



April 2024

the Messenger

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Passover celebrations



The Master of the Rolls speaks at the MLS AI Conference

With AI making a significant impact on the way we work and the lives we live, Manchester Law Society's AI conference was well timed to help attendees understand where the risks and opportunities of the developing technology lie and what to expect next.



AI image generated by the Master of the Rolls

The conference also gave an insight into how some of our colleagues and the courts are approaching the issue and was topped off with an address by the Master of the Rolls, Sir Geoffrey Vos, who set out how the courts and judges are approaching the issue, a copy of the speech can be found [here](#) .

Experts included James Akrigg, the conference Chair and long-time technology leader, speaker and advisor. Following over 18 years at Microsoft, James now works on the latest AI and developer tools to create digital products and advise business leaders in accelerating change with technology.

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MIL AWARDS 2024

BOOK YOUR PLACE!

Thursday 6th June 2024 at The Midland Hotel

For more information:

www.manchesterlegalawards.co.uk @MLAwards

Event host



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From the President

David Anderson, President

March was a month in which Manchester Law Society displayed its national significance and its ability to support and represent Manchester's legal community.

On the 6th of March we launched the Manchester Law Society App, a new communication and engagement tool for members of Manchester Law Society and the wider Manchester community. On the 8th of March we held the A.I Conference and welcomed Sir Geoffrey Vos, the Master of the Rolls as keynote speaker. On the 13th of March we welcomed Nick Emmerson, the President of the Law Society, to MLS Towers for a small roundtable with me and a selection of the other Officers of the Society. In addition we hosted the Employment Law Conference on the 12th of March and a number of smaller specialist committee meetings through the Month. The month will end (I am writing this on the 13th of March) with a meeting with the SRA to discuss their Consumer Protection Review. At each of these meetings a number of MLS members and Officers made clear the exceptional talent we have in the region.

We have been able to highlight the importance of local law societies and to have an influential voice as one of the largest of those societies. These efforts are crucial to ensure our voice remains heard and influential. The MLS App will assist us in ensuring more voices are heard and views are more readily available and will ensure we can continue that great work in the coming months. Please take the time to read the article in this edition and to download and engage on the app.

I have produced a review of the AI conference elsewhere in this edition of *The Messenger*, so will not give away the content of that article here, save to say that it is a significant coup to be able to bring the Master of the Rolls from London to give a keynote address on how he sees AI influencing court proceedings, and perhaps even outcomes, in the future. It seems AI will be a significant feature on most aspect of life, and law is in no way isolated from that inevitability.

We could not boast the influence or pull that we have if we represented and engaged with a smaller audience. Collaboration and engagement remains top of my agenda for 2024.

The AI conference also served to remind me of the exceptional work that goes on behind the scenes. We have, for many years, been grateful of the work of Fran Eccles-Bech. I am one of a succession of Presidents who benefits from her knowledge, contacts and hard work every day. Perhaps less familiar to some is Carla Jones*. Carla provides invaluable support to Fran, but also to Council and the Society and we are equally lucky to have her. More recently, we were joined by Chandre May, who is coming close to the end of her apprenticeship, having grown into the role in the past 12 months. They are a formidable team, putting on excellent events and making sure we can continue to be the collective face and voice of Manchester's legal community.

**Although she has worked for the Society for a decade this month!*

the Messenger



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Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

Manchester Law Society

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Send your stories to: messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

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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

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



Upcoming events

10 April 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

16 April 2024
MLS Council Meeting

17 April 2024
Property Law Conference

19 April 2024
Manchester Legal Awards Shortlist
Announced

19 April 2024
Messenger Deadline

29 April 2024
Membership & Social Committee Meeting

30 April 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

1 May 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

2 May 2024
Employment Law Forum Meeting

9 May 2024
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
Meeting

10 May 2024
Manchester Legal Awards Judging Day

14 May 2024
MLS Council Meeting

16 May 2024
Family Law Committee Meeting

21 May 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

22 May 2024
Private Client Committee Meeting

23 May 2024
Spring Posh Pub Quiz

24 May 2024
Messenger Deadline

30 May 2024
Crown and Magistrates Court Committee
Meeting

4 June 2024
MLS Council Meeting

5 June 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

6 June 2024
Manchester Legal Awards Ceremony

12 June 2024
Civil Litigation Committee Meeting

18 June 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

21 June 2024
Messenger Deadline

26 June 2024
Regulatory Conference

2 July 2024
MLS Council Meeting

3 July 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

4 July 2024
Employment Law Forum Meeting

10 July 2024
Local Authority Conference

12 July 2024
"It's Not The Euros!" MLS Football
Tournament in aid of We Love MCR Charity

CLICK FOR MORE INFO

Manchester Pride Brunch

Have you decided how you'll be celebrating Manchester Pride yet? Why not come along, with your friends, family and colleagues, and join us for our exclusive Manchester Pride Brunch?

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event from



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M A N C H E S T E R
A L E O N A R D O R O Y A L H O T E L



Saturday 24 August 2024

11:00 - 14:00 followed by a cash bar



**Trafford Suite, Midland Hotel,
Manchester, M60 2DS**



£48.00 including VAT per guest

Includes a drink on arrival, brunch, glitter bar,
specially discounted cocktails, and access to the
exclusive viewing space on the steps of The Midland

To book email

ChandreMay@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk



16 July 2024
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

16 July 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

19 July 2024
Messenger Deadline

07 August 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

20 August 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

23 August 2024
Messenger Deadline

24 August 2024
Manchester Pride Brunch 2024 in aid of Out Together

04 September 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

05 September 2024
Crown and Magistrates Court Committee Meeting

10 September 2024
MLS Council Meeting

11 September 2024
Civil Litigation Committee Meeting

17 September 2024
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

18 September 2024
Private Client Committee Meeting

20 September 2024
Messenger Deadline

24 September 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

25 September 2024
Private Client Conference

1 October 2024
MLS Council Meeting

2 October 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

3 October 2024
Employment Law Forum Meeting

9 October 2024
Family Law Conference

15 October 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

18 October 2024
Messenger Deadline

5 November 2024
MLS Council Meeting

6 November 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

12 November 2024
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

19 November 2024
MLS Officers Meeting

20 November 2024
Private Client Committee Meeting

22 November 2024
Messenger Deadline

3 December 2024
MLS Council Meeting & AGM

4 December 2024
Communications Committee Meeting

11 December 2024
Civil Litigation Committee Meeting

13 December 2024
Messenger Deadline

17 December 2024
MLS Officers Meeting



**POSH
PUB
QUIZ**

Thursday 23 May 2024

Book in and bubbles: 18:00 – 18:30

Quiz: 18:30 – 21:30

Entry is £25.00 + VAT (£30.00) per team member

Maximum 5 per team

**Manchester Hall, 36 Bridge Street,
Manchester, M3 3BT**

In aid of



JOIN US



Come on everyone get Appy

The Manchester Law Society App' is live on the [App Store](#) and on [Google Play](#)! It is a momentous occasion for the Society, as it marks the first time a local law society has launched a member app. The purpose of the app is to assist member communication and integration, enabling lawyers from across the region to come together in an easily accessible and secure digital space and share experiences, knowledge and opportunities.

The app was officially launched at an event at the Gotham Hotel on the 6th of March 2024, bringing together Council members, firm ambassadors and other Manchester Law Society members. The event was hosted by a group of representatives from [Engage Solutions Group](#), the digital engagement specialists who developed the app for the Society as part of their ESG programme to help Manchester's various

sectors engage for the benefit of the sector and the city.

David Anderson, President of Manchester Law Society, and Phil Wedgwood, CEO of Engage, each gave a short speech to the packed event. In his speech, David emphasised the importance of community and collaboration, particularly post-Covid, and of engaging with colleagues in the professional community in Manchester, sharing experiences and challenges and learning from one another. The app, he said, would help local lawyers to build ties and a sense of belonging that would hopefully lead to those relationships extending from the digital space and into in-person events and opportunities.

David thanked Phil and the team at engage for recognising the opportunity to bring Manchester's lawyers closer and the





Home

Welcome to Manchester Law Society



important role MLS has in that objective. Phil spoke of his determination to improve communication and engagement, both across the region and in individual firms, noting some of the exceptional clients Engage had created bespoke applications for in the past and his firm's drive to ensure they give back to the local community. The success of the app depends on those who make it live and breathe and the launch of the app is just the first step in that process.

Recognising the importance of a thriving legal services profession to the city, Engage Solutions Group offered to develop the app free of charge, working with Fran Eccles-Bech and Carla Jones for countless hours to ensure it will be a success. Over the coming weeks and months, the app content will continue to grow as it becomes an additional communication tool that the Society relies on to reach its membership and, it is hoped, the membership relies on to reach out to the Society and each other.

Read more about the app [here](#) .

Continued on page 12





What is the app for?

Networking and Collaboration

Providing the ultimate platform for members to connect, share, and learn from each other the app offers exclusive access to a variety of features, including:

- *Engaging Content:* Stay informed with legal updates, articles, and insights
- *Professional Contacts:* Connect with fellow lawyers, legal professionals, and experts
- *News and Events:* Get real-time updates on legal events, seminars, and workshops
- *Deals and Offers:* Access special discounts and offers for Manchester Law Society Members.

Role-Based Groups and Specialities

- Members can join groups based on their roles (e.g., solicitors, barristers) and areas of expertise (e.g., family law, corporate law)
- Tailored content and discussions relevant to their practice areas.

Secure Messaging

- Connect with colleagues securely within the app
- Discuss best practice, seek advice, and collaborate on legal matters

Celebrating Achievements

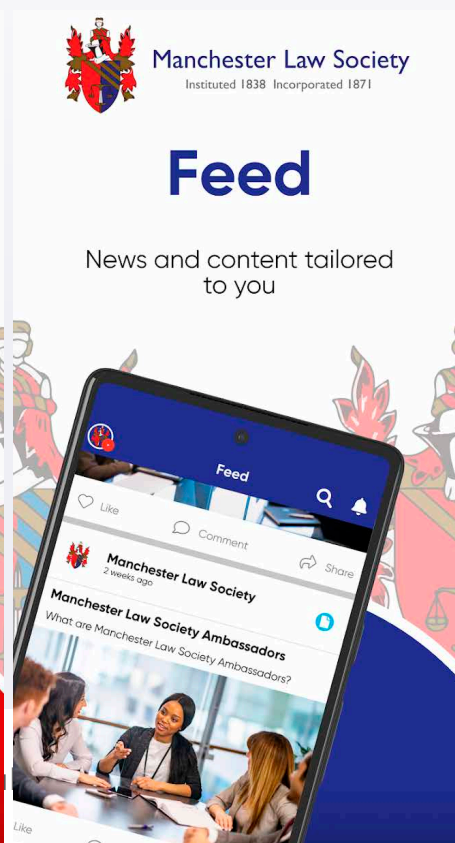
- Members can support and celebrate each other's professional milestones
- Recognise outstanding contributions within the legal community.

Non-Member Features

- Non-members can access information on legal advice and use the 'Lawyer Locator' to find a suitable law firm
- Enhances accessibility and outreach to the wider legal community.

How do I access the app?

- Download the app to your phone
- Click existing member sign up
- Log in using the last name and email address you use for your MLS membership
- Set up your security questions
- Now log in and have a look around!





Downward Spiral book launch

The Manchester launch of *Downward spiral* by John Bowers KC is at the House of Books and Friends, King St in Manchester on April 24th from 6pm.

The Johnson era will be remembered for a series of scandals that severely eroded trust in the British government. From questionable PPE tenders and public appointments to the 'partygate' fiasco, every aspect of public life seemed tainted. How did this downward spiral begin, and what can be done to reverse it? In this eye-opening book, veteran KC John Bowers presents a fearless examination of the decline in ethical standards before, during and after the Johnson government. Through interviews with political insiders, Bowers provides analysis of scandals such as partygate, Greensill and the revolving door with the private sector.

John Bowers KC is Principal of Brasenose College, University of Oxford. He was called to the Bar in 1979 and took silk in 1998. Described as 'an employment law rock star', he is the author of fifteen books, including *Bowers on Employment Law*, *The Law of Industrial Action and Trade Union Recognition and Whistleblowing*. He is a former chair of Bar Disciplinary Summary Tribunals and a member of the Bar Council's Race Relations Committee. Since 2005 he has been a Bencher of Middle Temple.

Tickets are on sale now, and can be purchased [here](#), ticket + book option also available.

“

The Johnson era will be remembered for a series of scandals that severely eroded trust in the British government

You Are Invited



Downward
spiral



Collapsing public standards
and how to restore them

JOHN
BOWERS KC

Book launch for *Downward spiral* by John Bowers KC

Tickets on sale now

24th April 2024

House of Books & Friends
King St, Manchester

06.00 PM
07.30 PM



Eamonn O'Neal appointed High Sheriff of Greater Manchester

A TV and radio broadcaster, and supporter of the Law Society, has been chosen by King Charles as the next High Sheriff of Greater Manchester.

The appointment of Eamonn O'Neal was formally announced by Buckingham Palace today and he will take up his ceremonial role next month.

In an unusual move, the father-of-three, from Sale, will be installed as High Sheriff for a second time, having previously held the position in 2020. This is unique in the history of Greater Manchester, as O'Neal has now been appointed by two different monarchs.

He will be installed as High Sheriff at Wardley Hall, Salford in April, succeeding Mary Elizabeth Walker whose term of office ends at that point.



Eamonn O'Neal

O'Neal, who will hold office for 12 months, has been a prominent broadcaster and journalist in the North West, having been head of regional programmes at *Granada Television*, Managing Editor of the *Manchester Evening News* and a presenter with *BBC Radio Manchester*.

He said: "It's a huge honour and quite humbling to be chosen as High Sheriff of Greater Manchester again. I'm grateful to have the chance to connect and engage with the charitable, voluntary, faith, ethnic, cultural and business communities across the county."

O'Neal was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Arts degree by the University of Bolton in 2015 in recognition of his 'outstanding contribution to the media and charity.'

The Office of High Sheriff is the oldest secular title in British history and among the most ancient in the world, dating back more than 1,300 years.

At that time the Sheriff represented the monarch, collected taxes, raised armies and was the rule of law across the county.

O'Neal said: "I won't be collecting taxes, or raising an army, but as High Sheriff I'll be proud to represent the King as the ceremonial head of the judiciary in the county."

"I also regard this Royal appointment as recognition of the importance of meaningful connection with the communities. I have had a long association with the Manchester Law Society and I hope that relationship will flourish during my Shrieval year."

Solicitor firms in Manchester invited to boost business and give back to charity in 2024 Will Aid campaign

Now's the time for solicitor firms to sign up to participate in this year's Will Aid campaign – which brings a host of opportunities including attracting new clients, boosting your reach, and helping seven of the UK's best-loved charities too.

Will Aid is an annual charity Will-writing scheme that sees hundreds of solicitors donate time in the month of November to write basic Wills. Instead of charging their usual fee for writing basic wills, solicitors invite clients to make an upfront donation to Will Aid with the donations benefiting the Will Aid partner charities.

It has been running since 1988 and has encouraged more than 350,000 people to write their Will with a regulated and insured solicitor and, in so doing has raised more than £24 million in donations, and many millions more in pledged legacies.

Boost to business

Helping others and supporting the local community is one of the main reasons why law firms sign up to take part in Will Aid each year.

But there are a whole host of business benefits to being part of Will Aid – such as meeting new clients, boosting staff morale, and raising your solicitors' local profile.

In 2023, there were 323 mentions of Will Aid in local and national press, on TV and radio, and in online publications – giving amazing exposure to those firms who helped people gain peace of mind by getting a Will professionally drawn up, while supporting charities as well.

Attracting new clients

There are always more people wanting to participate in Will Aid than there are available appointments, and as well as face-to-face sessions, firms can also offer remote appointments – meaning Will Aid is an effective way to widen the client network.

And the Will Aid team make it easy for you to take part. There is an easy-to-use and fully secure online dashboard to help solicitors keep track of where they are with each enquiry, and it's up to firms to decide how many Will Aid instructions they take.

Helping people at home and beyond

Lauren Smith, from Sheffield and Doncaster-based Taylor Bracewell, said the firm has been part of the Will Aid scheme for more than 10 years and found the process straightforward and worthwhile, attracting hundreds of clients a year.

"Taking part in Will Aid says that your firm has the interests of people right at its heart," she said. "Whether that's clients who want to put their affairs in order and provide for their loved ones with a professionally written Will, or those people who depend on the support of some of the UK's best-loved charities.

"Our involvement with Will Aid sent out that powerful message, and it was heard loud and clear. We attracted almost 300 new clients in 2023 as a result.

Continued on page 16

From p.15

“

Participating solicitors regularly see Will Aid clients return for additional services and have even been highlighted in the national and regional press for their incredible work.”

“The number of Wills you choose to write is up to you, so you always feel in complete control of your workload and calendar. I was surprised how easy it was to inform the Will Aid team that we were at capacity.

“In fact, they were incredibly helpful in supporting us every step of the way – whether that was helping us keep track of enquiries through their secure online dashboard or sharing PR materials with us to help us promote our involvement.”

A golden opportunity

Will Aid Campaign Director Peter de Vena Franks added: “We are always looking for firms to come on board to help fulfil enquires as appointments for Will Aid get booked up extremely quickly, and each year, we receive far more demand than we can fulfil.

“Participating solicitors regularly see Will Aid clients return for additional services and have even been highlighted in the national and regional press for their incredible work.

“We encourage solicitor firms, new or returning, to sign up to Will Aid 2024 and use this opportunity to support some of the UK’s best-loved charities, all while welcoming new clients and boosting the profile of your business.


