

October 2024



the Messenger

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Manchester Young Lawyers



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Manchester in the 1990s

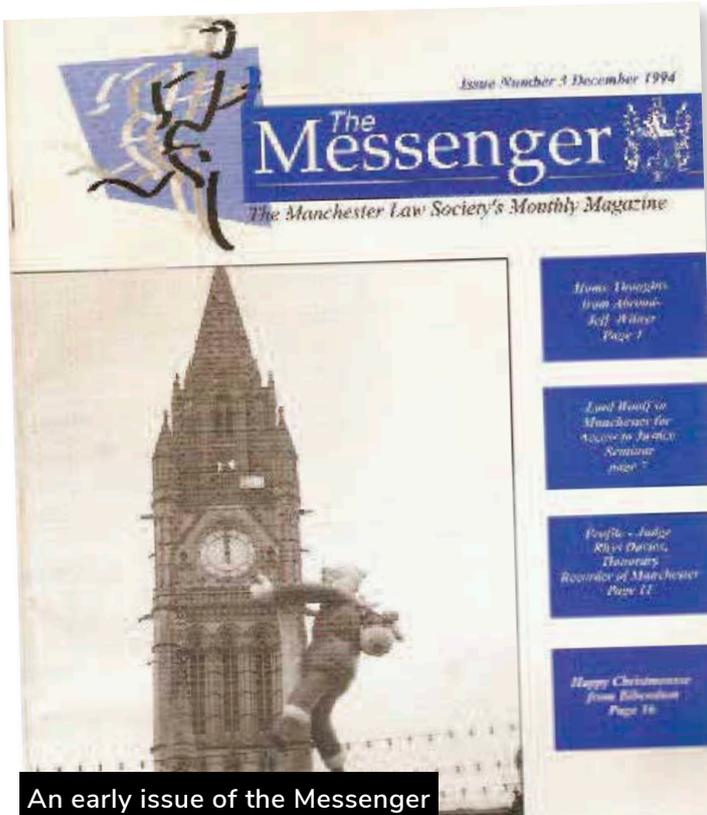


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Nick Johnson on his retirement



Celebrating 30 years of the Messenger



An early issue of the Messenger

This month marks a significant milestone for The Messenger, our official Manchester Law Society magazine.

From its humble beginnings, when it was typed, photocopied, stapled and printed by hand by the team at MLS Towers (which used to take a week each month!) The Messenger has evolved into a dynamic digital read, reflecting the rapid advancements in technology and the changing landscape of legal communication. This transformation has allowed us to reach a wider audience, providing timely updates, topical articles on matters of law and health and wellbeing, in-depth analyses, our popular 'Talking Heads' pieces and not forgetting our 'Pet of the Month'!

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www.manchesterlawsociety.org.uk



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From the President

David Anderson, President

This fantastic publication has reached the grand old age of 30. Thirty years ago, I was just starting my first year of 6th form, *Definitely Maybe* was released, the Channel Tunnel was officially opened, Nelson Mandela became the President of South Africa, OJ Simpson went on the run in his white Ford Bronco, Manchester United won the FA Cup, *Friends* first hit TV screens and *The Messenger* was born. A lot has changed.

In the intervening years we found out OJ wasn't guilty (or, at least, not to the criminal burden of proof), Oasis broke up and got back together, *Friends* would go on to be one of the most watched sitcoms of all time and Man' United would still win the FA Cup. *The Messenger* would also grow to be a must-read for anyone interested in what is going on in the local legal market, for fantastic management resources and for updates on regulatory matters.

This edition is no different, for alongside a number of helpful articles, we also have important news from some of the region's most well-known firms and chambers. Of course, this month's edition also harks back in time, through the history of *The Messenger* and the history of Manchester over the past 30 years. Seraphina Wilkins-Holiday (TLT Solicitors) also looks at how the routes into the profession have changed in the last 30 years and Matt Taylor (Eversheds) looks at what was in the news 30 years ago in this decidedly 90's inspired edition. Manchester makes *The Messenger* what it is and I know Fran and Carla, at MLS Towers, always welcome fresh content.

“

This month's edition also harks back in time, through the history of *The Messenger*”

While *The Messenger* continues with no sign of stopping, I am starting to see the finish line of my Presidency and this past month gave me a small window of insight into the next three months that lie ahead. Manchester hosted the Joint V Law Societies meeting (more about this later on in this edition), which I hosted and chaired at St John's Buildings Chambers, before an excellent meal together at Manchester Hall (funded by the attendees – don't worry, we do not waste precious membership funds on anything that does not advance the objectives of the Society). I completed my President's Challenge in aid of We Love Manchester, the day storm Lilian blew into town, which threw a bit of a spanner in the cogs, and invitations to dinners in Liverpool, Bristol and Manchester in November were gladly accepted.

Next up are events including the [Family Law Conference](#) , at which there are some fantastic speakers, including the Designated Family Judge, the [Regulatory Conference](#) , the [Local Authority Conference](#)  and the [Autumn Posh Pub Quiz](#) , at which I hope to finish somewhere more respectable than the last time we competed (it turned out our general knowledge was about 30 years out of date!).

the Messenger



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Manchester Law Society

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by following us on social media?





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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



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Upcoming events

1 October 2024

MLS Council Meeting

2 October 2024

Communications Committee Meeting

3 October 2024

Legal Education Committee Meeting

10 October 2024

Future Stars Committee Meeting

15 October 2024

MLS Officers Meeting

16 October 2024

MLS Officers Committee Chairs and Group Representatives Meeting

5 November 2024

MLS Council Meeting

6 November 2024

Communications Committee Meeting

7 November 2024

Property Law Committee Meeting

7 November 2024

Employment Law Forum Meeting

12 November 2024

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

13 November 2024

Family Law Committee Meeting

19 November 2024

MLS Officers Meeting

20 November 2024

Private Client Committee Meeting

28 November 2024

Crown and Magistrates Court Committee Meeting

3 December 2024

MLS Council Meeting & AGM

4 December 2024

Communications Committee Meeting

11 December 2024

Civil Litigation Committee Meeting

13 December 2024

MLS Officers Meeting

Messenger deadlines

18 October 2024 – November Messenger

22 November 2024 – December Messenger

13 December 2024 – January Messenger





**Female Lawyers
Breakfast Networking (FLBN)
Manchester**

31 October 2024

**Join Fieldfisher for the next FLBN Manchester event on
Thursday 31 October**

Enjoy breakfast networking with stunning Manchester views followed by a panel discussion on Female Confidence and Assertiveness.



Fieldfisher, 17th Floor, No 1 Spinningfields,
1 Hardman Square, Manchester M3 3EB



08:30—10:30



Be part of Pro Bono Week 2024!

Pro Bono Week takes place across the UK this year from 4 to 8 November 2024. Through events and comms it is an opportunity to recognise, showcase and discuss the voluntary contribution of the legal profession in giving free legal help to those in need.

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

Arrange an event

Pro Bono Week is a great time to arrange an event to promote or discuss pro bono. Many events are external occasions organised in partnership with others, while others are internal events for colleagues at an organisation. The overall theme for 2024 is *"the Power of Pro Bono"*, with some additional subtopics:

- Barred from justice: powerful, everyday stories
- Embedding pro bono in your organisation and career
- How technology can enhance access to justice

If you organise an event whether internal or external please do [let us know](#)! For help planning an event visit [probonoweb.org.uk/event-plans](#)

Share content on social media

Pro Bono Week is a perfect time to post on social media or your website about your commitment to pro bono, or to thank your volunteers, or to showcase a particular pro

“

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

bono lawyer or project. [#ProBonoWeek](#)

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

Attend events in Pro Bono Week

Events you can attend are continually added to the calendar at [probonoweb.org.uk/events](#)

These include the hybrid [launch event](#) in London & Edinburgh, including with Lady Justice Simler of the Supreme Court and the Attorney General of England & Wales Lord Hermer KC.

Sign up to do pro bono

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

And finally, raise dough!

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



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Local Authority Conference

We are delighted to announce the Local Authority Conference 2024, a joint event from Manchester Law Society and 11KBW Chambers.

Barristers from award-winning 11KBW will tackle the big questions in local authority law and what they mean for local authorities, their in-house legal teams and advisers.

Topics will include:

- Section 114 Reports
- Subsidy Control
- Education
- Community Care
- Procurement
- Judicial Review
- GDPR and Information Law



TUESDAY 12 NOV 2024
09:45 TO 15:50



MANCHESTER HALL,
36 BRIDGE STREET,
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MLS MEMBERS
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[**Find out more**](#)

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For what comes next



Future Stars: Next Steps

The Future Stars Committee at Manchester Law Society is excited to announce the launch of our new Future Stars programme.

We are delighted to announce that we received a strong number of applications from candidates to be our inaugural Future Stars. Those applications are currently being assessed by the Future Stars Committee and the successful applicants will be confirmed this month ahead of the formal launch of the first cohort of Future Stars on 1 January 2025.

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

Separately, utilising the funds in the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation, those who are admitted to the Future Stars Programme will be entitled to apply for financial support which can be simply to help support an individual financially or to help directly with their education/qualification – for example, it could include money to purchase a suit for an interview, a contribution to a laptop or money for text books.

In our view, it is a critical part of the profession's responsibility to ensure that it provides opportunities to people from all parts of society to enter the profession and to support the delivery of legal services to society as a whole. With this in mind, true to Manchester Law Society's founding roots,

the Future Stars Programme is designed to support either people from the Manchester and Salford region or people wanting to qualify into the profession in order to work in Manchester or Salford – whether that be as a solicitor or a barrister.

What we now need is the support of the profession with developing our Future Stars.

This is therefore a call to arms.

We would ask that everyone associated with Manchester Law Society to consider how they could support the Future Stars Programme. Any support, no matter how much or how little, will make a difference. There is no fixed way in which that support can be provided and we would welcome any suggestions or offers people have. There are multiple ways you can help support the Programme:

Law firm/barristers chambers, could you provide space for meetings or access to some of your people/events?

Could you provide financial support with modest contributions to the Manchester Law Society Educational Foundation?

As an individual, could you offer a few hours a year to mentor or coach an individual through the early stages of their career, could you speak at an event, or even just write a short practical article about your own route into the profession?

To register your interest in supporting this programme please complete the form [here](#) [↗](#). If you have any queries about it please email enquiries@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk [↗](#).

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

Will Aid 2024

Solicitors in the North West encouraged to help two-thirds of adults without an up-to-date Will by joining 2024 Will Aid campaign

Solicitors now have the chance to help the staggering 65% of adults in the North West who either don't have a Will or have one that's out-of-date, by taking part in this year's Will Aid campaign.

The poll by the Will-writing charity, which surveyed more than 2,000 people across the country, found 55% in the region haven't made a Will, and 10% admitted theirs did not reflect their current wishes.

Open for sign-ups

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 helping thousands of people who don't have a Will, attracting new clients, boosting their reach and helping seven of the UK's best-loved charities too.

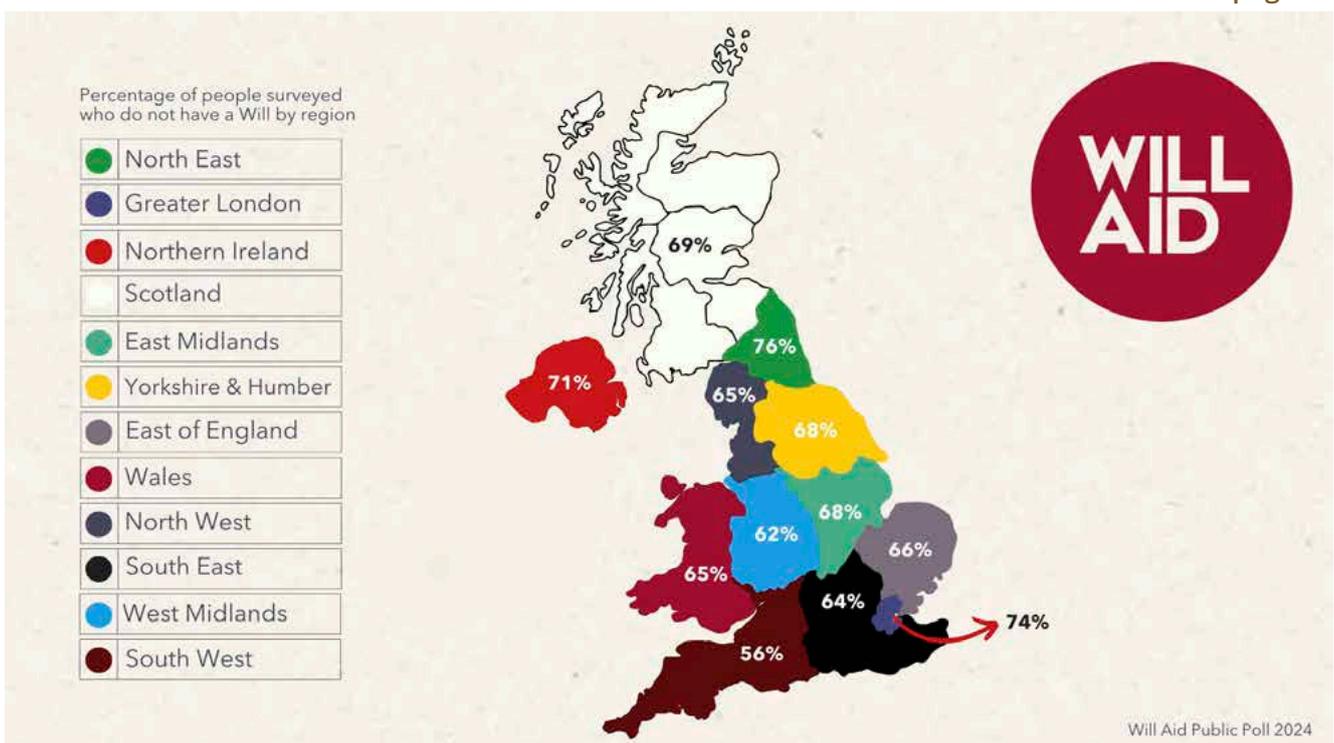
Will Aid is an annual charity Will-writing scheme that sees hundreds of solicitors volunteer their time and expertise during the month of November to write basic Wills. Instead of charging their usual fees, they invite clients to make an upfront donation to Will Aid. Donations raised through the campaign support the vital work of the seven Will Aid 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.

Worrying figures

Will Aid's latest poll showed financial pressures seem to be holding people back. Of all those polled, 21% cited the cost of instructing a solicitor as the reason they haven't sorted a Will.

Continued on page xx





Other reasons included believing they had nothing worth leaving (27%), never finding the time (18.5%), feeling uncomfortable talking about death (16%) and concerns about the process being too complicated (16%).

Nationally, the average time since people last updated their Wills is six years, with nearly 20% admitting they've never updated theirs.

Only a third (34%) of those surveyed have updated their Will in the past three years.

Parents with children over 18 last updated their Wills an average of seven and a half years ago, while those with under 18s averaged four and a half years.

A massive need

Peter de Vena Franks, Will Aid Campaign Director, said: "These statistics on the lack of a Will – or an outdated Will – are worrying, and show the scale of need out there.

"Thousands of people need support and the reassurance of speaking to someone who is qualified to draw up their legal documents properly.

"We'd encourage any firm who is interested in taking part to find out more. It's a brilliant way to not only help those who genuinely need support, as well as raising money for charity – but joining Will Aid also expands your reach for potential clients, is a fantastic tool to boost your own team's morale, and a rewarding way to help your local community and beyond."

The annual Will Aid campaign sees solicitors across the UK volunteering their time to write Wills throughout November.

Will Aid is a partnership between the legal profession and seven of the UK's best-loved charities.

The initiative, which has been running for more than 30 years, sees participating solicitors waive their fee for writing basic Wills every November.

Instead, they invite clients to make a voluntary donation to Will Aid – a suggested £100 for a single basic Will and £180 for a pair of basic 'mirror' Wills.

Will Aid is a win-win initiative for solicitors. For more information on how to join, visit the Will Aid website at www.willaid.org.uk/register or call 0300 0300 013.

Upcoming events: **Virtual Events**

17 October 2024 – [Presentations – YOU be YOU](#)

18 October 2024 – [Celebrating World Menopause Day 2024](#)

22 November 2024 – [Management – Closing the Gap](#)



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REGULATORY CONFERENCE

The MLS Regulatory Conference will be back on 8th October 2024.

Topics covered will include:

- **Net Zero and Climate Action**
- **SQE and routes into a career in law**
- **AI, Cyber & Data Security - what are we doing to manage the risks?**
- **A panel looking at the latest concerns in AML**

[Click here](#) for the full programme or book your place now 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”



TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER
09:00 TO 15:40



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



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



Meeting of the Joint V Law Societies

The Joint V is a group named after the five biggest Local Law Societies in England (and Wales, although there is no Welsh member): Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Bristol and Birmingham.

The group meets approximately every 4 months, to discuss topics of relevance to their members and to share experiences and opportunities. The combined membership of the Joint V Societies equates to something close to one quarter of the solicitors in private practice in the country (95,729 as at 31st July 2022 – Law Society Annual Statistics Report 2022). It is a powerful lobbying body, committed to ensuring the voices of their members are heard by government, policy makers, local MPs, regulators and the National Law Society.

