**

Ashley Boroda, Ashley Boroda Training and Development

**15:40 Chair's closing comments followed by refreshments**


Mike Ode, Director, Potential Unearthed

**BOOK NOW**

## Complimentary/alternative therapies and natural remedies for help relieving symptoms of menopause

In trying to deal with menopause symptoms they are struggling with, many women ask me what alternatives are available to them other than Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). In addition to implementing changes to their diet and or exercise routines, lots of women prefer to start by trying complimentary therapies or natural remedies to tackle more persistent symptoms.

It appears that a fear of the risks of HRT that was perpetuated by the Women's Health Initiative Study from 2001 within the media and medical profession still prevails. A lack of up-to-date knowledge and understanding of HRT within many GP practices often does little to reduce women's fear. HRT is therefore often seen as the last resort for many, as well as not being an option for women who have been advised against taking HRT for medical reasons.

The major menopause societies are broadly aligned in their views on complimentary therapies and natural remedies. There are research studies that show that such therapies and holistic remedies help with particular symptoms, but there is equally as much research that shows that such alternatives do not alleviate symptoms at all. Here in the UK, the National Institute for Care & Excellence ("NICE" - the government body tasked with providing national guidance on health and wellbeing) has carried out evidence-based reviews of the effectiveness of such complimentary and holistic treatments, versus placebo (i.e., no treatment) studies versus conventional forms of HRT. Additionally, the Australian Menopause Society has produced a "traffic light system" grading different complimentary medicines and treatments which is really helpful and [available here](#) .

There is also a widely held consensus view regarding the significant research evidence in support of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as a method for helping with menopause symptoms such as anxiety



Lisa Wright



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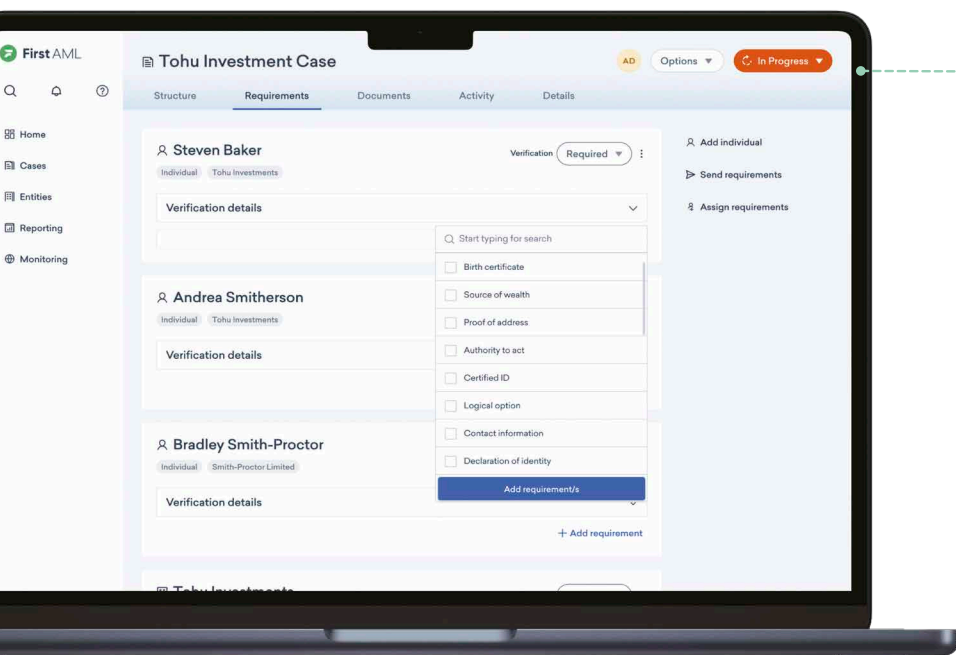
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and stress, depressed mood, hot flushes, and night sweats (vasomotor symptoms). CBT is a talking therapy that helps develop individuals develop coping skills to help manage problems by changing the way that they may be thinking or behaving. More information regarding CBT is available on the Women's Health Concern (patient website of the British Menopause Society) [here](#).

A primary consideration that you must give to any natural or herbal remedy you may be considering, is whether or not it may have a negative interaction with any pre-existing medical condition or any medication you may already be taking. If you are able to take natural remedies then it is also recommended that you should only purchase products with the Traditional Herbal Medicines (THR) logo on them. In displaying this logo, it means the product you are purchasing has been approved in terms of dosage amounts, has been manufactured using high-quality ingredients, and has appropriate product information supplied on or within its packaging.



The UK government provides a searchable list of all herbal medicines granted a traditional herbal registration which can be found [here](#) [↗](#).

There are also websites which provide more detailed information on the herbal remedy itself in terms of its origins, different brand or known names, and whether you can take with any pre-existing medical conditions. It is important to check this site before taking any herbal remedy for any health issue not just menopause symptoms.

[British Herbal Medicine Association](#) [↗](#)  
[US Government's Natural Library of Medicine](#) [↗](#)

“

I would advocate strongly that anything you consider trying, with regards to any aspect of your health always needs to be backed by evidence-based research.”

Unfortunately, as with many health issues if you search the internet for alternative menopause treatments you will return some interesting results including things such as magnets amongst others. All of which claim to be the definitive solution to all your symptoms. I would advocate strongly that anything you consider trying, with regards to any aspect of your health always needs to be backed by evidence-based research. Menopause is the big thing at the moment and it's a marketer's dream in terms of the size of the potential marketplace. When combined with the vulnerability that women feel at this stage in their life for a multitude of reasons, there's little wonder that there are some very expensive and ineffective products being targeted at menopausal women.

**(I will be covering HRT in detail in my article to be published next month.)**

*(\*For the purpose of this article where menopause is used it is defined as both the perimenopause and menopause phase of life.)*



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# Burnout

Most lawyers would say that they experience stress on a fairly regular basis. Our stress response is designed to be used in short bursts of up to 30-minutes, to escape a threat to survival.

A boost of cortisol, adrenalin and noradrenalin gets our heart racing and blood pumping enabling us to make a speedy getaway from a wild animal chasing us, for example. These days, a wild animal has been replaced by a bullying boss, a difficult client, a competitive colleague but our stress response is the same. And because these threats tend to be ongoing, many of us are existing in a near constant state of stress, which can lead to burnout.

Burnout is recognised by the World Health Organisation as an occupational phenomenon rather than a medical condition, and results from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.



## Recognising burnout

Those who are experiencing burn out are likely to feel:

- Low energy or exhaustion
- Increased mental distance from their job, or feelings of negativity or cynicism related to their job.
- Reduced professional efficacy.

Lawyers with burnout may feel angry or irritated by colleagues or feel misunderstood. They will feel under a lot of pressure to do well at work but will feel like they aren't really getting anywhere as they find it impossible to focus, feel overwhelmed by the amount of the work they have to do and procrastinate. They will often become forgetful – perhaps missing deadlines or meetings. Their judgement may be affected and they will often think of leaving their job or even the law profession entirely.

## I think I may have burnout, what can I do?

- Talk informally to someone you trust or contact LawCare on 0800 279 6888, [support@lawcare.org.uk](mailto:support@lawcare.org.uk) or via [www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk)
- Make an appointment to see your GP.
- Tell someone at work about what is happening, it doesn't have to be your line manager, someone in HR, another manager or Mental Health First Aider or equivalent can help.

- Take a break from work if you can – either take sick leave or book a few days off work as holiday.
- You may want to seek private counselling or your firm may have an Employee Assistance Programme or private healthcare you can access.
- Do one thing at a time; break complex tasks down into manageable chunks.
- Eat healthily, exercise, avoid alcohol and smoking.
- Work out what helps you stay calm – it might be walking, yoga, meditation, a bath, watching a movie – we all have different ways to unwind.

### Ways to avoid burnout

- Try to be objective about what is causing you stress. Keeping a stress diary over 2-3 weeks may help.
- Prioritise: don't over commit; learn to say no. Lose some things from your diary.
- Use your full holiday entitlement at work; take a lunch break and short breaks during the day.

**LawCare**

If you need emotional support call LawCare on 0800 279 6888, email [support@lawcare.org.uk](mailto:support@lawcare.org.uk) or visit [www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk) to access webchat and other resources.

## News from HQ

### Manchester Law Society Annual General Meeting

MLS Members, your attendance is requested at the Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Manchester Law Society.



The meeting will be held at the offices of Eversheds Sutherland, Two New Bailey, 6 Stanley St, Salford M3 5GX on Tuesday 5th December 2023 at 5.00pm PROMPT.

If you would like to attend, please email [ChandreMay@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk](mailto:ChandreMay@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk) for the joining instructions. To see the agenda please [click here](#).

Please note this event is only for Members of Manchester Law Society. However, under [S324 of the Companies Act 2006](#) you are able to send a proxy in your place if you are not able to attend.

# The importance of good mental health in the workplace



By Gareth Martin, criminal and regulatory solicitor, Olliers

**According to figures published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), some 914,000 workers were recorded as having suffered from work-related stress, depression or anxiety during 2021/22.**

Figures are on the rise, and a report by Deloitte estimated that the total annual cost of poor mental health to UK employers had increased by 25% since 2019, totalling up to £56 billion between 2020-2021.

The financial and human cost for those affected by work-related stress is not sustainable. Regardless of their nature, size or turnover, all businesses must not neglect their legal obligations to protect employees' mental wellbeing.

Here, Gareth Martin, criminal and regulatory solicitor from Olliers, marks National Stress Awareness Day (2 November) by sharing his insight into workplace stress and how to handle it.

## What is stress?

To accurately assess and prevent work-related stress and poor mental health, employers in the legal sector must understand precisely what it is.

Stress affects people in different ways, but generally, it tends to be prevalent when people feel unable to cope with work pressures. They may feel that they don't have the knowledge or skills to deliver a project, or they may be subject to tight deadlines, which cause or add to their worries.

Mental health relates to how people think, feel and behave, with anxiety and depression the most common mental health problems. Work

can cause such issues and also aggravate pre-existing conditions or their symptoms.

In terms of how stress and mental health problems may present in the workplace, you may notice individuals taking more time off, being withdrawn, suffering from mood swings or perhaps losing motivation and confidence. There may be increased arguments among teams, higher staff turnover, decreased performance and more grievances and complaints, amongst other issues.

## "It's good to talk."

It is widely acknowledged that a stigma is attached to mental health problems. Given the potentially far-reaching consequences, though, it is essential to talk about it, and this is an important starting point towards a healthy and happy workplace with fewer absences, increased morale and greater productivity.

Employers should encourage openness and honesty. Most importantly, they should listen to employees as without doing so, they'll never be able to understand, assess and deal with the risks within their firm.

Although issues will differ between firms and individuals, they should generally speak about the job's demands and establish how staff feel about what is expected of them and how the business supports them regarding workloads, training and wellbeing.

Importantly, where concerns are raised, employers should ask for the employees' views as to how best to resolve them. This approach will help address any immediate issues and ensure that employees feel listened to and encouraged to speak up in the future.

Stress, anxiety, and mental health issues will vary from person to person. It may well change over time, so it's also crucial that employers reflect on and review any measures they have put in place to protect employees from stress at work.

The conversations around mental health and wellbeing should not be one-off 'tick box' exercises. They should be regular and meaningful, and most importantly, they should put people at ease so that concerns can be addressed effectively and with compassion in case someone is worried about their stress levels or mental wellbeing.

### The approach to dealing with concerns

As with all aspects of health and safety, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to managing issues around mental health and stress. How this is achieved will inevitably be influenced by factors such as the nature of the business, the number of employees and the resources available.

However, some common themes may include how people work and what working practices exist. Legal employers should review records about why former employees left and talk to staff, as this will also help identify less obvious risks and even how to deal with them.

When it comes to assessing the level of risk, in addition to considering who might be vulnerable and how, they should also think about what they're already doing to control the risk and what further action needs to be taken, including by whom and by when.

Any ongoing risks must be controlled, and as with any other area of health and safety, employers must do everything reasonably practicable to protect people from harm. This essentially means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control it, considering the time, money and effort involved.

You should keep a record of the potential harms, risks and controls you put in place and keep them under regular review.

In short, you should:

- **Consider** - identify the risks and potential harm
- **Act**- take steps to prevent or reduce those risks
- **Review** - the effectiveness of those steps and adjust as necessary (ensuring employees are aware of any changes).

Law can be a very intense line of work, and at Olliers, we strive for a happy and healthy working environment through several initiatives, including:

- Good employee relations
- Regular review of training needs – the firm is committed to allowing every staff member to fulfil their potential.
- Open door policy
- Equal opportunities
- Anti-discrimination
- Flexible working patterns.

We also organise regular wellness events to give the team some vital time 'away from the law'. Most of these occur during working hours, with some events at the weekends. We try to ensure a mix of events to cater for all ages and interests, including hiking, the arts, sporting activities, gardening and much more.

Many of the activities that take place in school holidays involve family members, as do the weekend sessions. We have also specifically organised events to cater to different demographics within the workforce who may have different needs, for example, mobility issues.

As we approach 2024, I'd urge all firms to prioritise workplace wellbeing to minimise work-related stress. The power to transform culture, boost productivity and enhance professional relationships – all while meeting legal obligations as an employer – cannot be ignored.