“Participating in Will Aid is simple and beneficial for all involved. If your firm has

any questions before registering for this year, please do not hesitate to get in touch via our website, one of our team members will be more than happy to assist.”

Top tips

- When you take part in Will Aid, the number of new clients you take on is completely up to you.
- Just let the Will Aid team know when you are fully booked, and they will take you off the list.
- You can also choose to be on our remote list and reach clients all over the country. Listing your firm on the remote list gives prospective Will makers the chance to find and contact you, no matter where in the UK you’re based, so you can grow your client base even further.
- We have a secure online dashboard to help you keep track of where you are with each of your enquiries, as well as PR materials to help you promote your involvement with Will Aid.

Ready to win some new clients and change lives for the better?

To take part in Will Aid, follow these simple steps: Call the Will Aid team on 0300 0300 013 or visit willaid.org.uk/register 



Save the date: UK Pro Bono Week 2024 taking place 4-8 November

Following a hugely successful Pro Bono Week 2023, this year's event will expand on the insights and support delivered by PBW 2023.

The 23rd annual Pro Bono Week will be taking place from 4-8 November 2024, bringing together the UK legal community to collaborate and innovate – with the goal of enabling more qualified legal assistance to be provided free of charge to those who need it most.

Pro Bono Week 2023 saw over 60 events take place across the UK, involving an estimated 3,000 people participating to shine a spotlight on the UK legal sector's rich history of – and modern commitment to – pro bono initiatives.

Events last November focused on the impact of pro bono on the lives of members of the public and highlighted how much young lawyers across the profession value pro bono within their industry.

Key takeaways from last year included the launch of the first guide to [Pro Bono and Other Free Advice in Scotland](#), the publication by the Law Society of England and Wales of [case studies](#) showing the real life impact of pro bono by solicitors, the revelation that [49% of barristers undertook pro bono](#) in the past year, the announcement of a new [South West Chancery Litigant In Person Support Scheme](#) and South West County Court Appeals Scheme, alongside the launch of [Pro Bono Expert Support](#) and a range of other launches and projects.



Pro bono work is legal advice or representation provided free of charge by volunteer lawyers to those who cannot pay for legal services but are not eligible for legal aid. Pro Bono Week seeks to recognise, showcase and raise awareness of the voluntary commitment of solicitors, barristers, advocates and chartered legal executives across the UK to help those in need. It also aims to encourage more legal professionals to undertake pro bono work.

In announcing the date for Pro Bono Week 2024, the organisers have signposted that in June they will reveal the themes for this year's discussions and events, in order to assist organisers to plan their own events and communications to take place in November.

Looking ahead to Pro Bono Week 2024, Toby Brown, chair of UK Pro Bono Week commented: "It remains important that the legal community comes together for Pro Bono Week every November, putting a spotlight on legal pro bono and recognising those lawyers who generously volunteer their time. We look forward to revealing the themes for Pro Bono Week 2024 and supporting everyone to organise their own events in the coming months."

April Fool's Day

No one can really decide where April Fools' Day comes from, but one thing we can all agree on is that it's hilarious to prank your friends, family and colleagues on the 1 April.

Some people and organisations have managed to fool not only their friends, but whole countries. Here's our breakdown of some of the funniest and most ambitious April Fools' Day pranks ever carried out.

The Swiss spaghetti harvest

No list of April Fools could miss this Panorama stunt from 1957. It is ranked #1 in list of the [Top 100 April Fool Hoaxes of all time](#) on the Museum of Hoaxes website! It is also believed to be the first time the medium of television was used to stage an April Fool's Day hoax.

Richard Dimbleby anchored the piece about a particularly bountiful crop of spaghetti in Switzerland. In the programme, they explained that the uniform length of spaghetti was down to years of skilled harvesting and the bumper year was thanks to the mild weather and, in part, due to the disappearance of the pesky spaghetti weevil.

The story was on television – then a relatively new invention – and Auntie Beeb would never lie... would it?

When viewers contacted the programme to ask how they could grow their own spaghetti trees, they were reportedly told to stick some spaghetti in a tin of chopped tomatoes and hope for the best.

You can watch the piece [here](#)

The islands of San Serriffe

If you think typefaces can't be funny, think again.

In 1977, the Guardian published a travel guide to the mysterious island grouping of San Serriffe. The two islands, Upper Caisse and Lower Caisse, formed the shape of a semicolon.

If that wasn't enough to raise your suspicions, the part detailing education on the island read: "in addition to the mainstream subjects a San Serriffe teenager may well be offered pearl-diving as an A level choice".

You wouldn't be alone in wondering: "how do we sign up to go to school there?"!





Defying gravity

This prank was out of this world and made lots of people look very silly.

In 1976, renowned astronomer Patrick Moore appeared on BBC Radio 2 and announced that at 9:47am, we would feel what he called the 'Jovian-Plutonian gravitational effect'.

He said that at that exact moment, the planets would align and gravity on Earth would get a tiny bit weaker, so if you jumped in the air at exactly the right moment, you would almost float.

Pi in the sky

Do you find the value of pi impossible to remember? Well then, this one's for you.

In 1998, news circulated that the state of Alabama was to pass a law that would redefine pi to the 'Biblical value' of 3, and it made people furious.

When people started to write in to the Alabama state department to ask why they would do such a thing, it was revealed that physicist Mark Boslough (renowned for his humorous takes on science education) had started the rumour as an April Fools prank.

Big Ben becomes Digital Dave

Following renovations, we now have the bongs of Big Ben back. However, at one point the BBC Overseas Service (now called the World Service) tried to convince the world that it would change to electronic beeps.

In 1980, they announced to listeners that not only was the iconic clock face going digital, but that the first people to get in touch could win the hands of the clock.



Unfortunately, this did not go down as well as they'd hoped and the BBC was apologising for weeks after the joke was made. Some people just clearly didn't see the funny side!

Left-handed toilet paper

Why should right-handers be closer to cleanliness? In 2015, Cottonelle tweeted that it was introducing left-handed toilet paper for all those southpaws out there.

The joke followed a 1998 stunt by Burger King about its new 'Left Handed Whopper'.

Don't drink and surf

In 1994, PC Magazine ran a column about a bill making its way through Congress that would prohibit the use of the internet while intoxicated. Although the name of the contact person was listed as Lirpa Sloof (spell her name backwards), many people took the story seriously.

In retrospect, however, perhaps the bill – fake or not – wasn't a bad idea!

Let us know what your best April Fool's pranks have been – either ones you instigated or ones you were the recipient of! Send them to ManchesterLawSociety@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

Viewing menopause through a different lens!

Over the course of the articles that I have written on menopause for the Manchester Law Society I hope it is apparent that it's a subject I am both passionate about personally and in speaking with others about. As I have mentioned previously, I wish that in my early forties, when approaching menopause, I had known even just a little of what I now know. This is why I am an advocate of educating women of all ages so that they can be as well prepared for this stage in their lives as is possible.

When I deliver sessions on menopause to my clients, the response is usually positive from all age groups and both men and women who are present. However, occasionally I have had younger women say to me that they had no idea what menopause might involve and, in light of the information they were just given, now have concerns or are a bit worried about what they will experience when they reach their menopause. Recently one young woman stated that she felt "triggered" by the information that was provided and was very concerned about sharing any issues she may experience with her employer, despite her employer arranging the session and providing a formal menopause policy. As someone engaged by a client to deliver information on a particular topic you never set out to intentionally worry or "trigger" a member of your audience. This

individual's reaction set me thinking about why some younger women might be worried when presented with the information about something that they will inevitably go through, and for some it might be a lot sooner than they anticipate.

On reflection I can understand where the concerned female audience member was coming from. Whilst women in the workplace have seen their rights evolve considerably in the last 55 years (starting with the Equal Pay Act in 1970; Sex Discrimination Act in 1975; Statutory Maternity pay in 1986; Statutory Maternity Leave in 1993; Equality Act in 2010; and more latterly the requirement for disclosure of gender pay gap's in 2018 for companies with over 250 employees), women still only account for just over 40% of board members for the FTSE 350 companies.** Whilst this

figure has been achieved in advance of the original date set of December 2025, we are still seeing very few female CEOs in these companies with women occupying more of the functional type of board level roles. When we look at this achievement in the context of the findings of the "Women in the Workplace" study in 2022 that found women leaders were leaving their companies at the highest rates in years then we perhaps get more of a picture of what is happening outside of FTSE350 companies. This data suggests to me that women still have to work harder than their



Lisa Wright



male counterparts to achieve the same career outcomes and the anecdotal experiences of senior women I speak with seems to support this view. Therefore, I do understand why a woman might feel that she would potentially disadvantage herself in her workplace by disclosing she may be struggling as a result of her menopause. However, we can only continue to move the bar for women in the workplace by continuing such conversations.

The next area that I started to think about in relation to the worries expressed was that of the role the media has played in menopause awareness over the last few years. As with any topic in the mainstream media, its portrayal often becomes somewhat of a double-edged sword. Suddenly menopause and many celebrities experience of it are everywhere: discussed on television, in newspapers and magazines, the subject of podcasts, "insta" reels and TikTok videos. This you can argue can only be a good thing as it encourages discussion. When I reflect on what I personally saw, read, and listened to, the experiences related were more often about the negative aspects of menopause. Women talked about their struggles with a range of physical and psychological symptoms, marriages and career's nearly being destroyed, all until such time as these women "found" HRT- which was the silver bullet that saved them. Yes HRT can be part of the solution if you are struggling with menopause symptoms, but it's like any medication in that it can often take some time and involve trying different types and dosages to find what works best for you. As always it should be combined with looking closely at your overall health and if need be also making changes in other areas. So my advice would be to take a look at your diet and nutrition, your activity or exercise levels, consider your mental health and for the many women who cannot or who chose not to take HRT, investigate what alternative and complimentary therapies may be suitable for you.

“

I stand by my view that it is right to raise awareness around menopause in women of all ages”

Finally, I thought about what I could do differently and upon reflection I have concluded that perhaps I like many others, have forgotten some key positives about menopause that we should be sharing with the younger generation of women. Firstly, no more periods, PMS or spending money on sanitary products and you also have "the freedom to wear white" whenever you want! Secondly, it's a different experience for everybody, so you could be someone who breezes through this phase of your life with minimal symptoms and its over fairly quickly. And finally, when you reach menopause age, in all likelihood you will have had many good, bad, and indifferent experiences in your life. It is just the next phase of your life, whereby as an experienced and mature woman you can continue to flourish and grow.

I stand by my view that it is right to raise awareness around menopause in women of all ages and that being prepared is the best way to approach it, but I am going to remember to talk more about the positives of the journey as well.

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

****FTSE Women Leaders – achieving gender balance February 2023** [🔗](#)

Why is bullying still such a big issue for the legal sector?

Bullying remains a very common concern within the legal sector, and in 2023 there was an alarming 95% increase in the number of people contacting LawCare for support because of bullying, harassment or discrimination at work.

People who got in touch often said that they thought that bullying would never happen to them, and that they didn't feel able to speak out about it once it had. One trainee solicitor who was being bullied felt that they had to 'stick it out' until the end of their training contract. Another legal professional said that caring responsibilities and financial pressures made them feel trapped in their role.

Yet bullying is much more than just a problem for individuals, it also has a detrimental effect on legal organisations and the sector as a whole.

Bullying in the legal sector is not a new problem; it has been around for decades. So, is bullying just a price we pay for working in such a competitive and demanding profession? We don't think so.

Why does bullying thrive in the legal workplace?

The hierarchical and fast paced nature of working in the law can create an environment where bullying behaviours can thrive, particularly when bullying behaviour is not challenged.

LawCare's [Life in the Law research](#) showed that people working in the legal sector struggle with burnout, lack of autonomy at work, poor psychological safety, and very high workloads. These can create a

stressful work environment where bullying can flourish. This situation is exacerbated by managers who often lack the skills and time to manage conflicts when they arise. They avoid confrontation, so issues escalate, and bullying persists unchallenged.

The impact of bullying

Bullying takes many forms, from verbal abuse and micro-management to setting unrealistic deadlines and systematic exclusion. The effects of workplace bullying can be far-reaching; it impacts the person being bullied, the rest of the organisation and the legal sector as a whole.

Bullying has a damaging impact on people's lives and performance at work. Many people experience physical symptoms, such as stress, anxiety, depression, panic attacks and even PTSD. They may also become isolated as they withdraw from social groups as a result of the bullying. One person who contacted LawCare for support said that bullying impacted their confidence, sleep and finances. Financial hardship is particularly common where people feel they have no choice but to leave the organisation and sometimes even leave their careers.

Organisations where people are being bullied pay a very high price. Bullying creates a toxic work environment that can decrease productivity, lowers morale, and increases absenteeism. They may have high turnover rates where people leave, leading to a loss of valuable staff and increased recruitment and training costs. Additionally, organisations which don't tackle bullying face a greater risk of regulatory scrutiny, as bullying can undermine the ethical standards and professionalism expected of them.



The legal sector as whole is also compromised by bullying, it can harm professional relationships between colleagues, opposing lawyers and within the court system. This can lead to less collaboration and undermining of client trust, who may have their confidence eroded in the profession when they witness bullying behaviour between legal professionals. A reputation for bullying can spread beyond the legal community and reach clients, potential clients, and the general public.

How do we change this?

Addressing bullying in the workplace requires a collective effort from everyone within the legal sector to foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and openness.

You can help protect colleagues who are being bullied and contribute to cultural change in your organisation and in the wider legal sector. Here are a few ways you can make a difference:

- Make sure you can recognise bullying behaviours - be aware that it can be more subtle than name calling or intimidation.
- If you know someone who is being bullied, reach out to them in private. Let them know that you acknowledge what they are experiencing, and that it is not acceptable. Encourage them to document the incidents and signpost them to organisations, including LawCare and the National Bullying helpline, who can offer them support.
- Talk about bullying with your colleagues and leadership as this helps to break down stigma. Ask for training on workplace bullying, communication, and conflict resolution.

Furthermore, leadership within legal firms

and organisations must take a proactive stance to prevent bullying happening in the first place; bullying costs money and damages reputation, and there is also now the increased risk of regulatory sanctions. They must do much more than just have policies and reporting mechanisms. Leaders must publicly address the issue of bullying, take a clear stand against it, and actively promote a culture of respect. This could include:

- Talking about bullying at work and having a culture of openness.
- Making sure that people who are known bullies are not tolerated or rewarded, even if they are bringing in a lot of work and are otherwise successful.
- Including behavioural aspects of management in the appraisal process.
- Having regular training sessions about the signs of bullying, its impacts, and the importance of maintaining a respectful workplace.

In conclusion, creating healthier, more inclusive workplaces where bullying is not tolerated is essential for the long-term sustainability and integrity of the legal sector. It is crucial that all members of the legal community, from paralegals to senior partners, are part of this collective effort.

If you would like to know more LawCare has lots of information and resources about bullying, including *10 practical steps for managers on workplace bullying* [↗](#)

If you are being bullied, you can talk to LawCare about your situation and how you are feeling. It can be a good way to talk through your options. Call LawCare on: 0800 279 6888, email support@lawcare.org.uk [↗](#) or get in touch using the online chat on www.lawcare.org.uk [↗](#)

Culture – There’s nothing worse than forced fun

Every Firm wants their teams to be happy and productive. Owners, Equity Partners, Shareholders, they’re not stupid. They know full well, if their employees are happy, there will naturally be a knock-on effect on productivity and the bottom line. Similarly, employees who feel disengaged, unhappy, and devalued will most probably not perform as well.

So, how do you make them happy? I’ve seen it all down the years from pool tables and pizza Fridays through to table tennis and a fridge full of beer. All this is fine of course. There’s nothing wrong with creating a fun working environment. However, you’re in dreamland if you think this alone will create a happy culture.

I sometimes hear leaders saying, “We’ve given them all of these things and still they aren’t happy”. It doesn’t work like that. ‘Forced fun doesn’t create a happy culture. Employees aren’t daft. They know what’s going on and in many ways it’s counterproductive when it comes to creating a positive, healthy, and fun culture.

In my opinion, creating a positive, fun culture doesn’t require any spend at all, it’s completely free of charge.

Here’s what you need:

- Treat people with manners and respect – It should go without saying but all too often this doesn’t happen. Some leaders speak to people in such a derogatory and disrespectful way that it’s humiliating for the person on the receiving end. The bewildering thing is that leaders then expect that person to be happy at work – it’s mindboggling!



- Give them some recognition - If people do a good job, or they complete task for you, thank them, give them some feedback, give them some recognition. It doesn’t have to be anything major, just a simple thank you will do, or a thank you email or WhatsApp
- Create psychological safety – create an environment when everyone feels safe to challenge, to speak up and air their opinions. An environment where people can speak up if they are struggling without the fear of being belittled.
- What do you think? Ask for their opinion. Stop with the hierarchical structure where the manager makes all the decisions and feeds the changes down the line. Wherever possible, ask your team for their thoughts, opinions, and ideas. There’s a good chance they’ve got better ideas than you.

You see, it’s not hard to create a positive, healthy, and fun culture and it costs nothing. Mind you, I still think a pizza will always be warmly received by any team!