The most recent meeting of the Joint V took place in Manchester on the 3rd of September, hosted by St John's Buildings Chambers, the home of our President, David Anderson, who also Chaired the meeting. With 24 attendees present, either in person or on video link, it was a busy agenda for the day. It began with Aileen Armstrong, the Executive Director of Strategy, Innovation and External Affairs at the SRA taking the attendees through the SRA business plan, the Compensation Fund Review, proposed increases to financial penalties and the Consumer Protection Review, and then being asked a series of searching questions by those present. It was agreed that the Joint V would write to Aileen after the meeting to address any concerns the attendees had with what they had heard that day and a letter will have likely been dispatched by the time you are reading this round-up.



Following the opening session, the group discussed matters as wide ranging as the Law Society Legal Needs Survey, the SRA Compensation Fund and Business Plan Consultation, the Law Society Bicentenary, political engagement and lobbying, committee structures and various shared opportunities associated with the business under discussion. While the group may not agree on everything, it is reassuring that the discussion is considered, well informed and that any disagreement can usually be overcome in discussion, with an agreed approach being reached. At the heart of everything each representative seeks to achieve at these meetings is what is best for their members. As it happens, what is felt to be in the best interests of members in Manchester is nearly always the same as what is best for members in the other 4 attending Law Societies, leading to a powerful ability to influence the debate, no matter who that debate is with.

When the business of the day was done, the attendees had an excellent dinner at Manchester Hall, at which the conversation turned away from work. We are grateful to everyone for taking the time to come to Manchester for the meeting, which achieved a lot in one day and look forward to the next Joint V meeting, which will take place in Birmingham.

David Anderson, President, Manchester Law Society

CLICK FOR MORE INFO

Manchester — HALL —

Deck the Hall with Boughs of Holly



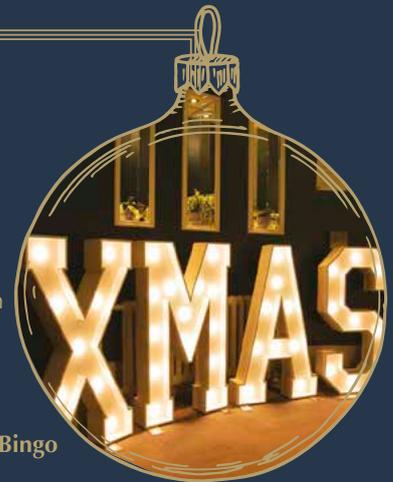
PERSONALISED EVENTS

Whether it's an intimate affair or a lavish seated dinner, our bespoke packages feature a range of delicious festive menus tailored to your every taste and preference, creating the perfect Christmas celebration. Our diverse and talented team are at the heart of Manchester Hall, a venue boasting thirteen elegant suites across three grand floors. We are dedicated to turning all your Christmas visions into a reality and to craft the most magical memories.

FESTIVE PARTY NIGHTS

From the glitz and glamour of the roaring 20's to the neon lights and classic hits of the 80s, immerse yourself in the nostalgia of our themed nights. Indulge in a tantalising array of canapés, indulge in a delicious two-course seated dinner, and enjoy fizz on arrival before dancing the night away with a live DJ and entertainment. At Manchester Hall our team will ensure every detail is perfect, so you can relax and revel in the joyous celebrations. Whether you're celebrating with friends, family or colleagues, our Party Nights promise to be your highlight of the season.

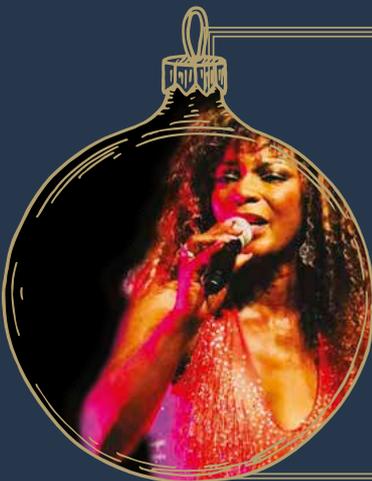
Our themed Festive Party Nights are as followed: **Murder at the Manor: Murder Mystery, A Gatsby Christmas, Totally Tinsel: 80's Party and Exceed Events Blowout Bingo**



TRIBUTE NIGHTS

Step into the spotlight and join us for a dazzling evening of tribute performances that will transport you through the greatest hits of music legends! Kick off the night with an arrival glass of fizz followed by a sumptuous two course dinner to indulge in as you anticipate our talented acts to take the stage. Sing along to your favourite classics amongst fellow fans and dance the night away to our DJ after the curtain falls on our spectacular acts. Don't miss your chance to be a part of this sensational celebration of music and join in on the unforgettable memories to be made.

Our variety of Tribute Acts are as follows: **George Michael, Tina Turner, Take That and Michael Bublé**



Manchester Hall | 36 Bridge Street | Manchester | M3 3BT | 0161 832 6256

christmas@manchesterhall.co.uk



www.manchesterhall.co.uk



Manchester Law Society

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MLS Legal Education
Programme Sponsor

Family Law Conference

9 October 2024
09:00 to 16:20

Manchester Hall, 36 Bridge St, Manchester M3 3BT

Full Day MLS Members £120.00 + VAT (£144.00)

Full Day Non-Members £160.00 + VAT (£192.00)

Half Day MLS Members £75.00 + VAT (£90.00)

Half Day Non-Members £100.00 + VAT (£120.00)

The MLS Family Law Conference returns on 9th October for a jam-packed day of updates and explorations.

The morning will focus on the Children side of Family Law with the afternoon focusing on finance and divorce. Delegates can attend the full day or opt to attend either the morning or afternoon, both including a networking lunch where you can catch up with your colleagues in the sector.

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 **OurFamilyWizard[®]**

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

09:00 Registration

09:30 Welcome and introduction

Fiona Wood, McAlister Family Law

09:35 Dos and Don'ts for children practitioners in the family court

HHJ Sarah Singleton KC

09:55 Intersection of Technology in Family Cases

Katie Deans, Our Family Wizard

10:40 Refreshments and networking

11:10 How to get the best from your expert

Vicki Hamilton, Child and Family Psychologist

11:55 Independent Social Work in private children proceedings - benefits and timely solutions to you and your clients

Elaine Stokes and Howard Bramwell

12:40 Networking lunch

13:40 Schedule 1 claims: are they just for the ultra-rich?

Sally Harrison KC, St John's Buildings Chambers

14:25 Tax and divorce - what family lawyers need to look out for

John McCaffrey, Accountant, Alexander and Co

15:10 Refreshments

15:30 10 Ways to Annoy the Judge in Financial Remedy Proceedings

His Honour Judge Alex Kloss

16:15 Closing remarks

Fiona Wood, McAlister Family Law

16:20 Conference closes

Book your place now

Celebrating World Menopause Awareness Month 2024

2024 International Menopause Society Theme – Hormone Replacement Therapy

The International Menopause Society (IMS) established World Menopause Day held each year on October 18th in 2009, with the aim of demonstrating support for all women experiencing health issues as a result of their perimenopause and menopause.

This single day has now developed into an awareness month with the additional objective of raising knowledge and understanding around menopause in all areas of women's lives.

Every year the IMS choose a specific health related theme on which to focus attention, and to help women better understand the wide-ranging health implications resulting from the hormonal changes experienced. This year the IMS is focusing its attention on Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) / Menopause Hormone Therapy (MHT), a topic that still divides expert opinion, can be scary and confusing to many women and is often portrayed on social media as a panacea that will solve all of their problems.

Lisa Wright

The IMS are using this year's focus on HRT to address many of the myths and misconceptions surrounding its use.

Misconceptions about HRT

A number of established organisations, including the Australian Menopause Society and the UK's The (sic) Menopause Charity have produced factsheets to help dispel some long-standing misunderstandings and misconceptions around HRT.

Both organisations cite two studies: The Women's Health Initiative (WHI) completed in the US, and the UK's Million Women Study (MWS) both publishing their results in the early 2000s, as the two biggest causes of misinformation and confusion in the world's press and within the global medical community.

The most concerning misconceptions these studies helped foster included: HRT causes breast cancer; HRT increases the risk of heart attack and stroke; HRT causes weight gain; a blood test is necessary to confirm menopause; and natural or complimentary remedies are safer than HRT. (If you would like to read more details about the evidence disproving these misconceptions then the underlying information is available [here](#) for the Australian Menopause Society and [here](#) for The Menopause Charity.



Origins of the misconceptions

Not surprisingly any one of the statements listed previously could be enough to deter any woman from wanting to take HRT to help with menopause symptoms. So how is it that a \$2billion research study - the WHI involving over 27,000 women, and the MWS (over 828,000 women), could release such confusing and misleading data to the world?

In summary it comes down to some key factors. The WHI study only assessed one dose and type of combined HRT or estrogen only HRT; in addition, experts considered the doses given to participants to be high for the age group studied. The women in this study were of an average age of 63 and the majority were overweight so were already at a higher risk of strokes, heart disease and breast cancer.

With regards to the MWS, the study methodology used was not a randomised controlled trial (where half the women would be given a placebo and the other half HRT), all the women in the study were already using HRT and were recruited at the time of their mammogram, so they may have already suspected or have identified a breast lump.

No changes in HRT use after the initial registration were recorded, so true longer-term effects could not be studied. (The Women's Health Concern (the patient specific resource of the British Menopause Society) provides a more detailed explanation of both studies and their impact on global use of HRT in the noughties [here](#) .)

HRT Options

Today women have a multitude of choices available to them if they want to consider HRT and your GP should be happy to discuss all the alternatives with you. HRT can be a

“

Today women have a multitude of choices available to them if they want to consider HRT”

combination of different hormones, so (o) estrogen, progesterone and testosterone. It can be taken orally (tablets) or applied transdermally via patches, gels and sprays. Transdermal oestrogen is absorbed straight into the body and is not digested and can be a safer form of oestrogen for women with other health issues such as migraines or high blood pressure. It can also be used locally to help with specific genitourinary syndrome of menopause (GSM) i.e. vaginally via pessaries, creams or vaginal rings. It can also be taken or used at different time i.e., in cycles (so sequentially) or on a continuous basis.

GPs should start women on a minimal dose and should review its impact after three months on symptoms, any side effects and increasing the dosage or changing the type of HRT if necessary. You should also be prescribed combined (oestrogen and progesterone) HRT unless you have had a hysterectomy removing your uterus, in which case your GP would prescribe oestrogen only HRT.

If you still have your uterus then taking progesterone helps protect the lining of the uterus from uterine cancer. If you are using an intrauterine system (e.g., the Mirena coil) for contraception then this will provide the appropriate progesterone.

Continued on page 20

Testosterone is not routinely prescribed by NHS GPs as standard as part of a HRT regime, primarily because it is only licensed for women who complain of very low sexual desire after all other possible causes have been excluded. Additionally, it would only be prescribed in conjunction with oestrogen and progesterone and once these had been proven to be working on all other symptoms and without any side effects. However, there are a growing body of private GPs who are willing to prescribe testosterone as part of a broader HRT regime. Primarily as a result of their own anecdotal experiences with patients and due to an observational study carried out by Newson Health and published in May 2023.

The study of 905 women across their clinics who had been prescribed testosterone as part of their HRT regimes found that it significantly improved mood and poor concentration as well as libido. Despite this there is still a reticence to endorse the prescribing of testosterone for broader menopause symptoms by numerous menopause societies due to the lack of detailed long-term research studies, so it remains contentious and difficult to obtain via NHS GPs.

Accessing HRT

Despite all the media coverage of menopause and HRT in the last few years, it can still be a problem for many women to access a GP who has both a good understanding of menopause along with an up to date and comprehensive knowledge of all things HRT. This means that many women face a lottery in terms of their experiences when they go to their surgery to discuss any issues they may have.

There are steps you can take to help prepare for an appointment to discuss any symptoms and these include: tracking any symptoms

that you may be experiencing for at least 8 weeks using a symptom tracker such as the Balance menopause app; asking for a double appointment with either the GP or practice nurse that is most experienced in menopause; know what your GP should and should not do as per the National Institute of Care and Excellence (NICE) Menopause guidelines. (There is a really good document produced by the British Menopause Society for GPs which summarises all the guidelines that is also very patient friendly, which you can access [here](#) .)

Alternatives to HRT

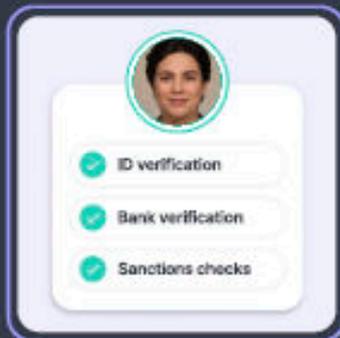
Unfortunately, should you not want or be able to take HRT, the various menopause societies around the world agree that the only alternative treatment where there is definitive research supporting its effectiveness in treating vasomotor symptoms is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

The research studies are broadly divided between those with results showing that herbal or natural remedies /complimentary therapies work and those that show them to be a placebo effect. What is imperative is that if you are considering a herbal or natural remedy, that you check the impact of that remedy on any other medication you take or pre-existing health condition as there may be a negative interaction. There is a good website for looking at specific natural remedies, in terms of their interactions with other health conditions/ medications: www.nccih.nih.gov/health/herbsataglance .

My advice would always be that if you have found a remedy that does not negatively interact with any other medication you may take or any existing health issues and you feel that it works for you, then stick with it subject to taking appropriate medical advice.



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Taking HRT

If we are to believe everything you hear, read in the mainstream media and see on social media, then HRT appears to be the immediate solution to all of your menopause problems. But like any prescribed medication it can take time to find the right combination in terms of types, dosage and dosing cycle. Therefore, women should set realistic expectations as to the immediacy of its benefits and be prepared to review their HRT on a regular basis with their GP so as to optimise the effect.

I know of women who have tried to self-determine their dose, as well as women who have come off it within 3-6 months because they didn't see an immediate effect, the common factor being that they did not go back and speak to their GP. If you are having any issues with your HRT then it is imperative you go back to talk to your doctor.

If you still feel that it isn't right or that you can't get answers to your questions then perhaps consider going to a private menopause specialist if you have company

“

If you are having any issues with your HRT then it is imperative you go back to talk to your doctor”

healthcare or are prepared to pay. Anecdotally I understand the present waiting time for an appointment with an NHS menopause specialist is currently over 6 months!

If you would like to know more about what I can do to support employers implement women's healthcare training and awareness then please contact me at lisa@menopausethewrightway.com 

*(*This article contains general information about medical conditions and treatments. The information is not advice and should not be treated as such).*

Upcoming events: Social Events

17 October 2024 – [Posh Pub Quiz](#) 



Upcoming events: Legal Education

08 October 2024 – [Regulatory Conference](#) 

09 October 2024 – [Family Law Conference](#) 

12 November 2024 – [Local Authority Conference](#) 



Celebrating World Menopause Day

18 October at 10:00 Via Teams

Manchester Law Society in conversation with Lisa Wright of Menopause the Wright Way on options to manage your menopause symptoms.

On World Menopause Day 2024, the International Menopause Society is focusing on the use of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) as treatment for menopause symptoms.

Manchester Law Society will be holding an online conversation with Lisa Wright of Menopause the Wright Way about how you can manage your menopause symptoms whether that be via HRT or via lifestyle interventions along with time for questions and answers from anyone who wishes to participate.

This event is an ideal opportunity to learn more about menopause with the help of a certified menopause coach

To book your FREE place [click here](#)



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

Leadership – It's all about self-awareness and humility

We all have an opinion on what leadership is. Your opinion has been shaped over your lifetime through the people you have met, worked with and family. You might have been influenced by sports people or by politicians. You've had good and bad leaders in your career and again these people have probably shaped what type of a person and leader you are. In my opinion, leadership is nurture not nature.

If you type leadership skills into Google and it throws up the usual suspects:

- Visionary
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Inspiration
- Decisiveness
- Resilience
- Empowerment

These skills are necessary in every leader but for me the main two are humility and self-awareness.

As a leader, all eyes are on you. Employees hang on your every word, what you say, how you say it, how you carry yourself, your mood, your body language – all these things are on show. Great leaders know this. They are self-aware and humble. Employees feed off this and this impacts the morale of the team. Don't display these traits and you'll get an unhappy camp.

Modern leadership is about levelling out the hierarchy. Leaders shouldn't put themselves on a pedestal. They aren't more important than anyone else in the business. They've just got a different title and are on more money. Of course, there will always be someone in charge, that person that makes the final decision, but great leaders tap into



Mike Ode

the skills, knowledge and opinions of the team. They don't see themselves as the font of all knowledge.

On a recent course one of our delegates was telling me about issues in the team. It had been going on for quite a while with a few different leaders coming in to sort everything out, but it hadn't worked. He said that the current leader shocked everyone by sitting them down and asking for their opinion and what they thought needed to happen to get things back on track. The leader was transparent and empathetic. She didn't agree to everything but gave them honest reasons why. He said it's the best team he's worked in, and it was all down to the leader. She displayed self-awareness of the situation and remained humble - people wanted to work for her.

The leader's behaviour has been honed over years. She wasn't born like this.

Do you display the right skills and traits? If not, it's not too late. You can educate yourself; you can change your habits and try new ways of leading.

Need a hand developing your leadership skills?, contact Mike: mike@potentialunearthed.co.uk or 07825301660



Personal Development Webinars

We are thrilled to announce we are back with a series of free personal development webinars, with Mike Ode in partnership with Potential Unearthed.

These popular sessions will explore managing relationships upwards, presentation skills and closing the gap between the team and the manager.

Join us and Mike as we look at how best to face these challenges.

