



the Messenger

May 2025

Inside this issue...

10

2025 Pro Bono
Recognition
List announced



18

Mental Health
Awareness
Week 2025



44

Naomi O'Rourke
on Autism
Acceptance Month



Entries close for the Manchester Legal Awards 2025



The [Manchester Legal Awards 2025](#) nominations have closed for another year, and we have had a record number of entries with over 230 nominations being received.

Our panel of judges have been carefully considering every entry. Those with the highest marks will be included in the shortlist which will be announced on 6th May. If you are reading this after that date you can see the shortlist [here](#).

With such hotly contested categories it is a massive achievement just to be shortlisted, so we hope all those that make the list are suitably proud.

Continued on page 28

Members Preferred
Partner Group



Legal Education
Programme Sponsor

Actionstep

Click for more info

MIL AWARDS 2025

SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED TUESDAY 6TH MAY!

Thursday 3rd July 2025 at The Kimpton Clocktower Hotel

For more information:

www.manchesterlegalawards.co.uk @MLAwards

Event host



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

Media partner

The Business
Desk COM

Marketing partner

RMS

Charity partner





From the President

Fiona Ledden, President

Welcome to our May edition of the Messenger. April was a very productive month, we were delighted to welcome our new recruit Grace, who started working with us, which will be an enormous help as we go into the preparations for our fabulous annual Manchester Legal Awards celebration. You all outdid yourself in nominations this year.

We received more than 230 nominations, even more than last year and the most we have ever received. I am sure that means you are all looking forward to the wonderful event on the 3rd July at our wonderful new venue Kimpton Clocktower Hotel, I can't wait to see you then. Please look for the notification of the shortlist on the 6th May.

I wanted to just remind you of a couple of other opportunities, which is the [Posh Pub Quiz](#) on the 15th May at Manchester Hall, a lovely event and an opportunity to show off your quizzing knowledge.

A more challenging event to remind you of is [the discussion with a Holocaust Survivor Tomi Komoly BEM](#) on the 14th May at Weightmans. When I hear from such people, I always feel awed and remind myself of why we continue to remember the tragedy of war and what terrible outcomes there are, and we still look around the world today and see terrible outcomes.

“

We received more than 230 Award nominations, even more than last year and the most we have ever received.”

I noted with considerable disappointment the Judgement that came out of the Supreme Court, I know a number of colleagues from the LGBTQIA+ have been very affected by the decision and the wording of the Judgement.

My approach, and our organisations', will be to continue to be an inclusive organisation for all, to respect and give dignity to all those we work with and those we provide services to. It may be helpful if you have affected colleagues to check in on them, it has hit hard.

I look forward to telling you about all the exciting events happening over May in our next Messenger

Fiona.

the Messenger



In this edition...

03 From the President

06 News from HQ

16 Mental Wellness

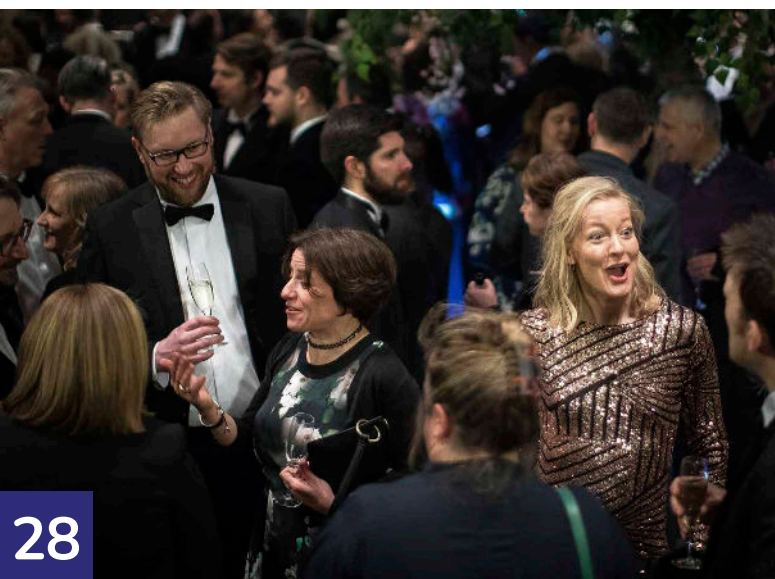
20 Professional Development

22 Regulation Update & News

28 Cover Story

30 Actionstep

34 Talking Heads



Manchester Law Society

Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

Manchester Law Society

4th Floor, Arkwright House, Parsonage Gardens,
Manchester, M3 2LF

www.manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

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

Why not join the conversation
by following us on social media?