Need a hand creating a healthy culture in your team? Contact Mike on 07825301660 or email him direct on mike@potentialunearthed.co.uk ↗

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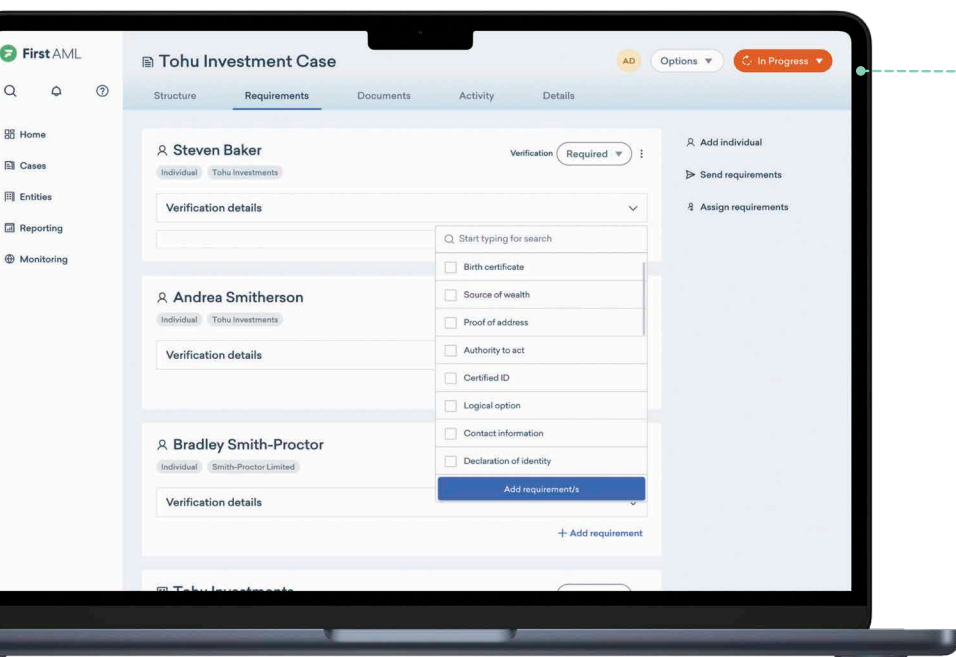
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26 Regulation Update & News

By **Andrea Cohen**, Compli, Weightmans



Welcome to Spring! We provide our usual overview of what has been happening in the last month in the world of risk and compliance, including recent regulatory and disciplinary decisions, and look ahead to what's on the horizon.

Amendments to the SRA sectoral risk assessment

On 5 March the [SRA published](#) an updated sectoral risk assessment in relation to anti-money laundering and terrorist financing

The major points to note and take into account when you review your firm-wide risk assessment, which you should now do, are as follows:

- Vendor fraud, pooled funds and funding platforms, third-party managed accounts and irregular methods of transferring funds have been added as new risks to be aware of.
- Sanctions now have their own risk heading, reflecting the continuing expansion of the sanctions regime.
- References to Covid-19 have been amended, with risks that are now part of usual business being retained those no longer relevant being deleted.
- Modern slavery is now flagged as a risk in relation to cash-based industries.
- Further references to AI and cybercrime have been added.
- The position with regard to domestic PEPs has been updated to reflect the recent change to MLR.

The SRA are continuing its desk-based reviews and firm visits and will ask to see your firm's written risk assessments and

policies, procedures and controls as part of its proactive supervision programme, or in response to specific information it has received. As we note in the Disciplinary and regulatory decisions section below, the SRA is continuing to take action against firms who fail to comply with their AML obligations, with the latest fines reported this month ranging from £3600 to £23000. From October to the beginning of March the SRA issued fines in relation to 19 firms, at least 10 of which were for £10,000 or higher. We are aware that there are a number of ongoing investigations, so we can expect to see similar decisions reported for some time. If you have any concerns in this regard, require an independent AML audit or general advice, the Compli team is on hand to aid you in this respect, so please do get in touch if we can be of assistance.

Economic crime and corporate transparency update

At the time of writing, the draft Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 (Financial Penalty) Regulations 2024 are at Commons committee stage. This is the latest development in the reform to economic crime and corporate transparency, a process which began in 2022.

Once in force, the Regulations will give the Registrar of Companies ("the Registrar") the power to impose a financial penalty of up to £10,000 for relevant offences under the Companies Act 2006. The Registrar will



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therefore have the discretion to either impose a financial penalty directly, where they are satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the person has committed a relevant offence, or pursue criminal sanction in the usual way.

The Regulations will come into force either on 2 May 2024 (if they are made on or before 1 May), or on the day after the day on which they are made (if they are made on or after 2 May).

SRA consultation on rule changes to regulate CILEX non-authorized members

The SRA has issued a new consultation on the rule changes required to enable it to regulate CILEX non-authorized members, including paralegals and students, that are not authorised to carry on any reserved legal activities. The SRA believes the changes will not affect the solicitors' profession and state that its communications will distinguish between solicitors, authorised CILEX members and non-authorized CILEX members to help make sure the public are aware of differences between them and make informed choices when accessing legal services. The consultation runs until 15 May 2024. If the SRA and CILEX agree to proceed with re-delegation, an application would need to be made to the Legal Services Board to agree to the relevant changes to both organisations' regulatory arrangements.

New draft resources for in-house solicitors

The SRA has published new draft guidance for in-house solicitors and their employers

(see below). In the news release introducing the new resources, the SRA highlights that there are more than 34,500 solicitors working in-house in England and Wales and that the recent Post Office case has revealed the challenges that in-house solicitors face.

The documents were published ahead of the SRA's second annual in-house solicitors conference on 14 March, and feedback is being sought before the materials are finalised later this year.

New practice notes and guidance

The SRA has published a number of draft guidance and case studies, including several aimed at in-house solicitors and their employers. Further, the Law Society has published three new practice notes since our last update.

SRA guidance

[Internal investigations - Guidance \(Draft\)](#) [↗](#)

NB: this is within the suite of guidance for in-house lawyers but is applicable to all SRA regulated firms and all solicitors, wherever they work.

- **[Reporting concerns about wrongdoing when working in-house - Guidance \(Draft\)](#)** [↗](#)
- **[Reporting concerns about wrongdoing when working in-house - Case study \(Draft\)](#)** [↗](#)
- **[Identifying your client when working in-house - Guidance \(Draft\)](#)** [↗](#)

Continued on page 28



- [Identifying your client when working in-house - Case study \(Draft\)](#)
- [Understanding in-house solicitors professional obligations employer - Guidance \(Draft\)](#)

Law Society practice notes

- [Raising concerns and whistleblowing: guidance for staff](#)
- [Implementing whistleblowing arrangements](#)
- [Representation before mental health tribunals](#)

Disciplinary and regulatory decisions

There has once again been a large number of decisions and judgments reported since our last update. Notable decisions include:

Fines for AML failures

At the date of writing, eight firms have been fined between £3,600 and almost £20,000 for AML failures, including failure to have in place a firm-wide risk assessment (“FWRA”), and failure to have in place adequate policies, controls, and procedures (“PCPs”).

Another firm has been fined over £23,000 for failure to carry out any client or matter risk assessments on its files prior to March 2023.

Compliance officer failures

A solicitor has been fined £2,376 for causing, allowing and contributing to his firm failing to satisfy its CDD obligations in relation to seven conveyancing transactions, and for allowing the firm’s client account to be used to make payments unrelated to the legal transaction, thus breaching the Solicitors Accounts Rules.

Another solicitor has been fined £18,750 for a myriad of failings, including: allowing the firm’s client account to be used as a banking facility; failing to carry out adequate CDD, source of funds checks, and ongoing risk assessment checks, and failing to ensure the firm had an MLRO and compliant FWRA and PCPs. As an RFL, he also failed to ensure he was supervised when carrying out reserved legal activity.

Firm fined for facilitating vendor fraud

A firm has been fined just under £20,000 for undertaking a conveyancing transaction which was later found to be fraudulent. The firm had failed to properly identify the client, failed to act upon the “refer” decision on the AML report and remitted over £110,000 to an unrelated third party.

Fines for failure to notify material change

Two firms have been fined £750 and ordered to pay costs of £150 after failing to promptly notify the SRA of a material change to the information it had previously provided to the SRA about their COLP and/or COFA.

Further fines for workforce diversity data failures

A firm has been fined a fixed penalty of £1,500 and ordered to pay costs of £150 for continuing to breach the requirement to submit workforce diversity data to the SRA. This was its third fine in as many years: the firm was initially fined £750 for this failure in November, and was previously fined £2,000 in November 2022 for breaches of the SRA Transparency Rules.

A second firm was fined £750 for failing to submit workforce diversity data.

Section 43 order for supply of class A drug offences

A legal secretary has been banned from being employed at a law firm without SRA approval, following her conviction for offences in connection with a county lines drugs supply operation. She had been fully aware of the drugs supply operation and had driven both the co-accused and a minor for the purpose of dealing drugs on multiple occasions.

Section 43 order for misleading the court

A caseworker has been banned from working in a law firm for falsely presenting himself as a criminal barrister, misleading the court in an application, and allowing a sealed court order to be drafted and approved which referred to him as counsel. The order, which resulted in a child being removed from their father, was later overturned in full. He was ordered to pay a proportion of the SRA's costs of £600.

Section 99 order after criminal conviction

A former law firm employee has been banned from working for a law firm or licenced body after her criminal conviction for impersonating another individual while using a police webchat to obtain unauthorised access to data.

Rebuke for abusive tweets

For the second month in a row, a fine has been issued in connection with social media use. A solicitor has been rebuked and ordered to pay costs of £1,350 in relation to three tweets published between November 2021 and April 2022 which were deemed abusive to such an extent that he breached SRA Principle 2.

Rebuke for unsolicited direct approaches

A solicitor has been rebuked for using the personal details of 619 people inadvertently sent to him by a client in order to send them an unsolicited marketing email. He was ordered to pay costs of £600.

Conveyancer rebuked

A solicitor has been rebuked for completing a property purchase without ensuring the clients' Declaration of Trust had been executed, thus failing to act in the best interests of one of the clients. It was noted in mitigation that her work was highly pressurised at the time (June 2021) due to the approaching deadline of the SDLT reduction.

Solicitor struck off for acting without telling firm

A solicitor has been struck off for acting for clients without the knowledge or authority of the firm he worked for, and for receiving client money into his own personal bank account. The SDT made a finding of dishonesty and he was accordingly struck off.

Signature short-cuts leads to strike off

A solicitor has been struck off for submitting two LPAs which misleadingly showed she had witnessed the donor's signatures. The SDT found that dishonesty was 'woven into a thought-out process of corner cutting', warranting striking off, and warned of the importance of taking advice from experienced colleagues to obtain insight upon the risk of departing from correct procedures. She was ordered to pay costs of just over £19,000.

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Solicitor suspended for using colleague's signature on court documents

A partner has been suspended for 28 days after signing six Statements of Truth using an absent colleague's electronic signature without their knowledge or consent, which were then filed at court. The partner self-reported to the SRA after the colleague noticed his signature had been used and raised that he was not comfortable having his signature on documents he did not draft. He was ordered to pay costs of £3,500.

Litigator struck off for misleading client, firm and court

A solicitor has been struck off for informing a client that an agent who was booked to attend a hearing could not attend due to illness, when in fact no advocate has been booked. Additionally, in relation to two separate matters for the same client, she fabricated an attendance note relating to a court hearing. She further misled the client about the progress of six litigation matters. She was ordered to pay costs of £2,000.

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.



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Topics covered will include:

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The conference will end with a networking lunch at 13:40 where attendees can continue the conversations of the day.



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From p.1

The Master of the Rolls speaks at the MLS AI Conference (continued)

“We are at least 50 or 60 years away from ‘The Legal Singularity’”, announced James in his opening address to the conference delegates. That is the point at which you no longer need lawyers, because the machines do it themselves. Very reassuring, I didn’t think.

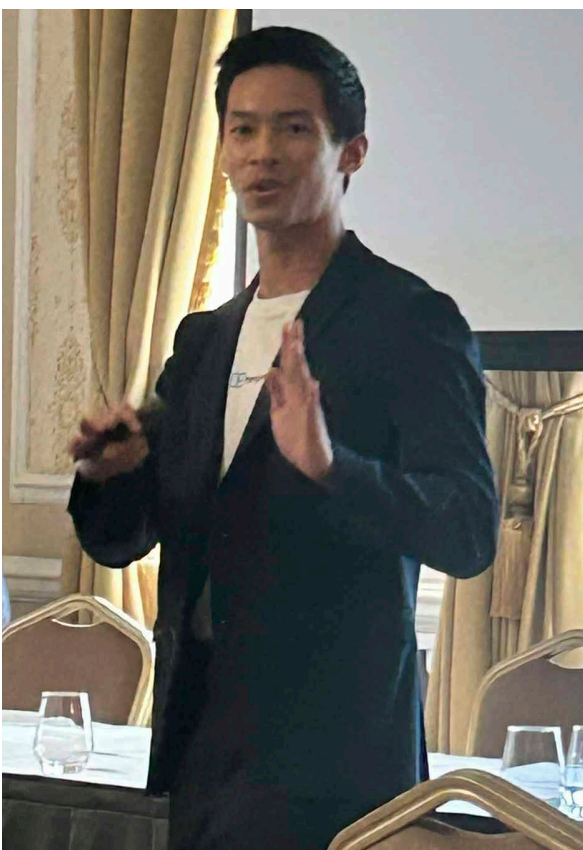
What I had not realised is that there is a whole book dedicated to the subject of the legal singularity, which tackles, according to its Amazon precis, “the future state in which technology facilitates the functional “completeness” of law, where the law is at once extraordinarily more complex in its specification than it is today, and yet operationally vastly more knowable, fairer, and clearer for its subjects.”

Fortunately, the AI conference, with its exceptional list of speakers, went on to reassure me that while the technology

we use and the way we are accustomed to working will change, the importance of human intervention, interaction and expertise will continue.

Other speakers included Tom Rice, the Legal Director of Travel Perk, who highlighted the positive impact AI had had on his business and its ability to reach clients and Justin Borja, who provided an insight into how [Henchman](#) had developed an AI powered contract drafting and negotiation tool that is being successfully used in the legal industry, both of whom identified the positive impact AI can have on our working lives.

Speakers were keen to stress that AI cannot be ignored and firms need to be aware of what is happening now. Dan Morton gave insight into what JMW are doing to ensure they constantly review opportunities presented by AI technology, as well as



challenges such as how a firm prices its use of AI, when we are all used to the billable hour. Something that superfast AI does not pay attention to.

Other issues discussed were the regulation and ethics of AI, with Pépin Aslett of St John's Buildings Chambers highlighting the case of New York Attorneys Steven A. Schwartz and Peter LoDuca, who filed a lawsuit against an airline that included references to past court cases that Schwartz thought were real, but were actually invented by an artificial intelligence-powered chatbot he had used. It turns out that AI, in its current iteration, hallucinates and makes cases up if it does not have an answer! If trained lawyers do not know that cases being relied on have been fabricated then what chance do litigants in person have who rely on the technology? Such concerns led nicely into the keynote address by Sir Geoffrey Vos.

Sir Geoffrey has, since he was first appointed Master of the Rolls, expressed a personal interest in the use of technology,



including AI, to improve the running of the court system. It was a significant coup for Manchester Law Society to be able to draw Sir Geoffrey to Manchester to present at the conference.

In his address, the MOR stated that it is his view that all lawyers "owe a duty to their clients" to make constructive use of whatever technology is available that can lead to a better, more cost effective and quicker resolution of their legal problems. In doing that, Sir Geoffrey said, lawyers would need to

Continued on page 34





ensure they protect clients from any adverse effects, the most obvious of which are data protection issues, breaching rules and regulations for AI use and potential cyber-crime. Any use of AI by a regulated person would be the responsibility of the regulated individual if it was misused or it failed.

Sir Geoffrey noted that judges have already been issued with guidance and that the guidance will continue to be reviewed as AI develops. He set out some of the ways in which AI could be deployed by lawyers, including:-

- Translations
- Ethical guidance
- Practice management
- Summarising documents and data sets
- Market and competitor research
- Drafting contracts and pro-formas
- Letter writing
- Client communication

But this needed human oversight and audit to ensure the model is working effectively. Sir Geoffrey also highlighted the risks associated with using market available AI, because any client data placed into a publicly available AI solution (such as ChatGPT) is then also available to any other user and will be used to inform future responses to requests from other users. The privacy and data issues are clear.

What was equally abundant from the conference is that AI is a major issue for legal firms that cannot be ignored and presents both challenges and opportunities for those firms. Those issues will continue to be considered by Manchester Law Society and it seems likely that this first AI conference will need to be repeated in the future as AI continues to develop at pace.

David Anderson
President, Manchester Law Society
Chief Operating Officer, St John's Buildings Chambers



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How might AI change the legal sector?

Aileen Armstrong, Executive Director Strategy, Innovation and External Affairs, SRA

Some of you will remember we wrote for the Messenger back in [December 2022](#) about how emerging technologies and their impact on you, consumers and our regulation. We want to revisit that view by looking in more depth at artificial intelligence (AI).

AI has the potential to change the way we live and work. Recent developments have been likened to the giant leaps forward in digital capacity seen with the arrival of internet browsers and the adoption of smartphone technology.

[A recent government report](#) suggests that the legal profession will be among the most affected by AI and, at the SRA, we have been analysing and engaging with [AI in the legal market](#) for many years.

So, with the prospect of radical new technologies and approaches changing how solicitors operate, what do you need to know and what issues should you be aware of? In truth, many of us are already using AI tools at work even if we do not realise it. Predictive text in email and word processing applications, online chatbots embedded in websites, and even the option to blur your background during video calls are all achieved with AI.