17th October Presentations – YOU be YOU

22nd November Management – Closing the Gap

Times: Each webinar will run from 13:00 to 13:45

Location: Online via Teams

Cost to Attend: Free but you must register

How to book: Book your place by clicking on the session title above



Manchester Young Lawyers (Previously MYSG) National Junior Lawyers Division (NJLD) Meeting

As a committee (formerly Manchester Young Solicitors Group), we felt that over the past few weeks at both the padel tournament and the summer party at Dukes 92, there has been a huge appetite for this group to broaden and expand to include all lawyers – from paralegals to partners and clerks to barristers. We no longer feel that being known as the ‘young solicitors group’ fits who we are anymore, and we do not want members to feel deterred from coming to events if they do not feel they fit into the ‘young solicitors’ bracket.

We have therefore rebranded to [Manchester Young Lawyers](#) (‘MYL’).

Our aim continues to be to bring lawyers

together through events including social, sweat-working, activities, seminars etc as we have over the years. The only change is that this now encompasses all – paralegals, pupils, solicitors, barristers, partners, apprentices etc, who have been in the industry for 0 – c.10 years.

We hope that this change will be celebrated and will hopefully encourage more lawyers (in whatever form that may be!) to continue to attend and enjoy our events moving forwards.

In terms of other updates, MYL’s National Junior Lawyers Representative, Emily-Jo Moore, was delighted to attend the NJLD Meeting on Saturday 14th September.





It was a gloriously sunny day in London for the only in-person NJLD meeting of the year. The national committee members assembled with the Executive Committee at the First Women room at The Law Society on Chancery Lane.

It was a great opportunity for national committee members to discuss what is happening in regional groups around England & Wales, what is working well for each of the JLD's and any issues which they are facing, whether it be funding or how spread-out members can be if the JLD is based in a rural location.

Emily discussed the events which MYL organised over the summer and the Executive Committee were impressed by both the variety of our events and the turnout which was nice to hear. More to come in Autumn and Winter!

It was useful for Emily to connect with the JLD representatives from nearby cities such as Liverpool and Leeds who also have active regional legal communities and hear about the events which have worked well for their members.

The meeting then focused on other prominent issues facing the profession, ranging from the latest SQE results, AI in the legal profession, the importance of wellbeing for junior lawyers and notifying us of the new Executive Committee from November 2024.

The next NJLD meeting will be taking place remotely in January 2025.



28 Regulation Update & News



By **Andrea Cohen**, Compli, Weightmans

Due to the unpredictable British weather, the arrival of Autumn has not been quite as shocking as you may expect (as at the date of writing, although you could be reading this in a flood/snowstorm!). Much more reliably, Compli is back once again to bring you our monthly round-up of developments in the world of risk and compliance, an overview of recent disciplinary decisions, and updates from the regulatory sector.

SRA inspections

We are aware from clients and generally on the grapevine, that the SRA is making good on its promise to increase the number of AML visits and desk reviews, utilising its increased staff numbers. The message we are hearing is that the depth and extent of additional queries, further investigations etc. can be dependant on the individual carrying out the visit. We anticipate that once the responses to the recent AML and sanctions questionnaire are analysed, there will be a further surge, possibly to include checks on firms outside scope of MLR in relation to compliance with the sanctions regime. Now is the time to check that your firm-wide risk assessment (FWRA), policies, controls and procedures (PCPs) are up to date, processes are being followed and recorded, and, if you've not yet had one, arrange an independent AML audit or book your next one. We have seen some large fines reported over the last few months for breaches of MLR, and those are only likely to increase over time, particularly when you consider the direction of travel of the SRA, indicated by the recently closed consultation on its wish for increased fining powers.

If we can help, please get in touch.

Transparency rules

The LSB has approved the CILEx Regulation application for all firms it regulates to be required to publish price and service

information for all legal services provided to individuals and small businesses, extending the obligation from just conveyancing, probate and immigration services. The SRA has an option to extend price and service rules to all legal services, but, at present, the rules only apply to limited areas, including conveyancing, some immigration services, unfair or wrongful dismissal claims in employment tribunals and debt recovery claims up to £100,000. Solicitors firms have been fined for breaching the transparency rules, including receiving fixed penalty fines of £750 for first offences and £1,500 for subsequent breaches. Will the SRA follow CILEx Regulation? Watch this space.

Publications/guidance

The SRA and Law Society publish useful information, but a common complaint is that there is often little/no publicity, some are 'buried' and practitioners 'fall across' them, rather than them being apparent and easy to find, not helped by them often not being in chronological order. There have been a number of useful publications released by The Law Society recently, which you may have missed:

- [Protection for solicitors against targeted attacks](#) - this outlines safety precautions to consider if you feel at risk from targeted attacks or threats from third parties
- [Money laundering risks and threats](#) - a list to help understand current and



emerging money laundering risks and threats, which can be used to help keep client, matter and practice-wide risk assessments up to date.

- [Compliance officers](#) - the practice note explains who can be a COLP or COFA, sets out what the roles entail, and the recording and reporting requirements involved.
- [Professional enablers](#) - this sets out how to interpret the definition of professional enablers and what steps can be taken in the fight against economic crime.
- [Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [What to do when the law firm you work for is closing down](#)
- [Suspicious activity reports](#) - This guide explains when and how to make a suspicious activity report (SAR), what to include, how to request a defence against money laundering (DAML) and what happens if you fail to report suspicious activity.

Meanwhile, the SRA has published a number of guides and updates relating to renewal of practising certificates, helpfully filed under mySRA updates, and not, at the time of writing, on the home page of the website. These include:

- [Bulk Renewal](#)
- [Renewing your own practising certificate or registration \(2024/25\)](#)
- [FAQs about practising certificates, registration and renewal](#)
- [Apply for bulk renewal and pay your periodic fees](#)

Increase in compensation fund levies - update

As we reported last month, having confirmed that the contributions paid by individual solicitors and firms to the compensation fund for 2024/25 would increase considerably if approved by the Legal Services Board (“LSB”), the SRA was then informed that the LSB had extended the initial decision period to 3 November 2024. We understand from the SRA that the LSB will make its decision prior to the start of the renewal process, but at the time of writing, we are not aware that the decision has been published.

Dates for your diary

- **1 - 31 October** - practising certificates and registration renewals, with confirmation required that solicitors have an up to date understanding of their obligations; have reflected and addressed any learning and development needs and are competent to perform their role. The SRA will monitor this, do spot checks and review it in the event of a complaint/ investigation.
- **8 October** – Manchester Law Society [Regulatory Conference 2024](#)
The conference will cover essential topics including the latest challenges in AML, hot topics in the regulatory world, and managing risks in AI, cyber and data security.
- **5 November** – SRA Compliance Officers Conference in Birmingham (virtual conference 25 – 28 November).

Continued on page 30



Disciplinary and regulatory decisions

A number of decisions and judgments have been reported since our September publication, including:

Firm fined for MLR breaches

Failure to have a FWRA or PCPs between June 2017 and January 2020, followed by 4 years when they were inadequate and only having compliant documentation in place by April 2024, and failing to carry out client and matter risk assessments between June 2017 and February 2024, led to a regulatory settlement agreement with the SRA of a fine of £3,711, based on the firm's turnover, and costs of £600.

Suspended for 12 months for misleading court and failing to inform client defence struck out

A solicitor, found by the SDT to be 'relatively inexperienced', who no longer has a current practising certificate and is not employed by a solicitors' firm, has been suspended for a year for signing a statement of truth on a witness statement and filing it at court which contained an assertion she knew was misleading, and failing to tell a client, its insurer and her firm that a defence and counterclaim had been struck out for failing to comply with an unless order and an adverse costs order had been made against the insurer. The SDT accepted the agreed outcome and said the suspension was 'required to maintain the public confidence ... and to send a deterrent message to solicitors who found themselves in a similar predicament'.

Struck off for misusing client funds and failing to pay disbursements [↗](#)

A solicitor who failed to inform the SRA

for two years that his firm was in financial difficulties, used monies received for counsel and medical agency fees to pay the firm's running costs, including his and members of his family's salary, breached an undertaking, and moved firms without telling his clients what was happening, has been struck off the roll and ordered to pay almost £40,000 costs. The SDT said there was no mitigation for what was serious, dishonest misconduct.

Fined for making threats in letters

A solicitor was fined £2500 and ordered to pay £30,000 in costs by the SDT for making unjustified legal threats in letters sent to around 250 schools regarding Covid measures, informing recipients they were at risk of criminal/civil liability if they required face masks to be worn in schools, carried out routine lateral flow tests, or facilitated Covid vaccinations for children aged 12-17.

Struck off for being dishonest in job application

A solicitor whose employment was terminated by a previous firm for falsifying emails to show she had sent drafts to witnesses when she hadn't, and then 'falsely represented the reason for her departure' when applying to another firm has been struck off and ordered to pay £5000 costs. The solicitor accepted the actions were 'embarrassing and shameful' and was acting 'simply out of self-preservation'.

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.

From p.1

Celebrating 30 Years of the Messenger (continued)

Over the years The Messenger has been more than just a magazine, offering a blend of news, expert opinions and practical advice on many matters and pressing legal issues of our time.

Our commitment to its quality and our dedication to our legal community have remained steadfast, even as we embraced the digital age.

We could not have done this without the indomitable Julia Baskerville, who came to us thirty years ago to help us move from a photocopied offering to a printed magazine, and then latterly to the digital edition. Her guidance, support, knowledge and passion were instrumental in making The Messenger what it is today. She was ably assisted by our various 'Messenger Committees', now our 'Communications Committee'. When Julia sadly took the decision to retire a couple of years ago, we were delighted to welcome Martyn Best and Legal RSS as the new publishers, and, we hope you will agree, The Messenger

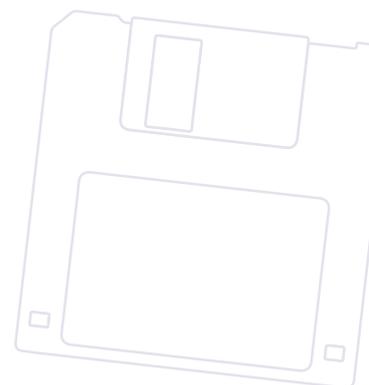
has gone from strength to strength.

As we celebrate this 30 year journey we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our readers, contributors and the entire Manchester Law Society membership. Your support and engagement have been the cornerstone of our success.

We look forward to continuing this journey together, exploring new horizons and keeping in touch with each other and hope that you enjoy our 30th birthday edition.



Images credit: Manchester Libraries and Manchester City Council





30 years later – how have routes into law changed?

Looking back 30 years to 1994, the route into the legal profession was at that time, a fairly novel one.

The 'training contract' had come into existence through the introduction of the Training Regulations 1990, and so came into being the mainstream route of qualification that has largely endured since.

Undoubtedly, there has been significant change since then.

I caught up with Kate Hasluck, TLT's Early Careers Senior Manager, to explore some of the turning points and catalyst events that have reshaped the journey to becoming a solicitor over the past 30 years. Over the last twenty years, Kate has worked in early careers for four law firms in three different cities. She now manages a team of five and is responsible for recruiting and training TLT's trainee solicitors and apprentices.



Kate Hasluck

The traditional routes

In 1994, the primary route to becoming a solicitor involved completing a qualifying law degree (LLB) or a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) for non-law graduates, followed by the Legal Practice Course (LPC). Candidates would then need to obtain a two-year training contract with a sponsored law firm. Failure to do so, meant they were unable to qualify despite having studied and passed the LPC, leaving many candidates with debt and no prospect of qualifying.

This pathway has remained largely unchanged until recent years, providing a structured but often competitive and costly route into the profession.

Another entry point into law was via the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx), with many utilising the vocational and apprenticeship routes provided by CILEx to qualify as lawyers – some of whom have gone on to become partners in law firms.

Introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE)

Undoubtedly one of the most significant changes came with the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) in 2021. The SQE replaced the LPC and traditional training contract routes, aiming to provide a more flexible, open and accessible pathway.



Kate explains, "A real positive of the SQE is that it has allowed people to use previous legal work experience to qualify without requiring a firm to sponsor them. They no longer need to obtain a training contract provided they can fund the SQE prep course and exams themselves. However, the SQE prep course and exams are not cheap so it has raised questions over whether it has opened up the profession".

Some firms have elected to stay relatively close to the traditional training contract – whereas others have looked to implement different models that sit alongside one another, such as Legal Solicitor Apprenticeships and Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeships.

"It's been a big shift", says Kate, "not just for firms, but also for students and training providers".

The rise of Solicitor Apprenticeships

Another notable development has been the rise of solicitor apprenticeships. Largely aimed at school leavers, these programs offer an alternative route to university and qualification, combining paid work with part-time study over six years.

Kate discusses how this has been a positive development, "the apprenticeship route has been great, particularly for those who may not feel they can afford or justify the expense of university."

Catching up with one of our apprentices at TLT, Josiah Morrone-Krawetz, provided some fantastic insight: Josiah completed a year of university before deciding to pursue a legal apprenticeship.

"I really enjoy the hands-on learning an apprenticeship offers – it's great being



Josiah Morrone-Krawetz

able to put what I'm learning into practice on a daily basis", says Josiah, who has just started the second year of his legal solicitor apprenticeship. It's great to hear first-hand how Josiah has got stuck-in and really enjoyed the experience of his apprenticeship so far: "It's been a big learning curve. You have to acclimate quickly to working in a law firm – but my personal development has been noticeable, and after six years feel I'll be a very complete solicitor".

Diversity and inclusion: a growing focus

Diversity and inclusion have become central themes in the legal profession's evolution. Initiatives aimed at improving social mobility and diversity have gained momentum. Law firms are increasingly recognising the importance of a diverse workforce, leading to targeted recruitment efforts for under-represented groups.

"Previously, the assessment of candidates for training contracts was heavily focussed on academic achievements", says Kate, "now, at TLT, we don't ask what A-Level results

Continued on page xx



Seraphina Wilkins-Tolliday, TLT

a candidate has achieved, and we use a recruitment system which puts candidates' achievements into context to help improve social mobility. Assessors and interviewers don't see the candidate's application form. The assessments themselves have evolved recognising that diverse candidates perform better across a range of assessments".

Evolution of assessment centres and open days

Traditional assessment centres often involving in-person interviews and group exercises, have been supplemented by virtual assessments, including the availability of video interviews following on from Covid-19.

Similarly, virtual law firm open days have become more commonplace, providing prospective trainees and apprentices with insights into firm culture and practice areas without the need for physical attendance, and reaching a wider pool of candidates as a result.

Kate explains, "As well as running our own graduate virtual insight days, we now use Springpod to offer virtual work experience to students. It's a virtual work experience platform for students aged 14 and upwards.

It's really popular with candidates who may be unable to take time off from school or employment. Since we introduced it in October 2023 we have had 4184 people enrol onto the programme, meaning we are able to reach and support a far greater number of candidates from an early age".

Impact of covid-19 on the trainee experience

The covid-19 pandemic brought unprecedented changes to the legal profession, particularly affecting trainees.

Remote working became the norm, leading to virtual training and supervision. Law firms adapted by offering online induction programs, virtual mentoring, and remote assessment centres. While this shift posed challenges, it also highlighted the potential for greater flexibility and work-life balance in the profession.

Looking forward

It still remains competitive to obtain a period of recognised training or an apprenticeship at a law firm – that hasn't changed. We may also see an increase in the number of people looking for NQ roles as more candidates complete their apprenticeship or self-fund the SQE. There are, and will always be, a finite number of Newly Qualified Solicitor roles available.

What is clear though, is that there is now greater choice for those wishing to become a solicitor. This strikes me as being an overwhelmingly positive change, and one that will likely result in a more diverse profession, open to a wider group of people – with qualifying solicitors having had a rounded and comprehensive training experience.

Seraphina Wilkins-Tolliday, TLT



Manchester in the 1990s

Has the world and Manchester changed since the Messenger was launched in printed form 30 years ago? Arguably not.

On 29 August 1994, a group of unknown lads from Burnage released Definitely Maybe and played at the Hacienda for the first time. 30 years later and not only is the Messenger celebrating its birthday, but Oasis are back together and have announced their comeback tour. There's a good discussion to be had over who has achieved more in the intervening years – Fran or the Gallagher brothers.

Also, in both 1994 and 2004, the Premier League and FA Cup were both brought back to Manchester by the winners. However, whilst United won both at a canter and as favourites in 1994, this year they were split between the red and the blue half of the city and one might reasonably argue that United's success in the FA Cup was not quite as predictable (to say the least!).

However, when you look at what else was going on, then it is clear that life has changed a lot in the last 30 years.

Like the printed form of the Messenger, the National Lottery launched in the Autumn of 1994 – to more or less the same fanfare for each of them. At least the Messenger continues to have the same focus today that it did back then (if not greater focus!).

Outside of Manchester, the UK was changing. Remarkably, it was as recent as 1994 that the Sunday Trading Act came into effect to allow shops to open legally on Sunday for the first time. Tony Blair became leader of the Labour Party, the first step towards his landslide victory in 1997

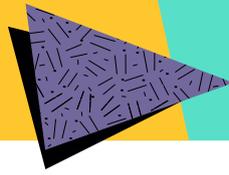


(he also had dinner with Gordon Brown at Granita in Islington in May – a meeting with long running political consequences for the next 15 years). The Channel Tunnel officially opened to connect the UK and France. Lidl opens its first store in the UK.

What can really date the last 30 years is to look at what we were watching in 1994. The first episode of Friends was premiered in September 1994. At the cinema we were watching Forrest Gump, The Lion King and Four Weddings and a Funeral. Speaking of Four Weddings and a Funeral, no one will likely forget the soundtrack for the year, with Wet Wet Wet's cover of Love is All Around being at number one for 15 weeks.

But perhaps the best way to show how life has changed since 1994 is to look at Manchester now and then...