16



13



14

- 38 Member News
- 40 MLS Advantage
- 44 ED&I Update
- 46 Movers & Shakers
- 56 Job Vacancy

- 58 Management Matters
- 62 Legal Costs Update
- 64 Pet of the Month

Communications Committee

Fran Eccles-Bech
Manchester Law Society

Carla Jones
Manchester Law Society

Grace Lindsay
Manchester Law Society

Chandre May
Manchester Law Society

David Anderson
St John's Buildings

Julia Bednarczyk
Clyde & Co

Martyn Best
Document Direct

Emma Bowie
18 St John Street Chambers

Adam Entwistle
JMW Solicitors LLP

Mark Fitzgibbon
Hill Dickinson LLP

Michelle Garlick
Weightmans LLP

Arwa Graf
Manchester City Council

Hafsah Jahan
Trowers & Hamlin

Nick Johnson
Wealth Recovery Solicitors

Steve Kuncewicz
Glaisyers Solicitors LLP

Fiona Ledden
Manchester City Council

Jeff Lewis
Brabners LLP

Julie Mogan
Excello Law

Brigid O'Malley
McAlister Family Law Limited

Cheryl Palmer-Hughes
Stewarts Law LLP

Shane Smith
Slater & Gordon Lawyers

Molly Souter
McAlister Family Law Limited

Matthew Taylor
Eversheds Sutherland

Seraphina Wilkins-Tolliday
TLT LLP

All rights reserved, reproduction in whole or part without written permission from Manchester Law Society is not permitted.

Photographic material and manuscripts are supplied at owners' risk, neither the company nor its agents accept any liability for loss or damage.

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



**Deadline for the
June 2025 edition
of The Messenger**

The Messenger is published by



Advertising enquiries:

Please contact Martyn Best:
Mobile: 07798 700500

Email: martyn.best@legalrss.co.uk

Design by Andy Bellis Creative



Introducing the Manchester Law Society Corporate and Commercial Law Forum

We're delighted to share the launch of our Corporate and Commercial Law Forum: a new Forum established to bring together lawyers across Corporate and Commercial practice areas in Manchester, with the focus being on the non-contentious aspects of these practice areas.

Whether you work in-house or in private practice, we understand the importance of having access to a legal professional community that focuses specifically on your practice area. The overarching goal of the Corporate and Commercial Law Forum is to help foster that community, and to provide a space where we can share experiences, challenges, ideas, and insights in a collaborative environment.

The Forum will aim to meet every couple of months, and will be chaired by:

Chair: Seraphina Wilkins-Tolliday, Senior Associate at TLT LLP

Co-Chair: Matthew Flanagan-Roberts, Senior Legal Counsel at Lookers

What is the Forum all about?

The Forum is built around three core aims:

1. Connection

We want to build a network where Corporate and Commercial lawyers can:

- Get to know one another beyond roles and job titles
- Explore ways to collaborate more effectively (whether between in-house and private practice, or working together on corporate transactions)
- Connect with others in the profession in a setting that's open and welcoming



Seraphina Wilkins-Tolliday



Matthew Flanagan-Roberts

2. Support

Corporate and commercial work can be high-pressure and fast-moving. The Forum aims to offer:

- A space that supports wellbeing and professional resilience
- A sounding board for tricky legal questions or grey areas where a second (or third) perspective can make all the difference

3. Knowledge Sharing

The Forum will be a hub for sharing:

- Market and deal trends, as well as horizon scanning and sector insights
- Updates on key issues that our clients and stakeholders are facing
- Updates from the CMA, barristers' chambers, recent case law and legislative developments

“

The Forum is built around three core aims: Connection, Support and Knowledge Sharing

Who is the Forum for?

The Forum is open to all Manchester Law Society members whose practice is focused predominantly in the areas of Corporate and / or Commercial law. It is for lawyers of all levels, from Paralegal to Partner.