Many large law firms are already introducing more advanced AI tools. Generative AI, which has the power to process large volumes of language and text rapidly, is changing the ways in which routine legal tasks are delivered. For example, in large document discovery exercises, drafting contracts, research, summarisation and know-your-client tests, generative AI can not only improve accuracy but also reduce the time needed to search or prepare documents from weeks to seconds.

These applications can offer immediate benefits to solicitors, to clients and the wider justice system by improving efficiency and allowing solicitors to spend more time applying their knowledge and experience where it is really needed. But, as with all new technologies, there are risks that need to be managed. For AI applications to function well they rely on the availability of large amounts of accurate, non-biased online information. But, when there is a lack of appropriate data, AI is susceptible to producing incorrect, misleading or biased output.





So, with the prospect of radical new technologies and approaches changing how solicitors operate, what do you need to know and what issues should you be aware of?

In AI circles this is known as hallucination and it has led to some high-profile legal failures. In the United States last year a judge fined a law firm and two lawyers for submitting a brief containing fake citations generated by AI. Similar has happened in this country for a litigant-in-person.

These new technologies are powerful tools, ones that could radically change the delivery of legal services. But they must be used responsibly. There needs to be human oversight to review, edit and quality-assure AI generated material.

What's our role?

At the SRA, we have a role to ensure that consumers are protected, but also to help solicitors make informed choices about how they develop their services. As mentioned earlier, as part of that we have taken a deep dive into the use of artificial intelligence in the legal market in our [Risk Outlook](#) series.

While there are numerous potential benefits offered by AI in terms of freeing up capacity from administrative tasks there are risks which we, as the regulator, are clear firms must manage effectively.

For example, solicitors must remain accountable to clients at all times, regardless of whether or not they use AI.

Client confidentiality must be maintained by solicitors too, especially where there are risks that sensitive information may be shared with an AI system provider. Solicitors must also be vigilant to the risk of AI systems making mistakes or amplifying bias in datasets by maintaining oversight of the output from these systems.

New technologies will change how solicitors work and, as they do so, we must make sure that our standards and regulations continue to be met.

However, as AI applications come to market and become more established across the legal profession, some of the greatest risks to firms may come from not fully understanding the systems they adopt or failing to adopt AI at all.

Join our free event

Across the legal sector, the number of AI applications are increasing together with opinions about the contribution AI can make. We will be exploring some of these at [our free AI event in Manchester on 15 May](#) when voices from across the profession, together with those developing AI applications, will discuss how advances in AI could change our ways of working and how we serve clients. I very much hope you will join us.



Myerson Solicitors are proud to be the official sponsor of BritFest

Myerson Solicitors are proud to be the main sponsor of [Brit Fest](#), a brand-new new festival held in Altrincham, Cheshire, between the 5th and 7th July 2024.

With a fantastic line-up of iconic British artists, including Bonnie Tyler, Scouting for Girls, Kim Wilde, Heather Small, Paul Young and Fleur East to only name a few, this new festival will no doubt be a summer highlight for the Cheshire community and beyond.

Myerson Solicitors have always been about fostering creativity, community spirit and supporting local businesses, making the sponsorship of Brit Fest a perfect match. In addition to a comprehensive programme of live music, festivalgoers can expect an array of family friendly activities and experiences – including a fun fair, workshops, a family cinema, well-being classes, an artisan market – and will have access to amazing food and drinks from local suppliers.

Tickets for the Brit Fest festival are [now on sale](#).

To celebrate their sponsorship, Myerson are hosting an exciting competition with the chance to win 4 Weekend Festival Tickets (2 adults; 2 children).



Richard Lloyd, COO at Myerson, says: “We’re thrilled to take centre stage as the main sponsor of Brit Fest. Myerson loves supporting local events that bring people together, and Brit Fest captures the true spirit of unity and celebration.

To make things even more exciting, we’re offering a chance for one of our lucky clients to grab Family Weekend Tickets.”

More information about the competition can be found [here](#). Entries close on 22nd May 2024.

To find out more about BritFest and the music line-up, [click here](#).

Anthony and Edward Prophet, BritFest’s organisers, (left and right) with Myerson CEO Carl Newton (2nd to left) and COO Richard Lloyd.



Unit Chambers Wins Chambers of the Year Award at Lexis Nexis Legal Awards 2024

Unit Chambers [🔗](#) is proud to announce that it has been awarded the prestigious Chambers of the Year title at the Lexis Nexis Legal Awards 2024. This recognition acknowledges Unit Chambers' commitment to excellence, innovation and client care in the legal profession.

Established in 2020, Unit Chambers has quickly risen to prominence in the legal landscape, challenging the status quo while honouring the rich traditions of the Bar. With a focus on providing exceptional service to clients and barristers alike, Unit Chambers is redefining the role of barristers' chambers in the modern legal environment.

"At Unit Chambers, we believe in doing things differently," said Lisa Edmunds, CEO and Senior Consultant Barrister at Unit Chambers. "While we respect the traditions of the Bar, we are not afraid to challenge conventions and push boundaries to better serve our clients and barristers. Winning the Chambers of the Year award is a testament

to our team's dedication and innovative spirit."

Unit Chambers prides itself on prioritising client care and providing barristers with the support and resources they need to excel in their practice. By fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment, Unit Chambers empowers its members to deliver outstanding legal services and achieve the best possible outcomes for their clients.

"We are honoured to receive this prestigious award and grateful for the support of our clients, solicitor partners and the legal community," added Lisa Edmunds. "This achievement would not have been possible without their trust and collaboration."

Unit Chambers is committed to continuing its mission of excellence, innovation, and client-focused service as it looks toward the future.

For more information about Unit Chambers, please visit www.unit.law [🔗](#).





All Eyes On PCS founder as she claims latest business award

The founder and Managing Partner of [Private Client Solicitors](#) has hailed the efforts of her colleagues as she claimed a prestigious business award.

Tasnim Khalid triumphed in the 'One To Watch' category for emerging female entrepreneurs in the latest edition of the Northern Power Women Awards.

Her victory caps a remarkable year in which Private Client Solicitors doubled its number of employees and confirmed its status as one of the country's leading specialists.

The boutique firm has also featured on a list of the UK's "most exciting" 100 businesses founded by female entrepreneurs.

Ms Khalid described the latest award recognition as further justification of the rapid impact made by Private Client Solicitors.

"The Northern Power Woman Awards have honoured an incredible collection of female business talent over the years, so I'm very much humbled by also being named as a winner.

"I'm under no illusion that this prize is very much testament to the huge effort made by my colleagues.

"It really does illustrate that despite still being something of a young firm, we have made a terrific start, managing to attract some very talented individuals who produce exceptional work every single day.

"That not only appeals to both professional peers who wish to join us and to clients at home and abroad because we are known

for providing a very high quality of support, no matter what the issue that we're asked to help with."

Ms Khalid was one of nine women shortlisted in the 'One to Watch' category, one of 11 awards on offer in the eighth edition of the Northern Power Women Awards.

Judges had to consider more than 1,400 nominations for what organisers described as the "largest celebration of gender equality in Europe...showcasing the trailblazing individuals and organisations across the North".

Within the last 12 months, Private Client Solicitors has seen a surge in casework, with its clients including some of the UK's most high-profile business owners and wealthiest individuals alike.

The arrivals of Associate Solicitor Jaima Mistry and Office Manager Atola Tamika-Fearon last month meant that the number of individuals employed by the firm had also risen from 17 to 32 in that time.

Ms Khalid said that the "strategic" appointments made over the last year had enabled Private Client Solicitors to achieve its early objectives even faster than anticipated.

Much of its workload is made up of complex probate work, business succession and estate planning but it has also quickly become recognised as the North West's foremost authority on sharia-related private client law.

Even though its client list features many of



Tasnim Khalid

the region's wealthiest individuals and most notable entrepreneurs, its recent cases have extended across several different jurisdictions, including Spain, Hong Kong, the Middle East and North America.

Just weeks before being commended as one of the country's best 250 law firms by *The Times* in October, the *Legal 500* rankings identified it as boasting "leading advisers".

As well as her legal capabilities, Legal 500 said that Ms Khalid was the "powerhouse behind this business and....an exceptional businesswoman".

That followed Private Client Solicitors being placed in the top tier of Band One of the Chambers and Partners High Net Worth Guide for the second successive year.

Ms Khalid was among a handful of experts to achieve Chambers' Band One status, while her fellow partners Paul Gotch and Nicola Walker made up half of the lawyers in Band Three for Manchester and the surrounding area.

Chambers concluded that Private Client Solicitors' service was "second to none" and has "a particular ability to handle diverse issues across the team on Shari'a law and international assets and estates", with no client being "too big or too small".

Ms Khalid was also named among a "new generation" of 100 female entrepreneurs listed by the *Daily Telegraph* and NatWest.

£460.35 raised in Peach Law's bake-sale for The British Heart Foundation

Monies raised was from the sale of cakes baked and donated by friends and family and from the sale of raffle tickets to win a beautiful chocolate cake.

It's [Peach Law](#)'s 10th year in business and we have chosen British Heart Foundation as their main charity this year. Lindsey – founder of the firm suffered the devastating loss of her father at the age of only 59 and, because of this life changing event, her view on life was forever altered. She never wanted to look back with 'what-ifs' – life is too short – just do! Peach Law was set up because of her loss.

Heart disease affects many people and families' lives, and funding raising is vital.



Browne Jacobson launches free job simulator to give aspiring barristers a taste of life in legal profession

Aspiring barristers can get a glimpse into the life of a lawyer from their desktops after Browne Jacobson launched a virtual work experience programme.

The UK and Ireland law firm has created the UK Law job simulation on the Forage platform, which provides online courses to help students from less advantaged backgrounds discover and land jobs at reputable businesses.

The free programme enables delegates to step into the shoes of [Browne Jacobson's](#) barrister team and complete tasks that replicate the specific type of work it does on a daily basis.

This is the firm's latest initiative to improve social mobility both within the organisation and the wider legal profession. Its award-winning [FAIRE \(Fairer Access to Real Experience\) programme](#), which offers in-person and virtual work experience opportunities to candidates specifically from lower socio-economic backgrounds, has drawn participation from more than 30,500 students since its launch in 2021.

[Kiera Riddy](#), an Associate Barrister at Browne Jacobson who has been the driving force behind the programme, said: "When thinking back to the work experience available for me while studying to get a foot in the door, it was somewhat limited to in-person roles requiring extensive travel and also took time out of part-time working – something that is essential to many people in funding their studies.

"With the success of our FAIRE social mobility scheme at Browne Jacobson, we started thinking about other ways we could increase accessibility to experience and the profession.



"Forage already has a scheme for solicitors, so we believed it was imperative to design a scheme for budding barristers.

"I designed this scheme with those wanting a 'day in the life' experience in mind and to give people the opportunity to experience tasks a typical junior barrister might be instructed on – making this a genuine first for the legal profession.

"The programme offers a certificate of completion and, importantly, feedback on the tasks completed. I hope it's a useful experience to get a taste of what we do."

The UK Law job simulation is self-paced and can be completed within four hours using pre-recorded videos and worksheets.

It features a theoretical scenario in which the delegate's team has been assigned to a project working for a council. They must conduct research, analyse legal documents and provide written advice to the client.

Delegates will receive a certificate that can be added to their CV, while developing practical legal skills and confidence needed for future job applications.

To access Browne Jacobson's free UK Law job simulation on Forage, click [here](#)



Fletchers Foundation First Birthday celebration raises over £12,000

Fletchers Foundation [↗](#), a charitable organisation which awards grants to people following serious, catastrophic injury or illness, celebrated its first birthday by hosting a fundraiser and birthday celebration on 8th March.

The event brought all the fun of the carnival to Revolucion de Cuba, Manchester and featured stilt walkers, aerialists, magicians and a host of carnival games, whilst bringing together supporters, trustees, sponsors and successful grant applicants.

Guests also got to hear the inspirational stories from two grant recipients; Sonny, who applied to the Foundation for a grant to enable him to purchase a custom-made wheelchair for wheelchair rugby, and Helen, who after suffering nerve damage, was struggling to get around in a manual wheelchair and so applied for a grant to purchase an electric mobility scooter.

The Foundation exists to support people who may otherwise have no legal resolution following a serious personal injury, accident or illness, and is part of Fletchers Group. It enables individuals to get access to grants which can cover physical or psychological rehabilitation and therapies, aids such as wheelchairs or exercise equipment, home and vehicle adaptations and support people who are unable to claim compensation for their injuries.

Fletchers is one of the UK's most trusted and respected law firms, specialising in serious personal injury and medical negligence claims and which has been supporting those with life-changing injuries for more than 30 years.

The celebration event raised £12,800 for the Foundation with all proceeds going directly to the grant programme, and to ensure that the Foundation can support even more people in its second year.

Reece Hobson-Adams, Director of Fletchers Foundation, said: "I'm beyond proud that our event managed to raise an enormous £12,800 for the Foundation.

"It was a fantastic turnout, and a brilliant event, and I would like to thank everyone who attended. I would also like to thank our two grant recipients, Sonny and Helen, who were brave enough to share their story; both of them are a true inspiration.

"Fletchers Foundation helps individuals, their families, community groups, schools and other charities, live life to the fullest and move forward in the best way possible. Personally, I'm overwhelmed with the level of support we have received, and we are very much looking forward to supporting even more people in 2024."

In its first year approved 24 grants for individuals and raised over £50,000 through fundraising.





Leigh Day report from PEOPIL

In March, the travel team from [Leigh Day](#) gathered in Paris for the Pan-European Organisation of Personal Injury Lawyers (PEOPIL) New Lawyer's Group conference.

Against the backdrop of the iconic city, we came together with personal injury lawyers across Europe and the United States, to share knowledge, discuss trends, and strengthen skills in advocating for the injured. We will explore the highlights and insights from the conference, which showcased the collaboration and camaraderie that flourishes among young legal professionals dedicated to personal injury practice.

Panel on Emerging Issues in PI Litigation

The day began with a trio of talks, chaired by Peter Hale of 12 King's Bench Walk

(12KBW) chambers, from personal injury lawyers regarding recent developments in their respective jurisdictions.

We heard from Karl Koenigs of Dolce Lauda, on the developing German case law on recognition and quantification of damages for psychological injury. Comparatively, Germany scores low compared to their EU counterparts when quantifying damages for injury, however developing case law is seemingly bringing awards for psychological injury in Germany closer to the EU average.

This was followed by a presentation by Ami Stefana Popescu of Remus Robu Solicitors, a Romanian law firm in London. Ami provided an interesting comparison between the approach of English and Romanian law on how their civil procedure and legal systems recognise protected parties, and assess capacity.



Finally, we heard from Adam Rose of Leesfield Scolaro, a firm from Miami Florida, on the enforceability of liability waivers in personal injury cases. It was surprising to hear that only 3 states in the US consider liability waivers to be entirely unenforceable, and predatory liability waivers remain a trend in the remaining states.

Revolution in French PI law, with focus on the psychological injury of terrorist attacks

The conference was attended by guest speaker Judge Benoît Mornet of the Cour de Cassation. Judge Mornet was pivotal in the development of the Le Référentiel, which is a tool used by the French Courts during quantification of personal injury awards.

Judge Mornet was part of the working group developing the methodological tool, which is a constantly evolving tool striving for consistency of awards at all levels within the French Court. Its primary use is to harmonise compensation for victims of bodily injury, and although not binding, has proved important for French practitioners.

We then heard from Camille Perrier of JP Karsenty, on the approach of French law in compensating indirect victims for psychological injury arising from terror attacks. This became relevant in the French jurisdiction following the 2015 Paris attacks, and has developed an area of law for friends and family who suffered psychological injury during the attacks while waiting to hear if their loved ones were safe.

Camille outlined that French law does now recognise “worry and waiting” as a compensable head of loss, particularly in instances such as terror attacks or collective accidents. It will be interesting to see how this is applied in other incidents involving a collective accident in the future.

“

Against the backdrop of the iconic city, we came together with personal injury lawyers across Europe

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Civil Liability

A very interesting topic covered by Solenn le Tutour of Le Tutour Avocats in France, concerning the draft EC regulation or “AI Liability Directive”. The directive intends on regulating general purpose AI on the market.

As explained by Solenn, the EU is the first continent to regulate AI, and is at the forefront of AI development and accountability. The act will change the current landscape significantly, and the objectives are to guarantee safety and manage risk posed by AI through classification and proposed control measure (and in some instances, total prohibition).

Care/rehabilitation costs in personal injury claims

A further panel hosted by Peter Hale of 12KBW, heard from three lawyers in different jurisdictions and their opposing takes on care and rehabilitation costs. We heard from Shauni de Coorde of HBSV Advocaten in Belgium, Dalibor Formanek of Holubová Advokátí in Czech Republic, and Cecilie Haukalid of Haver Advokatfirma in Norway.

All of these jurisdictions share the common principle of achieving full compensation,

Continued on page 46



From p.45

but the panel differed in approach. For example, some countries apply a forensic approach as in England and Wales, and others a tabular method which can limit heads of loss.

The discussion provided useful insight into lawyer's who take on international work and have to quantify damages under a foreign applicable law, and the limitations and challenges faced when trying to have standardisation.

Networking Session

The networking element was chaired by Dr. Gabriela Lenarczyk, a co-chair of the PEOPIL New Lawyer's group. We met in groups to discuss personal commitments, challenges, and turning points in our respective legal careers.

In particular, there was a focus on the impact of personal injury practice, and it was fascinating to see other lawyer's perspectives. For example, personal injury law is a well-respected practice in some countries, however in others it does come with certain stigma. Further, we found that the earning capacity of a personal injury lawyer does differ vastly from country to country, and in some countries all lawyer's are self-employed, which can impact work life balance.