Matt Taylor, Eversheds Sutherland



Back to Manchester in 1994

Fiona Ledden, City Solicitor at Manchester City Council and MLS Vice President, looks back at Manchester 30 years ago

In celebration of the Messenger reaching 30 years of publication, I wanted to look back at what was happening in Manchester at that time and share some pictures of how Manchester looked. It was the time when Regeneration was beginning to evolve but as the photos show there was still a long way to go to get to the Manchester we see around us today.

In the Civic realm Graham Stringer was the Leader of the Council before the General election in 1996 when he became an MP, Sir Richard Leese was Deputy Leader, with Arthur Sandford as Chief Executive and Sir Howard Bernstein as Deputy Chief Executive a truly inspiring partnership was around the corner! The Lord Mayor in 1994 was Sheila Smith who was known as a true working

class champion who served for many years as a Councillor as indeed did her Husband.

The pictures show a Manchester that is familiar but has changed and regenerated today, the picture of [St Ann's house](#) in the square has subtly changed and now has 2 rows of Windows where the front plaster declaring St Anns house was, enabling more Office space in the centre of the City. The picture of the [Marks and Spencer shop](#) on Market Street is familiar but different from today with the Buildings now added and expanded and Marks and Spencer shop having moved from the building. Although the picture of the [pedestrian walkway in Market Street](#) is exceedingly familiar, some of the shopfronts have definitely benefited from a face lift.



Manchester Arena Construction



Bridgewater Hall Construction

Images credit: Manchester Libraries and Manchester City Council



The Lord Mayor in 1994 was Sheila Smith who was known as a true working class champion”

The pictures of [Oxford Street](#) show a changed vista today with the Odeon Cinema demolished. With the picture showing the [construction of Bridgewater Hall](#) well underway glimpses of the Manchester of today definitely comes through.

I could not resist sharing some pictures of people too, I love the picture of pride on the faces in [the picture of the Circus when it was made a Heritage Inn](#) during 1994 the building dates back to 1790 and is one of the smallest bars in Europe.

As always, the pictures from 1994 demonstrate the pride and passion of Mancunians from all ages the picture of the [mobile Bandstand](#) which must have been innovative and creative shows a wonderful enthusiastic group of Children with the Lord Mayor Sheila Smith and a very young looking Councillor Karney enjoying ice creams and fun. The Fantastic picture of the [Tapathon](#) with young and old people using dance to raise money for Christie hospital in a building still very much a part of Manchester whether we know the building as Gmex or Manchester Central Convention Complex.

The real regeneration of Manchester took place following the tragic and terrible circumstances of the 1996 IRA Bombing in the centre of Manchester on Corporation Street. This tragedy enabled the regeneration to continue and the partnership and vision between Sir Howard Bernstein and Sir Richard Leese led to the Manchester we see around us today.

Please see some wonderful images of Manchester in 1994 [here](#) .



Bridgewater Hall Construction



Chinese New Year in 1994

38 Talking Heads

In a break from the norm we asked several questions to our talking heads this month:

“What were you doing in 1994?”

“If you did anything, how did you celebrate turning 30?”

“What is your best memory from when you were 30?”



Brad Pomfret KC, Barrister, 23 Essex Street Chambers

What were you doing in 1994?

I was 12-13 years old and big into Oasis the first-time round. Heading into Manchester on my weekends to buy bootleg CDs at Affleck's Palace and saving up to buy my first electric guitar from Forsyth's on Deansgate: a sunburst Japanese Fender Stratocaster.

What's your best memory from when you were 30?

Cheating slightly, as it was 4 days before my 30th birthday, but it has to be Manchester City winning the Premier League title for the first time by beating QPR 3-2 at the Etihad, having been 2-1 down into injury time and needing a win to finish top of the table on goal difference, ahead of United who finished on level points. I was at the game and I don't think the euphoria and elation of that moment, winning the League by the finest of margins against our local rivals, will ever be beaten. I don't have a picture from the day, but here is one of my late brother, Mitch, proudly holding a signed shirt of Sergio Aguero commemorating that "93:20" moment

Sucheet Amin, Senior Partner, Aequitas Legal

What were you doing in 1994?

At the start of 1994 I was 17 and heading to my 18th birthday in November. I was able to pass my driving licence with the financial support of my father, although little did I know, he wanted me to be able to drive his transit van to the local cash & carry to buy stock for his convenience store which quickly became one of my Saturday chores. I'll never forget the first time he asked me to go on my own with the van and a couple thousand of pounds in cash! He gave me a list and told me to look out for offers and of course get a receipt for the books. It was also the year I visited Liverpool University with my cousin to visit his sister for a weekend. Knowing I wanted to get away from London to read law, this was a great opportunity to get to know the city and it did not disappoint. Although I didn't get to see the Law Building, on the way home I told my cousin, 'it's a red brick university and I love the people - I'm going there!' It was the start of my journey to live in the North and I've never regretted it since.

If you did anything, how did you celebrate turning 30?

When I was 30 I was living in West Didsbury. There was a great local tapas restaurant on Barton Road which unfortunately is no longer there. It was a regular place that me and friends visited and the owner agreed to let me use the restaurant exclusively for a couple of hours one Saturday. Childhood friends and family

travelled from London. University friends travelled from Cardiff, Leeds, Hull and Liverpool. One of my university friends thought a comedy gift would be a 'Boyz II Men' Greatest Hits album. Much to his disappointment, little did he know that I was a fan and promptly asked the owner of the restaurant to play it throughout the meal. He had to endure their melodies for the next couple of hours!

What's your best memory from when you were 30?

Without question, hearing the news that my wife was pregnant with our first child. We had been trying for over a year without success and we had just started to get some medical help. Within a month of exploring options, we fell pregnant (something I hear is quite common) and the joy that moment brought us is indescribable.

Continued on page xx



Well into my 30s but with that little miracle beside me



Lisa Wright, Founder, Menopause the Wright Way

What were you doing in 1994?

By day working for Sovereign Leasing plc as an account executive, by night enjoying the benefits of living in City Centre Manchester and its flourishing gay scene...

If you did anything, how did you celebrate turning 30?

I held a "beach" themed party upstairs at the Lead Station in Chorlton complete with sand, Hawaiian shirts and 20ft inflatable palm trees, which to this day I have never understood how they got stolen in plain sight...



What is your best memory from when you were 30?

My now wife had only agreed to go out with me when I turned 30, so the morning after my birthday I asked her out again and she agreed. The rest is history.



Gary McIndoe, Managing Partner, Latitude Law

In 1994 I was mid-way through my big OE; after marrying the year before, my wife Rebecca and I decided to backpack for our honeymoon. We thought we'd be away for 12 months, but this turned into 2½ amazing years taking in South America, Australasia and Asia. Precisely 30 years ago, I was working in Sydney for TAFE, the further education provider for New South Wales, living my best life in the Chippendale area of the city. What I learned of overseas life and culture at this time certainly ignited my interest in global mobility, and ultimately the formation of a specialist immigration law practice in 2007.

My own 30th birthday - which happily coincides with Rebecca's - we were walking the Cotswold Way.



Fiona Ledden, City Solicitor, Manchester City Council

What were you doing in 1994?

In 1994 I was a mother of 2 under 5 wonderful girls, and working for a Local Authority in outer London, Sutton, undertaking Child protection work, and taking on challenges of managing a team with the new 1989 act fully coming into force. It was a very busy time but a very rewarding one too.

If you did anything, how did you celebrate turning 30?

When I turned 30 we decided it was a great time to celebrate by taking our new daughter to Ireland for both an introduction to some of our relatives and to have a fly drive around Southern Ireland. However, we had torrential rain a lot of the time and got cut off on the dingle peninsula. An everlasting memory is having breakfast cooked on a camp stove by the place we were staying in for bed and breakfast. We

also learnt a lot of people in 1990 were not entertained by baby tears at mealtimes I hope times have changed since then.



What's your best memory from when you were 30?

My best memories of being 30 were very much seeing my daughters develop and at the same time finding my way as a more senior manager in local Government. Working with the Association of Lawyers for Children, to help develop good practice and better outcomes for our most vulnerable Children in society. It was a great and very busy time!

Michael Taylor, Editor, TheBusinessDesk.com :

What were you doing in 1994?

I was a freelance journalist covering the television business, retained as the UK based international correspondent for a paper based in Denver, Colorado, USA, and a magazine in Singapore. The days could be quite long.

If you did anything, how did you celebrate turning 30?

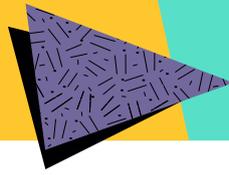
I was living in London and probably got blind drunk in the pub near work called the Camden Head with regulars like Mad Frankie Fraser, Kathy Burke and Jo Brand. Not remembering details of nights like

that is one of the reasons I stopped drinking altogether.

What's your best memory from when you were 30?

Euro 96 brought an incredible energy to the country, it was also the height of Cool Britannia and by then I was editing a magazine about the whole BritFilm boom; Trainspotting, Brassed Off, Lock Stock and Beautiful Thing.





Back in the day

Marking the 30th anniversary of the Manchester Law Society Messenger has provided an opportunity to reflect back to 1994 and to take a look at what was occupying the minds of Manchester's legal community at that time.

One of the biggest 'hot topics' of the year was the prescribed rates for Civil Legal Aid. The Lord Chancellor (who in those days was the head of the judiciary) had introduced, after protests, a discretion for enhanced rates to be claimed in certain proceedings. 1994 saw the introduction of a whole new framework for calculating Civil Legal Aid pay. Now, of course, Civil Legal Aid has all but completely disappeared.

There was concern that the government might be trying to introduce conditional fees as an alternative to Legal Aid. Hmm... wonder whatever happened to that idea!

Staying with civil litigation, the Courts were full of satellite litigation concerning cases which had fallen foul of an automatic strike-out rule. If the "plaintiff" (who had not yet become a "claimant") didn't apply for trial by a certain date then their claim was automatically struck-out. This caused the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) to dig deep into its pockets to compensate disappointed litigants. And if a law firm didn't like the premiums that SIF was charging? Well, that was just tough, because it would be another five years before the profession moved to an open market professional indemnity insurance system.

In the sphere of criminal law, Barbara Mills, head of the CPS, was facing severe criticism for trimming the number of CPS areas from 31 to 13 and for flattening the management structure. She was also campaigning for the CPS's 2000-lawyer employees to have rights of audience.



New legislation in 1994 included the Sunday Trading Act, which allowed shops in England and Wales to open on Sundays. And Sundays would never be the same again.

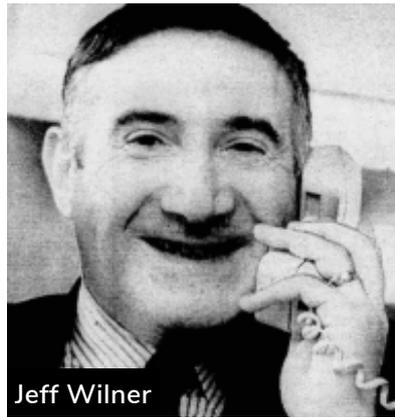
Meanwhile, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994 introduced bans on unlicensed rave parties, helpfully defining rave music as "sounds wholly or predominantly characterised by the emission of successive repetitive beats". More controversially, the Act substantially changed the right to silence of an accused person, allowing for adverse inferences to be drawn when cautioned, and it introduced new "stop and search" powers for the police.

There were approximately 66,000 solicitors in England and Wales in 1994 (compared to over 160,000 today). One of them was Rodger Pannone, a Manchester solicitor who in 1994 had risen to become President



of The Law Society. At a local level, the President of Manchester Law Society was Jeff Wilner.

At the other end of the career scale, trainee solicitors were licking their lips at a new starting-salary of £10,850 (or £12,150 in London). And for that kind of money a trainee could look forward to spending two years doing loose-leaf filing, photocopying, and reading lengthy documents aloud in order to spot differences between two versions ('track-changing' was not even 'a twinkle in the eye' of the somewhat hoarse trainee).



Jeff Wilner

The local legal scene in 1994 bore the names of firms such as Elliott & Co, Alsop Wilkinson, Vaudrey Osborne & Mellor, Cobbett Leak Almond, Gorna & Co, James Chapman, Hammond Suddards, Peter Rickson, Chaffe Street, Halliwell Landau, Fox Brooks Marshall and Mace & Jones and many others whose names have long since disappeared from the letterheads.

Meanwhile, back in the office, there was great excitement as a new word-processing package, Word perfect 5.1 for DOS, was unveiled. It was described as "containing everything a secretary could want"; the Law Society Gazette announced that it was entirely keyboard-operated, although it added that "it is possible to use a mouse – a flattened ball operated with the hand". Ah, I wondered what that thing on my desk was.

Once away from the office, lawyers were completely incommunicado, especially when on holiday, unless they left the name and telephone-number (and room number) of their hotel with their colleagues. There was certainly no 24/7 phone-calls and emails, and only the grandest and most important

of people had a mobile phone (if they were strong enough to carry such a brick-like object). It was however possible to send something urgently: all you had to do was dictate it to your secretary, wait for it to be typed, amend it in pen once the first draft was produced, send it back to your

secretary for amendment, and then wait for someone to stand by the fax machine whilst the communication slowly transmitted, whereupon at the other end the recipient would wait for it to be churned out on flimsy paper on which the contents would after a while fade.

As for Working From Home... this could only be done by carrying large files from the office to home, hoping that you didn't leave them on the bus or train in the process (nobody worried too much about data breaches in those days!), and then covering the living-room floor with papers and documents. Then the whole operation would be reversed, perhaps this time accompanied by a small cassette emitted from a Grundig Dictaphone. And if the cassette got lost or the tape got chewed-up (by no means an impossibility), well...you just did the whole thing again.

And if a client wanted to see what their solicitor (whom they might have located via Yellow Pages) looked like, then the only thing to do was for one of them to travel (perhaps a long distance) so that the two could meet. It all seemed perfectly sensible...after all, the only thing that could ever stop people continuing to work like that would be a global pandemic, and of course that would never happen.

Happy days – or not?

Jeff Lewis, Brabners LLP

Presidential recollections of 1994

While we are looking back at 1994, we got in touch with the Presidents from the time. Yes Presidents! Back then we changed President mid-year so now you get to hear from Jeff Wilner and Guy Robson.



Guy Robson – MLS President 1993-1994

First of all, I had a great year!

As is usual for all Presidents, the year was busy keeping the balance between my role as President, as a partner in Davis Blank Furniss and as a family man where I was supported by my wife Gwyn.

In no particular order I highlight some events which stay in my memory.

The opening of the Legal Year is and was celebrated at Westminster Abbey. It was certainly a colourful and memorable event, at which it was represented by many members of the legal profession. Many, but not all, of the Judges attended in robes. However, when I said “most of the Judges”, notably those who did not were the members of the House of Lords – the old and venerable name for what is now the Supreme Court. As we were watching, an American tourist asked me “who are the old guys in the parade?” Patiently I explained to



One major event in my year of office was the visit to the city of Lyon for the twinning with their Bar”

him that “the old guys” were the cream of the English Judicial System.

It is appropriate that I do mention one person who was and is fundamental to the good running of the Society - Fran Eccles-Bech who has carefully guided myself (I hope successfully) like all the other Presidents in the discharge of their role.

One major event in my year of office was the visit to the city of Lyon for the twinning with their Bar, an arrangement in which I very willingly participated. I recall very clearly the warm welcome during the three day visit attended by a team of Manchester solicitors and partners (not legal!) and the Avocats of Lyon. It was a particularly moving event for me as my late uncle had been the Batonnier of the Bar in Nancy.

Whilst the visit was educational, it would be remiss of me not to mention the splendid restaurants to which we were forced to attend!!!!



The final event which I recall attending in my capacity as President, with my wife and children was the National Law Society conference held in Brighton. The base of the conference was the Grand Hotel, which unfortunately became the target of a very serious bombing outrage. Luckily our Conference went well and was successfully led by Roger Pannone who was not only a successful Manchester solicitor but also the National President. I do recall the very noticeable respect in which our Society was held.

To conclude I have always been proud to have been a solicitor and a member of our Society and simply wish it success for at least a further 30 years.

Jeff Wilner – MLS President 1994-1995



Born very young, in Manchester, educated here, obtained law degree here and joined local criminal oriented firm here. After qualification I spent two years in Hong

Kong which was really very good for all my later professional life as a criminal defence advocate began on my return home.

To Manchester of course... With old friend Fred Ollier we built a successful criminal based (but not exclusively) practice. My old mentor and boss Peter Goldstone was a city councillor for some years (though foolishly a Liberal!) and his wife became a city magistrate. I say this because Stephanie became a city magistrate and persuaded me to become involved in local politics.

I was a city councillor (initially for Moss Side). When I stopped in 1988 I began my

involvement with the Law Society taking my interests in politics and social justice into that involvement. I was a Labour councillor...

As President (and a United football fan) I remember taking as my theme for the year as "A city united". The challenges in 1994 I recall were especially in relation to legal aid for criminal defence work and in council I led discussion as to how we could progress this. Also very important was the feeling that we were not of much interest to the large commercial law firms in the city and I am not sure now but think I (or Guy before me) started to create links with them. Advertising was beginning and became an important issue around this time too.

Rewarding for me as President were the opportunities to meet colleagues from around the country and in Europe, realising that we all had the same problems and discussing how to deal with them.

As President I expected an initial period of calm settling into the role. Instead, I discovered that I had to attend the AGM of the national Law Society and deliver the valedictory address as Rodger Pannone retired. This was a week or two after I started. I didn't get the feeling that what I said was of much interest...