We hope to build a diverse and inclusive Forum, drawing on a range of perspectives and experiences.

Get Involved

If you're interested in being part of the Forum, we'd love to hear from you. Whether you'd like to attend events, contribute to discussions, or help shape the Forum's future activities, your voice and involvement are welcome!

To join the Forum and receive an invite to our first meeting, please contact [Carla Jones](#) ↗

Thank you to our Messenger supporters

More information can be found in this edition



See page 15



See page 17

MANDERSTAM
INTERNATIONAL GROUP

See page 21



The Legal Services Board's 'reshaping legal services in the North West of England' event

Date: 26th June 2025 • Time: 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Location: Fieldfisher, No 1 Spinningfields, 1 Hardman Square, Manchester, M3 3EB

RSVP: events@legalservicesboard.org.uk

The [Legal Services Board](#) invites Manchester Law Society members to attend their 'Reshaping Legal Services in the North West of England' event, taking place in Manchester on the 26th June from 4:00pm to 5:30pm.

Hosted by [Fieldfisher](#) , it will serve as an opportunity for colleagues across the legal services sector in the North West to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing the profession in the region.

The Legal Services Board is the oversight regulator for legal services in England and Wales. They oversee the performance of the sector's regulators, including the Solicitors Regulation Authority, the Bar Standards Board, and CILEx Regulation. The Board regulates them in the public interest to promote an independent, strong, competitive, diverse, and effective legal profession.

Their [Reshaping Legal Services](#) strategy sets out their ambition to make sure regulation supports access to legal services for everyone who needs them, especially those individuals and businesses whose needs are too often unmet. The Legal Services Board are interested in exploring areas where regulation can have the greatest impact in addressing the challenges facing the sector. They would be particularly interested in your views and experiences in relation to:

- access to justice
- diversity and inclusion
- education, training and ongoing competence
- professional ethics and the rule of law
- technology and innovation

The Board hopes you'll be able to join them for a wide-ranging discussion at this event with legal professionals, academics, advice agencies, and consumer groups from across the North West of England. Our very own President, Fiona Ledden, will also be there to share her thoughts on the main issues facing the legal profession.

Feel free to extend the invitation to colleagues and others who might be interested in attending.

If there are issues you would like to discuss or hear more about at the event, feel free to let them know in advance. You can contact them via the email below.

If you can attend, please RSVP to events@legalservicesboard.org.uk .



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

In aid of



Dosh Pub Quiz

Thursday 15 May 2025

Book in and bubbles: 18:00 – 18:30

Quiz: 18:30 – 21:30

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

Cost to attend:

£36.00 inc VAT per team member

Includes a welcome drink, a delicious supper, quiz entry and donation to We Love MCR Charity

Maximum 5 per team

[More details](#)

Kindly sponsored by

Excello Law



The 2025 Pro Bono Recognition List of England & Wales

Over 4,000 lawyers recognised for pro bono contributions in second year of the Pro Bono Recognition List of England & Wales.

The Attorney General's Pro Bono Committee is proud to announce the publication of the second annual [Pro Bono Recognition List of England & Wales](#), with 4,780 lawyers across England and Wales recognised for their dedication to providing pro bono services.

The 2025 edition of the list saw 4,780 entries in total, an increase of over a fifth from 2024 (3,762 entries).

This includes close to 2,000 names (1,934) appearing for their second time on the list, as well as 2,846 lawyers featured for the first time on the list this year.



Almost 4,000 solicitors were featured on the list alongside 617 barristers, 55 registered foreign lawyers, 2 registered European lawyers, and 137 chartered legal executives.

The 2025 list saw an increase of almost a third (30%) in the number of barristers featured, from 476 in 2024 to 617 in 2025 and a 21% increase in the number of solicitors from 3,284 in 2024 to 3,969 in 2025.

The List recognises and celebrates those lawyers who have given 25 or more hours of pro bono legal assistance over the previous calendar year, shining a light over the sustained time and effort given to pro bono initiatives each year by the legal community.

This year, the initiative expanded to include chartered legal executives, SRA-registered foreign lawyers and registered European lawyers, reflecting the List's commitment to celebrating the pro bono contributions of professionals from across the entire legal community.