Workshop on Expert Reports

We heard from English Barristers, Lorna Badham of Outer Temple Chambers, and Conor Kennedy of Deka Chambers, on expert reports. It is not uncommon for personal injury lawyers, particularly those practicing in international work, to require expert evidence from lawyers in other jurisdictions.

The discussion had a focus on the requirements of expert reports in the English Court, put proved useful for instructing parties and instructed experts on what is required of them. This is invaluable in cases that fall on the sufficiency of their expert evidence, and we were reminded of pertinent points regarding impartiality of an expert, and speaking beyond the scope of their expertise.

Negotiation Principles, Skills and Strategies

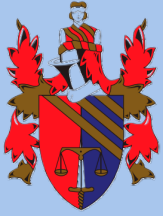
The final discussion came from Clara Tilanus of Van Wassenae Wytema in the Netherlands, and David Danagher BL of the Bar of Ireland where we discussed practical strategies and approach to engage in persuasive settlement discussions.

The discussion was beneficial for both Claimant and Defendants litigators to ensure that the best result is achieved for our clients, and we had the opportunity to share and exchange our own negotiation tips.

To finish, we had final words from Nathaniel Martindale of Irwin Mitchell and member of the New Lawyer's Group committee, and from Ana Romero of Astrom Legal and President of PEOPIL.

We closed on the day, and were reminded of the importance of the organisation in unifying personal injury lawyers both in Europe and Internationally. The conference was an overall success, and had us looking forward to the many other conferences and events in this year's PEOPIL calendar.

Caitlin Wood
Associate
Leigh Day



Manchester Law Society

Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

REGULATORY CONFERENCE

Save the date! The MLS Regulatory Conference will be back on 26th June 2024.

Details of the programme will be announced soon but you can register your interest in the event by emailing ChandreMay@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

Delegates at our 2023 conference said:

“Very informative conference with lots to take back and act on”

“A really useful event!”

“Excellent speakers and content”



**WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE
09:00 TO 15:30**



**MANCHESTER HALL, 36 BRIDGE STREET,
MANCHESTER, M3 3BT**



**MLS MEMBERS £100.00 + VAT (£120.00)
NON MEMBERS £125.00 + VAT (£150.00)**



This is #SeriousSh1t

Lawyers support Spinal Injuries Association call for Parliamentary Inquiry into life-threatening state of bowel care for those with spinal cord injury

Specialist medical negligence law firm Hudgell Solicitors is supporting calls for a Parliamentary Inquiry to be held into the 'inadequate and dangerous' state of bowel care for patients with spinal cord injuries in healthcare settings.

It follows MPs, NHS representatives and Government officials being told how in some cases patients are left feeling 'humiliated' as they are unable to go to the toilet for days, or in extreme cases left lying in their own excrement in hospital beds due to a lack of dedicated, specialist care.

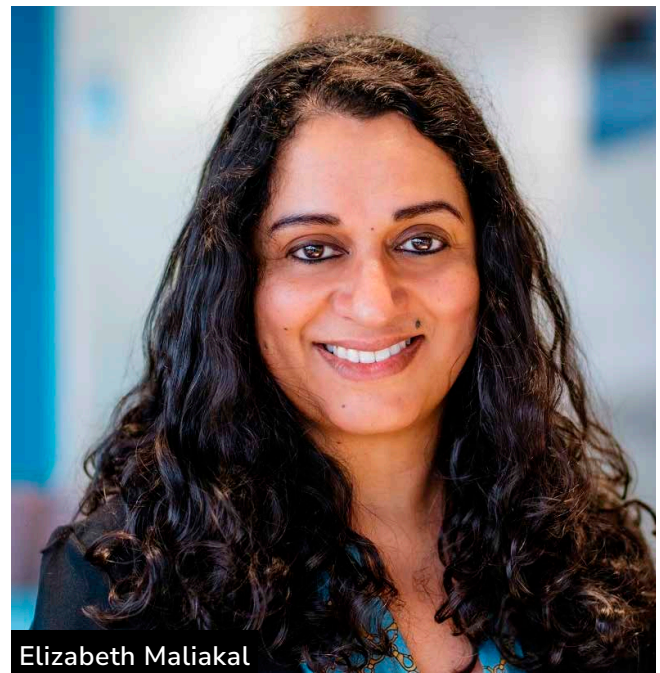
The issue was discussed at a recent Parliamentary roundtable meeting, hosted by the Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) and attended by more than 30 representatives of the NHS, MPs and the spinal cord injury sector.

As Campaign for Change' partners with the SIA, Solicitor Elizabeth Maliakal, of Hudgell Solicitors' specialist medical negligence team, also attended and says the firm supports many people whose bowel care is 'delayed or not attended to at all'.

Patient left feeling 'humiliated and terrified'

Proper bowel care management is a basic human right, yet it is consistently the most challenging aspect of living with a spinal cord injury, the SIA says.

Now, the charity is calling for a Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry into the matter, highlighting how patients are being left 'humiliated' and 'terrified' when going into hospital, with the situation potentially 'life-threatening'.



Elizabeth Maliakal

Their [‘This is #SeriousSh1t’](#) campaign is calling for a commitment to ensure all NHS healthcare providers have a fully implemented bowel care policy in place.

Campaigns manager Dharshana Sridhar said: “Our research proves that there is a post code lottery at present in terms of the level of bowel care provided across the country. ”

“We are now pushing for a Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry so that consensus can be reached on what actions need to be taken to affect the change that so many people desperately need.”

“No one is blaming nurses for this as training is key and the department of health and social care who were present at our meeting are listening.

“We need to ensure there is a consistently good level of care for these patients, a national bowel care policy and adequately trained nursing staff in all hospitals and healthcare settings. These improvements will benefit not only those with spinal cord injury but also other patients that are in hospital and require specialist bowel care.”

Solicitors see impact on patients ‘physically and psychologically’

As ‘Campaign for Change’ partners, Huggell Solicitors, which has offices in Hull, Manchester and London, is supporting the SIA call for a Parliamentary Inquiry.

Solicitor Elizabeth Maliakal says lawyers at the firm commonly represent patients who have suffered both physically and psychologically due to a lack of bowel care policies at hospitals, and a lack of fully trained bowel care nurses within the NHS.

“We see in our cases that very often when someone is admitted to hospital their bowel care can be delayed or not attended to at all, often impacting on their dignity and self-esteem, ultimately leading to poorer final outcomes,” she said.

“We fully support SIA’s call for an Inquiry into this issue. The campaign is shining a light on bowel care in hospitals and improvements will benefit not only those with spinal cord injury but also other patients that are in hospital and require bowel care, for example the elderly and patients who have had abdominal surgery.

“We cannot ignore the avoidable cost of failing to have adequately trained nursing staff; from extended hospital stays and increased damages and legal costs in the context of medical claims.”

‘Humiliated and frustrated’

SIA ambassador Jonathan Goodwin, who was left spinal cord injured after a TV stunt went wrong, has recently taken to social media highlight the issue.

He posted: “Without the correct care you are essentially filling up with poop and it is no laughing matter. As well as huge discomfort it can lead to dangerous conditions, that could be life threatening.”

Following a recent hospital visit, one spinal cord injured patient contacted SIA and said:

“I was instructed to get on with my own bowel care even if that meant messing the bed so I soiled myself many times.

“I’ve been spinal cord injured for over 40 years and have never felt as humiliated and frustrated as I did then. I’m now terrified about going into hospital again.”

We Love MCR Charity Update

In March, [We Love MCR Charity](#) continued our mission of supporting impactful local projects and ambitious young Mancunians experiencing disadvantage, making a significant difference in the community. We're thrilled to share with Manchester Law Society a flavour of the grants awarded through our *Stronger Communities Fund* and Manchester's *Rising Stars Fund*, which came to [a total of £32,449](#)!

Through the *Stronger Communities Fund*, we proudly awarded grants to seven inspiring local projects. Bradley Folds Allotment (BFA) in Didsbury received funding to enhance their community access plot for gardeners with reduced mobility. This project aims to create raised bed areas, level paths, and provide assistance to enable members with mobility challenges to continue gardening. Additionally, VFTS in Longsight was granted funding to support their 'Longsight Lions' peer support group, aiming to reduce social

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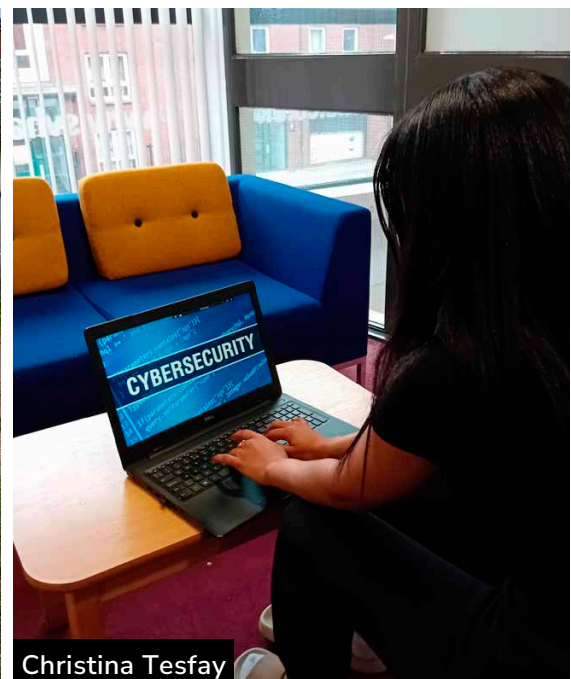
Our unique *Rising Stars Fund* made awards to eight talented young individuals in March

isolation and provide structured sessions for families during difficult times. NEPHRA in New Moston received funding to launch the "Tuesday Social Club", bringing together elderly residents for social gatherings and activities to combat isolation and loneliness.

Our unique *Rising Stars Fund* made awards to eight talented young individuals in March with grants to pursue their dreams, despite the financial and family difficulties they face. Shaima from Cheetham Hill was awarded £850 for an iPad and pencil as she strives for academic excellence in



Bradley Folds Allotment



Christina Tesfay





Maths. Nauman from Longsight received £1,620 for a laptop and digital camera to support his aspiration of becoming a videographer. Christina, living in homeless accommodation in Hulme was granted £1,192 for an additional Cyber Security course to further her career ambitions in the field. These grants not only provide essential resources but also symbolize our commitment to nurturing talent and ambition within Manchester's youth.

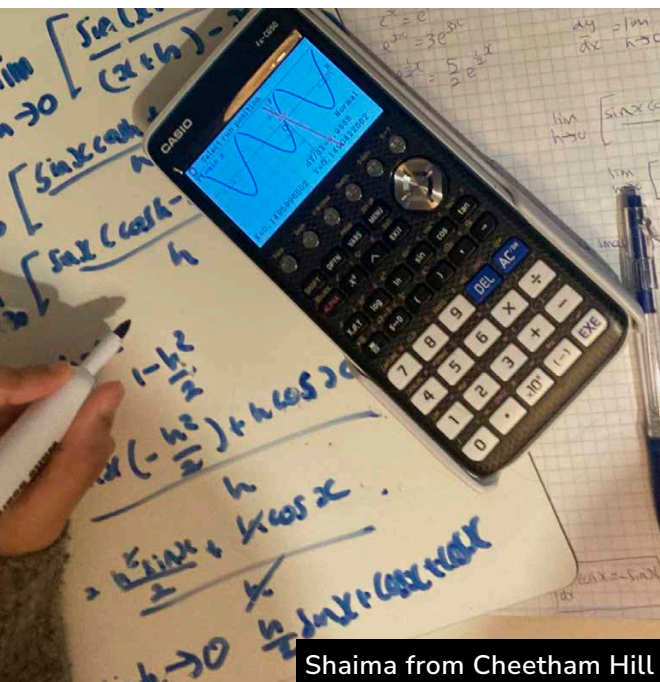
As we reflect on the impact of our grants in March, we extend our gratitude to Manchester Law Society for their unwavering support. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of young Mancunians and local communities, fostering a spirit of empowerment and growth across the city. Remember none of these uplifting stories could be possible without the support from MLS and its members, and if you're interested in fundraising for us in our latest offer of free places and raceday perks in the Great Manchester Run on 26th May – all information can be found [here](#)!



NEPHRA

For more heartwarming stories and updates on our grants, please visit www.welovemcrcharity.org and follow us on social media. We are excited about the future possibilities that lie ahead as we continue our journey of transforming lives and communities through generosity and opportunity.

Warm regards,
The We Love MCR Charity Team



Shaima from Cheetham Hill



Nauman Photography

Leigh Day celebrates excellence with five partner promotions in Manchester

Leigh Day is pleased to announce five new partner promotions in its [Manchester](#) office.

This significant expansion of the firm's northern leadership team reflects Leigh Day's unwavering commitment to excellence and its dedication to developing talent within the organisation.

Lauren Tully (medical negligence), Louisa Saville (personal injury), Colin Murphy (personal injury), Ryan Bradshaw (human rights) and Stephanie Hill (human rights) have been made partners, as the firm continues to strengthen its North West presence.

The promotions represent a significant step forward in the firm's strategy to build a powerhouse legal team in the north of England.

Colin Murphy

[Colin Murphy](#), who was named Insurance Rising Star of the Year at the 2024 Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards, has worked exclusively in [International Travel Litigation](#) since he qualified as a solicitor in 2013. Joining Leigh Day in 2018, Colin acts for clients who have suffered serious [personal injuries](#) whilst abroad, including those who have suffered significant brain and spinal injuries. Colin is frequently instructed in claims involving workplace accidents, holiday accidents and road traffic accidents and has extensive experience dealing with complex jurisdiction and applicable law disputes as well as multi-party litigation. More recently, Colin has been involved in the claims presented by hundreds of Liverpool FC fans



L-R: Colin Murphy, Louisa Saville, Stephanie Hill, Lauren Tully, and Ryan Bradshaw

who were affected by the events surrounding the Champion's League final at the [Stade de France](#) in May 2022.

Ryan Bradshaw

[Ryan Bradshaw](#) is joint head of Leigh Day's Manchester [Human Rights](#) department. He trained at a regional firm working predominantly in areas connected to social justice and joined Leigh Day in 2015, attracted by the quality of the work being produced and the way that it was approached. Ryan currently has a varied case load spanning both human rights and employment with a focus on discrimination, worker status and holiday pay. He has several institutional clients, such as charities and trade unions. Ryan was nominated for Rising Star of the Year at the 2023 Legal 500 [Northern Powerhouse](#) Awards.

Lauren Tully

[Lauren Tully](#) joined Leigh Day in 2018, specialising in [medical negligence](#) claims. Lauren advises individuals who have experienced poor medical care and lasting harm. She also acts for family members who have lost loved ones and represents them at inquests and has acted as assistant solicitor to HM Coroner for Manchester. Lauren's work involves helping clients get answers and acknowledgement as well as compensation.

Louisa Saville

[Louisa Saville](#) joined Leigh Day's Manchester office in 2018, specialising in representing victims of [asbestos](#) disease, such as mesothelioma, asbestos related lung cancer, asbestosis and pleural thickening. Louisa has brought claims for those exposed in high-risk industries, such as ladders, plumbers and electricians, and has successfully litigated for claimants who have been exposed to asbestos through less

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These promotions are a testament to the exceptional talent and dedication of our Manchester team

well-known occupations, such as teachers or office workers.

Stephanie Hill

[Stephanie Hill](#) joined Leigh Day as a paralegal in 2013. She became a trainee solicitor at the firm and now leads the Manchester [Human Rights](#) department, with Ryan Bradshaw. Stephanie works on a range of public law cases - representing individuals, charities and community groups in challenges against decisions of public authorities. Having worked in human rights and public law for over seven years, Stephanie also represents individual in private law compensation claims for human rights breaches. She currently focuses on [migrants' rights](#), in particular claims for unlawful detention. Most recently, she represented the charity Asylum Aid in the high-profile judicial review claim challenging the Rwanda removals policy. Stephanie was one of three lawyers nominated in the Public Law category at the 2023 [Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year](#) Awards.

Managing Partner Chris Benson said:

“These promotions are a testament to the exceptional talent and dedication of our Manchester team. They have consistently delivered outstanding results for our clients, and their commitment to social justice aligns perfectly with Leigh Day's core values. I am confident that they will continue to play a pivotal role in the continued growth and success of our Manchester office and the firm as a whole.”

Motorcycle injury specialist, Mary Lomas, joins Fletchers to strengthen two-wheel practice

Highly experienced catastrophic and serious injury solicitor, Mary Lomas, who specialises in motorcycle accidents, has over 20 years' experience and will join the two-wheel team within [Fletchers' Serious Injury practice](#).

Mary joins Fletchers from Thorneycroft Solicitors, where she previously held the position of Associate Director and represented clients on a wide range of cases relating to severe orthopaedic injuries, brain injuries, PTSD, chronic pain, fatality cases, as well as clinical negligence cases.

She is a keen supporter of several motorcycle safety organisations and individuals including The British Motorcycle Federation, Upright, DocBikes, Team Thorneycroft56, BelleVue Colts and Christian Iddon.

As part of the move, Fletchers has taken over Thorneycroft's motorbike practice and sponsorship partnerships.

Speaking on her appointment, Mary said: "I'm delighted to be joining a firm where clients are at the heart of everything and I'm excited to be working alongside an-already excellent and highly regarded team in the two-wheel division.

"Thorneycroft has been my home for many years; however, my priority is to ensure that our hard work of recent years would be maintained in a 'new home' and I am delighted to have found this at Fletchers."

"I can assure my many contacts in the bike world that I'll still be attending their breakfast catch ups, ride outs and race meetings."