Rodger in fact became quite ill at this time and to my reward for becoming President I found that he had a fair number of dates in his diary to address other law societies and professional organisations which needed a replacement speaker. Guess who had to stand in.

Continued on page 46



Well over the next couple of months I at least improved my powers of public speaking (I told myself).

With my role in crime, I took the opportunity to get together all the local agencies involved with young offenders including the police and formed a group to pilot a new approach to how young offenders involved in prostitution should be dealt with – as victims not offenders – and the successful trial of this in Manchester has been adopted around the country. Less successful was my persuading Manchester Evening News to hold a major conference on crime and drugs.

Although well attended and national cover it has made not the slightest difference to the way in which drug/crime policy has been handled by police or government.

The visits Stephanie and I made to the formal opening of the legal calendar in Lyons and Brussels both stand out as memorable. The enormous expense and tables groaning with extremely wonderful food in Lyon's were, I discovered, because the local Bar keeps the interest earned whilst awaiting the decision as to where the capital sum should be assigned. This explains why our local hospitality could not compare.

In Brussels, in the company of colleagues from London and Liverpool, I was privileged to hear Flemish spoken throughout the formal opening of the Belgian Flemish Bar. No attempt was made to translate and I understood not a word.

At the formal dinner that night greeted by the President in English I responded in French. He immediately asked if I spoke Flemish and when I said no he asked that



I enjoyed my year immensely and the opportunity to make contact with other professionals and organisations I think has stood me in good stead as a solicitor”

we spoke only in English in that case! I was happy to do so.

I enjoyed my year immensely and the opportunity to make contact with other professionals and organisations I think has stood me in good stead as a solicitor and later in the role of Chair of South Manchester NHS UHT. I am glad that I did my professional time in crime, and when I started as Chair at Wythenshawe Hospital reading the contract, an enormous volume, for the PFI which had produced an enormously costly headache for the Trust, I knew I had made the right legal decision all those years earlier.

Finally, I enjoyed writing the monthly column for the magazine which was still in its infancy. I thought that what was needed to keep the readers on side was a mixture of relevant information and humour.

It seemed to work.

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Myerson Solicitors becomes Manchester's first 100% employee-owned law firm

Myerson Solicitors [↗](#) has announced its conversion to a 100% Employee-Owned Business (EOB), becoming the first law firm in Greater Manchester to do so. With 150 employees, Myerson now ranks among the largest employee-owned organisations in the UK.

Founded in 1982 by Neil Myerson, the firm serves both business and private clients nationally and locally, having achieved 15% organic growth for the financial year ending 31 August 2024, with revenues reaching £17.5 million.

Myerson is now 100% owned by its employees through an Employee Ownership Trust (EOT). A new Board of Trustees has been created, with the appointment of Steve Tudge, Joanne Evans, and James Birch — who are tasked with ensuring the organisation is managed in the best interests of all its employees. Meanwhile, the existing management board, under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Carl Newton, will continue to oversee Myerson's operations and strategy.

Additionally, the board will now include Jordanna Reynolds, the People Director, to represent the HR function.

A Commitment to Independence

Myerson has always had a 'people-first' culture with the ethos to remain independent and only grow organically. Becoming 100% employee-owned reaffirms Myerson's commitment to this and aligns with its core values of innovation, creativity, and being forward-thinking.

Myerson's CEO, Carl Newton, who joined the firm in 1995 and has witnessed its continuous growth, comments: 'We've always been bold and entrepreneurial. Becoming the first 100% employee-owned law firm in Manchester marks an exciting milestone for Myerson and for me personally, it's a very proud moment.'

Becoming an Employee-Owned Business allows us to give every single employee a stake in our firm's financial success; it empowers our people, attracts top talent,



Carl Newton, Chief Executive Officer of Myerson Solicitors



Carl Newton (CEO); Steve Tudge (Chair of the Trustees); Joanne Evans (Trustee); James Birch (Employee Trustee); Richard Lloyd (COO).

and reinforces our people-centric culture. In a market where we see numerous mergers & acquisitions by private equity houses and large national law firms, I am delighted that Myerson is making a strong statement, championing stability and independence.'

Increased Employee Engagement

Myerson employees will now benefit from tax-free bonuses, greater stability and continuity, and increased investment in learning & development. A newly established Employee Engagement Committee will safeguard the firm's culture and uphold Myerson as a great place to work.

Carl continues: "Our clients will experience the same exceptional service they have come to expect, with the added assurance that all our employees are more engaged and committed than ever to ensuring the firm's continued success."

The legal sector: a late adopter of the EOT model

Employee Ownership Trusts (EOTs)

have seen remarkable growth in the UK since their introduction in 2014. The EOT model was designed to promote employee ownership by providing a tax-efficient mechanism for business owners to transfer ownership to their employees. This policy intervention has generated a significant increase in the number of employee-owned businesses. As of October 2023, the UK proudly boasts a thriving sector of over 1,650 employee-owned businesses, reflecting a strong movement towards inclusive and sustainable business practices. However, the legal sector has been a late adopter: out of the 9,500 solicitors' firms in the UK, only about 20 are employee-owned.

The legal work has been internally led by Corporate Partners Terry Moore and Akeel Latif. Terry Moore is an expert in the field of Employee Ownership Trusts, having acted for many clients, including other law firms.

If you would like to find out more about Myerson's expertise in advising employee-owned businesses, you can contact the Myerson Corporate Team on 0161 941 4000, or email lawyers@myerson.co.uk .

Myerson Solicitors employees in front of their Altrincham premises





Fletchers Group breaks Guinness World Record for most people performing upper-body rehabilitation stretches

Personal injury and clinical negligence specialist [Fletchers Group](#) has broken a Guinness World Record for the most people doing a particular sequence of upper body stretches, in an attempt led by 90's TV-legend Mr Motivator. These stretches often form a key part of the rehab and ongoing care routines for people suffering a wide range of muscular or spinal injuries.

Colleagues came together from across the Group's various offices - Manchester, Liverpool, Southport, Leeds, Bolton and Cambridge - to the Albert Hall in Manchester for an afternoon of marking milestones, to celebrate one of its most successful years to date.

As part of these celebrations, the firm enlisted the help of exercise guru and



fitness legend, Mr Motivator, along with his team of 'Motivators' to lead the five-minute stretch routine, which consisted of a number of upper body postural exercises aimed at improving blood flow, circulation and range of movement, imperative for recovery after injury.

The stretch routine, which was successfully performed by 647 colleagues, was chosen

Clarke Willmott secures Regenda Legal panel bid win

[Clarke Willmott LLP](#) has successfully secured a place on a panel of leading housing specialist law firms as part of a legal services framework agreement.

The firm is among a group of law firms named by The Regenda Group, a social housing provider in the North West.

Having previously worked for the organisation under one lot, Clarke Willmott has now



Lindsay Felstead

been appointed to all four of the available lots - Corporate, Governance, Financial & Securitisation; Housing Management and Commercial; Property, Development & Construction; and Employment.

by Fletchers and Mr Motivator to highlight the importance of rehabilitation, and rehabilitative exercise.

Fletchers secures millions of pounds in settlements for its clients each year; and this ensures that all financial future needs are met; from ongoing medical care to rehabilitation and other therapies.

The achievement underscored Fletchers' ongoing mission to help people who have suffered serious injuries move forward with their lives.

An official Guinness World Records adjudicator was on-hand to do the official count, which was announced at the end of the conference with the presentation of a certificate of achievement handed to the Group's Chief Marketing Officer and Blume's CEO, Alex Kenny, to formally recognise the win.

Alex said: "Our annual conference was created to celebrate all the fantastic things we've achieved over the last year – and what



better way to mark it than to attempt our very own Guinness World Record.

"We chose a record that was personal to us and what we do. Our world record reflects the fact that our practice goes beyond legal advice; we use our expertise and professional connections, from case managers, independent medical experts, through to the many charities we work with, to ensure individuals have the right support to rebuild their life."

The new framework is worth £10m and will run for four years, led by Clarke Willmott's senior social housing partner Lindsay Felstead.

Lindsay Felstead [↗](#), who jointly heads up Clarke Willmott's social housing sector alongside Vicky Kells, said: "We are delighted to have been reappointed to the Regenda framework and to expand our remit with the organisation.

"Not only did we retain an important lot, we also gained three more which is a great testament to our work and the services we provide. It's fantastic to be appointed across the board and offer a 'one stop shop'.

The Regenda Group, formed in 2001, is primarily a social housing provider but operates across the housing and construction sector, in care and support, and in education, training and careers.

Clarke Willmott's national specialist social housing team is one of the largest in the UK and acts for more than 100 Registered Providers, social landlords and major frameworks across England and Wales, including housing associations, local authorities and arms-length management organisations (ALMOs).

For more information on Clarke Willmott's social housing work visit [click here](#) [↗](#).



Stephensons secures multiple nominations for the prestigious Lexis Nexis Family Law Awards 2024

The family law team at [Stephensons](#) has been shortlisted for two awards at the prestigious Lexis Nexis Family Law Awards 2024.

Stephensons was named Family Law Firm of the Year for the North at last year's ceremony. The firm has been shortlisted once again for Family Law Firm of the Year (North) and has also been shortlisted for Children Law Team of the Year.

The nominations follow the firm being recognised as a tier one family law firm by the Legal 500 for the second year in a row.

The Family Law Awards brings the family law community together for its biggest night of the year, celebrating excellence in the profession. Now in its 13th year, the Family Law Awards were launched in 2011 to recognise the important work of family lawyers and celebrate their successes and achievements.

The shortlist of firms nominated for awards this year was chosen by a judging panel made up of the heads of the Family Law Bar Association, Resolution, the Association of Lawyers for Children and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives, along with Family Law editors and publishing professionals.

Commenting on the shortlist, [Victoria Gethin](#), partner and head of the [family law](#) department at Stephensons said:

"I am so happy that our wonderful team has been recognised once again on the national stage. We were completely ecstatic to win the award last year, so to be recognised once again in two categories is a superb achievement.

"Every single member of our team plays a vital role in supporting our clients and guiding them through often challenging circumstances. They do that with great sensitivity and the utmost professionalism. I am so pleased that their talent and hard work continues to be recognised alongside some of the country's finest family law firms."

The Family Law Awards will be held on Wednesday 20th November 2024 in London.



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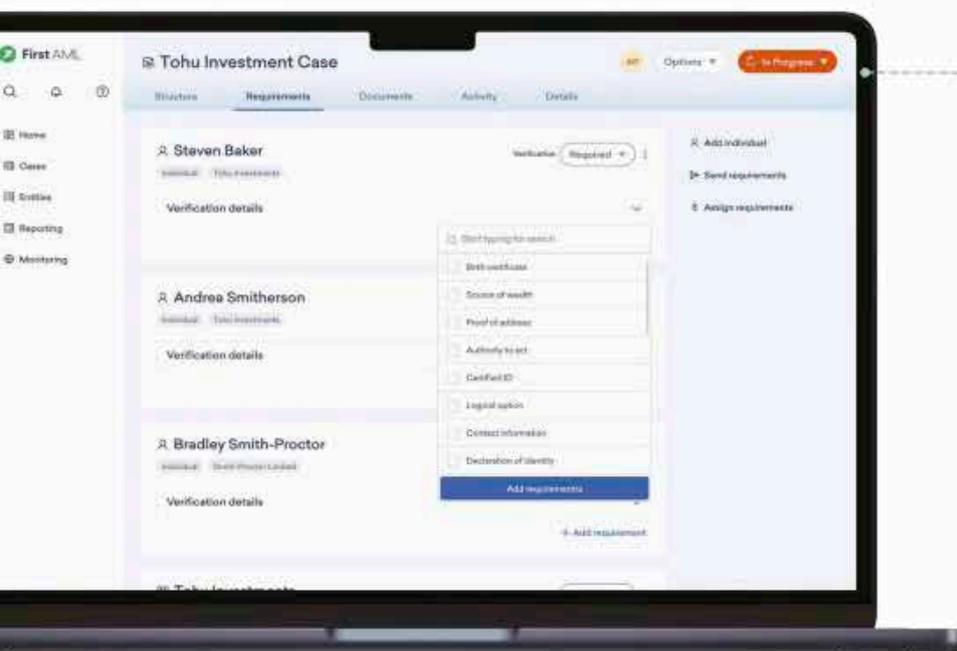
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Growth leads to giving as Bexley Beaumont launches charitable foundation

Bexley Beaumont [↗](#) has announced the creation of a charitable foundation to allow community projects nationwide to share in its success.

Bexley Beaumont Chief Executive Karen Bexley has said the BBFoundation initiative was evidence of its determination to fulfil its responsibilities to clients and the community.

“When we launched, we were insistent about giving something back to the communities in which we operate.

“Each year, we have a principal nominated charity but, as we have grown, we felt that the nature of our community contributions should grow too.

“We have partners based throughout the country and, therefore, it was essential to ensure that our support should reflect as many suggestions about suitable schemes as possible.

“Given that we take our obligations seriously, we felt that setting up the charity was a natural step because it adds a professionalism and structure to our philanthropy.

“It is an indication of our progress as a business and our maturity too. Our fifth year really seemed like the right time to establish the foundation.

“We also regard this as something of a spur to keep pushing ourselves as an organisation in order to help as many communities nationwide as we can.”

The BBFoundation has been registered with



the Charity Commission and is the latest but arguably most significant evidence of Bexley Beaumont’s charitable activities.

Since opening its doors, the firm’s central support team and lawyers have already undertaken a wide of range of fundraising activities, including walking, riding and cycling a total of more than 2,000 kilometres across the UK on behalf of the mental health charity, MIND.

Ms Bexley has described how the Foundation is one of a series of “cornerstone ventures” for Bexley Beaumont.

Earlier this year, it launched a platform, BBElevate, to support the career development of its legal and support staff.

In addition, the firm has been a member of the Legal Sustainability Alliance for the last two years as part of a commitment to follow best environmental practice, including the intention of eventually becoming a net zero carbon emission business.

One of the individuals leading its

sustainability efforts, trainee lawyer Harry Jenkinson, won a North West regional award for his efforts in April.

Ms Bexley added: "This is about doing much more than simply expressing good intentions.

"We feel that by supporting our colleagues, our communities and the planet, we provide both the motivation and the opportunity to grow as a business, something which enables us to do even more.

"That is the kind of firm which we intended to have and it is an approach which I'm pleased to say has delivered progress since we started."

During the course of this year, Bexley Beaumont has added 15 partners across all its service areas.

It now has 62 partners and a further five Associate Solicitors despite only opening its doors in 2020.

The firm's appeal across the legal industry was underlined by an independent study conducted by Codex Edge last year.

Although many legal practices struggled to attract talent during 2023, the research concluded that the partner ranks of Bexley Beaumont had grown by 27 per cent in just a year.

Bexley Beaumont's achievements have seen it claim a succession of important legal industry awards - most recently, the Law Firm of the Year Award at the Modern Law Awards in March.

AI-fuelled start-up set to "supercharge" probate process

A Manchester-based legal start-up is using AI to speed up and simplify the process of managing the estates of people who have died.

[My Probate Solicitors](#) [↗](#) (MPS) has claimed that its service is offering "unique reassurance" to clients by having qualified lawyers complete the work for a fixed fee.

Chief Operating Officer Jean Warde added that at its heart was a bespoke AI platform named Xeena which is able to drastically reduce the time taken to prepare probate applications.

"Administering the estates of those who have died is very important but time-consuming and not terribly straightforward.

"Any delay in making a probate application can, of course, hold up the execution of a will. Furthermore, if the process is not done properly, there can be serious consequences for those acting on behalf of the deceased.

"Our fundamental objective is to supercharge the probate process, making it as simple and fast as possible for clients.

"By harnessing the very latest technology, we will prepare the necessary documents for checking by our solicitors and have them submitted within six weeks. In fact, we are so sure of our ability to do so that we're prepared to write off our fees if we fail.

Continued on page xx



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“We genuinely believe that there is no other firm around offering transparent, fixed-fee probate work with our combination of speed and expertise.”

Probate is the name given to the process by which executors or administrators are given formal authority to carry out the task of distributing a dead person’s estate, whether or not a will has been made.

It is typically required if the total value of the deceased’s assets, including property, shares or savings exceeds the Probate Registry threshold of £50,000.

Although led by Mrs Warde, MPS is backed by the team behind one of the country’s leading boutique law firms, Private Client Solicitors.

PCS has been named as one of the country’s best 250 law firms in The Times and identified by Legal 500 as having some of the profession’s “leading advisers”

Although MPS and PCS are distinct operations, Mrs Warde said that MPS’s clients would benefit from the combined decades of experience amassed by the senior leadership team. MPS has been co-founded by Tasnim Khalid, Paul Gotch, Nicola Walker, Jean Warde, Alvin Oliva and Ryan Lewis to disrupt the fixed fee Probate legal market.

Mrs Warde said: “Not all estates are large or complex. Yet even though the law which governs all estates is the same, there hasn’t previously been an effective, fixed-fee probate solution for those lower value estates. My Probate Solicitors has been specifically created to address that issue.

“Our agility and extensive expertise will be of great comfort to both our corporate and private clients alike.

“In fact, we are so confident of the potential of what we are able to offer that we reasonably believe we can become the leading provider of reserved legal activities to the estate planning business community in England and Wales.”





Launch of the Manchester Litigant in Person Support Scheme (“M-CLIPS”)

A huge thank you to those who were able to attend the launch of the M-CLIPS Scheme, kindly hosted by 23ES Chambers on 10th September.