## Employee Engagement – Don't be like Fred

Meet Fred the Foreman. It's 1980 and Fred's out of control moustache and curly perm are slowly taking over his whole face. He stands in his brown camel coat with clip board in hand watching as the staff slowly clock in for another riveting day at the jam factory. He watches them as they unenthusiastically put lid after lid on pots of sticky jam.

Fred shouts at them if they go too slow or if they are doing it wrong. He never pats them on the back for doing well. The day ends and he watches as they rip off their hair nets and run to the door to clock off again. Fred comments to his peers that this is the quickest they've moved all day.

Fast forward 40+ years and some managers are sadly still managing in this way. The perms have probably made way for a fancy flick, the moustaches may have turned into carefully preened beards and the brown coats have been replaced with business suits, but management styles in some cases haven't moved on at all. I meet managers all time who micro-manage and display zero trust in their people. What they fail to realise of course is that there is an undercurrent of disengagement bubbling away.

These types of managers will no doubt sit in their management meetings chatting about why their teams aren't performing, why they are disengaged, why no one looks interested. They don't realise that they are the reason why people feel the way they do.

If I met a manager like Fred in his Monday morning meeting, I'd love to ask him:

- Do you empower your team? In what ways? Do you hand over responsibility and accountability for projects and targets?



Mike Ode

- Do you provide regular and timely feedback to help reinforce desired behaviours and improved performance?
- Do you recognise great team performance and encourage the sharing of best practice?
- Do you instil a healthy, positive and transparent culture? A culture where employees feel happy to work in?
- Do you trust your employees? Do they trust you?

Chances are, Fred would answer no to all the questions above.

What about you? How would you answer those questions? Hopefully this has given you some food for thought.

Have you got a team of highflyers? Have you got some steadies? Or maybe you've got a few underperformers? If that's a yes, why not join us on the 24th November our free webinar, Proactively Managing your Stars, Steadies and Underperformers.

If you want a chat about how we can help your management/leadership skills, contact Mike on [mike@potentialunearthed.co.uk](mailto:mike@potentialunearthed.co.uk)  
 Tel 07825301660



# Managing your Stars, Steadies, & Underperformers

 FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER  
13:00 TO 13:45

 ONLINE VIA TEAMS

Managing a successful team can bring many rewards; however, managing the stars, steadies and underperformers who sit within your teams can be fraught with difficulty if you take your eye off the ball.

In this webinar, Mike Ode from Potential Unearthed tackles how to manage these people head on. Mike will introduce you to practical methods and techniques that will ensure you maximise the potential of your team.



## What will we cover?

- Defining what we mean by Stars, Steadies and Underperformers
- Identify the challenges that managers face in managing each category
- Who has the Skill v Will? Assess your own team against a skill/will matrix
- Mind the gap – Identifying and proactively managing the 5 gaps in underperformance
- Underperformance: are you to blame? An introduction to the CORE model to highlight the importance of trust.

[BOOK HERE](#)

# Regulation Update & News

By Andrea Cohen, Compli, Weightmans



As the nights draw in, we provide a short overview of what has been happening in the world of risk and compliance over the past month and look ahead to what's in store.

## AML

AML made the headlines (again) in October, with the SRA publishing its [annual AML report](#) on 13 October, which outlines the enforcement action undertaken during the year, as well as a look at the continuing risks such as the expansion of the sanctions regime, changes in the high risk third countries list, and vendor fraud in conveyancing.

The SRA carried out 177 proactive inspections and 73 desk-based review and only 43 firms were compliant, 115 partially compliant with enforcement action being taken against 47 firms and individuals. It submitted 24 suspicious activity reports to the NCA, relating to assets of more than £75m.

The annual report was swiftly followed on 18 October with the release of the following:

- [A thematic report on client and matter risk assessments](#)
- [An AML warning notice](#) in the wake of findings of firm non-compliance in relation to client/matter risk assessments – in 2022/23 the SRA found 51% of client/matter risk assessments ineffective
- [A client and matter risk template](#) to support firms in this regard, but with the warning that if you use the template, it should be adapted to suit your firm.

We strongly recommend reading the report and, if you have not done so recently (or at all), review your policies, controls, and procedures to check they are up to date, relevant to the work you undertake and reflect the guidance, including LSAG guidance, warning notices and publications; review your training, and carry out an independent AML audit.

## SRA COLP & COFA conference

As you would expect from the above, AML was high on the agenda at the SRA annual COLP & COFA conference in Birmingham on Wednesday 18 October. Paul Philip, Chief Executive, said that the SRA would be 'coming down harder' on firms who are not complying with AML regulations and would be consulting next year on fixed financial penalties for AML failings, including not carrying out client/matter risk assessments, with fines higher than those presently introduced last year. These fines will be in addition to the unlimited fines the SRA will be able to impose in relation to financial crime following the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill coming into force.

The SRA has commenced sanctions inspections at firms, so now is the time to put processes in place, if you haven't already done so. The foreword to the AML annual report confirms the SRA will increase its work in this area, including proactive sanctions inspections and desk-





based reviews, and where it finds sanctions breaches it will take enforcement action.

Also of note was recognition that some investigations are taking longer than they should and additional case workers have been employed. The SRA also want to be able to penalise partners who have allowed misconduct to happen, as well as the individuals who carried it out.

### **Fixed recoverable costs and client costs information**

Solicitors advising on civil litigation claims will be aware that the fixed recoverable costs (FRC) regime was extended at the start of October. The government has also confirmed that FRCs will be introduced for lower damages clinical negligence claims in April 2024. [See the response here](#) .

In response, the SRA has published [an article](#) as a reminder of what should be included in costs information to clients, for example information about the circumstances in which clients might be responsible for any shortfall between costs incurred and costs recovered from the other side, and information about the circumstances in which a client might be responsible for the other side's costs.

Dissatisfaction about costs information can result in complaints from clients, so providing clear costs information can serve to reduce the likelihood of client dissatisfaction and ultimately of complaints being made.

### **Warning notice issued to providers of immigration services**

The SRA has issued a warning notice to all law firms, solicitors, and other staff providing immigration services to clients. It has seen examples of and reports in the press that solicitors may be advising clients or prospective clients to falsify or fabricate information which is then used to support applications for asylum or leave to remain. The SRA has also identified risks around poorly drafted applications or advising clients to pursue totally without merit appeals of Home Office decisions.

Failure to have proper regard to the warning notice will likely result in disciplinary action, the SRA warns.

### **CILEX Regulation Limited publishes response to CILEX consultation on regulatory transfer to SRA**

CILEX Regulation Limited (CRL) has [published its response](#) to CILEX's proposal to redelegate the provision of its regulation to the SRA, which – among other things – criticises a lack of information on the part of CILEX in relation to the financial implications of the proposed switch and raises concerns in relation to whether “appropriate governance structures” would be created, and the possibility that CILEX may choose to disregard the views of its members in deciding whether to proceed. In CRL's June consultation, which received over 1,000 responses, two thirds of respondents confirmed that regulatory change was not a priority for them, and three quarters stated a preference to continue with a specialist regulator.

**Continued on page 26**



The response concluded by urging CILEX members to engage with both the CILEX and SRA consultations on the matter. As a reminder, the CILEX consultation is open until 5 November, and the SRA consultation closes on 22 November.

### New practice notes and guidance

#### Law Society practice notes

The Law Society has published three new practice notes since our last update:

- [Social media](#)
- [Access and disclosure of an incapacitated person's Will](#)
- [Lasting powers of attorney](#)

#### SRA guidance

In addition to the above, the SRA has [published new guidance on the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002](#) (PoCA 2002). This guidance is pertinent to all SRA-regulated firms and those working within them, solicitors (including in-house solicitors), registered European lawyers and registered foreign lawyers. The guidance outlines the principal offences, and details how to make a suspicious activity report.

The SRA notes that firms which do not carry out work in the scope of the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 do not need to appoint an MLRO, but those firms are nevertheless expected to have 'suitably robust systems and controls in place to detect and prevent money laundering'. It therefore strongly recommends that all firms appoint an MLRO (and a deputy MLRO) to oversee the firm's compliance and ensure that it does not commit any PoCA offences.

### Disciplinary decisions:

#### Solicitor struck off for child sex offences

A solicitor has been struck off and ordered to pay costs of £4,002 after he was convicted of three offences of making indecent photographs of children, and the offences of arranging the commission of a child sex offence and facilitating the commission of a child sex offence.

#### Solicitor struck off for misappropriating estate monies

A solicitor has been struck off for using cheques to pay £200,000 of estate monies from two separate matters into his own accounts and for overcharging a combined total of almost £200,000 across six matters. He admitted all the allegations and was ordered to pay costs of £1,000.

#### Three-month suspension for conducting reserved legal activity when not permitted to do so

A solicitor has received a three-month suspension and was ordered to pay costs of £16,000 for making an application for probate for reward when not permitted to do so. She also admitted to practicing as a solicitor when not authorised, and to failing to pay client money promptly into an approved and authorised client account.

#### Two solicitors fined for failing in their duties under a lasting power of attorney

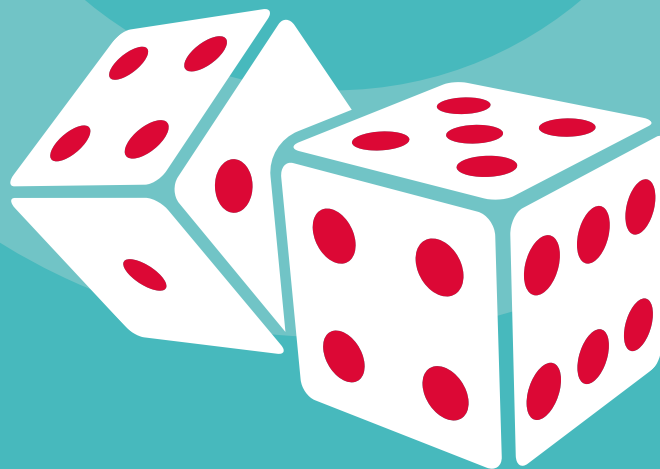
The two solicitors were each fined £11,250 by the SRA for: failing to ensure the conditions of a home insurance policy were met; using the donor's funds to pay for the cost of repair work in the absence of insurance cover due to the non-compliance



**Still think  
cyber risk management is  
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are this high, should you  
be gambling?**

**Talk to the experts.**





instead of advising their client about the potential negligence; and continuing to act for the donor for over two years despite their own interest conflict. They were also ordered to pay the cost of the SRA's investigation to the sum of £600.

### **Solicitor fined for making "derogatory" remarks in emails**

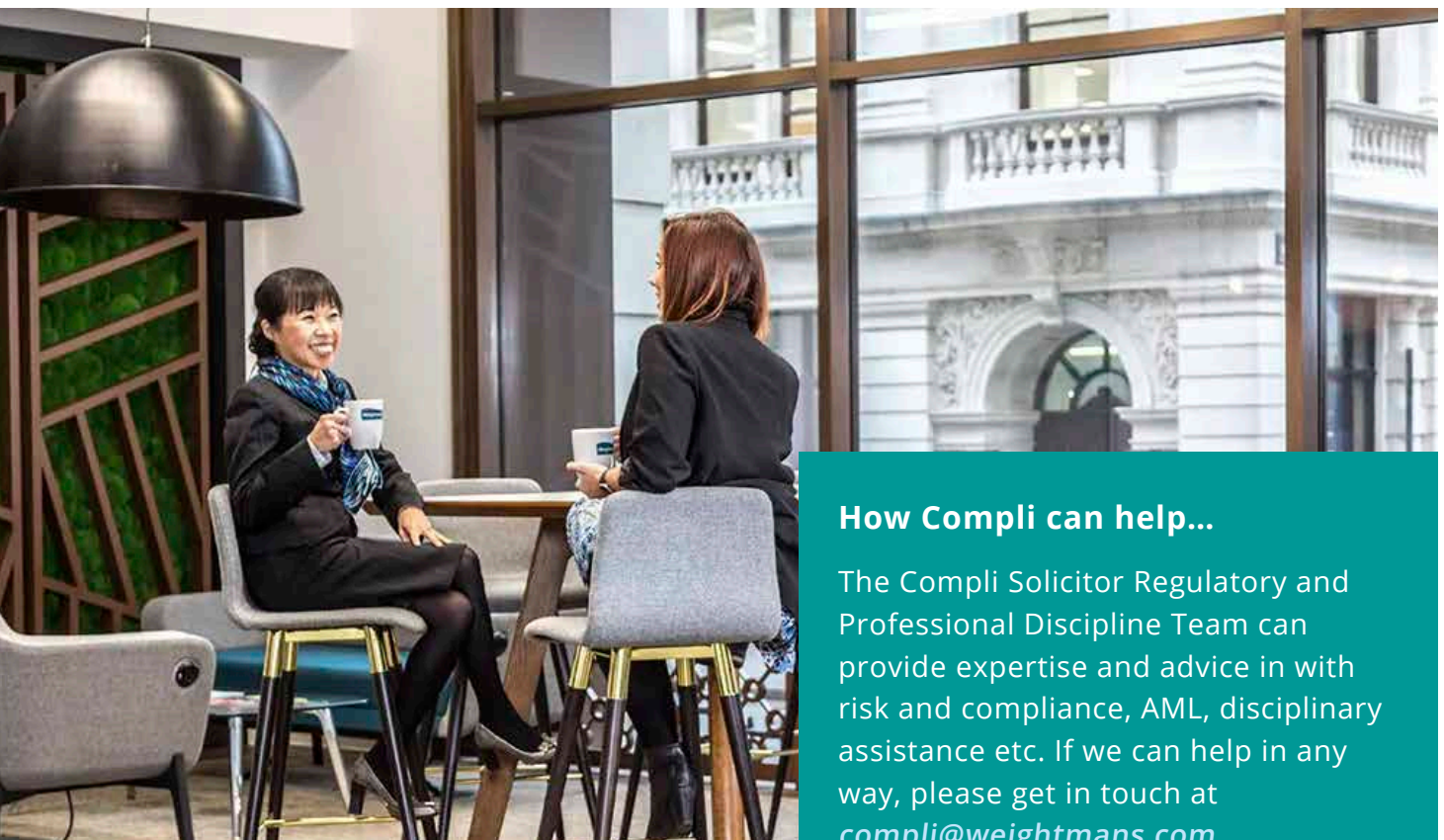
A solicitor was fined £7,500 for making "inappropriate, derogatory, puerile and inflammatory remarks" in emails sent to another solicitor, and for contacting a school attended by children of a defendant in possession proceedings where he represented the landlord. He was ordered to pay costs of £600.