Mary Lomas

Commenting on Mary's appointment and the transfer of the wider practice to Fletchers, Caroline Morris, Director of Serious Injury, said: "We're thrilled to have appointed Mary at a time of continued growth for our two-wheel team, and we're confident that her knowledge and experience in this area will prove invaluable for this area of practice.

"This is a great opportunity for us to extend our presence in the bike market, and I'm especially pleased that Mary has chosen to join our team, where she will help us build our ties and commitment to helping people within the motorbike community.

"I have complete confidence that Mary be a welcome addition to our 20-strong two-wheel team, and I am confident that we will now be in a stronger position to build on our existing partnerships whilst continuing to provide the highest level of legal support."

Squire Patton Boggs Promotes Senior Manchester Lawyer to Partnership

Squire Patton Boggs is pleased to announce that senior financial services lawyer **Andy Kirkham** has been promoted to partner.

Based in the firm's Manchester office, Andy undertakes a wide variety of transaction work, which includes bilateral and syndicated facilities and complex security arrangements for banks, funds, private equity providers and both onshore and offshore borrowers, with a particular focus on acquisition and leveraged finance and corporate lending as well as real estate finance.

Some of Andy's recent transactions include advising ECI Partners on the financing aspects of its acquisition of the Commify Group, advising Endless on the acquisition of Yorkshire Premier Meats and its subsequent refinance, and advising NatWest in relation to Growth Capital Partners' acquisition of Electric Theatre Collective.

He is recognised as "Up and Coming" by Chambers and Partners and as a "Next

Generation Partner by Legal 500, in their client guides to the UK legal market.

Matthew Ingram, head of the Financial Services team in Manchester, said: "Andy has made his mark at the firm. He is a talented lawyer with a strong track record of advising on high profile regional and cross-border deals. His promotion is testament to the growth of our practice in the city, and the scale of ambition we have for its future success."

"Many congratulations to Andy on his promotion," added Rob Elvin, managing partner of the Manchester office. "Andy has made a significant contribution to our office and we wish him every continued success."

Andy joins the growing partner ranks in Manchester, with **James Pike** (Labour & Employment) promoted last year, and **Victoria Murphy** (Tax Strategy & Benefits), **Emma Ball** (Intellectual Property & Technology) and **Matt Canipa** (Corporate) promoted in 2022.



Rob Elvin and Andy Kirkham



Empowering change for Bromleys as newly appointed team Heads announced

Bromleys [↗](#) are thrilled to announce the appointment of two new Heads of Department.

As part of the continued company progression since joining the MAPD Group, Jessica Hotchin has been promoted to the Head of Property and Anjum Noreen as the Head of Court Protection.

Speaking of her recent promotion, Jessica said: "I'm excited by the opportunity offered by Paul Westwell, our managing partner and Head of Commercial, and the rest of the board at MAPD. I will continue to work with him in the commercial team as closely as I have done, maintaining the excellent service that we provide to all of our clients. My new role will enable me to bring some new ideas to the team."

As well as Jessica's promotion, there has also been the addition of Lucy Ridler as a Chartered Legal Executive and Raeesah Dudhwala as a Solicitor to the Property Team.

Jessica added: "The addition of Lucy and Raeesah, added to the extensive experience of the Residential Property team, means that we have a broad knowledge base to draw upon while delivering the comprehensive service that we provide for our clients, whether they are individuals dealing with their homes, their rental investments, or business clients dealing with their commercial premises, warehouses, farms, industrial units or property portfolios or developments."

Anjum also spoke about her recent promotion, to Head of Court of Protection, as she said: "I am absolutely delighted with myself for earning the promotion, it feels amazing. It's validation and a recognition of my expertise and hard work."

"I have learnt a lot about myself and my role within the firm in a very short period of time and I have had great mentors and a supporting family helping me along the way.

"I look forward to leading my team to success. I am sure with my great team that we will be able to continue the success and build upon the great reputation that it already has."

She added: "I want to learn and collaborate with my peers and key stakeholders working in the Court of Protection field. I bring a skill set, expertise and look forward to adding value, in a clear and concise way."



L-R: Jennifer Hall, Jessica Hotchin, Paul Westwell, Lucy Ridler and Raeesah Dudhwala

Hall Brown strengthens ‘spine’ with trio of appointments

Hall Brown [↗](#) has made a trio of appointments to support a continued strong increase in the volume of casework which it is handling.

Iram Bandy has joined the Finance team at the boutique firm’s Manchester head office as Accounts Executive, while Kate Buttery has taken up a role in Leeds as Mediation Co-ordinator.

Chloe Taha has, meanwhile, become a Paralegal in Hall Brown’s Sheffield office.

The firm’s Chief Financial Officer, Will Taylor, has described the hires as “strategically important” in enabling its lawyers to deliver services to clients.

“We fully appreciate that, as the amount and complexity of casework which we deal with grows, it’s vital to ensure that we have solid foundations.

“Just as we have been able to attract some of the country’s leading family lawyers since we first opened, we are extremely fortunate to have what we believe is the best support team to be found in any law firm anywhere.

“Iram brings a wealth of experience and is a very valuable addition to the skills which we have in-house.

“Following the launch of our national mediation practice, we have seen a rapid rise in dispute resolution work across all our

Continued on page 58



L-R: Iram Bandy, Chloe Taha and Kate Buttery

**From p.57**

premises, so Kate's appointment is hugely important.

"Chloe is evidence of our determination both to attract legal talent and to bring in individuals who are very much familiar with our client base.

"Although she is joining at an early stage of her career, she has come from another leading firm, where she gained experience of assisting on the financial aspects of complex, high net worth divorces.

"That kind of expertise is of fantastic help as Hall Brown's casework and reputation extends not just in this country but much further afield.

"All three appointments demonstrate our willingness to leave no stone unturned in providing clients with the best legal and practical advice possible, no matter where they are or whatever they need help with."

The latest wave of recruitment by Hall Brown bolsters more key developments already made this year.

Job Vacancy

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Role Overview:

As the Head of Legal & Compliance, you'll play a crucial role in ensuring the organization operates with integrity, excellence, and adherence to legal and regulatory standards. Leading a team of legal and compliance professionals, you'll oversee all aspects of legal compliance, ethics, governance, bid compliance, risk management, and stakeholder management.



Mr Taylor was himself only appointed in November in what the firm described as a “new and exciting” phase of its evolution, even more professionalism to its central support function.

Ms Banday joins after working with a number of other boutique firms over the course of the last 15 years.

The post taken up by Ms Buttery - who is a fully qualified legal secretary - sees her directly working with Partner Sarah

Manning, who was appointed as Hall Brown’s first Head of Mediation in January.

The firm, said Mr Taylor, has since seen a “considerable influx” in mediation work across its five offices - Manchester, London, Sheffield, Leeds and Birmingham.

Ms Taha is the latest recruit to a team of paralegals in Sheffield, having trained as a costs draughtsperson at another top-ranked law firm in the area.

Key Responsibilities:


- Monitor and ensure compliance with laws, regulations, and industry standards.
- Provide legal advice and guidance to departments across the organization.
- Develop and maintain a robust code of ethics and conduct.
- Establish effective governance structures and policies.
- Lead bid compliance process to ensure submissions meet requirements.
- Identify and mitigate legal and compliance risks.
- Serve as a liaison between legal department, internal teams, and external stakeholders.
- Provide high-quality legal services and advice to Transdev UK.
- Advise on legal issues, negotiate contracts, and review corporate policies.
- Ensure corporate contracts are properly authorized and executed.

- Manage legal claims and advise on legislative changes affecting the company.
- Required Education and Experience:
- Bachelor’s degree in law or equivalent
- Professional certification in compliance or governance is a plus.
- Proven experience in legal and compliance roles.

Skills:

- Strong knowledge of relevant laws, regulations, and compliance frameworks.
- Excellent analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- Exceptional writing abilities.

Join The Team!

Ready to make a meaningful impact in transportation? Apply for the Head of Legal & Compliance role at Transdev UK. To learn more about this role: contact, Lisa Heaven, Talent Partner at Intuitive Talent Solutions - lisa.intuitiverecruitment.com 

Trowers & Hamlins' Manchester Office Head, Suzanne Benson named Firm's new Real Estate Sector Head

Manchester-based Partner Suzanne Benson has been appointed as the new national head of the firm's Real Estate Sector. She takes over from Senior Partner, Sara Bailey, who has stepped aside after a decade in the role.



Suzanne Benson

Suzanne is currently head of [Trowers' Manchester office](#) and leads the firm's North West Real Estate team, roles which she will retain alongside her new appointment. She has been with Trowers for 25 years and specialises in major projects (including strategic land, joint ventures and regeneration) and the delivery of residential schemes.

Trowers has over 450 people advising clients in the real estate sector across all of the firm's 9 offices in the UK, Middle East and Asia and includes lawyers from diverse service lines including corporate, dispute resolution, finance, tax and employment. Trowers is internationally recognised for the depth and calibre of its real estate offering and regularly undertakes high-profile and complex matters and deals for many of the industry's key players.

Commenting on her appointment, Suzanne said, "Trowers is rare in the depth and breadth of our expertise and our work in the real estate sector and I am deeply proud to take up this role to lead on our real estate growth strategy.

"I very much look forward to working with our talented colleagues across our network to build on the excellent work already done by Sara. I'd like to thank her for all of her hard work in steering the group over the last decade. Real estate has a major role to play in creating a better and more sustainable future for society and I'm looking forward to helping us play our part in that."

As Senior Partner, Sara Bailey added, "The real estate industry is one of the world's key economic drivers and plays a massive role both in the UK's economy and those of most countries around the world. As we move into 2024, the industry faces unique challenges, but also massive opportunities, not least of all through the ongoing development of more environmentally friendly practices and as an exemplar of responsible business. As one of the leading law firms in the real estate sector, Trowers is working with clients across the globe to deliver on these key issues. At such an exciting time for the industry I am really pleased that Suzanne has taken on the role and I look forward to continuing to work with her as part of the wider growth strategy for the firm.

"I can think of no-one better than Suzanne to lead our international sector group and on behalf of all her Trowers colleagues, I'd like to congratulate Suzanne in her appointment.



TLT makes three partner promotions in Manchester for 2024

National law firm TLT has promoted three colleagues to partner in its Manchester office, demonstrating the firm's commitment to progressing female talent with women accounting for all these promotions in 2024.

Effective from 1 April 2024, TLT's newly promoted partners in Manchester are financial services disputes and investigations lawyer Roisin Bell, Rachel Smith who specialises in all aspects of property advice for financial services clients, and planning and environment lawyer Debbie Reynolds.

Graeme Orchison head of location in Manchester said: "Congratulations to Roisin, Rachel and Debbie who are truly talented lawyers and provide the best possible service to their clients. It's been an outstanding year of successes and achievements for the entire team in Manchester and it's great to see that reflected in well-deserved promotions across our sectors and service lines."

Elsewhere in the firm, TLT promoted two other colleagues to partner head of trusts and estates: Debbie Gale and restructuring and insolvency lawyer Ainslie Benzie.

The promotions follow a successful year at TLT, during which the firm celebrated record £157m revenue, welcomed a considerable number of new senior hires and expanded its offering into a new location in Birmingham.

The latest round of promotions also further cements TLT as a leader for women's

representation in senior positions, after it recently achieved

33% female partner representation and announced a new target to achieve 50% of women in partner roles by 2029.

Sasha Butterworth, senior partner at TLT commented: "In 2023, TLT has continued to establish itself as a national law firm providing market-leading legal guidance to some of the UK's top institutions. Ensuring we are promoting the next generation of legal talent is crucial to maintain the exceptional service for which we are known for across the country.

"I'm pleased to see promotions ranging across our sectors, service lines and locations, demonstrating our full-service and UK-wide offering. It's also particularly encouraging to see 100% female lawyers promoted to partner this year which, alongside the individuals' hard-work and determination, demonstrates TLT's commitment to supporting women's career progression. Congratulations to all those who have been promoted this year."

TLT also promoted male and female colleagues to more senior positions: one colleague to legal director, 22 senior associates to managing associates and 30 associates to senior associates across the firm's offices in Glasgow, Belfast, London, Manchester, and Bristol.

The latest round of promotions brings the total number of partners to 164.



Graeme Orchison

MYSG Committee Elections 2024

We are delighted to announce the MYSG Committee Election process for 2024.

We would like to say a massive thank you to all of our sponsors, event hosts and most importantly, our members for their continued support throughout 2023.

Many thanks also go to the following committee members who, after several years of commitment to the committee have decided to hand over the reins:-

- *Ruth Thomas (Chair).*
- *Alex Streeter (Social Director).*
- *Liam Whitfield (Social Director).*
- *Madeleine Langmead (Charities Director).*
- *Jack Bookey (Health and Well-Being Director).*

We are pleased to announce that MYSG Marketing Director, Helen Royle will be taking over as Chair of the MYSG and she will be continuing on the committee with the following existing committee members:-

- *Sam Bumby (Professional Development Director).*
- *Tom Moody (Professional Development Director).*
- *Claudia Arends (General Director).*
- *Cori McKeown (Inter-Professional Director).*
- *Hannah Mycock (Charities Director).*

With this in mind, the following committee roles are open for nomination:-

- *Social Directors (x2 positions) - responsible for organising the various social events for MYSG members.*
- *General Director (x1 position) – responsible for the MYSG mailing list, circulating MYSG related emails to the membership database and marketing MYSG events.*



- *Inter-Professional Director (x2 positions) – overseeing and organising the various inter-professional social events.*
- *Charity Director (x1 position)– responsible for organising events to raise funds and awareness for MYSG’s Charity of the Year*
- *Sports, Health and Well-Being Director (x1 position) – responsible for organising the various sports, health and well-being events.*

If you are interested in putting yourself forward for any of the above roles, please email Ruth Thomas (Ruth.Thomas@IrwinMitchell.com [↗](#)) and Helen Royle (helen.royle@family-law.co.uk [↗](#)) with your full name, the name of the law firm you work for, your PQE level and a short paragraph (max 250 words) about why you want to be a part of the MYSG Committee/ why you are applying for a particular role. Please note that the MYSG is open to qualified solicitors of all levels from NQ up to 10 years’ PQE.

The deadline to submit your nomination is Friday 19 April 2024 and the MYSG Committee roles are to be announced on Friday 26 April 2024. A full MYSG Committee handover will then be conducted during the course of the week commencing 29 April 2024.

The MYSG Committee looks forward to receiving your nominations over the coming weeks.

Good luck!

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Passover celebrations

April is a busy month this year, with three major religious festivals being celebrated, Passover, Easter (well Easter Monday, anyway) and Ramadan.

The date of Passover changes each year because the date is set by the lunar-based Hebrew calendar, not the Gregorian calendar, and starts this year at sundown on April 22, to sunset on April 30.

Passover, Pesach in Hebrew, is the Festival of Freedom, commemorating the story of Exodus, when God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Israelite settlement in ancient Egypt first occurred when Joseph, a son of the patriarch Jacob and founder of one of the 12 tribes of Israel, moved his family there during a severe famine in their homeland of Canaan, now Israel. For many years the Israelites lived in harmony in the province of Goshen, but as their population grew the Egyptians began to see them as a threat, and a particularly hostile pharaoh ordered their enslavement and the drowning of all firstborn sons in the Nile. One baby boy was rescued by the pharaoh's daughter, given the name Moses (meaning "one who is pulled out") and adopted into the Egyptian royal family.

Moses became aware of his true identity and the Egyptians' brutal treatment of his fellow Israelites, and killed an Egyptian slave master, escaping to the Sinai Peninsula, where he lived as a shepherd for 40 years. Moses was commanded by God to free his fellow Israelites from slavery and when the pharaoh refused, God unleashed 10 plagues on the Egyptians. The Israelites' homes were "passed over" during the last and most punishing plague, hence the name of the holiday. Terrified of further punishment, the Egyptians convinced the pharaoh to release the Israelites, and Moses quickly led them out of Egypt. However, the pharaoh

changed his mind and sent his soldiers to retrieve the former slaves. As the Egyptian army approached the fleeing Israelites at the edge of the Red Sea, a miracle occurred and the sea parted, allowing Moses and his followers to cross safely, and then closed, drowning the Egyptians.

The Israelites, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, trekked through the Sinai desert for 40 years, living on manna (used to make bread) sent from heaven and receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, before finally reaching their ancestral home in Canaan, later known as the Land of Israel.

One of the most important Passover rituals is removing all leavened food products (known as chametz) before the holiday begins and abstaining from them throughout its duration. Instead of bread, we eat a type of flatbread/cracker called matzah. According to tradition, this is because the Israelites fled Egypt in such haste that there was no time for their bread to rise. To commemorate the unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when they left Egypt, we do not eat any chametz from midday on the day before Passover starts until the conclusion of the holiday. Chametz means leavened grain, so any food or drink that contains wheat, barley, rye, oats, etc. for example: bread; cake; biscuits; cereal; pasta and most alcoholic drinks. Passover foods are unique in that, beyond the usual rules of keeping kosher, there are special rules for preparing food that is kosher for Passover. Many Jews have special Passover dishes that are only used once a year during the holiday.