The evening saw over 30 members of the local bar, clerks, judiciary, courts and front line agencies come together to celebrate the launch of the latest CLIPS Scheme to have been developed outside of London that, established with the support of the Business and Property Court Judges in Manchester, the Northern Circuit and the Northern Business and Property Bar Association. The Scheme has already received an overwhelmingly positive response!

Mirroring existing arrangements in London, Newcastle and Birmingham, the M-CLIPS Scheme aims to provide on-the-day advice and advocacy for unrepresented parties in the Business and Property Court on nominated Fridays, and will run as an initial 3 month pilot, starting on 4th October 2024.

Through the Scheme, barristers with post-pupillage Chancery experience will be able to volunteer to be on duty at Manchester CJC for one day at a time, accepting instructions under the licensed auspices of Advocate in order to assist unrepresented parties with hearings listed for 1 hour or less.

Following the success of existing CLIPS Schemes, we are anticipating that the M-CLIPS Scheme will not only fill a gap in the support available to unrepresented parties in the Business and Property Courts, but will also provide a fantastic opportunity through which volunteers will be able to build advocacy experience whilst working

with cases that deal with often fascinating and specialist points of law.

HHJ Hodge KC, who attended the launch, said: “The Manchester Business and Property Courts Judges are delighted that Advocate have chosen to launch their latest Chancery Litigant in Person Support Scheme in Manchester. We are aware of the considerable benefits that the first such scheme has brought to unrepresented litigants in the Rolls Building. We trust that the new M-CLIPS scheme will prove as successful and enduring as CLIPS has proved to be there. We recognise the potential benefits that M-CLIPS will bring for unrepresented parties faced with unfamiliar forms of relief, such as freezing orders and injunctions to enforce post-termination restraints and duties of confidence. We are grateful to the many advocates who have volunteered to assist with the M-CLIPS scheme. We trust that they too will benefit from the challenges this may bring in terms of greater exposure to the BPC s.9 and district judges and possibly unfamiliar heads of claim.”

The Vice-Chancellor, Fancourt J said about M-CLIPS: “I am delighted to welcome the new M-CLIPS scheme and wish everyone involved the best of luck in running it. The CLIPS scheme provides benefits all round: to litigants in person, judges, the other court users, and not least the volunteers themselves, and I am confident that it will be a success in Manchester.”

If you are interested in hearing more about the Scheme, or would like to be involved, we welcome you to contact Advocate at manchesterprobono@weareadvocate.org.uk [✉](#), or visit the webpage at weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html [✉](#).



Clarke Willmott completes largest summer vacation scheme to date

[Clarke Willmott LLP](#) has completed its largest summer work experience programme to date, providing 22 placements to emerging legal talent.

The Clarke Willmott Summer Vacation Scheme took place across five of its regional offices – Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester, Southampton and Taunton – and saw a focus on inclusivity and accessibility with a blind shortlisting process.

The scheme provides paid legal work experience to individuals interested in a career in law and participants have the opportunity to work in one or more teams across five days. A total of 26 teams took part in the scheme meaning students had access to a wide range of specialist practice areas including family law, property litigation and private client.

All students were offered the opportunity to engage in a new informal mentoring

programme to build on professional relationships and assist in developing strengths and skills for the future.

The scheme has made huge steps forward since returning in 2023 after a pause. Historically vacation schemes only took place in Taunton, last year this was extended to include Birmingham and in 2024 five out of seven regional offices offered placements.

Daniel Jones, Clarke Willmott's director of human resources, said: "We are so pleased with the success of the 2024 Summer Vacation Scheme which saw a 308% increase in applications and over 65 interviews held across our offices.

"The students have given hugely positive feedback on the opportunity to access real work as well as meaningful networking events and development sessions throughout the week. We worked on both

Irwin Mitchell Partners With Manchester Carbon Literacy Project To Become First Law Firm To Deliver Client Training

Irwin Mitchell has partnered with Manchester-based Carbon Literacy Project to become the first UK law firm to offer certified Carbon Literacy training for SMEs.

The accreditation has been awarded by the [Carbon Literacy Project](#) – a charitable organisation which helps individuals and organisations understand the carbon costs and impacts of their activities and how to reduce them.



Keith Davidson

personal and professional skills and ended the week with a mock assessment centre.

“It was very important for us to create an equal opportunity for all so we used a blind shortlisting process and inclusive recruitment practices. In 2023 we made one of our core objectives to create an inclusive and supportive hiring process and we have built on that in 2024, as part of our ED&I commitments.

“I’d like to say a huge thank you to the offices and the lawyers who took part in the scheme, making the students feel comfortable and welcome and imparting invaluable knowledge into what a real career in law looks like.

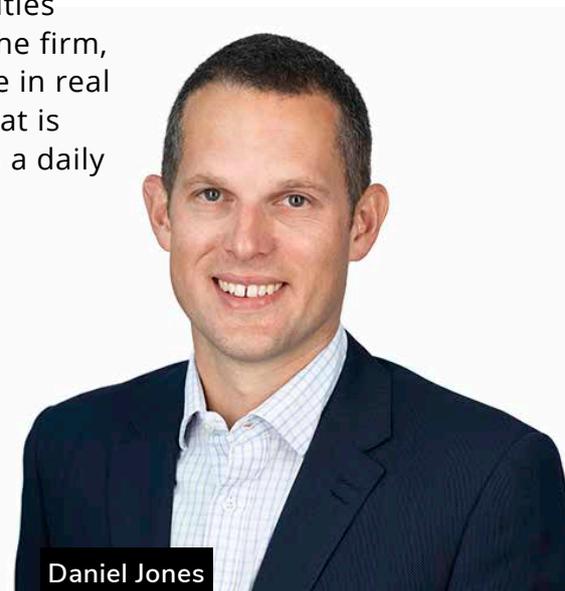
“Throughout the summer we were introduced to some incredibly talented young people who we will be keeping in touch with as they move through their qualifications.”

Participating students reported that they could see themselves working in the law with 100% agreeing they were made to

feel welcome and 83.3% agreeing their objectives had been met. Comments included: “This hands-on experience has significantly deepened my knowledge and practical skills, providing a solid foundation to make a significant step forward in my future career.”

And: “This scheme was very beneficial in exposing me to the operations of a law firm and allowing me to see how a law firm truly operates in practice. I am very grateful for the opportunities provided by the firm, immersing me in real client work that is completed on a daily basis.”

For more information about the firm’s equality, diversity and inclusivity initiatives [click here](#).



Daniel Jones

The [Carbon Literacy training](#) will enable Irwin Mitchell’s clients to become certified as Carbon Literate individuals and Carbon Literate Organisations.

Since launching, Carbon Literacy Project have certified over 100,000 individuals and 7,800 organisations as Carbon Literate.

Irwin Mitchell Environment Partner, [Keith Davidson](#) who is a former Environment Commissioner for Greater Manchester, said: “The Carbon Literacy Project is a real Manchester success story. The training is suitable for all employees and managers

and it’s a great way to gain the motivation and ideas to reduce emissions.”

Claire Petricca-Riding, Head of Planning & Environment at Irwin Mitchell who is also based in the Manchester office, added: “This is an important milestone and I’m proud Irwin Mitchell has taken a lead here by offering Carbon Literacy training as part of its Net Zero services for SMEs.”

Want to hear more from Keith? He is speaking at the Regulatory Conference on 8th October. Find out more [here](#).



North West Legal Consortium appoints 15 law firms to new four-year panel

The North West Legal Consortium (NWLC) has appointed 15 law firms to its new panel.

Firms involved in the framework, which covers the period from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2028, can now be instructed for legal work by consortium members.

Representing more than 40 public organisations – including councils, combined authorities, waste disposal authorities, social housing agencies, emergency services, transport bodies, and police and crime commissioner offices – the consortium facilitates collaboration in the procurement and commissioning of legal services.

Following a detailed procurement exercise, NWLC awarded contracts to up to six firms in each of [five lots](#) (except for projects, procurement, commercial and construction, where it appointed 10 firms):

- Civil litigation, prosecutions and regulatory
- Property, planning and environment
- Corporate governance, ethical standards and information law
- Projects, procurement, commercial and construction
- Social care and education.

Two firms, Browne Jacobson and Capsticks, have also been awarded partner status. These firms will work closely with the consortium's management team on bespoke requirements such as a training programme, delivery of an annual training

event, support to junior lawyers and a range of other value-added activities for consortium members.

Other firms on the framework include Brodies, DAC Beachcroft, DWF Law, Forbes, Freeths, Geldards, Hill Dickinson, Mann Roberts Solicitors, MSB Solicitors, Muckle, Stephensons, TLT and Weightmans.



Anne Greenwood, Chair of the North West Legal Consortium management board

Chair of the NWLC management board, Anne Greenwood said: “We are pleased to announce the fourth iteration of our legal framework since the inception of NWLC in 2009.

“By welcoming eight new firms and two new partners in Browne Jacobson and Capsticks, we look forward to the injection of fresh ideas and enthusiasm they will bring alongside those firms with which we already have established longstanding and trusted relationships.

“

Fifteen years into our existence, NWLC continues to be embedded in our region, facilitating valuable collaboration in the procurement and commissioning of high-quality legal services for our members”

“Fifteen years into our existence, NWLC continues to be embedded in our region, facilitating valuable collaboration in the procurement and commissioning of high-quality legal services for our members, which wish to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness of the external legal support they require to supplement their in-house provision.”

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council is the lead contracting authority for NWLC, whose [members](#) are located across the Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside and North Wales local authority areas.

Members include the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, Lancashire County Council, Cheshire Fire and Rescue, Lake District National Park Authority, Liverpool City Council, and the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales.

The consortium’s day-to-day activities are led by Fiona Pritchard, Consortium Development Manager. She joined NWLC in January after 30 years in private practice as a solicitor, latterly managing public sector framework agreements and procurements from the supplier side.

Fiona said: “I’m very excited about the opportunity to work with our new

framework law firms and partners on collaborative legal activities, as well as the value-added initiatives we offer to members, including training, events and communications via our regular newsletter.”

[Bradley Martin](#), Partner in Browne Jacobson’s government and infrastructure team, said: “We are thrilled to be awarded partner status for NWLC, which comprises high-profile members delivering hugely important work in their local communities that requires legal support.

“The scope of the work is broad, ranging from providing extra capacity to local authorities’ in-house legal departments through to bigger projects across any areas of a commercial nature. It is testament to our growing profile and dedication to supporting our clients in the North West and nationally.”

[Tiffany Cloynes](#), Head of Local Government and Partner at Capsticks, added: “This appointment is key for the Capsticks team as it will provide the opportunity to support local authorities at a time when they are experiencing a high level demand. It will allow the NWLC partner councils to focus on the pressing needs in their communities rather than divide their attention on sourcing high-quality legal support.”



Glaisyers ETL welcomes landmark judgment in case of Leeson & Anor v McPherson

Glaisyers ETL [✓](#) has welcomed the High Court judgment ruling that the businesswoman Paula Leeson, who died in a swimming pool in Denmark in 2017, was unlawfully killed by her husband Donald McPherson.

Following a trial at the Manchester Civil Justice Centre this April, Mr Justice Richard Smith delivered [his judgment](#) [✓](#) in the case of Leeson & Anor v McPherson on 6 September 2024. He found “without hesitation” that Mr McPherson unlawfully killed Ms Leeson, and should not benefit financially from her estate, or the life insurance policies totalling £3.9 million he had taken out on her, most without her knowledge.

Mr McPherson was not present, and elected not to be represented, at the trial this spring. Originally from New Zealand, he is believed currently to be living in the South Pacific region.

Ms Leeson worked for her family’s groundworks and skip hire business, W. Leeson & Son. She drowned on 6 June 2017 while on holiday with Mr McPherson at a remote property in Denmark.

The case was initially treated as accidental death by the Danish authorities. A later criminal trial for murder in the UK collapsed in 2021 after the judge in that case, Mr Justice Goose, directed the jury to return a “not guilty” verdict based on there being insufficient evidence to secure a safe conviction.

Immediately following the collapse of the 2021 trial, Ms Leeson’s son Ben, father William and brother Neville initiated

civil proceedings against Mr McPherson, instructing the law firm Glaisyers ETL to act for them.

The team working on the case at Glaisyers ETL was led by partner David Jones and senior associate Alison Rowley, with support from the wider commercial litigation team, including trainee Niamh Howarth. The Leeson family were represented in court by the barristers Lesley Anderson KC of Kings Chambers and Tom Gosling and Arianna Barnes of 23 Essex Street Chambers.

Lesley Blohm KC of St John’s Chambers, along with Tom Gosling, represented the family at an earlier hearing, in January 2022, at which an application by Mr McPherson to strike out the Leeson family’s claim was dismissed.

Reflecting on Friday’s judgment, David Jones, partner at Glaisyers ETL, said, “After the seven-year battle for justice on behalf of Paula Leeson, this was the result that we, and the family, had been waiting for.

“Glaisyers ETL have worked tirelessly to secure this outcome for the Leeson family, who never wavered in their belief that their beloved mother, daughter, sister and auntie had been murdered. Despite the Danish authorities originally ruling her death an accident and McPherson’s ‘not guilty’



Paula Leeson



David Jones

verdict in 2021, we continued to fight for justice alongside them.”

The civil case in April heard a range of significant new evidence that did not form part of the original criminal prosecution in 2021. The family believes that this new evidence, and Friday’s judgment, will enable Greater Manchester Police and the Crown Prosecution Service to re-open the criminal investigation into the case.

Mr Jones continued, “This was a landmark case, and, pending the findings of an inquest into Paula’s death expected later this year, the family believe the compelling new evidence underpinning last week’s judgment makes an overwhelming argument for Greater Manchester Police and the Crown Prosecution Service to reopen their investigation into Paula’s death.

“Civil cases alleging criminal activity – in this case the most serious criminal act of all – are rare and often involve high-profile

defendants, with settlement being a likely result. However, that was never a realistic outcome for this case which, beyond making sure that McPherson could not profit from Paula’s death, was never about money.

“If the evidence we were able to unearth and present to the High Court in April were to lead to a reopening of the criminal investigation, and potentially another trial under the terms of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, then we believe it would be the first time in England and Wales that criminal proceedings would have been reopened based on the findings of a civil case.”

Mr McPherson, who was born Alexander James Lang in the Auckland suburb of Takapuna, has gone by several different names during his lifetime and has 36 convictions spanning 15 years across three different countries. During the civil trial in April the Court heard that at the time of Ms Leeson’s death he was already preparing another new identity, under the name “Rob Jones”.

In a statement released following Friday’s judgment, the Leeson family said, “Naturally, we were devastated when the criminal Trial against Donald McPherson for Paula’s murder could not proceed in March 2021. We remain grateful to the Greater Manchester Police for their investigation into Paula’s death to-date and the provision of a large volume of documents which helped ensure the success of this claim.

“We now believe that this large body of evidence and the further new and compelling evidence secured in the course of these civil proceedings will enable GMP and the Crown Prosecution Service to re-open the investigation into Paula’s murder and again pursue criminal charges against Donald McPherson leading to his conviction for Paula’s murder.”



Burton Copeland new launches internship programme

This month [Burton Copeland](#) has announced the launch of its new internship programme in order to support up and coming lawyers or law students who might be considering embarking on a career in criminal or regulatory law.

Managing Partner Louise Straw said, "Burton Copeland has always been supportive of the younger generations and have always welcomed students and young people who want to gain some work experience. Legal aid cuts have meant that the number of people going into criminal law has been on a massive decline in recent years. We'd like to offer people an opportunity to come and experience exactly what an exciting and interesting sector this is to work in. We want to forge links with local education providers and the community".

Rather than students completing a week or two as they would usually do if completing a college work experience placement, the internship programme will provide a more structured approach with interns gaining real experience over a period of 2 – 8 weeks.

The Law Society announced recently that between 2017 and spring of 2024 more than 1,4000 duty solicitors have left the sector. Those that remain are aging with fewer than 4% of duty solicitors aged under 35 years old and the average age in 2021 was 49.

Louise said, "The Law Society has campaigned significantly about legal aid cuts, but individual firms need to play their part too. It is not just about encouraging law students to choose criminal law at university. There are other many roles within a solicitor's firm such as paralegals, legal secretaries and finance

“

The internship programme will provide a more structured approach with interns gaining real experience over a period of 2 – 8 weeks

and administrative support and also many different routes to qualification.”

Practice Director Deborah Jackson said, "We want to be flexible and offer people the opportunity to spend a longer period with us. We often find that work experience placements who stay with us for longer find that they enjoy the placement more as they settle in and get to see and experience more.

The placements will therefore be entirely flexible, we don't want to limit the opportunities by having set periods such as only during the summer or half term holidays.

We also don't want to limit people applying for financial reasons so will cover payments for travel and subsistence expenses to successful applicants to ensure that they are able to gain experience without being out of pocket.”

Those who wish to apply for an internship placement should email enquiries@burtoncopeland.com for further information and an application pack.

CLICK FOR MORE INFO



Manchester Law Society

Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

In aid of



Dash Pub Quiz

[More details](#)

Thursday 17 October 2024

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Quiz: 18:30 – 21:30

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

£30.00 inc VAT per team member

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Maximum 5 per team

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Happy retirement to our Immediate Past President!

Nick Johnson, the senior partner at Glaisyers ETL and immediate past president of Manchester Law Society, has retired, drawing to a close a legal career spanning 41 years.

Nick's legal career began at the Manchester firm Goldstone Casket and Eva, where he trained after studying politics at Hull University and taking his CPE and finals at what is now Manchester Metropolitan University. He qualified in 1985, joining the firm's litigation team.