### **Firm fined after building up £105k in residual client balances**

A law firm has been fined and ordered to pay costs of £600 by the SRA for having

inadequate procedures to deal with residual client balances on inactive or closed matters and for using its client account as a banking facility for a decade by retaining rent deposits in relation to the firm's offices when it no longer carried out legal services connected to them. The firm had self-reported and had been able to return the client funds with interest. The mitigation reduced the indicated fine of £16,607.60, based on the firm's turnover, to £14,116.46.

Want to hear more on compliance and regulation? Why not join us for the [MLS Regulatory Conference](#) on 8th November? We will be looking at economic crime, cybersecurity, exploring upcoming risks to law firms as well as hearing from the SRA on AML and the Legal Ombudsman on the impact of their new rules. [Find out more here!](#)



### **How Compli can help...**

The Compli Solicitor Regulatory and Professional Discipline Team can provide expertise and advice in with risk and compliance, AML, disciplinary assistance etc. If we can help in any way, please get in touch at [compli@weightmans.com](mailto:compli@weightmans.com).

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From page 1

## MLS Future Stars Programme (continued)



was launched in November 1877. Along with other philanthropic foundations set out by other local solicitors over the years, the monies in that fund were eventually brought into the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation when it was created in September 1971.

Over the last 50 years, both the profession and society have moved on considerably. As such, the scheme rules for the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation were no longer consistent with modern day routes into the profession and so were overly restrictive on our ability to utilise the funds at our disposal. However, we are pleased to now announce that, after a lot of work, the Charity Commission has recently approved our resolution to amend those scheme rules and so we now have the ability to support the solicitors and barristers of the future across the region.

As to the **Future Stars Programme** itself, we originally hoped to launch it at the start of 2023. However, given challenges with the funding position and also recognising the need to be able to ensure that our messaging

got to all of the right potential candidates across the region, we have taken time to build up our communication materials and our network across the region to delivery our message. We are delighted to say that this work is now nearly complete, such that we will be formally launching the **Future Stars Programme** very shortly.

In our view, it is a critical part of the profession's responsibility to ensure that it provides opportunities to people from all parts of society to enter the profession and to support the delivery of legal services to society as a whole. With this in mind, true to Manchester Law Society's founding roots, the **Future Stars Programme** is designed to support either people from the Manchester and Salford region or people wanting to qualify into the profession in order to work in Manchester or Salford – whether that be as a solicitor or a barrister.

The **Future Stars Programme** will be a network of aspiring individuals working their way towards qualifying as a solicitor or barrister. We will invite at least 10 people to join each year and they will remain part of the scheme until qualification. The **Future Stars Programme** will enable participants to network with each other and with law firms/barrister chambers across the region; obtain mentoring and coaching; and receive additional practical support (eg job interview training).

Separately, utilising the funds in the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation, those who are admitted to the Future Stars Programme will be entitled to apply for financial support which can be simply to help support an individual

“

We would ask that everyone associated with Manchester Law Society consider how they could support the Future Stars Programme as any support, no matter how much or how little, will make a difference

financially or to help directly with their education/qualification – for example, it could include money to purchase a suit for an interview, a contribution to a laptop or money for text books.

The **Future Stars Programme** is being led by Matt Taylor, who commented that:

*“In many ways, it is harder than ever before for people to gain access into the legal profession and there is a very real risk that, without proactive help and support, we will not attract a diverse talent base from all parts of society into the profession in order to be the lawyers of the future.*

*I’m therefore delighted that we will shortly be able to launch the Future Stars Programme which has been carefully designed to provide individuals with more opportunities and more access to the profession, together with financial support where appropriate.*

*Manchester Law Society has an unrivalled network within the region which it can rely upon in order to unlock opportunities and to help grow and develop the local profession. I urge everyone to get involved wherever they can to provide support as collectively we will make a huge difference.”*

This is therefore a call to arms. We would ask that everyone associated with Manchester Law Society consider how they could support



the **Future Stars Programme** as any support, no matter how much or how little, will make a difference. There is no fixed way in which that support can be provided and we would welcome any suggestions or offers people have. For law firms/barristers chambers, that support could be practical in the provision of space for meetings or access to some of your people/events; alternatively, it could be financial with modest contributions to the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation. For individuals, it could involve offering a few hours a year to mentor or coach an individual through the early stages of their career, or to speak at an event, or just to write short practical articles about your own route into the profession.

**Please do get in touch about how you can support the Future Stars Programme. Together we can make a real difference.**



# How has web design and development changed since 2015?

2015 – the year that Clarkson lost his Top Gear job, the Conservatives came into power and Sepp Blatter's downfall at FIFA began. It's also the year Marty McFly goes to in Back to the Future II – which caused the team at Legmark to do a little diving about in the internet history archives to see what various law firm websites looked like 8 years ago.

Law firms are notorious for being 'traditional' and have often been accused of neglecting our digital future in favour of other avenues of marketing and business development. At Legmark, we have over 3,200 law firm websites on our digital dashboard, being scanned weekly and it's clear that there are many firms who are yet to fully embrace the opportunities that are brought about by a solid web presence.

The good news is that during this exercise we ran the websites of the Manchester Law Society members through the Internet Archive's Way Back Machine and there's been a marked improvement in both website design and general online presence since 2015\*. One really interesting thing to see is how many websites 8 years ago looked so similar, and how some firms were really in their website infancy.

\*Some websites didn't quite have the data for 2015 but we went back to the date as close as we could.

Take a quick walk down memory lane [here](#) ↗ .

Digital marketing changes at great speed, and that's clear to see from how far law firm websites have come since 2015 with the main difference being how much stock

```
if ($(window).scrollTop() > header1_initialDistance) {  
  if (parseInt(header1.css('padding-top'), 10) == header1_initialDistance) {  
    header1.css('padding-top', '' + $(window).scrollTop() - header1_initialDistance);  
  }  
} else {  
  header1.css('padding-top', '' + header1_initialPadding + 'px');  
}  
  
if ($(window).scrollTop() > header2_initialDistance) {  
  if (parseInt(header2.css('padding-top'), 10) == header2_initialDistance) {  
    header2.css('padding-top', '' + $(window).scrollTop() - header2_initialDistance);  
  }  
}
```



firms are now putting in their website, and how much time and financial investment is clearly going in.

So here are ten ways we've noticed website design and development has changed since 2015:

1. **Mobile-First Design:** As mobile device usage has skyrocketed, the importance of mobile-first design has grown. This means designing websites with mobile devices in mind before desktop. Google's emphasis on mobile-friendliness as a ranking factor further cemented this trend.
2. **Responsive Design:** Linked closely with mobile-first design, responsive design ensures that websites automatically adjust their layout based on the screen size and device.
3. **Flat Design & Material Design:** Flat design emphasises minimalism, using simple elements, bright colours, and two-dimensional illustrations. Google's Material Design introduced depth with subtle shadows and card-like layouts, combining the principles of flat design with more depth and dimension.
4. **Simplified coding and development frameworks:** Like everything, the way we code has become more streamlined and there are a number of powerful content management systems (Wordpress, Umbraco etc) on which developers can create great websites.
5. **API-Driven Development:** Websites have become more interactive and dynamic, often pulling in data from various sources using APIs.
6. **Greater Attention to User Experience (UX):** User-centered design, faster load times, accessible design for all users, and intuitive navigation have become paramount.
7. **SEO and Core Web Vitals:** As search engines have become more sophisticated, so have the requirements for websites. Google's Core Web Vitals, introduced around 2020, emphasise user experience metrics like loading performance, interactivity, and visual stability.
8. **Voice Search Optimisation:** As devices with voice recognition capabilities (like Amazon Echo and Google Home) became popular, websites began optimising for voice searches.
9. **Chatbots and AI:** Websites have integrated chatbots powered by artificial intelligence to enhance customer service and engagement.
10. **Increased Security Concerns:** With a rise in cyber threats, there has been a push for HTTPS adoption, stricter security protocols, and practices like Content Security Policy (CSP). (Although we know nearly 10% of law firm websites don't even have SSL...!)

These trends reflect broader changes in technology, user behaviour, and industry standards. Web design and development will continue to evolve as new technologies emerge and user expectations change and we're doing what we can to make sure law firms are at the forefront and don't get left behind.

Want to know more about your firm's website performance? The Legmark Dashboard provides all your performance data in one place and allows you to see how you stack up against the competition, too. Sign up for free [here](#) ↗.



## Bexley Beaumont Progress honoured with Legal Awards Shortlist hat-trick

The significant continued progress made by [Bexley Beaumont](#) has seen it recognised by another of the country's most prestigious legal awards.

Bespoke practice Bexley Beaumont is among 10 practices to make the shortlist in the Alternative Legal Service Provider of the Year category at the British Legal Awards.

In doing so, it has completed something of a rare hat-trick.

The firm was Bexley Beaumont was chosen in March as the Boutique Law Firm of the Year in the inaugural Northern Powerhouse Awards organised by Legal 500.

The following month, it was shortlisted for the Law Company of the Year category of The Lawyer Awards - a competition celebrating "the UK's legal elite".

Chief Executive Karen Bexley said that this latest honour underlined the swift impact which the firm had generated since opening its doors in 2020.

"We are all tremendously excited because the hard work invested by everyone involved with Bexley Beaumont has once more caught the attention of competition judges.

"This category in particular highlights the degree to which we have been doing



something very different and very beneficial both for lawyers and clients.

“Our desire to innovate and change the fee share model for the better - in part, by focusing on recruiting only the most capable legal performers - has delivered steadily better results since we launched.

“That has enabled us to attract superbly talented individuals from right across the country and grow our operations in Manchester and London.

“The quality of the work which is being done is leading to yet more high calibre people choosing to join us and more private and corporate clients opting to switch from longer established firms to be represented by our lawyers.

“It is amazing to think that we have made such advances so relatively soon after launching but is testament to the vision and the effort of fee earners and support staff alike.”

This is the first year that the British Legal Awards have included an Alternative Legal Service Provider category.

All 10 firms making the shortlist have convinced judges that they are “leaders” and have made “significant progress” over the last year or so.

As well as picking up the Boutique Law Firm of the Year title in the inaugural Northern Powerhouse Awards, Ms Bexley and her co-founder, Anna Beaumont, were also nominated in the Management Partner of the Year category of the competition.

Judges described how Bexley Beaumont had “made waves with fast growth, a progressive culture and an innovative fee-sharing model”.

“

Our desire to innovate and change the fee share model for the better - in part, by focusing on recruiting only the most capable legal performers - has delivered steadily better results since we launched.”

In addition to awards recognition, Bexley Beaumont has strengthened its ranks of top tier lawyers across a breadth of specialisms.

Maurice Dwyer - one of the UK’s most experienced private equity partners - became the sixteenth Partner appointed by the firm in the space of the last 12 months when he joined in September.

Bexley Beaumont currently has 53 Partners and four Associate Solicitors and maintains offices in the City of London and the heart of Manchester’s business district.

The firm handles work on behalf of clients in a variety of sectors, including retail, leisure and hospitality, pharmaceuticals, logistics, real estate and the public sector.

Bexley Beaumont has also been named Beaumont as one of the top 10 Alternative Law Firms following independent research conducted by the legal research consultancy, Codex Edge.

The Codex research covered more than 2,200 ALFs across the UK and examined the impact generated by ALFs in the decade since the Solicitors Regulation Authority first licensed Alternative Business Structures.

## Burton Copeland kick off the fundraising for the 2023/24 chosen charities

**Burton Copeland** [↗](#) has always been involved in fundraising for both local, national, and international charities which have been close to their hearts. This year they decided to give staff the opportunity to nominate charities and then to all vote for their favourites. In total 12 charities were nominated but when the nominations were delivered to staff and the votes were counted there were two clear winners.

Practice Director Deborah Jackson said, "It was intended that the one with the top number of votes would win, but these two charities came out on top and well ahead of the rest, so we decided to choose them both".