“

Instead of bread, we eat a type of flatbread/cracker called matzah

The celebration of Passover is prescribed in the book of Exodus in the Old Testament (in Judaism, the first five books of Moses are called the Torah). The holiday is celebrated for eight days (seven in Israel), and incorporates themes of a Jewish homeland, remembrance of Jewish history, family, springtime, and social justice and freedom, including recognising those who are still being oppressed today. All of these aspects are discussed, if not symbolically represented, during the Passover meal known as a Seder (derived from the Hebrew word for “order” or “arrangement”, because there is a ritual order that is followed, from the order of prayers and songs to the

sequence of specific foods eaten), which takes place on the first two evenings of the festival. The story of the Exodus from Egypt is retold using a special text called the Haggadah. Symbolic foods eaten at the seder are: maror (bitter herbs, usually horseradish, a reminder of the bitterness of slavery), salt water (symbolizing the tears of the slaves), charoset (sweet paste made of fruit, wine and nuts, symbolizing the mortar the slaves used to build the Egyptian pyramids), shank bone, (representing the Passover sacrifice), hard-boiled egg (symbolic of life and birth associated with the spring season), and karpas (a leafy green vegetable, symbolizing hope and redemption). It is required to drink four cups of wine throughout the seder, a celebration of freedom.

Every family has its own Passover rituals, which may reflect family tradition, the denomination of Judaism (some are more orthodox, others less traditional), or whether they are Mizrahi (from the Middle East and North Africa), Ashkenazi (originating from Central and Eastern Europe), Ethiopian, Sephardi (e.g. from Spain and Portugal) etc.

The text of the Haggadah, which has been used for generations to guide the Seder, says that in every generation each Jew must regard themselves as though they were personally brought out of Egypt. Through the annual retelling of the Passover story, Jews reflect on how their ancestors survived adversity, but are reminded that, as a people, Jews were all slaves in Egypt, and of the challenges that Jews faced over the centuries and continue to face today.

**Andrea Cohen
Weightmans**



International Wheelchair Day – 1 March 2024

Did you know??

- there are around 2 million wheelchair users in the UK. That is approximately one in 35 people, and wheelchair users account for around 20% of all disabled people in the UK
- the wheelchair is the worldwide symbol for disability and
- it was the ancient Greeks, who first used a wheelchair to mobilise people who had a lower limb impairment and who could not walk.

International wheelchair day gives us the opportunity to reflect on the huge importance of wheelchairs to those with a mobility impairment.

As a wheelchair user himself, after a spinal cord injury as a teenager, Jonathan Fogerty, associate solicitor at CFG reflects on how his wheelchair means he can lead a fulfilled life after a spinal cord injury.



Jonathan Fogerty

Jonathan says 'I was only a teenager when I became a wheelchair user. That was over 35 years ago now and, in that time, wheelchairs have revolutionised the lives of many disabled people living with a mobility impairment all around the world.'

A wheelchair when you need it is not just a means of mobility; it is your very independence.

When I first sustained my spinal cord injury, wheelchairs were very cumbersome. They were heavy pieces of equipment that were difficult to push and did not fold easily and there were very limited options around powered wheelchairs for those with a very significant disability.

Fast forward 35 years, and we have very sophisticated powered wheelchairs, with tilt and recline features and programmable controls that you see daily.

These powered wheelchairs mean independence in mobility for people even with a very significant disability.

My own wheelchair is a manual wheelchair with power assist wheels. It is lightweight and folds easily meaning that I can transport it without fuss in the boot of a car, in the cabin of an aeroplane or easily in my own adapted vehicle.

But more widely, we now have wheelchairs that facilitate disabled people accessing the beach, the countryside and of course competing in demanding, competitive wheelchair sports.

The wheelchair as a piece of equipment is changing all the time; it must, to keep up with the demands and expectations of the lives of disabled people.

Where will we be in another 35 years I wonder? What changes will we see to the wheelchair in that time?

I really don't know, but what I can be sure of is that wheelchairs are no longer pieces of equipment that restrict disabled people or leave them 'wheelchair bound'.

And I am sure that disabled people will not be confined by them either. Far from confining them, wheelchairs positively free people who need them.

So, on this international wheelchair day, I would urge to think about somebody you know who uses a wheelchair and take a moment to think how it may have enhanced their life as a disabled person.

Jonathan Fogerty is an Associate Solicitor at CFG Law.

He is a wheelchair user after spinal cord injury as a teenager.

He can be reached at jonathan.fogerty@cfglaw.co.uk ↗

News

Compete in the Blossom Dash Corporate Challenge

The National Trust will shortly be launching Bloomtown, a trail of 40 different Blossom hotspots across Manchester, Salford and Trafford.

The trail will encourage people to go on a journey and spot the Blossom across the city, including the iconic purple foxglove trees in St. Peter's Square, the beautiful spire cherry trees on Tariff Street or the marvellous magnolias in Parsonage Gardens. There is also a programme of events, workshops and activities at Castlefield Viaduct, parks and green spaces and other partner venues designed to celebrate the blossom season, encouraging people to notice, connect with and care about nature, beauty and their local environment.

We'd love to get businesses involved in the festivities and invite your company to submit a team into our Corporate Fundraising Challenge – BLOSSOM DASH!

Ask your colleagues, friends and family to sponsor you to raise much needed funds to support the future of Castlefield Viaduct

and keep nature alive across Manchester for years to come.

- Date: Wednesday, 24th April
- Time: 4pm – 7.30pm (race runs 4.30 – 6.30pm)
- Venue: Manchester Central
- Maximum of 5 people per team
- £10 per person entry fee and min of £500 to raise per team.
- Deadline to enter: 15th April 2024
- Please note that there is a maximum of 25 team places available.

How to enter:

Contact rachel.brydon@nationaltrust.org.uk ↗ or becky.cleasby@nationaltrust.org.uk ↗ to confirm you would like to enter a team.

We will share with you further details, including the different prize categories, provide you with a map of the hotspots and also a Just Giving link to help you with your fundraising. Please do also let us know if you would like to donate a prize!

[See page 75 for more details](#) ↗



Structural Warranties and Building Safety Act 2022

Whilst the Building Safety Act 2022 has significant implications for the Construction Industry, some aspects of the Act may impact on other professions in respect of new build properties.

Certificates v Warranties

Before delving into the potential issues arising out of the Act, it is important to highlight the differences between Professional Consultant's Certificates (PCC) and Structural Warranties as these are two very different beasts.

A PCC is simply a certificate that demonstrates that the Architect has inspected the property and that it is in accordance with the plans and the approvals. Whilst the certificate will likely confirm that Architect will maintain professional indemnity insurance, this does not confer the benefit of that insurance on

to the purchaser of the property. For a claim to be considered under the PCC, it must be demonstrated that the Architect has been negligent in the performance of their role.

On the other hand, the Structural Warranty is an insurance backed product, taken out by the Developer/Builder with the intention of covering any defects that may arise within the property. The purchaser will have the benefit of the Warranty and would simply need to raise a claim with the Warranty Provider, be that the NHBC, LABC or other company.

Whilst there have been occasions when Certificates and Warranties have been viewed as being similar, they are not. Historically, this has resulted in purchasers being left with limited cover as the PCC does not operate as a Warranty despite the assurances of the conveyancers/solicitors.

STRUCTURAL WARRANTIES AND THE BUILDING SAFETY ACT 2022



**SOLICITORS
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NOTE 2024**



Changing Times

Whilst larger Developers will almost always have a Structural Warranty in place, this has rarely been the case with smaller Developers, with many simply opting to rely on the PCC in its place.

However, under the Building Safety Act 2022, this is no longer going to be the case. Under Section 144 of the Act, which applies to any person carrying out the creation of one or more dwellings, provides that:

(2) The developer must, at the time of or before granting or disposing of a relevant interest in a new build home –

provide to the purchaser a new build home warranty for the new build home.

(b) provide to a prescribed person a new build home warranty for any common parts.

(3) A “new build home warranty” for a thing is an arrangement, satisfying any requirements under subsection (4), under which –

(a) the developer agrees, in specified circumstances, to remedy any specified defect (or any defect) in the thing occurring in a specified period.

(b) a prescribed person obtains the benefit of a policy of insurance relating to specified defects (or any defects) in the thing.

This Section also provides that the Warranty must provide cover for a period of 15 years, an increase from the previous 10-year period bringing the Warranty product in line with the changes to the limitation period contained within the Act.

The Conveyancing Problem

In view of the obligations imposed on the Developer under the Building Safety Act 2022, the presence of a Structural Warranty is going to be of greater importance that it has been previously.

As a potential purchaser is unlikely to be aware of the obligation imposed on the developer by the Building Safety Act 2022, it is going to be increasingly important that anyone acting in respect of sale of a new build property is aware of the differences between a PCC and a Structural Warranty, the implications of the Building Safety Act and has provided the Client with the appropriate advice.

The obvious concern is that the position in respect of the Structural Warranty is misrepresented by the Solicitors or Conveyancers, this could leave them exposed to claims by the purchasers.

If you would like to discuss the subject matter of this article further, please contact:

Julia Whittle | jw@mflinsurance.com | 0161 237 7731 | 07495 499708

Mark Ramsbottom | mr@mflinsurance.com | 01943 816 866 | 07803 199401

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MLS Member Benefit: Chamber Space Access

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce HQ is based at Elliot House, Deansgate, right in the heart of Manchester City Centre. Over the course of the pandemic, the Chamber doubled the size of the Members' Lounge and added a hot-desking facility, so why not pop in, grab a free coffee and network?

As members of Manchester Law Society, you're welcome to use the facilities there, just notify a member of staff on

arrival. The Chamber also has a suite of 16 meetings rooms at Elliot House from conference facilities, boardrooms through to gallery rooms – and members of the Chamber get 20% off.

To find out more, visit:

www.chamberspace.co.uk  If you're interest in Membership, the Members' Lounge or Chamber Space, then feel free to get in touch with the team on benefits@gmchamber.co.uk 



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The benefits of engaging with ‘external’ diversity networks to promote diversity and inclusion



Oluwagbemiga Ogunleye

I grew up in Nigeria but went to university in the UK. Growing up in Nigeria obviously meant that I had never previously experienced being an ethnic minority, and so being a minority at work was something I had never had to consider.

Initially, starting my career in a completely different country and culture, where I had very few connections was daunting. This feeling progressively eased when I engaged with professional networks that focused on promoting diversity and providing spaces for minorities to connect.

As a training contract applicant, I had anticipated the values of these networks. Therefore, in addition to quality of work

and training, when making applications and looking at different firms, I looked for firms that value diversity, commit time and resources to encourage it, and have active diversity networks.

External networks like Rare Recruitment and the Black Solicitors Network are pioneering diversity organisations that have existed for decades and have contributed to the success of thousands of black lawyers. More recently, law firms have increased time and financial investment into their internal diversity networks, as the initiatives undertaken and organised by these networks have become key to the way law firms implement their respective ED&I strategies.

As both external and internal networks share the same core objectives, continuous engagement between both types of networks could help to circumvent some of the practical challenges they face, such as lack of time and resources. In particular, I believe that two key benefits can be gained from such engagement: talent attraction and wider collaboration on impactful initiatives.

1. Talent attraction

In the last few years, new external initiatives, and networks such as the Young Professionals and 10K Black interns have entered the diversity space and have been successful in arranging work placements with chambers, firms and companies, for black students and graduates in various



industries. Notably, 10K Black Interns upskill their applicants and set an ambitious goal of creating a network of 10,000 interns over a five-year period, which they are halfway to meeting.

Many black graduates, myself included, have benefited from these placements, gaining valuable work experience. Some others were even able to obtain training contracts and pupillages after interning through these schemes.

External diversity networks are well placed to attract members from diverse backgrounds to a career in law, as they have greater visibility in diverse communities and are well placed to create a forum to support members with their career development. For example, the Black Solicitors Network's Grassroots programme is a fully funded programme that runs a range of careers and skills programmes designed to upskill undergraduate participants. The Network's reach and longstanding connections to The Law Society, law firms, corporations, universities, schools, and other stakeholders make it well placed to get in front of talented aspiring lawyers at even the earlier stages of their academic journeys.

Law firms' internal diversity networks have an important role to play in work such as this, and their partnering with external networks could provide a wider reach for law firms to attract the best talent from diverse backgrounds.

2. Wider collaboration on impactful initiatives

Increased engagement between internal and external networks could lead to wider collaboration on impactful initiatives that can drive positive change in the legal profession.

“

External diversity networks are well placed to attract members from diverse backgrounds to a career in law

For example, in February 2024, the UK celebrated its annual 'Race Equality Week', an initiative that unites thousands of organisations and individuals to address the barriers to race equality in the workplace.

Race Equality Matters (REM) an external network, organised a widescale implementation initiative with the support of internal networks. This year's theme was **#ListenActChange** which focuses on **listening** to what needs to be done, taking **action** on what has been heard and learnt and creating and being the **change** in tackling race inequality.

This initiative has been made possible and is maintained through engagement with individuals, organisations, and internal race diversity networks.

Conclusion

To conclude, whilst internal and external networks could operate independently, they should both be utilised together in a way that achieves the shared objective of promoting diversity in the legal profession. Both groups can benefit from engaging with each other and pooling their expertise and resources to overcome some of the practical challenges that they respectively face.

*Written by Oluwagbemiga Ogunleye,
Trainee Solicitor at TLT*

Edited by Elle-Sue Calderbank

78 Management Matters

By **Bill Kirby**, director of Professional Choice Consultancy



This Month

- **What is the image/brand of your business**
- **Regulatory and Due Diligence challenges**
- **PMS/CMS Update**

30 years now working with law firms and many of their suppliers in terms of strategy, management and development.

From a commercial perspective, law firms have the same challenges as most other businesses – all need to be perpetually reviewed and handled - Aspiration of owners, business strategy, business management - proactive process with the right objectives and appropriate BI, MI and KPI, the right staff being on boarded, developed and retained. Decisions over in-house work or outsourcing for volumes and needed skills.

Empathy with clients, business development – new clients but also retention and development. The right image in the marketplace through brand, image, social conscience and community awareness – can be decision makers for new and retained clients as well as staff. A secure and high performing IT infrastructure with the right tools for accounting, business efficiency, on boarding and communication. Well used PMS and CMS enhanced as necessary with added value solutions.

In addition to all of this law firms have also got to be up to speed with all regulation and compliance – rules of the game with AML and SRA but also avoiding fines which are growing like crazy – profit, cash and image impact but also loss of Professional Indemnity Insurance which means the end.

Business Brand

This is something that law firms have tended to ignore – much through ego but also not recognising how important the image of the business is becoming for the acquisition and retention of clients as well in particular with younger staff acquisition and retention.

Over the last few years I have had the benefit of getting to know [Phil Strachan](#) and have attended some law society events, business networking events and afterwards often share the same opinions – so many opportunities lost by the providers.

Phil says

“One particular very busy, almost overcrowded, market sector where many businesses compete to offer their services but so many fail to differentiate themselves and their offerings is Legal Services. It really pains me to come across one firm after the other, whether I meet them in person or through their website or business cards and they just blend in with their perceived competitors. They simply fail to stand out from the crowd.

This is because all too often they simply present themselves almost as a commodity, just as Solicitors or something similarly bland, without perhaps signalling clearly that they are Family Law Specialists or Corporate and Commercial Lawyers. Additionally they succeed wonderfully in failing to have, or at least failing to communicate a compelling proposition that will prompt anyone to choose them over their perceived competitors.

As such, in the eyes of their target audience, they are perceived to be just another anonymous brick in the wall - as me-too blands as opposed to the go-too brand in their market. Equally, from the employer



brand perspective they totally fail to position themselves as the go-to legal firm, the employer of choice, with the result that they will fail to attract, recruit and retain the best candidates.”

[Home - Think Brand Not Bland](#)

It is not about how pretty the web site is but the image that the firm projects – empathy and client performance and benefits, skills and market awareness, the target markets priorities from skills through social awareness, local or national services and understanding leading to community participation and environment contributions. Potential and existing clients have much clearer lists on choice methods and sought benefits.

This includes things like ESG and B Corps read more about it [here](#).

Legal Compliance/ Regulation/ Due Diligence

In addition to all of this commercial management and challenges, law firms have also got to be up to speed with all regulation and compliance – rules of the game with AML and SRA but also avoiding fines which are growing like crazy – profit, cash and image impact but also loss of Professional Indemnity Insurance which means the end.

There are so many firms at the moment who are not following basic due diligence or processes to protect themselves not only from the SRA.

Again, I have had exposure for the last few years to [Brian Rogers FCMI](#) for multiple discussions and also participation in his on line, [monthly legal compliance update](#) for which in excess of 2,200 are registered. Next one is as soon as 4th April.

There are so many compliance and regulation plus due diligence challenges that must be faced by law firms and staff at all levels and sign off and operations methodologies have to be met.

A few examples:

- AML – and identity fraud a very hot topic at the moment. The last month has seen a number of firms sanctioned for breaches – fines £3,203 - £23,000 – causes lack of firm wide compliance and client and matter risk assessments. The SRA has made it clear they will take action where failure to meet full obligations.
- Due diligence at an appropriate level is essential for corporate and individual clients. We now have the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act.
- Updated assessments covering potential vendor fraud – included methods of funds transfer, pooled client funds, third party managed accounts
- Matter Risk Assessments
- Operational diversity data
- Financial Action Task Force
- Ethical Conduct – good lawyering is one thing but it needs to be managed well without bullying
- Residual Balances – fines again being introduced where not returned to clients and maybe so long as to files being destroyed

All firms need to have policies and procedures in place to ensure that at least the basics are met – due diligence timing, source of funds checking, individual and corporate ID.

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From p.79

PMS & CMS

Following the [November](#) and [March](#) articles it is good to see some progress at least from a couple of suppliers. Some firms are enquiring of their vendors. We also now have interest with regional law societies in developing questionnaires where the providers can be challenged – these will be developed soon. Potential new suppliers are clearly working with the essential added value opportunities.