To read more about the List, including comments from the Greater Manchester Pro Bono Committee and cases of pro bono in action, click [here](#).



Lady Chief Justice, the Right Honourable the Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill



EMPLOYMENT LAW *Conference*



REGIONAL
EMPLOYMENT
JUDGE FRANEY

Wednesday 14 May 2025

09:00 – 14:00

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

Cost to attend:

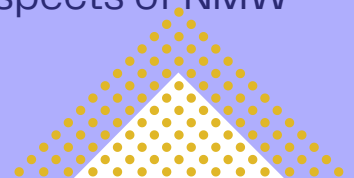
MLS Members £80.00 + VAT (£96.00)

Non-members £110.00 + VAT (£132.00)

Speakers include:

- Regional Employment Judge Franey giving the keynote address
- Amy Smith of Nine Chambers case and legislation update exploring the most recent developments in employment law cases.
- David Hopper, Partner at Lewis Silkin, will discuss Trade Union issues
- Jeni Morris, Head of National Minimum Wage Team at Ernst & Young LLP who will give an overview of key aspects of NMW legislation

**FIND OUT
MORE**





Upcoming Q2 & Q3 meetings

Tuesday, May 06, 2025
Property Law Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 07, 2025
Communications Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 08, 2025
Future Stars Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 08, 2025
Crown and Magistrates Court Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 13, 2025
MLS Council Meeting

Tuesday, May 20, 2025
Joint V Meeting

Wednesday, May 21, 2025
MLS Officers Meeting

Thursday, May 22, 2025
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 03, 2025
MLS Council Meeting

Thursday, June 05, 2025
Family Law Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 11, 2025
Communications Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 17, 2025
MLS Officers Meeting

Wednesday, June 25, 2025
Private Client Committee Meeting

Tuesday, July 01, 2025
MLS Council Meeting

Wednesday, July 02, 2025
Communications Committee Meeting

Tuesday, July 15, 2025
MLS Officers Meeting

Thursday, July 17, 2025
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 06, 2025
Communications Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 19, 2025
MLS Officers Meeting

Wednesday, August 27, 2025
Private Client Committee Meeting

Wednesday, September 03, 2025
Communications Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 09, 2025
MLS Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 10, 2025
Family Law Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 23, 2025
MLS Officers Meeting

Thursday, September 25, 2025
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

New Hire at MLS HQ!

You may have seen over the last few months we have been recruiting for an Events and Marketing Executive. We are delighted to announce that the role has now been filled and Grace Lindsay started in the position in April.

You will start to hear a lot more from Grace while she organises, promotes and delivers our events with the support of the wider team. With this additional support for the Society we hope to be able to bring you even more high quality and wide ranging events.

Grace will also be supporting on the production of the Messenger, as well as other content and marketing activities.



During a busy month Grace has already proved herself an invaluable and hardworking member of the team, so she fits in well with the already excellent crew here at MLS HQ.

Please do join us in welcoming Grace to the team and do connect with her on [LinkedIn](#).

Profile:

I'm Grace, Manchester Law Society's newest recruit! I graduated last year with a degree in English Literature from the University of Liverpool, and have since been working to enter the events and marketing world. Part of this journey was the work experience I did last Autumn right here at MLS! I was introduced to the innerworkings of the society by tagging along to conferences and committee meetings and helping to prepare events. I learnt a lot of valuable skills, which I hope to further build on! I have a long history of working in events and hospitality, working as a Hospitality Team Member at Anfield Stadium for six years (apologies to any Mancunian football fans – I do support Liverpool!), so I am excited to continue this at Manchester Law Society.

I'm looking forward to meeting our members and joining you all on committee meetings, conferences, and events!

Hobbies: Painting, playing guitar, reading

Film/TV show of the minute:

Black Mirror

Song on repeat: *Give Me Another Day* - Jalen Ngonda

Fun fact: I lived in Seoul, South Korea for over four months whilst doing a semester abroad

Family Law Committee Meeting – 01.04.2025

Melissa Jones, Senior Associate
at McAlister Family Law

It was a pleasure to attend this meeting as we had an incredible talk from Aaron and Liam at Wealth Recovery Solicitors about Cryptocurrency in Family Law. We learnt about the impact cryptocurrency has in family law and particularly in financial remedy cases. Aaron and Liam truly uncovered the myths about cryptocurrency and the misconceived 'anonymity' of it.