Partner Nick Terry mid-walk donning his Scottish attire

**Blood Cancer UK** - Is a charity which is dedicated to transform the lives of those who have been diagnosed with all types of blood cancer including leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma. It does this through research into causes and treatment as well as offering a huge amount of support through their specialist support teams and connecting individuals to others.

**42nd Street** - is a local Manchester based charity and helps young people, aged 11-25 who are struggling with their mental health or emotional wellbeing. They offer

## Hugh James marks first anniversary of its collaboration with PRD with 'brand' new name

Hugh James is pleased to announce that the firm's Manchester office, which is currently branded as Potter Rees Dolan following an acquisition in October 2022, will take on the Hugh James brand, effective from 1 December. The milestone marks one year since the two firms

joined forces, strengthening their serious injury and clinical negligence practice, and expanding the firm's presence in the Northwest.

From December, the "Hugh James" name replaces "PRD - a Hugh James Business", as the Manchester practice was known in the first twelve months of the partnership. In that time, the firm has increased the number of partners from nine to 12, taking the total number of staff to 76, from 65.

The news comes as their combined strengths are recognised by the legal directories. Hugh James is now ranked Band 1 for the Northwest in Chambers and Partners, building on the strong reputation law firm



L-R – Alun Jones - Hugh Potter - Helen Dolan - Stephen Webber



free confidential support and access to professional charity workers, counsellors and therapists who are able to provide a range of therapies and treatments including counselling, cognitive behavioural therapies, psychosocial support and group therapeutic work.

The first event was a sponsored walk starting in Beetham in Lancashire but crossing over the border into Cumbria during the 7 miles hike. The walk takes in some fabulous views of views of Arnside, Silverdale and Morecombe Bay in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the border between Lancashire and Cumbria.

Staff sponsored walkers and in particular partner Nick Terry who completed the walk on his birthday and braved the torrential rain and cold weather in Scottish attire.

Nick said, "In these days of remote working and video conferences there is a

PRD has built in the region. [The full-service law firm retains its strong standing](#) , with 29 departments ranked across the main directory and High Net Worth edition and 61 ranked lawyers at Hugh James' headquarters in Cardiff and UK offices.

[Announced 12 months ago](#) , PRD identified Hugh James as the ideal successor-firm which would present its Manchester offices as part of a national practice. Hugh Potter and Helen Dolan have continued to lead and manage the office in Manchester, working with the wider Hugh James management team, to ensure a smooth transition and seamless client service.

As the countdown continues to 1 December, clients in the Northwest can expect a seamless transition as the rebrand takes effect. With shared values, the firm will continue to uphold the highest standards of



Burton Copeland staff about to embark on their sponsored walk

certain amount of detachment from the important face to face interaction with work colleagues. The walk addressed that balance, it was great to catch up and enjoy some friendly banter, most of which, I should say, was aimed at me. I am really looking forward to the next one".

So far the walk has raised several hundred pounds for the two chosen charities and is rising. If you would like to donate email [rebeccalloyd@burtoncopeland.com](mailto:rebeccalloyd@burtoncopeland.com)

professionalism and excellent client service that both brands are known for – the only thing that will change, is the name.

Speaking of the new chapter, Managing Partner at Hugh James, Alun Jones commented: "When Hugh James established its presence in Manchester one year ago, we did so in collaboration with PRD under a hybrid brand to honour the excellent reputation Hugh and Helen had built in the North. Since then, our successful partnership approach has delivered great results, enhanced the services we provide our clients, and seen us grow and strengthen the reputation of our legal teams. On the first anniversary of our partnership, we are pleased to start the countdown to bring the whole team together as part of the Hugh James brand and are confident that our clients and partners will be as reassured as we are come 1st December."



John Wood

## TLT commits to greater diversity in early careers

**TLT** has announced a new ethnic diversity target designed to eliminate barriers to entry into the legal profession for aspiring ethnic minority lawyers and to improve diversity.

This Black History Month 2023, the firm has set a target of 35% ethnic minority representation across its early career roles (trainees and apprentices) to be achieved by October 2030 – driving an increase in ethnic minority representation in its early careers roles from one in five to one in three.

The new target forms part of our apprenticeship strategy, which aims to open the legal sector to different backgrounds and offer future talent an alternative pathway other than to university. With our innovative legal apprenticeships, TLT offers both a Legal Solicitor Apprenticeship, aimed at ambitious and motivated employees, school leavers or career changers and a Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeship, aimed at internal applicants who have a degree.

These fresh ambitions are being spearheaded by a number of early careers initiatives, including a recent investment to grow TLT's early careers team, ensuring the firm has the internal resource to deliver its plans; and an ongoing commitment to our partnerships with Rare, Bright Network, Aspiring Solicitors and Social Mobility Business Partnership (SMBP).

Alongside the design of a bespoke Solicitor Qualification Exam (SQE) preparation programme, launched in partnership with BPP University Law School in 2022, TLT has designed a new virtual work experience programme for school leavers launching in

the autumn, to ensure access is widened to a larger demographic and audience.

TLT's commitment to increasing ethnic minority representation was developed as a supporting long-term action plan to help close its ethnicity pay gap and is supported by further measures throughout the employee lifecycle, which will focus on promotion and attrition.

Progress against these targets and comprehensive measures will be shared with the firm's ethnic diversity network – one of TLT's core affinity networks, which empowers and supports ethnically diverse colleagues to educate others on the challenges faced by ethnically diverse individuals, informs policy and approach and enables TLT to grow and maintain a representative and equitable workforce.

The new early career goals will be supported by robust investment from the firm both in terms of resource, finance and targeted initiatives, all of which are key to delivery. These will include the creation of new advisory roles and additional senior and strategic roles within the business, and a new outreach programme aimed at schools and relevant partnerships.

Kanika Kitchlu-Connolly, partner at TLT and sponsor of the firm's ethnic diversity network commented: "I am really pleased to see the firm take this initial step towards increasing diversity throughout our business and committing to ensuring we have the resource to get us there."

John Wood, managing partner at TLT said: "We have a responsibility as an organisation to look at how we can open up the legal



sector and give people from different backgrounds the opportunity to consider a career in law. We are committed to improving diversity at TLT by investing in our early careers, doubling our efforts to raise awareness amongst young people

of the career opportunities in law and to continue to create an inclusive working environment. There is still a long way to go, however I am confident that we are one step ahead and are paving the way to diversifying the legal sector."

## We Love MCR Charity Firewalk



**On 2nd November the Manchester Law Society Firewalkers will be walking barefoot across 700 degree coals to raise money for We Love MCR Charity, the President's Charity of the Year.**

At the time of writing the magnificent seven have raised over £2300 thanks to the generous donations from colleagues, members, friends and family. If you have a few spare bob to pop in the tin you can do so [here](#) ↗.

The Lord Mayor of Manchester's We Love MCR Charity directly supports young people and communities across Manchester. They help our young people remove unfair barriers to success, and support communities to empower themselves with vital grants.

The communities and young people that are supported by WLMC grant programmes make Manchester the city it is today, and the city it will be tomorrow. Volunteer-led community groups are the lifeblood of our local areas, and the Stronger Communities Fund gives these groups vital funding for projects that improve, nurture, and bring life to the city we call home. Through this fund, WLMC awarded £33,000+ of grants to 11 community projects last month alone! From mental health drop-ins, accessible basketball sessions, food clubs, parenting classes and early-years reading schemes, [learn more about those awards here](#) ↗.

The Manchester's Rising Stars Fund makes life-changing differences to talented young

Mancunians with bags of ambition, but whose experiences of disadvantage block them from reaching their potential. Since starting this unique fund two years ago, WLMC have supported well over 200 incredible young people who have so much to offer this city but were held back by their personal circumstances.

One of these was Lina\*, who received support in August. Lina suffered significant exploitation at the hands of those supposed to care for her, had to navigate the care system and ended up living in supported homelessness accommodation for young people. Despite all of these challenges she excelled and earned a place at a top university in New York to study Mechanical Engineering.

However, due to living on a low income with zero family support, she was simply unable to get there. We Love MCR's support made Lina's dream happen – getting her a passport, arranging her travel needs, with which she was able to take up her rightful place at university and become the Rising Star she definitely is.

So good luck to all those firewalking, big thanks to all those who have donated and a massive well done to We Love MCR Charity for all their good works.

And keep an eye out for the write up in the December edition of the Messenger!

*\*Names have been changed to protect privacy.*



# The Legal Profession's Role in Promoting Kindness

World Kindness Day, celebrated annually on November 13th, is a global initiative aimed at spreading kindness and promoting goodwill among people of all walks of life. While the legal profession may not be the first industry that comes to mind when one thinks of kindness, it has a unique role to play in fostering a more compassionate and just society.

## Legacy of Kindness: Lessons from Grandad

My great inspiration was my grandad Michal, born in 1919 in Kuty, a small town in what is now Ukraine. Grandad Michal often shared stories about the diverse communities living in Kuty before the Second World War. Harmony thrived in that small town as people of various backgrounds and beliefs respected each other's differences and contributed to a stronger, unified community. My grandad suffered immeasurably during the War but emerged from a Nazi concentration camp with a spirit of forgiveness, resilience, and kindness that he carried throughout his life.

Marcin Durlak

His life experiences serve as a testament to the importance of maintaining kindness, even in the face of unimaginable hardship.

Today, as the legal community navigates complex challenges both locally and internationally, there's a pressing need to incorporate these virtues into our daily practice. By embodying the spirit of kindness that my Grandad Michal championed, we can be agents of positive change, mediating conflicts with empathy, fostering a spirit of inclusivity, and advocating for those without a voice.

## External Advocacy: Clients, Opponents, and Beyond

In our interactions with clients, we're privileged to be their voice, their defender, and often, their last hope. By extending kindness and understanding, we can bridge the emotional and legal aspects, crafting a comprehensive approach that takes into account the human element.

When dealing with opponents and third parties, it's crucial to remember that fairness and respect can coexist with steadfastness. Kindness in negotiations and mediations sets the stage for resolutions that benefit all parties, fostering a sense of mutual trust and collaboration.

## Internal Dynamics: Nurturing Kindness Within

Legal professions, while rewarding, come with their stresses. The emotional toll of handling intricate cases, tight deadlines, and the overarching sense of responsibility can be overwhelming.



It's imperative that legal firms cultivate an environment where mental well-being is prioritized. By encouraging open dialogues about mental health and offering support structures we can ensure our colleagues don't just survive but thrive.

Equally, respect for personal time and commitments isn't just a courtesy—it's a necessity. By fostering flexible work hours, understanding family commitments, and promoting downtime, firms can create a space where employees feel valued beyond their professional roles.

### **Kindness and Diversity: The Pillars of Modern Legal Practice**

In the legal realm, the emphasis on diversity and kindness holds paramount importance. These principles, married with values of tolerance and respect, forge a culture where every individual feels valued and heard. A diverse legal team, enriched by varied perspectives, not only enhances our problem-solving prowess but also embodies the true spirit of justice. It's not merely about representation; it's about creating an environment where respect and understanding are intrinsic, allowing for more compassionate and equitable outcomes. In embedding these values into our culture, we not only uphold the integrity of the profession but also set a precedent for broader societal change.

### **The Global Context: A Plea for Peace**

The significance of kindness takes on even greater urgency considering current global conflicts. The war in Ukraine following Russia's invasion and the most recent conflict between Israel and Hamas are stark reminders that peace remains elusive. On this World Kindness Day, let's remember that behind every legal statute, negotiation, or judgment, there are real lives at stake. As

lawyers, we must try to connect rather than divide.

Our unique position enables us to be ambassadors of kindness, actively advocating for understanding, empathy, and collaboration across nations and communities. Legal professionals, with their knowledge and influence, can actively engage in initiatives that promote dialogue, tolerance, uphold human rights and break down barriers that divide, emphasizing our shared humanity above all else.

### **The Last Word**

While kindness may not be a term often associated with the legal profession, it remains crucial for fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and empathy—both within our industry and in society at large. On this World Kindness Day, let us all take a moment to reflect on how we can be kinder, not just to those similar to us but also to those who are different.

Remembering my grandad Michal's lessons, we can all work towards a world where people of all backgrounds can coexist harmoniously, just like the diverse community in Kutty that once was. Let us aim to leave behind a legacy of kindness and mutual respect for future generations. After all, in a profession where the power of words can dramatically affect lives, a little kindness can go a long way.

So let's take the lessons from the past, the imperatives of the present, and our hopes for the future to make kindness an integral part of our personal and professional lives.

Happy World Kindness Day.

**Marcin Durlak, Managing Partner at IMD Solicitors LLP**

# Q&A with James Cole



James Cole (on the right) photo courtesy of Gordon Marino

Kenneth Tang speaks to James Cole, the Chair of Village Manchester Football Club. VMFC is Manchester men's LGBTQ+ football team. James talks about the VMFC, the challenges he sees for a grassroots LGBTQ+ team and what can be done to make football more diverse and inclusive.

**You are the Chair of Village Manchester Football Club. VMFC is the LGBTQ+ team in Manchester. Please can you tell me more about the team and your role in it?**

*James:* VMFC is Manchester's men's LGBTQ+ football team. It was founded in 1996 by a group of friends who wanted to play the sport they loved but didn't feel comfortable joining any existing team. The club started small (I joined in 2014 and it was fielding only two teams), but it has always punched well above its weight, winning divisions in local leagues and taking titles in international LGBTQ+ competitions.