Bill Kirby is a director of [professionalchoiceconsultancy.com](https://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 and [LinkedIn](#)

News

#LittleByLittle – Stress Awareness Month 2024

Stress Awareness Month takes place throughout April, dedicated to helping people understand stress, what causes it and how to manage it for better mental health and wellbeing in both personal and professional life.

This year, the theme for Stress Awareness Month is **Little By Little**. The idea is that small consistent actions each day contribute to overall wellbeing as a cumulative effect.

In today's fast paced world, the constant barrage of information can leave many of us feeling overwhelmed and struggling with stress-related issues.

Some key statistics include:

- The most common cause of stress is work-related stress with 79% saying they frequently felt it
- Stress, depression or anxiety accounted for 55% of all working days lost due to ill health in 2021/22
- 7% of UK adult feel stressed every single day
- 74% of people feel so stressed they have been overwhelmed or unable to cope

- Inpatient hospital admissions caused by stress-related illnesses in the UK cost around £8.13 billion
- 46% say that they eat too much or too unhealthily due to stress.

The statistics paint a concerning picture of the current state of mental health and the prevalence of burnout among workers has seen a notable increase since before the pandemic.

The **#LittleByLittle Campaign** emphasises the importance of simple, manageable changes that seamlessly integrate into our daily routines. Let's foster open conversations and raise awareness, creating supportive environments where everybody can prioritise their mental well-being, one small step at a time.

For more information on Stress Awareness Month and some really useful free resources visit [Stress Awareness Month 2024 – The Stress Management Society](#)

And if anybody feels like they need a confidential chat please don't hesitate to contact me and we can arrange a coffee – 07977 748450.

Fran Eccles-Bech, Chief Executive

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Legal Costs Update



By **Nick McDonnell** (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

First, a successful Court of Appeal case in which Kain Knight's very own Mark Brighton was involved. **Hadley v Przybylo** [2024] EWCA Civ 250 concerned whether, and to what extent a solicitor could recover costs between-the-parties where time was spent attending case management meetings with medical and other professionals in the course of managing a claimant's rehabilitation needs. Master McCloud, at first instance, decided that, as a point of principle, such costs were not recoverable as they did not 'progress' the case. Lord Justices Colson, Dingemans and Birss allowed the appeal finding that, in principle such costs are recoverable, but the extent to which they are is a matter for the costs judge against a test of reasonableness. Solicitors acting for Claimants working with case managers can now breathe a huge sigh of relief.

It is rare for any appeal against a costs management decision involving costs budgeting to succeed, but **Woolley v MOD** [2014] EWHC 304 (KB) is one such case. Below, the judge had fixed the parties' costs budgets, making heavy reductions to the claimant's Form H in a personal injury action when doing so. On appeal, Kerr J held that the judge below had made a serious procedural error or other irregularity in that she had closed her mind to any argument

based on a comparison with items in the defendant's costs budget. Kerr J allowed the claimant's appeal and sent the matter back for a different judge to re- fix the budget.

Next family law costs. In **KS v VS** [2024] EWHC 278 (Fam), the husband had applied for £331,000 in costs following his successful application to stay divorce and financial remedy proceedings. He argued that the civil "Guide to the Summary Assessment of Costs" should not form part of a family court's consideration in making a summary assessment. However, Arbutnot J held that the Guide was helpful as it set out what a reasonable and proportionate hourly rate would be in the various types of cases that came before the court.

Still in family law, in **Xanthopoulos v Rakshina** [2024] EWCA Civ 100, a costs order in financial remedy proceedings had been made in favour of a successful appellant. However, the Court of Appeal held that a significant discount was required to reflect the court's findings of litigation misconduct against him, which included having to increase the time estimate for the hearing by half a day to accommodate his numerous unmeritorious ancillary applications.

Next a victory for insurers against credit hire companies where vehicles have been rented after a road accident whilst the claimant's car is under repair. In **Kindertons v Murtagh** [2024] EWHC 471 (KB), Turner J upheld a non-party costs order made below against the appellant credit hire company. Following the dismissal of a personal injury action arising out of an RTA, the losing claimants had been found to have been fundamentally dishonest, had failed to pay the other driver's insurers' costs of £12,000. Turner J agreed that the original claim (which had been for damages and car hire charges) had been for the financial benefit of the credit hire company which had had a very strong financial stake in the litigation; any benefit to the losing claimant in pursuing the claim for hire charges had been all but illusory. It followed that the non-party costs order stood, with the combined costs of the appeal estimated to be in the region of £100,000.

Still with non-party costs orders, but with a slight difference. **Topalsson GmbH v Rolls Royce Motor Cars Ltd** [2024] EWHC 297 (TCC) concerned an application by Rolls Royce for funding information in support of its application for a non-party costs order under s. 51 of the Senior Courts Act 1981 against Kubilay Topal the founder, managing director and majority shareholder of the claimant, and importantly, other potential funders. Rolls Royce succeeded, but not without Constable J stating that "...there is a depressingly real risk that an order requiring disclosure may provoke a side alley of satellite litigation around compliance".

In an usual case involving a potential Damages Based Agreement, in **Stoop (t/a Warwick Risk Management) v Johnson** [2024] EWHC 286 (CH), Elizabeth Jones KC dealt with whether an agreement was a DBA at all, and if so, whether the success fee was reasonable. She held that the agreement did not comply with the DBA Regulations 2013 and was unenforceable, but if that were wrong, it related to family proceedings. Accordingly it was also unenforceable being in breach of s 58AA(4) (aa) Courts and Legal Services Act 1990.

Finally, **Holden v Holden** [2024] EWHC 453 (Ch) which concerns Part 36. Nicholas Thompsell KC had given judgment on various preliminary issues and had then moved on to consider the costs. In doing so, he was mindful of the limitations which apply about making costs orders after a trial of preliminary issues where, as was the case, there had been Part 36 offers. However, the parties agreed that he should look at the offers. Upon doing so, the judge decided that they were not valid offers under the rule. It followed that he could make costs orders other than "costs reserved", holding that he need not defer dealing with the costs until the final determination of the litigation.

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 or Colin.Campbell@kain-knight.co.uk

Use unclaimed balances and unused budget for good: donate to The Solicitors' Charity

The Solicitors' Charity is calling on law firms to help make a positive difference to the wellbeing of solicitors by donating its unclaimed balances, risk-free, at any time. With some financial years also coming to a close, the Charity is calling on law firms to contribute any unused budget to a good purpose.

The Solicitors' Charity CEO Nick Gallagher said: "Now is the perfect time to make a firm commitment to support the profession through The Solicitors' Charity. With our expanded range of wellbeing support, we're reaching more individuals than ever before.

"We invite you to join us. Wherever you are in your financial year, just beginning, halfway through, or end, your contribution, whether a one-time donation or regular RCB support, can help solicitors facing adversity. Together, let's ensure no solicitor stands alone in times of need."

The Solicitors' Charity offers a range of wellbeing and emotional support services, as well as practical and financial help, to provide a safe place for all solicitors going through difficult times.

The charity works with many support organisations, including [LawCare](#), [Onebright](#), [Renovo](#), [Citizens Advice Manchester \(CAM\)](#), [Pennysmart](#), and Advice Works to get solicitors back on their feet. LawCare, is the mental health and wellbeing charity offering peer-to-peer support to the legal sector, while Onebright is dedicated to providing end-to-end services for mental health. The Charity offers referrals, signposting, and provides funds for both.

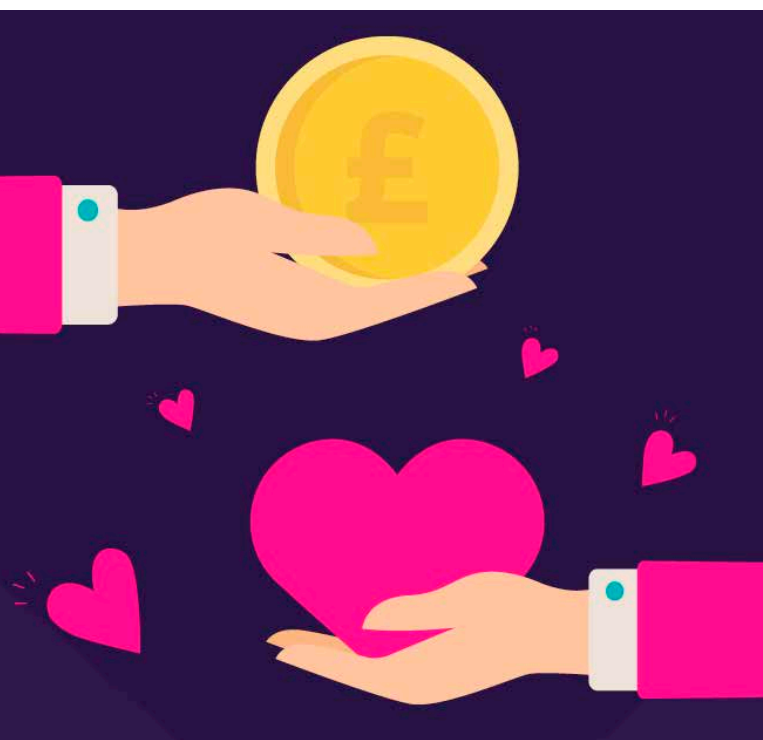
Solicitor 'Dan' (name changed for privacy) explained: "The help with accommodation and financial support provided by The Solicitors' Charity is really helping me get back on my feet.

"The best thing now is being debt-free, having a roof over my head and a warm room. If the Charity hadn't been there for me, I don't know what would have happened. They've been massively helpful and a real lifesaver."



Regular RCB donor, Anthony Earl, Director at Earl and Crocker Solicitors said: "I am honoured to advocate for this commendable Charity, which

provides essential support to our profession amidst its demanding and high-pressure nature. The ease of donating, coupled with





the assurance of fund return, if necessary, underscores its accessibility and reliability.”

“Particularly in these times of financial strain and heightened focus on wellbeing, its importance is paramount. I urge fellow law firms to join us in supporting this essential cause, enriching the very profession in which we work.”

Solicitor ‘Naomi’ (named changed) says:

“I don’t know how I would have survived without the kindness and support of The Solicitors’ Charity. When I contacted the Charity, I was treated like a human being. I was struggling to pay rent, bills, food, living essentials, and relying on the goodwill of friends.

“The Solicitors’ Charity provided me with essential support and relief in desperate circumstances; they made it possible for me to live.”

The Charity’s new fundraising campaign invites law firms to use any unused budget they may have to make a one-off donation, or to donate their RCBs regularly, with no risk involved. It is also reaching out to lapsed law firm donors to restart their donations and urges existing donors to continue with their much-needed support.



Anna Dunford, LLB Solicitor’s firm, Hadgkiss Hughes & Beale, currently donates its RCBs. She said: “The Solicitors’ Charity carries out

vital work supporting solicitors in England and Wales. We have found that donating our unclaimed balances is simple, and we regularly encourage other firms to do the same.

“We’re thankful for the help the Charity

“

Find out how donating your unclaimed client balances will make a positive difference

provides to solicitors in need, and proud that our contributions make a difference.”

Nick Gallagher adds: “I think all firms will be very aware of unclaimed client balances because of the accounting rules, but they may not realise that they are able to donate them to The Solicitors’ Charity and that we give an absolute indemnity that they will get the money back if a client gets in touch in the future.

“The process for donating RCBs is very simple and straightforward. Send us an email, call us, or fill out the form on our website and we will support you through the process.

“Any single donation over £500 needs approval from the SRA, but we have the necessary forms and can talk you through them. When you’re ready to donate, you can send a cheque with a covering letter, or make a payment through BACS and we will send out an indemnity letter by return. It’s a very easy process, so please get in touch.

“Together, we can make a difference and improve the wellbeing of many people in the profession, and those who depend on them.”

Find out more about The Solicitors’ Charity, and give your support, by visiting thesolicitorscharity.org/support-our-work



Pet of the month

Name: Rebecca Peace

Firm: Mitigo Group

Pet Name: Hattie (Hathor)

Pet Nickname: Hattatha Christie

What kind of pet do you have?
Cat (rescue)

Is your pet: Female

How old is your pet: 9 years young

Favourite Toy: Octopus Energy finger puppet

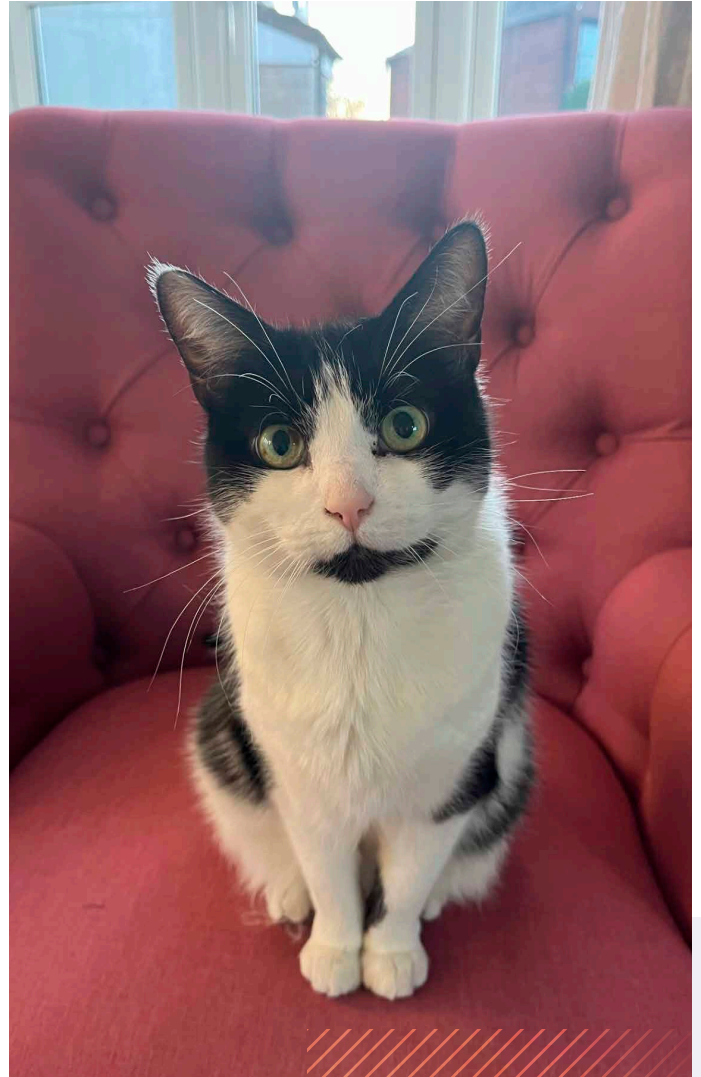
Favourite Activity: Lying in front of the fire

Favourite Treat: Mozzarella (cheese tax)

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

My perfect day would be... After the most important meal of the day aka breakfast, a tour of the windowsills to assess the outside world. At lunch, a quick potter outside to sniff my favourite bush, before stretching out in front of the fire for the rest of the day.

My favourite thing my parents do... Pull out a chair so I can join them at the dinner table.



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!

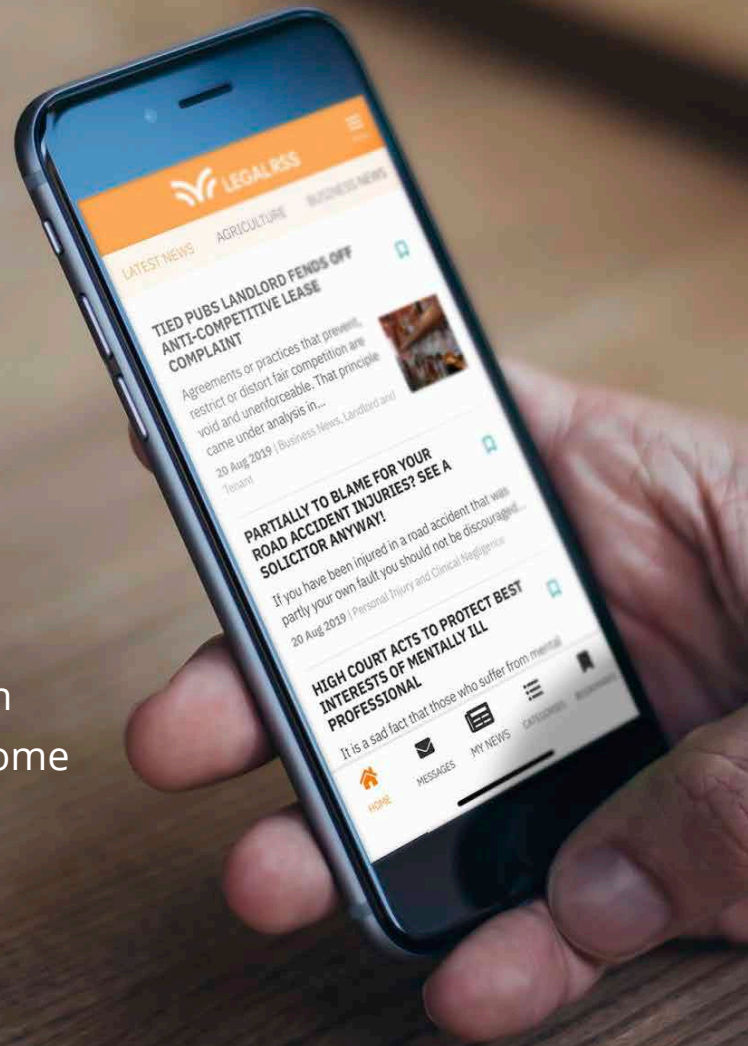
You can download a copy of the questions here then send your answers and photo to Messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

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