In 1993, Goldstone Casket and Eva merged with Glaisyers, and in 2009 Nick became managing partner, a position he held until 2018.

His tenure included the firm's 2013 merger with fellow Manchester firm Fruhman Davies Livingstones and, earlier that year, the demerger of Glaisyers' legal services business, forming WTB Solicitors.

In 2018 he oversaw the process that saw the firm become part of the ETL GLOBAL network of professional services firms. Headquartered in Essen, Germany, ETL GLOBAL's member firms employ around 26,000 people in more than 60 different countries.

Since Glaisyers became part of ETL GLOBAL, Nick has held the role of senior partner, providing guidance and leadership as the firm has grown and evolved. Highlights of this period include, in 2021, investments in the commercial law firm Laytons and the fraud recovery specialists Wealth Recovery Solicitors and, in 2023, opening the firm's first office in Liverpool and moving its Manchester headquarters to Spinningfields.

Nick is a highly respected disputes practitioner, and is a former head of Glaisyers' commercial litigation practice.

"Every case is a new challenge and I like solving problems," he says. "It also appeals to my competitive nature!"

It is also an opportunity to make a huge difference for clients. Memorable matters he points to include, early in his career, a civil fraud case in which he acted for a defendant facing a claim running to many millions of pounds.

He says, "The case involved complex legal arguments and forensic investigation into



Nick Johnson

the operations of a fast-food outlet. Beside the volume of papers it was also important to manage the clients' expectations and provide emotional support, and after five weeks of court time the claimant was awarded a very modest amount."

Other cases that stand out for him include acting for the uninsured defendant in a group action by more than 100 dental patients, where the client faced potential financial ruin. "After robust litigation and many days of mediation the claim was settled and the client was able to avoid bankruptcy and rebuild his life," Nick recalls.

Over the years he has on numerous occasions successfully defended clients and their businesses in litigation that could have resulted in insolvency. In such cases, he points out, "you have the added responsibility of saving people's jobs from the consequences of litigation."

In addition to defendant work, he has also acted for claimants in cases with life-changing consequences. In the 1990s he was involved in dealing with a number of structure settlements arising from clinical negligence, and still acts as deputy for the client.

Nick is an active member of Manchester Law Society. In 2020 he joined the board of MLS and, in 2023, served as president.

He also established MLS's Pro Bono Committee, on which he continues to serve as vice chair.

Highlights he points to include the "opening of the Legal Year at Westminster, and the MLS Legal Awards, which involve celebrating excellence within our profession in Manchester.

"It has also been a huge pleasure to work with Fran, Carla, Chandre and the officers of MLS to make a difference and contribute to the profession."

Nick's retirement from Glaisyers ETL coincides with the firm's 50th anniversary. Having been with Glaisyers for more than half of its history, he says that what stands out is "the people and a strong sense of loyalty.

"Glaisyers has developed a strong culture where people matter, where we care and look to have a balanced approach to our work and lives while remaining ambitious – which can often be a hard balancing act."

He is, he continues, most proud of seeing the firm develop from one employing 15 people, with a turnover of less than £250,000, to one that is "part of a multi-national business while maintaining its focus on its people and their development, with strong core values."

Values lie at the heart of Nick's approach to business, legal practice and life – a reflection of his strong Catholic faith.

Outside of work, he says that family, friends and making a contribution to society are his driving passions. He is a swimming and rugby coach and chairs the board of the Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust, which comprises of 12 schools.

Nick may be retiring from legal practice but, although he intends to spend more time with his family, "particularly now I have grandchildren", he also plans to continue with his voluntary work in education as well as concentrating on his pro-bono work. The drive and determination to make a difference that have characterised his career show no signs of abating just yet.



Stephensons' partner to leave the firm after 26 years

Mike Pemberton, a partner at [Stephensons](#) [↗](#), is to leave the firm after more than 26 years.

Mike joined Stephensons in 1998 as a clerk before commencing a training contract under the firm's respected trainee solicitor scheme. He qualified as a solicitor with the firm in 2001, specialising in civil liberties and public law.

During the course of his career with Stephensons, Mike has worked in a number of areas of law which have led to Judicial Review proceedings. His public law work has included education, human rights challenges, representing families in inquests where the state may have some responsibility for the deceased's death and representations against barring to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Mike has also worked in niche practice areas involving criminal record disclosure disputes which led to challenges taken to the Supreme

Court and European Court of Human Rights, some of his cases have resulted in changes to the law.

For the past few years, Mike has been an assistant coroner in The Black Country (West Midlands) and more recently in Manchester (West). These roles have been performed alongside his work at Stephensons. From mid-October, Mike will focus his time on these roles going forward which will include a recent appointment to the Manchester (South) coroner area.

Sean Joyce, managing partner at Stephensons said: "Over the course of his long career with Stephensons, Mike has assisted hundreds of clients with great care and sensitivity, as well as being a fantastic support to many colleagues. He has built a nationally recognised reputation for his work and I, and everyone here at Stephensons, wish him all the very best in his important role as a coroner."



Mike Pemberton

Farleys Retain 100% of qualifying trainees and welcomes new intake

Farleys Solicitors [↗](#) is celebrating the retention of all of its qualifying trainees for 2024.

In total, all of the four newly qualified solicitors, who joined the firm's highly regarded training programme in 2022, have taken up permanent roles at Farleys.

Anna Billingsley, Joseph Bridge, Olivia Cooper, and Amy Jones have completed two years of training, gaining experience across several departments before finding their specialisms.

Anna has joined the commercial litigation team, based at the firm's commercial offices on Shadsworth Business Park in Blackburn. She will advise clients on a wide range of litigation, including contract disputes, shareholder disputes, property litigation, and contentious probate.

Joseph takes up a position within the firm's abuse and inquests team, specialising in abuse claims and claims against local authorities. The department is nationally recognised for its expertise, having previously recovered record damages in abuse claims for survivors of childhood abuse.

Olivia has taken up a permanent role in the firm's insolvency and commercial litigation team in Preston, having began her career as a paralegal in the team prior to commencing her training contract. She advises insolvency practitioners, directors, creditors, and debtors in both contentious and non-contentious matters across personal and corporate insolvency.

Amy has joined Farleys' corporate team and will be based across the Shadsworth and



Pictured (top row, L-R): Anna Billingsley, Amy Jones & Joseph Bridge. (Bottom row, L-R): Lauren Lowens, Armin Pishro and Eve Abdel-Moneim

Manchester offices, assisting business owners and management teams with sales and acquisitions of businesses, restructures, and mergers.

Alongside the qualifying trainees, Farleys has welcomed its new intake to its training programme. Eve Abdel-Moneim, Lauren Lowens and Armin Pishro have taken up their first training seats in the firm's abuse and inquests, family and insolvency departments, respectively.

Nick Molyneux, partner and training principal, said, "I'm pleased to welcome our four qualifying trainee solicitors into permanent roles at the firm. They have all worked hard over the last two years and have now qualified into their chosen areas as highly competent and hardworking solicitors.

"Farleys' training programme has an excellent reputation for preparing the solicitors of the future with a well-rounded, diverse programme that offers experience and training in a wide range of practice areas. Over the years the programme has welcomed many of the current solicitors at Farleys, including quite a few who have risen through the ranks to become partners and managing partners of the firm."

Nick added, "We're proud of the programme we offer to training solicitors as we welcome the latest intake. We wish them the best of luck with their training contracts."



Myerson announces promotions and welcomes new apprentices and trainees as new financial year begins

Myerson Solicitors [↗](#) is gearing up for continued growth, announcing a series of key promotions and a new cohort of apprentices and trainees. Following a successful financial year that ended on 31st August, during which the firm achieved a £17.5m turnover and 15% annual growth, Myerson is further strengthening its team. Earlier this month, the firm also announced it had become 100% employee-owned via an Employee Ownership Trust.

A total of 16 employees have been promoted across the various departments of the firm, a testament to Myerson's commitment to developing internal talent. Amongst the senior promotions, Jordanna Reynolds, People Director,

has been appointed to the Board. Sarah Cowen has been appointed Partner in the Commercial Property team. Sarah, who joined Myerson in December 2022, has 17 years of experience in commercial property matters, including commercial, acquisitions and sales, leases, asset management, and secured lending.

Another significant promotion is Karen Taylor, now Legal Director in the Property Litigation team. Karen, who has been with Myerson since 2021, specialises in commercial property management and lease disputes, and property development issues. The firm has also promoted four lawyers to Senior Associate, six to Associate, and three colleagues within its Business Services Team to Senior Executive roles.

Myerson remains committed to developing future legal talent and is delighted to retain three newly qualified solicitors in the Commercial Litigation and Employment departments. At the beginning of September, the firm welcomed two new apprentices and four trainee solicitors.

James Birch, Talent Manager at Myerson, comments: "It's exciting to see so many people developing their careers here at Myerson. We truly believe that we offer a supportive, friendly and meritocratic environment where our junior colleagues can learn and gain valuable experience across our various departments. The addition of our new apprentices, trainees and NQ solicitors ensures we are well-positioned to meet our growth ambitions.

This year, we've seen a record number of



James Birch (left), Talent Acquisition Manager at Myerson, with the 2024 cohort of trainee solicitors and apprentices

applications for both our Trainee Solicitor and Solicitor Apprenticeship Programmes. The quality of the candidates has been outstanding, and it is really pleasing to see the legal profession attracting so much interest from the next generation. I have every confidence that our recent conversion to employee ownership will make us an even more attractive prospect for candidates at all levels."

To learn more about career opportunities at Myerson, visit: myerson.co.uk/about/



Myerson Solicitors Head Office, Manchester, Altrincham

Burton Copeland Benefits from Lawyer Relocation

Burton Copeland have recently taken on a new experienced Crown Court Litigator Damian Gwiazdowski.

Damian studied law at Leicester University and completed his LLB, Masters and LPC.

He worked at Leicester Crown court where he developed his experience working behind the scenes before joining a busy Criminal Practice in Leicester. During this period Damian gained considerable experience knowledge and expertise handling a significant caseload.

But sadly, for Leicester, Damian didn't consider that it was ultimately his long-term home.

"I have loved studying and working in Leicester. I have met some amazing people and made some really good friends, Leicester will always have a special place in my heart".

Unfortunately for Leicester, Damian recently realised that it wasn't the city he wanted to settle. Whilst visiting friends in Manchester, he decided that this was the place he

wanted to lay down his routes and continue his career in criminal law.

"I have travelled significantly around Europe, but as soon as I visited Manchester, I knew I wanted to live here, the people are really friendly and this city has so much to offer"

Managing Partner Louise Straw said, "Manchester is a fantastic city, and we are delighted that Damian has chosen it as his new home and also really pleased to have recruited such a talent to Burton Copeland. We wish him all the very best in his new home and look forward to a long and prosperous career with us"



Louise Straw and Damian Gwiazdowski

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Neurodiversity and me

My name is **Emma Hamnett**, and I am 42 years old and Neurodiverse.

I was diagnosed with high-functioning autism in January 2019. When I was diagnosed with Autism, it wasn't as much of a shock as I thought. I always knew I was different from my friends when I was young. I used to always look at the world differently and still do and always look outside the box, as they say.

Being autistic used to mean that you were treated differently. Still, now the world has started to recognise that although you are different, you have the same drive, feelings and passion as anyone Neurotypical, and you both want to achieve the same goals. Still, Neurodiverse people do it in a different way.

How I describe myself and my quirky brain is like a Jenga tower. My brain is very structured, and I know exactly what is going on. I know what I want to achieve every day, like a Neurotypical person; it's just that my brain is very uniform. Whereas a person who is Neurotypical has a brain like a scatter diagram and is not as structured as mine.

The thing is, Neurodiverse and Neurotypical people feel the same emotions; we have a faster working brain and heightened emotions. We struggle with sound, maths, writing, financial decisions, travelling and anything new outside of our routines.

A big thing about Neurodiverse people is that it just doesn't entail being diagnosed with Autistic, ADHD, Asperger, etc. It involves especially for me in being Autistic, for example, the heightened sensitivity to what is going on in the world around me.



I am affected more by noise as I am more sensitive to noisy environments, and I use headphones often while I process the world around me. I am not being rude, and I have heard comments such as why she always has headphones on. I used to hate it and feel awkward and uncomfortable, but now I embrace the comments and ask people to come and ask me why I am a brilliant reader of faces and people's emotions. I have struggled all my life with communication and have had to have help and guidance when I act or react in a certain way or say something. Although my brain thought I was right and being kind, it didn't always come across that way. People probably say I am a very sociable person, but that comes with a lot of anxiety, self-doubt, and also a heightened sense of emotions from laughing to crying, which has to be Neurodiverse I suffer from the most.

“

Something hit me one night in 2021 that I was going to make sure that all Neurodiverse people or anyone should not have to hide their Neurodiversity”

Being Neurodiverse and Autistic comes with other issues, such as those I have described above. However, Neurodiverse people suffer from severe anxiety, depression, a tick, speech impediment, and Tourette's, and it's not that we are different to anyone else who is Neurotypical. We have a heightened sense of emotion.

For example, my experience is now Neurodiverse. After an 18-year business career with some of the biggest high street names, I decided to follow my passion of wanting to become a Lawyer. I was going to be a Lawyer, and then in 2019, when I was diagnosed with Autism, my path to that dream took a route I was expecting to experience after I decided to disclose what the legal world called my disability.

As soon as I decided to tell the world I was Autistic, I was met with names such as special, thick, dunce. You will follow these rules and this guidance and do as you're told.

Then, bam, something hit me one night in 2021 that I was going to make sure that all Neurodiverse people or anyone should not have to hide their Neurodiversity. The legal world needed to take note that we are different from our Neurotypical colleagues; we just need that extra bit of help to achieve the same goals. Neurodiverse people have priceless superpowers and skills. We are human beings; we feel the same as everyone else. We are just us.

So I decided that after a couple of years of drafting and working on my idea of smashing that glass ceiling of the legal world, excepting that Neurodiverse colleagues are amazing, we are not a unique marketing tool to attract people to a legal firm by saying we have Neurodiverse colleagues working for us come and work here.

Therefore, in October 2023, I met a wonderful lady at Fletchers Solicitors, part of the dynamic Fletchers Group, and pitched my idea of becoming a Neurodiversity champion. My idea was born, and I became our group champion, supporting colleagues who are Neurodiverse across our entire business.

Today, I am not only our Group Neurodiversity, but I am also the head of our NeuroNetwork, where all Neurodiverse colleagues have a safe space to share stories, meet new people, and talk to each other, with the odd social event thrown in.

Currently, I am working with my firm on some new great ideas and projects to support neurodiverse colleagues in the legal world. My key goal is to let every Neurodiverse colleague just be them. The legal world does have some incredibly talented people who are not only Neurotypical but all Neurodiverse.

Thank you.



Celebrating Black History Month

October is Black History Month. I have often wondered what is the point of Black History Month? Bear with me, It is not a rhetorical question. I want to explore the wider benefits of having a dedicated month devoted to Black History.



Samantha Labor, Partner, Fletchers Solicitors

There have been great advances in awareness of Black people and our history and contributions but Black History Month provides an opportunity to highlight Black leaders in their field.

However, Black History Month should not be limited to focusing on the leaders and well known personalities but on all people who have diverse voices, using their experiences to light the path for others to enable them to be more and do more. If you can't see it, you can't be it.

Black History Month gives us an opportunity to share our experience. Black history does unite us. We have heard it said that diversity is our strength. When we appreciate this and learn about our different backgrounds and cultures, we realise how we are all connected. We have a shared history

“

Black History Month should not be limited to focusing on the leaders and well known personalities but on all people who have diverse voices”

and goals and one only has to look at the contributions made by the Windrush generation who came over to the UK after the war at the invitation of the government to help rebuild the NHS and the railways.

Acknowledging and celebrating our differences in the workplace during Black History Month is beneficial. It is often mooted that diversity of thought in business is a good thing. It provides for broader perspective which often leads not only to a vibrant work environment but also transformative changes. Celebrating differences creates a feeling of belonging, making team members feel that they have a voice. This in turn will lead to better performance, mental health and productivity, which is particularly important in the legal sector.

So, this Black History Month we should all challenge ourselves to learn more about Black history and celebrate.

[More information on Black History Month here](#) .

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Management Matters

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



This Month

- **Clients**
 - **Our really most valuable asset**
 - **Development and retention**
 - **Potential returns from the priority**
- **You cannot always rely on others to meet essentials – regulation and compliance being one. Responsibility cannot be overlooked – very risky**

A positive attitude cannot be ignored

Many law firms are facing the commercial challenges in the current and future environment.

Strategy plans and commercial operations, the right leaders with the right motivation, profitability, working capital, the best use of the right IT, security and regulation challenges, PII at the right time and cost, image and social conscience, staff and client retention and development.

Back in [July](#) I referred to a very valuable asset which is the Will Bank of the firm (updating Wills and selling LPAs) and the potential new business with half the adult population without a Will. We certainly talked about the benefits from enhanced client communication and targeted action.

Further research and experience from the sector tells me that every firm should have a strategy in place for finding and converting the right prospects, to developing existing clients for broader and repeat business. Every legal department needs a plan and utter commitment by all staff to achieving this and demonstrating the right profile as well as the highest performance doing

the job. All clients are demanding much easier and effective communication with their lawyers (42% not at all impressed at the moment). Dissatisfied clients do pass on their feelings about firms to their friends and networks. They can also pass on positive news.

It doesn't however stop there – all staff from every department need to enhance their client communication and empathy whether it is answering the phone, walking past them in the corridor, seeing them in reception, getting the business development communication right, the firm's brand and image from a client benefit perspective to social conscience and community contribution – not only are clients impacted by this but also 65% of younger skilled people within the firm looking to leave.