Today the club has six teams, including four playing in local FA leagues and one playing in the national Gay Football Supporters Network league.

My role is to co-ordinate the day-to day running of the club, with a view to the long term as well.

**From your perspective, what does the landscape look like for LGBTQ+ players at the grassroots level?**

*James:* The landscape has changed dramatically in recent years. The fact that we now have professional players like Jake Daniels and Zander Murray coming out and playing football as their authentic selves has been a great boost to representation in the game. Beyond that, attitudes have changed dramatically in society over the last ten years or so. More and more, LGBTQ+ players at grassroots level feel able to be out to their mates and to join the same teams their mates join, something I would never have believed possible twenty years ago.

I hope teams like VMFC will not be needed in future, but there is still a long way to go. Safe spaces are always at a premium, and you only need to look at the terrible regression in attitudes towards trans people and the rhetoric employed by the current government to see that what has been won over decades can be undone in years.

**Do you see any challenges for teams like VMFC? If so, please can you share them?**

*James:* There are always challenges for any grassroots club, and VMFC certainly has some that apply to us in particular.

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Ensuring that we provide a safe space for all our members is a constant challenge, particularly for those who frequently become the focus of hatred simply for being who they are

Ensuring that we provide a safe space for all our members is a constant challenge, particularly for those who frequently become the focus of hatred simply for being who they are. Even on the pitch, we experience ignorance from opponents on a regular basis, which we call out whenever we hear it.

There are also more mundane challenges. For example, we spend an extraordinary amount of money on pitch bookings every year, because unlike a lot of grassroots clubs which grew organically and are rooted in a local community rather than a found community, we have never owned our own home ground.

### **What do you think could be done to make the game more welcoming for LGBTQ+ players?**

*James:* At a local level, I think things are slowly improving for LGBTQ+ players. That said, the single biggest thing any grassroots club can do to be more welcoming is to be actively vocal about the fact that they are being more welcoming. It's very easy to passively believe that you're an ally without anyone actually realising you are. These days clubs can use events like Rainbow Laces and Football vs Homophobia to really make players and fans alike more aware of the unique challenges around LGBTQ+ acceptance in the game. The more people talk about being accepting, the better things get.



**Kenneth Tang, Commercial Litigation Solicitor at Pannone Corporate LLP**

### **If there anything coming up with the team that you would like to tell members of Manchester Law Society about?**

*James:* We made it all the way to the final of the FA Saturday Amateur County Cup last season, so we are hoping to go one step further. One thing I would encourage people to look out for is the Rainbow Laces campaign which will be coming up in the next month or so. It's the tenth anniversary of Stonewall's original campaign for better recognition and acceptance of LGBTQ+ people in sport, and you can read more about it at [www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/rainbow-laces](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/rainbow-laces) .

**Kenneth Tang, Commercial Litigation Solicitor at Pannone Corporate LLP**



## Keith Davidson joins Irwin Mitchell's Fast Growing Planning and Environment Team

**Irwin Mitchell** [↗](#) is boosting its ESG Practice with the recruitment of Keith Davidson as a new partner in its Planning and Environment Team. Keith is recognised as a leading expert on environmental and sustainability issues. He was a former Environment Commissioner for Greater Manchester and Head of Environment at Mills & Reeve.

Keith will transfer his own award-winning environmental practice at ELM Law and team up with Irwin Mitchell's successful National Head of Planning & Environment Claire Petriccia-Riding in the firm's Manchester office. Together they will further develop the firm's environmental law offering for clients across the UK.

The appointment is a massive boost for IM's Environmental practice. Over the past three years Claire Petriccia-Riding has

grown Irwin Mitchell's specialist Planning and Environment (P&E) team to fourteen, with four partners. The team was recently boosted by the recruitment of planning partner Pamela Chesterman at the end of last year and Jill Crawford, senior associate and environmental regulatory specialist in 2022. Claire Petriccia-Riding herself has been recognised as one of the most impactful environmental lawyers by ENDS magazine two years in a row and listed in the ENDS Top 100 Environmental power list.

The P&E Team sits within Irwin Mitchell's Property Division which will now number 31 partners and over 150 qualified lawyers in ten offices across the UK. IM's P&E and real estate offering was further strengthened last month with the acquisition of Scottish law firm Wright Johnston & Mackenzie with five offices and strong track record in the renewable energy sector.

## Mills & Reeve expands private client team with partner hire

**Mills & Reeve** [↗](#) have recruited Christopher Noel as a partner to boost its Manchester private client team.

Christopher has joined from DWF where he was head of the private capital team in Manchester. He advises ultra and high net worth individuals (U/HNW), family trusts, business owners, entrepreneurs, charities, trust companies and banks. He also has expertise in advising on domicile and residence issues and offshore trusts.

Christopher's appointment will strengthen the team's private client practice and capitalise on the growing opportunities in the North West market with a focus on boosting its U/HNW client base and developing corporate relationships with the private wealth and private equity markets as well as with onshore and offshore trust company clients.

Deborah Clark, partner and private client lawyer at Mills & Reeve, said "I am delighted to welcome Christopher to the team to further enhance our position as a leading private client team in Manchester. Christopher has an excellent reputation in the market and his experience of advising business owners and entrepreneurs, and working closely with corporate colleagues,



Keith Davidson

Keith Davidson has been top ranked for environmental law in Chambers and Legal 500 for over a decade and has a national reputation for contaminated land transactions. His main focus will be to grow Irwin Mitchell's ESG, sustainability and climate practice. One initiative will be to create a dedicated Net Zero support service for companies to include climate contracting, carbon literacy training, supply chain collaboration and a Net Zero getting started service.

Keith Davidson said, "I'm delighted to join forces with Claire and her team and excited about creating the new Net Zero hub to help businesses accelerate climate action."

Claire Petricca-Riding added, "There is an urgent need for all companies in the UK to take climate action in the next 5 years. We plan to offer useful Net Zero legal products and services that stand out from our competitors. I can't wait to start working with Keith on these exciting new initiatives."

Adrian Barlow, Director of Property Legal Services at Irwin Mitchell continued, "Irwin Mitchell is ideally placed to exploit this market with its wide range of ESG legal advisory services, strong international network and reputation as a leading responsible business. Keith will play an important part in helping us to fulfil Irwin Mitchell's ambitions in this field. We warmly welcome him to the practice."

Irwin Mitchell has continued to invest heavily in its team focused on the corporate, property and institutions audience.

will further develop our mid-market and family-owned business clients. His experience on international matters will also strengthen our offering in that increasingly important area."

Chris Ross, head of the Manchester office, said: "It is a pleasure to welcome Christopher to the Manchester office where he'll play a pivotal role in further growing our private client practice."

Christopher Noel added: "Mills & Reeve has an incredibly strong and well-regarded private client practice across the UK. I am absolutely delighted to be joining such a friendly and fantastic team and to become part of the growing Manchester office."



Christopher Noel



## Leigh Day expands its human rights legal department to Manchester

Law firm [Leigh Day](#) is expanding its northern operation with a human rights department in Manchester to focus on legal aid work, as part of its aim to help everyone who needs it to find a way to access justice.

It brings greater capacity to help people in the North West with claims in discrimination, welfare rights and migrants' rights, as well as many others in judicial reviews and claims for breaches of human rights.



Ryan Bradshaw

The Manchester human rights team is headed by solicitors, [Ryan Bradshaw](#) and [Stephanie Hill](#).

They belong to a firmwide team that has successfully championed the rights of thousands of people under the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

Ryan and Stephanie anticipate being able to help people with a wide range of human rights cases. They are looking forward to adding their skills to the legal aid provision already in place in the North West and to representing clients in the North West.

Leigh Day already employs 300 people including lawyers and support staff at its [Manchester office](#) in Central Park, Harpurhey. Until now, those legal teams have concentrated on employment, personal injury and clinical negligence cases.

The addition of the human rights team to the Manchester base is the next step in Leigh Day's aim to grow access to justice across England and Wales.

The Leigh Day partnership was one of the first law firms in the UK to launch a human rights department after the Human Rights Act 1998 was passed.

The Human Rights Act 1998, which enshrined the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in British law, and the Equality Act 2010 have been used by thousands of people in Britain to defend their rights with the help of legal aid funded lawyers. The Human Rights Act guarantees many freedoms, including

from slavery, forced labour and degrading treatment. The Equality Act protects against discrimination for race, disability, sex, religion, age, and sexual orientation.

Leigh Day's expansion means more people will have access to legal aid funded lawyers to help defend their rights under the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act. This is particularly important given the number of firms providing legal aid funded advice has *fallen significantly in recent years and is due to fall even further* [↗](#) .

Ryan Bradshaw said: "The small number of human rights lawyers active in the North West has made it harder for individuals local to this region to access justice. There are, of course, excellent professionals already providing frontline advice but they need more local solicitors who are prepared to discuss the injustices they see day-in day-out and to back them up. We want to build on our existing relationships and bring our experience to bear in order to improve access to justice and obtain outcomes for those in need of our assistance."

Stephanie Hill said: "It is vital that people whose human rights have been breached are able to challenge unlawful decisions and seek redress from the courts. I am delighted to be moving to Manchester to continue my work representing clients in holding public authorities to account, particularly those who find themselves marginalised and mistreated. At a time when the legal aid sector is stretched to capacity, especially outside London, it is exciting to be developing our work in the North West, with the aim of improving access to justice for all those who seek it."



Stephanie Hill

The Leigh Day human rights department is led by partner [Gene Matthews](#) [↗](#) and partner [Jamie Beagent](#) [↗](#) . Gene Matthews said: "The firm is delighted to be expanding our human rights team to the North West. The work undertaken by the Ryan, Steph and the other lawyers in the department will help to ensure that an even greater number of people gain access to justice. We are pleased to be joining the first-rate professionals who are already making a real difference in the region and hope our contribution will further support these critically important areas of law."



## Myerson Solicitors expands their Contentious Trusts and Probate Team with new Legal Director hire



Adam Carvalho

**Myerson Solicitors** [↗](#) are excited to announce the hire of Legal Director Adam Carvalho as a part of their ongoing period of organic growth.

Adam joins the Myerson Contentious Trusts and Probate team at the Legal Director level, bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and experience from his previous work at the ultra-high net worth London law firm Farrer & Co. Adam worked on a range of noteworthy cases during his 14 years at the firm, including, handling complex disputes with values often in the billions. In addition to his High Court experience, Adam has been involved in cases in the UK Tax Tribunals, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court and jurisdictions around the world, from Bermuda to New Zealand. Adam has considerable experience in resolving complex family disputes, multi-jurisdictional matters, and trustee applications.

After leaving Farrer & Co in 2021, Adam joined The Carvalho Consultancy. Set up

and run by Adam and his wife, The Carvalho Consultancy specialises in providing training, therapy, counselling, and coaching to lawyers with the goal of making law a *'more fulfilling and sustainable profession within which to work'*. Adam's experience with The Carvalho Consultancy is closely aligned with the Myerson values and company culture. Myerson has recently been ranked the #1 Mid-Sized Law Firm to Work for in the UK by Best Companies, showcasing the commitment Myerson has to making employee wellbeing a priority.

Adam is a fully qualified member of STEP and has worked with them closely. Adam has contributed to Oxford University Press textbooks, including the *Law of Trusts* and *International Trust Disputes* and legal journals such as *Trusts and Trustees* and *Trusts Quarterly Review*. Adam is a Subject Expert and Case Review Expert in trusts, probate, and charity litigation for legal know-how platform Lexis Nexis, and he has lectured widely on topics related to these areas throughout his career.

Adam Carvalho, Legal Director at Myerson Solicitors, said: 'I am delighted to become a part of the award-winning Contentious Trusts and Probate department at Myerson Solicitors. The team is recognised for combining

technical ability with a real commitment to client care, and I admire the culture and entrepreneurial spirit of the firm. I am excited to bring my own expertise to the table and add to the growth and success of the department.'

The Myerson Contentious Trusts and Probate Team has been ranked Tier 1 in the



2024 edition of the Legal 500, making this the fifth consecutive year the department has received this ranking. The team has also been ranked as Band 2 in Chambers & Partners 'High-Net-Worth Guide 2023'. Adam has been recognised by both the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners throughout his career. His expertise will bolster the success of this already highly accomplished department.

Helen Thompson, Partner and Head of the Contentious Probate team at Myerson Solicitors, said: 'We are delighted to welcome Adam to the team. Myerson is going through an exciting period of organic growth, and we are thrilled to expand our team with such a strong hire. Adam's experience both as a practising solicitor and his work with The Carvalho Consultancy, STEP and LexisNexis is incredibly impressive and makes him an excellent asset to the team. We look forward to working with Adam and watching the team continue to grow.'

## Ward Hadaway nurtures homegrown talent with new trainees

**Ward Hadaway** [✉](#) has announced the recruitment of three new trainees into its Manchester office, with 13 trainees recruited nationally as it continues to grow.

Ward Hadaway welcomes Chloe Middleton, Rosie Cryans and Chris Prossor to the team. The new recruits take the number of trainees in the Manchester office to six as the firm strengthens its commitment to developing the next generation of lawyers.

Caroline Jones, recruitment and emerging talent manager at the firm, said: "We're delighted to welcome new trainees to our team in Manchester. At Ward Hadaway, we believe that nurturing talent and providing the right environment for growth is paramount. Our commitment to employee development is a priority, and we are excited to see our trainees thrive in our inclusive, supportive culture."

By expanding its trainee programme, the firm continues to highlight its commitment to investing in emerging talent, shaping the legal landscape for years to come. Trainees embark on a two-year training contract,

rotating through four distinct practice areas every six months, ensuring they acquire the necessary skills and expertise to practice as solicitors upon qualification.

Liz Bottrill, executive partner in the Manchester office, said: "It's great to welcome more talented people who are eager to learn and follow a successful career in law. Our commitment to employee development and ensuring everyone is given the opportunities to fulfil their

Continued on page 51



Ward Hadaway trainees

## Employment team at Ward Hadaway experiences substantial growth



Ward Hadaway trainees

**Ward Hadaway** [✉](#) has announced strong growth of its employment and immigration team following the recruitment of a partner, two senior solicitors and a paralegal.

In the last 12 months, the Ward Hadaway employment and immigration team has made a number of key appointments to meet the rapidly growing demand from businesses across the North West for employment and business immigration legal support.

In recognition of the growth of the demand for these services, the firm has recruited two leading lawyers in the region, to develop Ward Hadaway's practice across

the North West. Laura Darnley and Arshia Hashmi, who have over 35 years of combined specialist experience, have joined the team with a particular focus on working with businesses within the life sciences, biotech, manufacturing, recruitment and care sectors.

Their appointments follow Charlotte Nuttall's recruitment as a legal director in April. Charlotte was brought on board to further build Ward Hadaway's reputation as the go-to legal partner for employment services across the North West. Employment and immigration paralegal Sana Muddsar joined in April to add depth to the team and enhance its offering.

Harmajinder Hayre, partner and Head of Employment at Ward Hadaway said: "We're continuing to demonstrate strong growth strategically across the North West. This has been partly driven by a surge in demand for business immigration, employment and HR advice from both existing and new clients. Our investment in our employment and immigration team enables us to provide expert legal advice to a diverse range of North West businesses. The collective expertise that sits within the Manchester and wider employment and immigration team enables us to adapt to ever changing client needs and deliver bespoke legal guidance that's tailored to our clients' challenges and objectives."

Partner Laura Darnley, recognised by the Legal 500 as a Next Generation Partner, who is sought after by businesses across the North West for her immigration and employment law expertise, said: "I'm excited to be joining Ward Hadaway at a key time during its growth in Manchester, building

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Our investment in  
our employment and  
immigration team enables  
us to provide expert legal  
advice to a diverse range of  
North West businesses.”

on new and existing relationships with clients across the North West and beyond. I'm delighted to be working with partner, Caroline Shafar, to build on the existing platform of services with a particular focus on sectors that are pushing boundaries, such as life sciences and biotech, and to provide them with the tailored immigration and employment advice that they require. I couldn't be more excited to be part of the journey ahead. "

## Ward Hadaway nurtures homegrown talent with new trainees (continued)

potential is central to the firm's ethos. Having the right individuals with the necessary skills and capabilities is vital for us to achieve our vision and continue to grow, creating job opportunities for our future legal practitioners. By providing an environment where trainees can excel, Ward Hadaway is not only shaping its own future but also contributing to the development of the legal profession as a whole."

Trainees are a key part of the firm's people strategy with approximately 30% of the organisation's current management team beginning their careers as Ward Hadaway trainees.

Chris Prossor, one of the Manchester-based trainees, said: "It's great to join a law firm like Ward Hadaway that is known for its strong culture and commitment to people development. From the very structured and transparent onboarding process to the supportive working environment, it's evident that Ward Hadaway values each individual's unique career journey and aspirations. The firm stands out for the way it nurtures talent and provides ample opportunities for professional growth and I'm excited for what lies ahead."

For more information about Ward Hadaway and its trainee programme, [click here](#) .

# MLS Advantage



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Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

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Mitigo provides cybersecurity and cyber risk management services to members. Mitigo will give you visibility of your cyber risks, and secure you against attacks and business disruption. Cybersecurity is not the job of IT support: it requires independent advice from cyber risk management specialists.

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- Commercial rent deposits
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# Be part of Pro Bono Week 2023!

Pro Bono Week takes place across the UK this year from 6 to 10 November. Through events and comms it is an opportunity to recognise, showcase and discuss the voluntary contribution of the legal profession in giving free legal help to those in need.

For the latest updates follow @ProBonoWeekUK on [X \(Twitter\)](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

## Arrange an event

Pro Bono Week is a great time to arrange an event to promote or discuss pro bono. Many events are external occasions organised in partnership with others, while others are internal events for colleagues at an organisation. There are three suggested themes this year:

- Changing lives through pro bono
- Maximising the impact of pro bono
- Pro bono within ESG: from climate to sustainable development

For help planning an event visit [probonoweek.org.uk/event-plans](https://probonoweek.org.uk/event-plans)

## Share content on social media

Pro Bono Week is a perfect time to post on social media or your website about your commitment to pro bono, or to thank your volunteers, or to showcase a particular pro bono lawyer or project. [#ProBonoWeek](#)

For a toolkit & resources such as #IDoProBono posters visit [probonoweek.org.uk/media-resources](https://probonoweek.org.uk/media-resources)

“

Pro Bono Week is a great time to arrange an event to promote or discuss pro bono

## Attend events in Pro Bono Week

We welcome you to attend events during the week, including our hybrid launch event with Attorney General the Rt Hon Victoria Prentis KC MP on Monday 6th November at 6pm. Register at [pbw2023.eventbrite.co.uk](https://pbw2023.eventbrite.co.uk)

Events you can attend will be added closer to the time at [probonoweek.org.uk/events](https://probonoweek.org.uk/events)

## Sign up to do pro bono

For lawyers or organisations not yet involved in a pro bono scheme, Pro Bono Week is an opportunity to sign up, see [probonoweek.org.uk/volunteering](https://probonoweek.org.uk/volunteering)

## And finally, raise dough!

Get baking with the [Great Legal Bake](#) and raise money for local advice charities.

**PRO  
BONO  
WEEK**  
probonoweek.org.uk

**6th - 10th  
November**  
**2023**



## Bromleys Family Team receives Legal 500 recognition

**Bromleys Solicitors LLP** [↗](#), have received their first ever ranking in the current edition of the Legal 500, for the outstanding work undertaken by their family team. This follows having been listed as “One to watch” last year.

The family team is split into two separate teams – one team undertaking public law and one team undertaking private law. The recognition by the Legal 500 reflects the excellent reputation that the team has based on it providing a fantastic client experience often in the most trying of circumstances and making a positive difference to the lives of our clients and their families.



Olivia Bell

Paul Westwell, Managing Partner, said: “Here at Bromleys we are delighted to have been recognised for the exceptional standard of service and expertise demonstrated by our family team. This accolade clearly reflects the high esteem in which Olivia Bell and her team here are held by our clients and all those we continue to support and work with. The dedication and sheer determination of the team allows them to make a positive difference to the circumstances of all of those that they represent.”

The Legal 500 listing notes that “complex care proceedings form the cornerstone of the practice” and lists in particular our expertise with Placement Orders, Special Guardianship Orders, Non Molestation Orders and prohibited Steps Orders. The team leader Olivia Bell heads the team, and Keith Bull leads the private law team. The team is described as being “exceptionally well run” and provides “clear, concise legal advice”.

Olivia says: “It is very satisfying that the dedication and expertise of the team is recognised by both our peers and our clients. It is particularly satisfying that the testimonials highlight the strength of our teamwork in particular. This highlights the success of our policy in bringing in young lawyers and training them to become accredited panel members and experts in their chosen field. We are constantly looking for the next team members and have just recruited 4 new paralegals to join the team, all with a view to them progressing to qualification. We are still looking to grow further, and anyone joining us will do so in a supportive and collaborative team.”

## Clarke Willmott's Manchester Office ranks highly in 2024 Legal 500

The 2024 Legal 500 results have been announced and once again the Manchester office of [Clarke Willmott LLP](#) has ranked highly with both practice areas and individual lawyers named.

The guide, which ranks the UK's top lawyers and firms, recommended the Manchester office in eight practice areas including social housing; family, personal tax, trusts and probate; construction and corporate and commercial, which rose from Tier 4 to Tier 3 this year.

Manchester lawyers were also individually named in the guide with Lindsay Felstead in social housing listed as a 'Leading Individual' and Matthew Wilson, also in social housing, named as a 'Next Generation Partner'.

Clarke Willmott LLP Chief Executive, Peter Swinburn, said: "We are delighted with our numerous rankings in the Legal 500 guide and especially pleased to receive Top Tier rankings in no less than nine practice areas across the firm.

"The Legal 500 is a well-respected and prestigious industry guide, one that both industry insiders and clients use as a measure of quality and professional legal services. Rankings are partly based on client feedback which is a great indication of the esteem in which we are held.

"The recognition reflects the time we invest in developing relationships with our clients, our high level of service and our straightforward approach."

Nationally, Clarke Willmott received Top Tier rankings in nine practice areas and recommendations in 46 practice areas. Four Clarke Willmott lawyers are named in the 'Hall of Fame', 18 are named as 'leading individuals', nine as 'next generation' lawyers and ten as 'rising stars'. A total of 119 lawyers are recommended in the guide.

The Legal 500 series is widely acknowledged as the world's largest legal guide. It is an independent guide and firms and individuals are recommended purely on merit.



Peter Swinburn of Clarke Willmott



## Kuits achieve record results In Chambers UK

**Kuits Solicitors** [↗](#), has achieved its best ever results in the newly published Chamber UK guide 2024 with more lawyers being ranked and improvements in previous rankings.

Seven of the firm's departments have been ranked including the corporate team who are ranked in Band 1 for Corporate M&A for owner managed businesses which demonstrates their leading expertise in the sector. The guide comments on the beneficial integration between the corporate team and Kuits' private wealth team who are also ranked in Band 1 in the Chamber High Net Worth guide and combined they are one of the

most reputable teams in the North West. Kuits' employment, real estate, licensing, intellectual property and contentious tax teams are also ranked in the guide. This year thirteen of Kuits' lawyers are ranked three of whom have not previously appeared in the guide and all have either improved or maintained their rankings.

Robert Levy, Executive Partner, at Kuits commented: "We are extremely proud of the outstanding recognition in this year's Chambers rankings. I'm very pleased to see so many of our exceptional teams and lawyers ranked which is a fitting reward for their commitment to excellence and dedication to client success."

Kuits L-R - Robert Levy, Kuits Executive partner;  
Steve Eccleston, Kuits Managing partner



## MSB Solicitors lands a trio of national industry recognitions for its services

- MSB Solicitors highly rated on Chamber and Partners, specially commended for Family and Crime Law
- Follows impressive ratings on Legal 500 and inclusion in The Times' list of Best UK Legal Firms 2023 earlier this month
- A total of 20 MSB lawyers highlighted for excellence across Legal 500 and Chamber and Partners

[MSB Solicitors](#) is proud to announce an impressive collection of nationally recognised accreditations.

Included in the accreditations are several impressive rankings from Chamber and Partners, which produces international rankings for the legal industry. Announced today, MSB legal experts ranking was stand-out, particularly within Family and Criminal Law departments.

Earlier this month the firm was also recognised as a Tier 1 firm" by the world's leading legal directory, The Legal 500. MSB's Family Law team was ranked Tier 1 due to the level of expertise being 'almost unique in this area' and its Commercial Property Team also achieved a Tier 1 ranking. Many other members of the team were individually commended as leading individuals or rising stars.

In addition, to complete the trio of recognition for services, MSB has learnt it will be ranked in The Times list of Best Legal Firms 2023. The Times survey the legal profession in England & Wales and Scotland to assess which law firms and individual lawyers are those that lawyers rate in their specialist fields, making this another

“

We are so excited about future opportunities that lie ahead for us all and look forward to further contributing to the growth of this vibrant region.”

incredible achievement for the ambitious and fast-growing UK business.

Commenting on the recognition, managing director at MSB Solicitors, Emma Carey says: 'We pride ourselves on our highly trained and experienced team of legal experts who deliver good work every day. I am so proud of my team and our ongoing growth – which is all down to the amazing service they provide to our clients.

'These professional accreditations mean the world to us - the team are just delighted to be recognised at a national level for the brilliant work delivered here in the North West - supporting local people and businesses in the community around us is a privilege.

We will be rewarding our team with champagne this week and celebrating together.

'We are so excited about future opportunities that lie ahead for us all and look forward to further contributing to the growth of this vibrant region. It's a very proud time indeed for MSB!'

## Pearson Solicitors and Financial Advisers Ranked by Legal 500 UK

*Pearson Solicitors and Financial Advisers* [✓](#) has been listed as a 'Leading Law Firm' in The Legal 500 UK Solicitors 2024 rankings, with its employment department being recommended by this prestigious legal directory.

In addition, Alan Lewis, joint head of the employment department, who has been ranked for several years whilst based at a city centre firm, retains his 'Leading Individual' status. Alan was the first solicitor in the North West to be ranked as a leading individual acting for employees.

Co-head Susan Mayall joins Alan as a recommended solicitor alongside Ben Williams.