Empathy is great "I am sure we can help", "let's talk a little bit more about the requirement", "providing a name" when answering the phone. Responding to communications as per SLAs within the firm – assuming they exist – making sure the prospect/client has an expectation that suits.

Across the firm it needs inclusion in strategy, operations, image, staff recruitment and development. In a job specification the profile of communication skills, intellectual skills and motivation needs much more emphasis – these are essential standards for recruitment and have a big impact on effort but also success. It is also a key subject for appraisals and reviews and subsequent staff development programmes after appraisal.



Heads of Legal departments need to be very clear on their related accountabilities – client retention, client development, on boarding performance as well as revenue, GP, cash and compliance.

As an interim measure there is also reference to the DISC personality profiling where we are aware of the personality profiles of some clients and our own staff members. D – Dominance Driver, I - Sociable Influencer, S - Amiable and Tactful, C- Compliance and Analytical. Before he is retrained and developed as part of the system is partner A the right person to be dealing with client B where they both have conflicting personalities.

Advocate Development

It is really useful for any business to make people aware of a potential client life cycle

- A suspect – where we have developed a marketing programme by business type and have selected our target population – who are they and what are we doing about it?
- A prospect – meets the profile and approaching us or we are approaching them – who are they, what is the profile and what is the action?
- A first-time client – either a conversion of an inbound enquiry or some proactive firm activity with direct or networking contact – who, when and why?
- A repeat client – who either updates his Will or buys the next house or you have sold other services too
- A majority client – this is a client who selects the firm as the supplier of choice – private and commercial

- A Loyal client – someone with a strong positive attitude towards the firm and is prepared to provide references
- An advocate – one who goes that much further by making references – private and commercial, family and friends, business networks

The firm needs to be aware by work-type which clients fall into each category and to have a plan to move them forward to the next stage and the right people in the firm allocated the challenge.

It is great to win new business but also great to develop clients that we already have – not only the cheapest route to enhance the market but positive referrals will impact on more new business.

Client Relationships into Business Context

- 50 – 70% of prospect consider reviews and referrals in selection
- 40% of live clients are not happy with communication from their firms and they tell their friends. Unhappy clients have a tendency to tell 20+ people who may share with 10 and then a further 5 etc. Happy people only tend to tell 5 – they could always be encouraged to advise more.
- Conversion of enquiries is key. A 100-person firm as a benchmark with reasonable image and marketing generates about 500 enquiries a month. Where handled not too well maybe a 20% conversion rate. When the right attitude, scripts, empathy and SLAs are in place then that figure for many

Continued on page xx



is 65%. 20% means just 100 new files, 65% means 325 files – per month which at £500 per file equals nearly £2million of additional revenue and nearly £1.2million of additional gross profit over a 12-month period. Well worth a serious consideration by the firm and just think about expanding the work with the new found clients to reference and referrals.

Product Marketing Plan

There should be a product marketing plan in place for every legal department as well as the overall firm. Without one of these before business development plans and commitments – things can be more costly and less effective. Low hanging fruit for the greatest return is essential – short, medium and long term.

- Products and services offered
- Benefits for the potential and developing clients
- The targeted population
- The route to that market
- Firm Brand and Image

This needs to be covered in detail. Potential clients are looking for skills, performance, communication and empathy. So, what is our planned branding and how are we going about it – web sites, networking and what makes us different to our competitors. It is not just about a pretty website

Some previous articles on the above topic

[December 2022](#)

[March 2023](#)

[July 2023](#)

[December 2023](#)

You cannot always rely on others to meet essentials – regulation and compliance being one. Very Risky

Law Firms are now like many other commercial businesses facing challenges of generating new clients, enhancing income and gross profit through efficiencies, stimulating enough cash. We then have additional challenges brought on by enhanced regulation and compliance and the need for Professional Indemnity Insurance at a growing cost and compliance challenges, the essentials of IT security and availability.

Failure to do fully verified ID and AML checks by some fee earners – not checking the response and getting authorised by management has generated a number of SRA fines.

Lawyers and law firms need to take full personal responsibility for checking regulation and compliance. In August our attention was drawn to scenarios where estate agents who have law firms on their panel seem to be asking the firms not to double check on some of the compliance routines.

We cannot avoid the responsibility.

Regulation and compliance are becoming such a significant challenge.

There are many ways of ensuring you are up to date and the MLS Regulatory and Compliance Conference is one of them. Full details can be found [HERE](#). Or why not get your COLP/COFA/MLRO to attend the MLS's bimonthly COLP/COFA/MLRO Forums? To join email enquiries@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

Bill Kirby is a director of 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](#)

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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.

With the High Court and Court of Appeal on vacation until 1 October, it has been a quiet month for judgements. However, the Solicitors Act 1974 has not let us down! In **Candey Ltd v Finnan** [2024] EWHC 2157 (Ch) HHJ Cadwallader, on appeal, upheld the decision of the costs judge below. In proceedings under the Solicitors Act 1974 (the Act), the judge had acceded to the solicitors' application that a Conditional Fee Agreement made in respect of s.994 Companies Act 2006 proceedings, had been a Contentious Business Agreement pursuant to s 61(1) of the Act, and had made an order for costs of £100,000 to be enforced against their former client. HHJ Cadwallader ruled that it had not been open to the judge to have enquired into the hourly rates, or the hours worked as the client wanted. S.58(4), Courts and Legal Services Act 1998 provided for the fees and expenses to be paid only in specified circumstances. On the facts, £40,000 (of the £100,000) was payable if the claim succeeded. Contrary to the former client's contention, that had not been a success fee for which there was no provision in the CFA. It followed that the order enforcing payment of the £100,000 was correct, so the appeal was dismissed.

Next planning costs. R. (on the application of Halton BC) v Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

[2024] EWHC 2030 (Admin) concerned an application for a judicial review of costs orders awarded against a local planning authority under Pt XII s.250(2) Local Government Act 1972. Support for a planning application had been withdrawn by the authority after its safety planning expert had failed to come up to proof in his evidence, as a result of which a Planning Inquiry, after 8 days, had been aborted. Fordham J refused the application. He held that there was a wide latitude in costs decisions, and it was not the function of the judicial review court to substitute its own view of the merits, even if it was in a position to do so, which, on the authorities, it was not.

We have noticed that more recently, reported decisions have dealt with "consequentials". In **Queensgate Place Ltd v Solid Star Ltd** [2024] EWHC 2139 (Ch), David Rees KC had been concerned with the determination of a petition under s.994 Companies Act 2006. Subsequently, this had involved "consequentials" (including liability for the trial costs and a payment on account) and a late application to amend the petitioner's costs budget under CPR 3.15A. The amount sought had been £161,964 for the trial phase to cover a Remedies Hearing. Whist accepting that there had been a "significant development"

in the litigation and “good reason” under the rules for the court on assessment to depart from the petitioner’s approved budget, he held that it was not appropriate after the trial had ended to approve amendments to the budget, and the detail on the issue would be left to the costs judge to resolve. Note that judgments have gone the other way, where the trial judge has declined to direct that the matter should be left to the costs judge to decide.

Next, a rare visit to the Family Court. In **Re A (Appeal: Costs)** 2024 EWHC 2218 (Fam), on appeal from a decision of a recorder, Henke J considered whether there was any good reason to depart from the general practice of making no order for costs in cases involving children. She held that there was not. The appeal was in Children Act proceedings in which the welfare of the child was the paramount consideration. To be factored in was the obvious distrust and antagonism between the parties, and that by ordering one party to pay the costs of the other, there was a real risk that that would further aggravate their poor relationship and undermine their ability to work together for the benefit of their child. She held that no order as to costs had been the correct order, so the appeal was dismissed.

Next costs on account following a summary judgment. It was the receiving party’s case that when deciding how much of the £274,138.61 sought was payable, 70% was the appropriate figure. In **Matrix Receivables v Must Holdings (re Costs)** 2024 EWHC (KB), Freedman J rejected the submission that the appropriate percentage was 70%. That was too high a starting point unless the calculations were straightforward and the points of dispute limited. On the facts, the appropriate percentage was 50%, being £151,828.20 payable within 28 days.

Finally costs in applications for freezing injunctions and the extent to which they should be reserved to trial or further order. In **Cancrie Investments Ltd v Haider** [2024] EWHC 2302 (Comm), Nigel Cooper KC 9 held that the ordinary approach to costs in such situations is that the court should make an order for costs following the hearing of a continuation application while reserving the costs of the original without notice application. A defendant had a choice about resisting continuance of a freezing order and thereby causing the costs of a return date to be incurred, in which case it would be open to the court to make an order for costs, rather than reserving the costs. On the facts, it had been appropriate to reserve the costs of the original hearing and to order the defendant to pay those incurred on the return date.

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

Where your donations go: Making a real difference for solicitors and their dependants

At [The Solicitors' Charity](#), small change makes a big change to the lives of solicitors and their dependants during challenging times. Whether it's one-off contributions or donating your firm's unclaimed balances, your support is making a tangible difference to the wellbeing of others in the solicitors' profession.

It's important for the charity to carry on the work it has been doing since 1858, providing physical, professional, emotional, and financial wellbeing support to those who need it most.

Here's how your contributions make a meaningful difference:

Solicitors facing mental health challenges often need professional support to help manage the pressures of the job. Your donations enable us to fund specialist mental health services, including therapy sessions with qualified psychotherapists. These services, such as those provided by [Onebright Mental Health](#) and [Lawsight](#), include initial assessments (costing £100 to £130) and ongoing therapy sessions (ranging from £65 to £130 per session). In total, a full course of treatment can cost between £1,000 and £1,500, and your

Where your donations go.



THE SOLICITORS' CHARITY.
Supporting you, since 1858



Physical



Emotional



Professional



Financial



“

There are many ways to support The Solicitors' Charity. You can make a one-off donation, set up regular contributions, or donate your firm's unclaimed balances to the charity”

contributions ensure that no solicitor is left without the help they need during difficult times.

Physical rehabilitation is equally important, and thanks to your support, we can provide access to expert Occupational Therapy (OT) services. Occupational Therapists work with people of all ages, helping them to carry out the activities that they need or want to do to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Whether solicitors need assessments for, or advice about living with physical conditions caused by illness, injury or frailty, your donations help fund these sessions, which typically cost from £150 through [The OT Practice](#) . Financial pressures can affect anyone, and through your generosity, we provide solicitors with access to Independent Financial Advisers (IFAs). These advisers offer expert guidance on key issues, such as retirement planning, managing financial difficulties, or exploring options including equity release. These essential services, which typically cost between £2,000 and £2,500, provide a critical lifeline during times of financial uncertainty. Your donations also fund expert welfare and benefits checks, ensuring that solicitors and their families receive the financial help they're entitled to, as well as money management and debt advice. Providers like [Pennysmart](#) and [Advice Works](#) offer this type of service, with costs ranging from £250 to £360 per session. This vital assistance prevents financial challenges

from escalating, offer a much-needed safety net as well as practical help with budgeting.

For solicitors facing career transitions or seeking new opportunities, your support pays for career coaching services through providers like [Renovo](#). These personalised coaching sessions, costing around £600 per person, give solicitors the guidance and confidence they need to take the next step in their professional lives. This tailored support helps solicitors adapt to changing industry demands, ensuring they can continue to thrive.

There are many ways to support The Solicitors' Charity. You can make a one-off donation, set up regular contributions, or donate your firm's unclaimed balances to the charity. However you choose to give, you're helping to make a positive difference to the lives of those who need it most. Thank you for your continued generosity because together, we are building a supportive community for solicitors, ensuring they have access to the care they need, when they need it most.

Play your part: thesolicitorscharity.org/support-our-work/



Pet of the month

Name: Nikki Ferguson

Firm: Bexley Beaumont

Pet Name: Bessie

Pet Nickname: Bessie Boo

What kind of pet do you have? 3 legged rescue Lurcher (she had been in kennels a year)

Is your pet: Female

How old is your pet: 6

Favourite Toy: Blue Squeaky Octopus

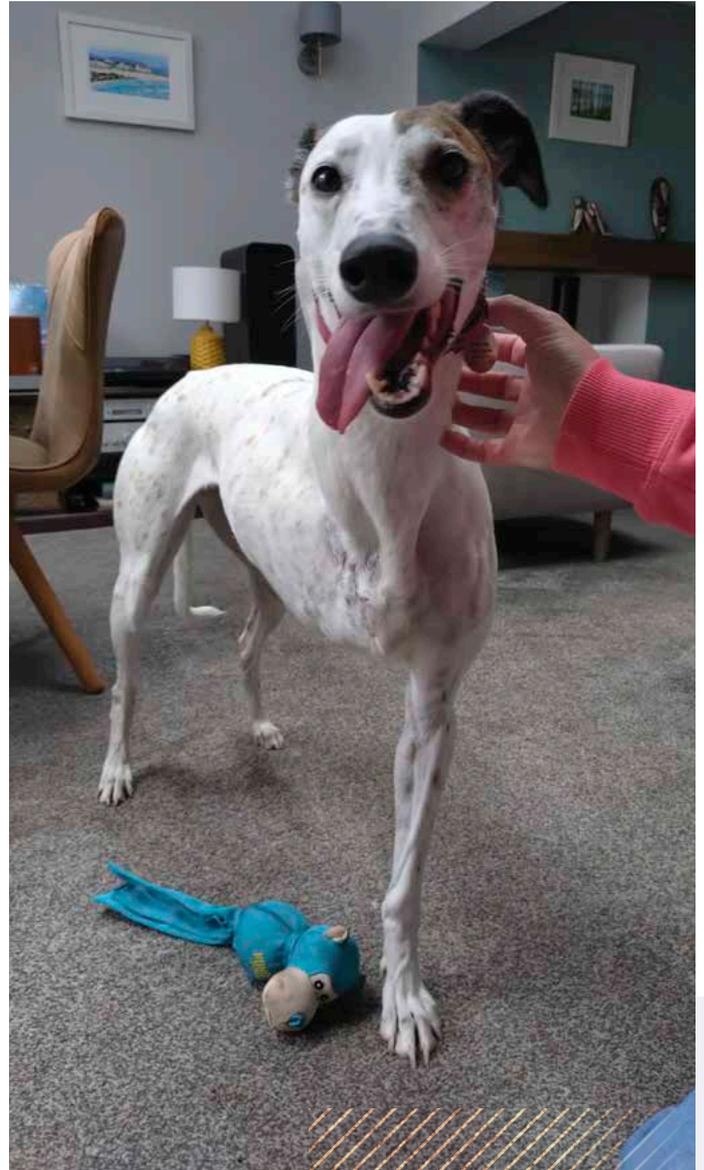
Favourite Activity: Sprinting through long grass (preferably chasing something)

Favourite Treat: Cocktail sausage

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

My perfect day would be... going for a walk/ run and spending all day with my parents, and a bit of sunbathing.

My favourite thing my parents do... belly rubs and coming home.



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!

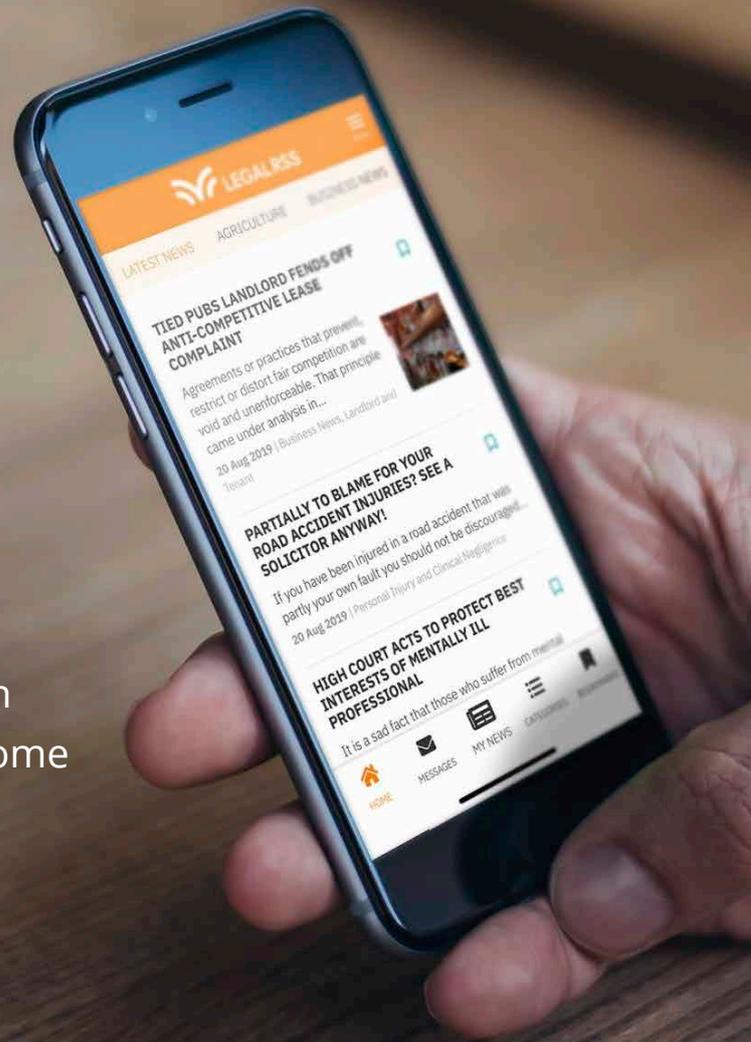
You can download a copy of the questions here then send your answers and photo to Messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

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