The Oldham-based firm employs over 80 staff members across its three sites in

Greater Manchester. The provider of legal and financial expertise since 1874, can proudly boast this benchmark achievement and is the only law firm in Oldham to have ever been ranked in the Legal 500.

Georgina Stanley, Editor at The Legal 500 UK Solicitor, states that:

"All of the firms and individuals ranked are recommended by us for the year ahead from publication on 04 October 2023.

"These rankings reflect the result of months of extensive analysis by our research team, who conduct thousands of interviews with private practice lawyers and read through tens of thousands of submissions in order to select the very best lawyers and law firms in the UK."



L-R Ben Williams, Alan Lewis, and Susan Mayall

Alan said, "I am delighted to have helped Pearson achieve national recognition in the Legal 500. When I brought my employment team across from Linder Myers at the end of 2022 to join the well-established team headed by Susan Mayall, I knew the Pearson team was worthy of a Legal 500 recognition. After seven months of anticipation, I am simply elated with the news and that the teams' efforts in the submission process have now come to fruition."

Susan commented, "The Legal 500 is a well-respected guide that clients and legal professionals refer to as a measure of quality and service and this accreditation sets us apart from other law firms. We are a firm held in high regard amongst our loyal client base and peers, and this recognition has been an incredible boost for not only the department but the entire practice."

Alan further adds: "We must take a moment to thank our team, the research team and, of course, our clients, in particular those who afforded their time to speak to the researchers and provide testimonials which we are thrilled with."

"Alan Lewis is a very professional, experienced and skilled solicitor who also understands the importance of being able to communicate effectively with his clients. He is a man of his word and instils confidence in you when you feel you have lost hope; he is extremely honest, honourable and is straightforward – a thoroughly decent human being and a highly competent solicitor."

"Alan Lewis understands what clients need and what they are going through – he knows his area of expertise inside and out and back to front."

"Alan Lewis is extremely approachable and affable. When I have had occasion to

“

The Legal 500 is a well-respected guide that clients and legal professionals refer to as a measure of quality and service and this accreditation sets us apart from other law firms.”

contact him with work difficulties, he always responds quickly, and demonstrates a swift grasp of the issues and explains things in a clear and straightforward way.”

"Pearson Solicitors provide a personal service, and you are made to feel as though you are their only client. There are affordable options for financial engagement, offering either a monthly 'package' approach or bespoke fixed fee options. This means you can engage with them frequently and with confidence, knowing the cost."

"They have a great deal of knowledge and deliver their services in a personable and efficient manner."

"Susan Mayall is an outstanding, professional individual who has a breadth of knowledge regarding employment law. She works incredibly hard to provide quick answers and is always available to talk through difficult situations. Not only has she provided excellent advice and support to our business but has enabled us to grow our knowledge and experience with her support."

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“  
 Pearson Solicitors and  
 Financial Advisers  
 Ltd recently bolstered its  
 capacity for a full-service  
 through several arrivals from  
 Linder Myers in 2022...”

**The write up by The Legal 500 demonstrates the work Pearson does and why they have been ranked:**

The Legal 500 write:

Pearson Solicitors and Financial Advisers Ltd recently bolstered its capacity for a full-service through several arrivals from Linder Myers in 2022, including team head Alan Lewis. The firm advises on mandates ranging from protective award claims, senior executive exits, and responding to restrictive covenant assertions. Lewis focuses on exit negotiations for individuals, working on cases across, but not limited to, the financial services, legal, real estate and telecommunications sectors; he also has experience in unfair dismissal and discrimination cases, as well as acting for collectives during redundancy disputes. Co-head Susan Mayall handles post-termination restrictions and TUPE transfer matters across a wide breadth of sectors, while Ben Williams, has a particular focus on unfair dismissal and discrimination matters, with experiencing litigating in Employment Tribunal claims.

In the wake of an impressive year of recruitment, Pearson Solicitors and Financial Advisers Ltd has fostered a strong team with the ability to handle the full

breadth of contentious and non-contentious employment mandates. The ‘stand out’ team head Susan Mayall is active in TUPE transfers, GDPR and data protection issues, contractual and policy drafting procedures, as well as advising senior management on executive hires and departures. Alan Lewis, who joined from Linder Myers Solicitors in November 2022, joins Mayall as co-head of the department, and has largely focused on restrictive covenant, redundancy, and discrimination and unfair dismissal tribunal proceedings. Ben Williams, who also joined from Linder Myers Solicitors alongside Lewis, is commended for his ability to tailor specific advice to clients, providing ad-hoc HR support amongst a steady volume of grievances investigations and disciplinary processes counsel.

Work highlights include:

- Acted for a director of a big 4 bank in claims for unfair dismissal and breach of contract, successfully achieving re-engagement with full back pay and payment of substantial legal costs.
- Successfully achieving protective awards in the Employment Tribunal for substantial numbers of employees made redundant by multiple companies including Roadbridge UK Limited, Turbine Efficiency Limited and Bleikers Smokehouse.
- Acting for substantial numbers of employees affected by the high-profile collapse of Metamorph Law and the subsequent SRA intervention for claims for protective awards.

The accreditation falls on the back of the firm’s recent win at the Oldham Business Awards, where the firm picked up the award for ‘Supporting Young People’.





By Bill Kirby, director of Professional Choice Consultancy

## This Month

- **The Challenges**
- **Perceived Obstacle**
- **New Solution Possibilities**
- **Information to Encourage Action**
- **Outsource for Efficiency and Delivery**

## The Challenges

Law firms have many challenges to meet – strategy development and achievement, growth, on boarding, revenue and cash generation, efficiency and productivity, cost savings, client communication and satisfaction, MI & BI, compliance, regulation security.

In this changing world there are increasing options around resourcing – in house, outsourcing for required skills and volumes of activity resourcing – in house or third party (changing world), compliance and regulation and security.

I recommend a catch up with these two recent articles [June 2023](#) and [September 2023](#).

## Current Perceived Obstacle

For many years there has been a dependency on core Practice and Case Management Systems (PMS & CMS).

There is now a current and real uncertainty with regards to existing core PMS and CMS systems – seen and reported by many as a result of the multiple acquisitions.

The perceived impacts are currently mainly affecting small and medium sized firms - both commercially (forced changes in T&Cs) and also limited clarity about which of the current systems are continuing or being enhanced and by when. There are

also reported perceived cut backs in client support, disappearing staff with previous good client support relationships.

Many firms need to know whether their current products are to be enhanced or substituted by alternatives or integrated with third party added value products for key issues such as on-boarding, client communications, MI & BI, compliance and other added value outsourced services.

In early September I did a post on LinkedIn – [Are you in a happy place with your PMS/ CMS supplier?](#). It clearly touched a nerve and has had over 2,350 reads, 22 likes and 5 re posts. I feel strongly that there is an unmet need to bring the law firm community together to enhance understanding, especially mid-size firms, by bringing leaders together to gather current experience and future requirements from some of their key technology, especially their Practice & Case Management Systems (PMS & CMS)

As you will be aware there have been many acquisitions of PMS/CMS suppliers with The Advanced Group, Practice Evolve/Leap, Access Group and even Insight Legal now part of Dye and Durham. For many law firms and advisers/consultants it has been very difficult to gain the strategies for product developments. In addition, some law firms are feeling the effects of some dramatic price hikes – with revenue seemingly becoming more important than customer relationships. Legal sector consultants are also seeing the challenges.

## Potential New Suppliers

Whether they like it or not, law firms need to be efficient, compliant, secure, insured

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and have some cash and have to provide added value to clients – on boarding, efficiency, communication. There's also an increasing need to move their key systems into onto cloud technology.

With all the pressures and lack of clarity the door is becoming open from potential new suppliers and including the latest cloud-based technology.

What is also interesting is that there is now a growing queue of potential new suppliers (some international – for example Australia and Singapore bases) all operating here now but relatively short term but beginning to sign up new firms – I am aware of eight and done due diligence on six so far.

The majority use standard accounting packages but have added the necessary SAR adjustments for compliance plus are cloud based. The necessary accessibility and security which is a growing demand.

Many of the current PMS/CMS are not fully cloud based but dependent on hosted arrangements with variable performance hosts.

The potential new suppliers also tend to have a more open mind with regards to integration with added value solutions – collaboration opportunities. Potentially quite a challenge to the current suppliers.

### Information Gathering

In wanting to assist the sector I am very interested in some feedback from law firms on

- Their perception of the current status of the relationship with their supplier of PMS/CMS
- Their added value needed. What are regarded as priorities in terms of

enhancements and added value to help achieve the business priorities - strategy development and achievement, growth, on boarding, revenue and cash generation, efficiency and productivity, cost savings, client communication and satisfaction, MI & BI, compliance, regulation security.

- Their relationship with suppliers – quality and pricing, support – performance against expected SLAs
- Their perceptions of the offerings currently being made – is there clarity in terms of what to expect going forward in terms of applications and infrastructure
- Maybe some initiatives/proposals to enhance the interface with the suppliers

This sort of information can potentially be a way to enhance client relationships and the achievement of the firm's business objectives.

### Outsourcing for Efficiency and Quality

Whilst looking at the performance of the current suppliers and potential new ones there has been serious confirmation about the much more flexible approach to resourcing the firm's needs. Reference again to the [June 2023](#) article.

Irrespective of the size and shape of firm appropriate skills are needed – whether for legal work, finance, IT & Security, M&A considerations but with the technology of PMS/CMS from older or newer suppliers there is becoming real consideration for support services to cut costs and enhance delivery capabilities affecting client satisfaction, GP and Cashflow.

So integration with [MLS Advantage](#) suppliers such as [Transcription Services & Document Production - Document Direct](#),

*Employee Engagement and Performance Management Software* [weekly10.com](http://weekly10.com) [↗](#), and *UK's Leading AML Software Solution First AML* [↗](#) should be on the list, along with Outsourced Accounting from people like *Outsourced Legal Cashiering & Compliance The Cashroom* [↗](#), Law Firm Business Intelligence Software - Katchr and many others should be on the list as well as outsourced and added value services from IT, Accountants, legal services.

There are great strategy, operational performance opportunities with a different resource consideration.

Bill Kirby is a director of [www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com](http://www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com) offering advice to firms on business issue from strategy, planning, business development, the effective use of IT applications and IT hosting for compliance, business continuity and DR. He can be contacted at [billkirby@professionalchoiceconsultancy.com](mailto:billkirby@professionalchoiceconsultancy.com) and [LinkedIn](#)

## News from HQ

### “Making the law work for women: Solutions to extreme misogyny”

Booking is now open for JUSTICE's annual Tom Sargant Memorial Lecture, taking place over Zoom at 6:30pm on 8 November 2023. This year's delivered is entitled "*Making the law work for women: Solutions to extreme misogyny*" and will be delivered by Dr Ann Olivarius KC (Hon) OBE.

Tickets are free and can be [booked here](#) [↗](#).

### November offer from Manchester Hall: A Cracking Christmas offer!

Are you still thinking about what to do for your Christmas do or family get together? Look no further – Manchester Hall are offering MLS Members 20% off their “Elegant Affair Christmas Package”!

The package includes:

- Glass of fizz on arrival
- Canapés
- Three course plated menu
- Table wine

Usually this is £79 per person but all MLS Members receive a **whopping 20% discount!** Leaving you budget to spend on your favourite Law Society Staff's Christmas present...

Read the delicious menu [here](#) [↗](#).

To book email [m.rafferty@manchesterhall.co.uk](mailto:m.rafferty@manchesterhall.co.uk) [↗](#) and quote **MLSXMAS**

# Legal Ombudsman Update



## Our approach to dealing with complaints about delay

By Jason Chapman, Ombudsman, LeO

**Along with poor communication, delays are the most common area of complaint that the Legal Ombudsman receives – last year, 21% of complaints that we investigated were either about an unreasonable delay or failure to progress. Unfortunately, many of the complaints that we see are avoidable. This month I want to share our advice on how to avoid them, or to put them right fairly if they do arise.**

It's inevitable unforeseen issues and delays will sometimes arise when handling some client matters. When we investigate a complaint about delay, we can't and won't hold the service provider responsible for delays that are outside their control. Recent examples we've seen include delays in registering properties, obtaining grant of probate and matters becoming protracted due to delays in obtaining court dates. We have also seen a lot of complaints relating to delays in service providers dealing with property purchases during the Stamp Duty (SDLT) – where the purchase did not complete before the window closed, causing the buyer to incur a Stamp Duty liability that they did not want or expect. None of these delays are within a service provider's control.

Where we have upheld complaints relating to these issues, it is almost always the case

that – although the service provider was not directly responsible for the delay – they have failed to adequately communicate with and update their client.

So the failure in service does not relate to the delay itself, but rather that the client has not been told that the delay is likely, or that matters have been delayed, and provided with updates. It's understandable that some clients would perceive that, as their matter is not progressing, their legal representative is at fault – leading them to make a complaint.

It is always worth remembering that a client will, in most cases, have little experience in dealing with legal matters, so won't know how long things might take. This isn't helped by TV adverts which show people being injured and then immediately holding cheques. But my experience as an ombudsman is that across areas of law, clients expect things to develop and resolve far quicker than is realistic.

So we always advise service providers to be very clear at the outset as to how long things may take, and to provide realistic timescales for work they're carrying out. In some areas of law, for example litigation, it is difficult for a service provider to provide an accurate timescale of when the claim will resolve – because they will not know, at



the start of the claim, what the ability and intention of the other side in the claim are with regards to settlement. Even so, the more information that the service provider can give at the start, the less likely the client is to want to raise a complaint about delay.

If a delay develops which is outside the service provider's control, we always advise them to let their client know what is causing the delay and why, and then provide regular updates to let them know what has changed as things develop.

Where a delay is being caused by a third party, we would expect to see service providers chasing that third party on behalf of their client, although we recognise that some cases this will not be possible. Our test is always to determine what is fair and reasonable – and we don't expect service providers to be on the telephone every day chasing, for example, medical evidence in support of a personal injury claim or the seller of a property for responses to enquiries made. We just check that there have been reasonable attempts made by the service provider to chase for a response.

There are of course complaints where I have determined that there have been unreasonable delays, or a failure to progress a matter, which are not outside the service provider's control. This tends to be where the matter instructed is not urgent, but the service provider then receives urgent instructions on other retainers which understandably take priority – resulting in the non-urgent

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matter being left. This is particularly common in wills and probate matters. It can often be the case that the service provider deals with other retainers and 'takes their eye off the ball' in respect of the non-urgent matter.

Because of this, we always advise firms to diarise reviews of the non-urgent files to ensure that it is regularly picked up and the client updated. This is particularly relevant if the client care letter sets out a schedule for such updates. We always look at what the client has been told and therefore expects, and this will be a material consideration when making a decision about the level of service provided.

In light of this, I would say that most complaints about delay that we uphold are as much about communication with the client – which is always key when dealing with legal matters and central to high standards of service.

# Legal Costs Update



By Nick McDonnell (pictured on the left) and Colin Campbell (right)

Here, in Kain Knight Costs Lawyers' regular monthly legal costs update, we focus on those cases which we believe are likely to have a practical relevance for its members. We welcome feedback and if there is an area, topic or case you would like us to address, please let us know.

The most important case this month is the decision of the Court of Appeal in *Diag Human SE v Volterra Fietta* [2023] Costs LR 1511. In proceedings in which solicitors had acted for the claimant under a Conditional Fee Agreement (CFA), Stuart-Smith LJ held that the court below (see [2022] Costs LR 1209) had been correct to uphold the decision of the Master who had assessed the defendant's bill of \$2,929,928.38 at nil in determining a preliminary issue under s.70 Solicitors Act 1974. It had been common ground that the CFA was unenforceable as it had included a success fee that could exceed 100% and had not stated the success fee percentage contrary to s 58 Courts and Legal Services Act (CLSA) 1990. The solicitors argued that the offending term could be severed, so that at least base costs would be payable, alternatively, that the firm was entitled to payment on a quantum meruit basis. Those arguments were unanimously rejected: worse for the solicitors, reversing the decision of Garland J in *Aratra Potato Co Ltd v Taylor Joynson Hicks*, the court directed that any sums already billed and paid should be reimbursed to the client – a mere \$1.5m!

Another case where it all went wrong for the lawyers is *Glaser KC v Atay* [2023] EWHC 2539 (KB). Here two barristers had

undertaken work under the Public Access Scheme for fees to include trial. However, the trial had been adjourned, at which point the client withdrew her instructions, and refused to pay the fees. Turner J held that the barristers were entitled to nothing. The payment term had been unfair under s.62 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015, meaning that the contract fell to be treated as if the entirety of the payment term had never existed. It followed that the barristers had no contractual right to payment of the agreed price at any time. In what other walks of life could lawyers do good work and go unpaid, it might be asked? Is the answer that it is the lawyers who write the contract, so they only have themselves to blame?

Next, an unusual costs budgeting case. In *South Tees Development Corporation v PD Teesport Limited* [2023] EWHC 2270 (Ch.) Trower J held that the successful defendant on an appeal should have the costs. Although the costs of the appeal had not been included in its costs budget and no application to vary it under CPR 3.15A had been made, Trower J found that (1) the costs of any appeal are not to be included in the form of costs budget mandated by the CPR, (2) the defendant was not under any obligation to vary its precedent H and

(3) the fact it did not do so did not have any effect on the way in which the court's discretion ought to be exercised when considering the appropriate costs order to be made in relation to the appeal, so the defendant was entitled to its costs.

For an extraordinary case on the making of an indemnity basis costs order, see **X v Transcription Agency LLP** [2023] EWHC 2283 (KB) in which the claimant in a claim for a subject access request under the [Data Protection Act 2018](#), had made unfounded allegations of dishonesty and improper conduct against the judge. He had also aggressively pursued litigation against the transcription service, seeking to force it to reveal its insurer, in a manner which was outside the norm. Indemnity basis costs ordered.

Hot of the legal press is a long and thorough judgment by Freedman J in which he refused to make a non-party costs order (NPCO) against the claimant's solicitors - see **The Scout Association -v- Bolt Burdon Kemp** [2023] EWHC 2575 (KB). In brief, it was the defendant's case that the solicitors should satisfy various adverse costs orders made against the claimant which they could not enforce due to QOCS. That argument failed, the court holding that, contrary to

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A recent study identified that 52% of menopausal women experienced some kind of sleep disorder

the defendant's assertion, the solicitors could not be described as the “real party” to the litigation. In the context of an NPCO application, that would usually be determined by reference to whether the solicitor was acting “beyond or outside the role of a solicitor.” The firm was not, so the application failed.

Lastly a brief mention of the costs aspect in **V (Medical Treatment)** [2023] EWCA Civ 1190. See paragraphs 1, 42-43 and 49-57. The Court of Appeal was not persuaded to depart from [Rule 19.3 of the Court of Protection Rules 2017](#) which provide that, “where the proceedings concern P's personal welfare the general rule is that there will be no order as to the costs of the proceedings”.

As always, these are a selection of the principal recent cases which are likely to be of use to practitioners and if any further information is required, please contact either Nick McDonnell or Colin Campbell at [Nick.McDonnell@kain-knight.co.uk](mailto:Nick.McDonnell@kain-knight.co.uk) or [Colin.Campbell@kain-knight.co.uk](mailto:Colin.Campbell@kain-knight.co.uk)

# Navigating Career Transitions in Law

by The Solicitors' Charity CEO Nick Gallagher

## Helping solicitors follow the right career path

A solicitor's career path can be a long one, with many twists and turns that can lead to more fulfilling work and greater success – but sometimes into a dead end.

Solicitors working under stress and in situations that leave them overwhelmed and depressed can turn to us for support and understanding of what is needed to put them back on the right road.

Our wellbeing service is available to those in the profession who will benefit from personal career coaching, helping them to confidently navigate the jobs market and find a new direction.

Since 2014, 117 individuals have accessed expert career counselling and coaching services from our preferred supplier, Renovo.

During the pandemic, more solicitors sought support with their career plans, whether it was another career in law, like Family Mediation, or a move away from law altogether.

In particular, 2020 was a busy year, with 28 requests for support and expertise. Everyone spent more time at home during the Covid crisis and used the space to reflect on their lives, including all-important careers. Many discovered that what was important to them was to live a fulfilled and happy existence.



Support is available for solicitors to navigate the jobs market to help them find a better future





For example, young solicitor Faye found herself at a low ebb, suffering from debilitating chronic fatigue syndrome and Long COVID, which meant she couldn't work.

She was supported by The Solicitors' Charity and after a period of recuperation was interested in preparing to get back into the workforce. She was registered on Renovo's three-month programme and found it improved her chances of enhancing her job options.

She said: "My personal coach was great from the start; very accessible and we worked through various aspects that I needed to focus on. This made me identify my strengths and visualise what my ideal job might look like."

Before any job interviews, she had 45-minute sessions with her coach to work on the competency-based questions she was likely to be asked. "The experience was transformational; I secured a new post in a new area of law which was an amazing opportunity. I cannot thank The Solicitors' Charity enough for supporting me and offering me the means to land this great new position!"

It's usual for those contacting The Solicitors' Charity to be supported by a range of services for a truly holistic approach, of which Renovo is a prime example. For instance, someone may come initially short term asking for help to get through a bad patch. Through building a relationship with our casework team, they may go on to benefit from a variety of support such as longer term mental health support for stress, alongside tailored career counselling.

Renovo can support individuals with all aspects of career transition, whether that be finding and securing a new role, looking

at consultancy or self-employment or considering a complete change in career direction.

People on the programmes get access to flexible, personalised virtual career coaching along with access to a wide range of digital resources, including career profiling assessments, CV building tools, interview simulators and a series of online workshops on a range of key career transition and job search topics.

Overall, there is very positive feedback from the solicitors that have been referred to the programmes offered by Renovo. Here are some of the comments from some of those benefiting from this specialist support:

- "My coach was a guide, navigator, and advisor about the modern workplace. It had been 12 years since I last drafted a CV, and I had no idea how much they had changed."
- "Workfriend [the bespoke career transition and job search programme provided by Renovo] is an accurate label for this online facility. The various modules, subjects and video tutorials are modern, focused and easily understood. It is like having a complete toolbox at your disposal which you can use in your own time."
- "My confidence was at an all-time low when I was registered on the programme, but my coach really worked on resilience and restoring my confidence in myself and my capabilities."

We're doing great things to make a real positive difference to legal professionals during their tough times. So, if you're struggling, please get in touch.

[www.thesolicitorscharity.org](http://www.thesolicitorscharity.org)



# Pet of the month

Is your pet the perfect poser? Whether you have a cute cat, delightful dog, fabulous fish, gorgeous guinea pig, happy horse, brilliant bird, smart spider, luscious lizard - you get the picture - whatever animal you own we want to see and hear about them!

Each month we'll pick a couple of 'Pets of the Month' for the next edition so keep a look out to see if your pet has made it, modelling in The Messenger magazine!

Simply send us a photo that captures your pet/pet's individual personality and complete the questions below:

**Name:** Ruth Peters

**Firm:** Olliers Solicitors

**Pet Name:** Loki

**Pet Nickname:** Locust

**What kind of pet do you have?**  
White German Shepherd

**Is your pet:** Male

**How old is your pet:** 3

**Favourite Toy:** tennis ball

**Favourite Activity:** playing with a ball and swimming

**Favourite Treat:** steak and/or pig's ears

**What would your pet say, if they could speak, to the following -**

My perfect day would be a spot of sunbathing on the patio in the morning, protecting my mum while she is working hard by barking at anyone who dares to come anywhere near our drive - followed

by a long walk and a spot of swimming so I can get my beautiful white coat filthy!

**My favourite thing my parents do**

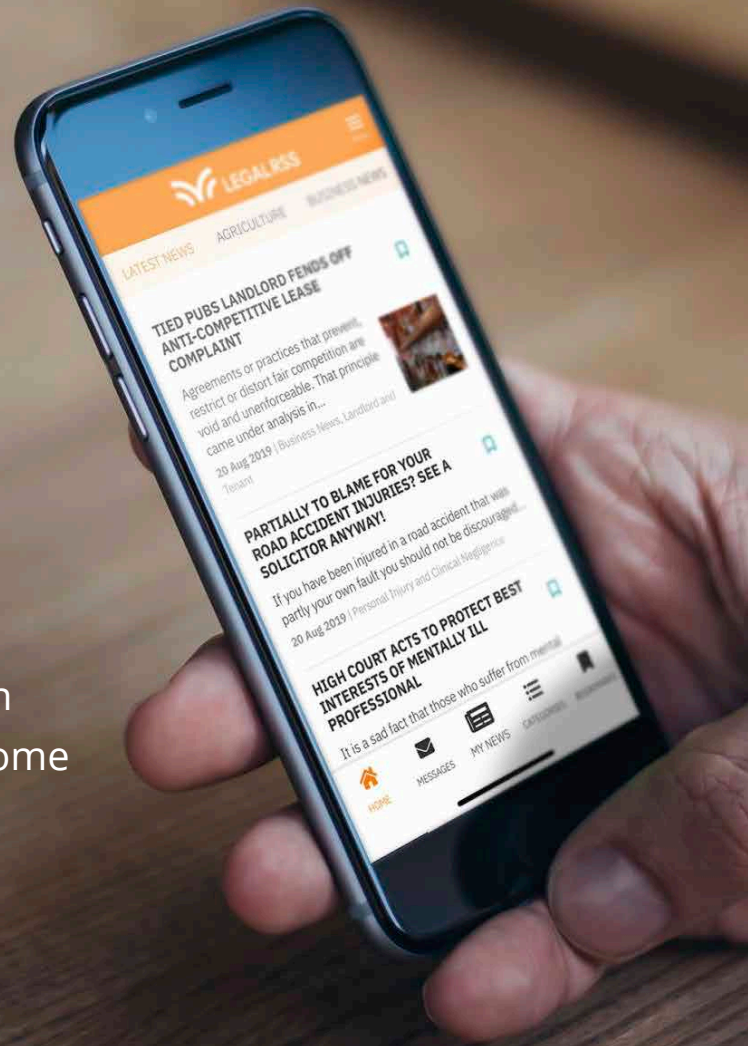
Simply existing! My sole purpose is to look after my mum and protect her and my two human brothers.



Download the questionnaire [here](#) then send your answers and photo to [Messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk](mailto:Messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk)

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