Aaron and Liam discussed how they would be able to assist from the start of a case and shared tips on how, we as professionals, can effectively tackle crypto related matters. The biggest eye opener from the talk was how often cryptocurrency isn't disclosed in financial remedy case, so we must all remain vigilant when dealing with these types of cases.

Following the talk above, the Committee then moved on to discussing the Family Law Conference which will be held on 8th October 2025. We talked through the general themes of the Conference and the guest speakers we hope to secure for the following topics:

- Pathfinder Court Model – Understanding its rollout and impact on children cases
- The Future of Family Law – How AI and technology are shaping legal practice
- Financial Remedy Law Updates/ Mediation & ADR in Family Disputes – Encouraging out-of-court resolutions/ LSPO applications



Melissa Jones

- Mental Health in Family Law –in a high-pressure practice.

Our next meeting and social gathering

We are going to be mixing it up at our next Family Law Committee Meeting on 5th June 2025 and are hoping to hit the dancefloor! We are making plans to attend a Salsa class as part of our next meeting in Manchester City Centre. It will be nice for the Committee Members to have a summer social with dance and drinks. We are all really looking forward to this and shaking things up. We will also be extending the invite to one of our Family Law Organisations who will chat to us but also join in the fun on the night. We are also looking into a possible hiking event and social in September!

Why did I join the Committee?

My colleague, Fiona Wood, Partner in the Divorce and Finance Team at McAlister Family Law, was the Chair of the Family Law Committee at the time that I joined and I had heard such great things about what the Committee could offer in terms of connection with like-minded Legal Professionals, networking and paving the way for innovative ideas for the family law community. It is great to represent Manchester Law Society at this level and be involved in an area of law that I am so passionate about. I am so happy I joined as it is such a welcoming Committee and it's a pleasure to meet once a month and collaborate on so many fantastic ideas.

If you are interested in joining this or any other committee please email CarlaJones@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk



Neuroplasticity

Neuroplasticity is your brain's incredible ability to rewire itself, creating new neural connections and pathways throughout your life. While now a widely embraced idea, neuroplasticity only entered mainstream acceptance in the last two decades. Prior to 2007, the prevailing belief was that the brain became fixed once fully developed, making any developmental errors or neurological injuries permanent conditions one had to live with indefinitely.

Conditions like traumatic brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, autism, ADHD, dyslexia and other learning difficulties were considered lifelong burdens, with irreversible functional impairments. However, psychotherapy—originally introduced by Sigmund Freud—has long challenged this fixed view by asserting that individuals can change their perceptions, emotions, and behaviours. Modern neuroscience confirms that

psychological change inherently involves rewiring the brain's neural connections.

Neuroplasticity means hope. With targeted training, individuals are recovering from brain injuries or neurological diseases and can rebuild their capabilities. By forming new neural pathways, the brain can bypass damaged areas, restoring functions previously considered permanently lost. For congenital conditions, this discovery is also transformative—proving that the brain can indeed create new connections even when once-conventional wisdom believed otherwise.

Today, neuroplasticity empowers us with an optimistic vision of brain health. It fundamentally changes our understanding of recovery and cognitive improvement, affirming that meaningful rehabilitation is achievable at any stage in life. Neuroplasticity isn't just about science; it's about reclaiming life, resilience, and the limitless potential of your brain.



info@dpeak-counselling.org 07889 041 432

Carrying the emotional burden of your cases?

Finding it hard to switch off after work?

Need to talk?

Contact David Today

Counselling & Psychotherapy, in person & online for: *(amongst others)*

- Anxiety
- Trauma
- Depression
- Bereavement / Unresolved grief
- Stress
- Relationship difficulties
- PTSD
- Alcohol and substance misuse

BACP Accredited Counsellor & Psychotherapist with 20 years' experience.



Law Care – ‘Let’s talk about Gen Z’

Date: Thursday 15 May 2025

Time: 12.30 to 1.30pm

Live webinar

Join LawCare this Mental Health Awareness Week for a webinar exploring how generational differences are shaping the profession and what this means for the future.

[Book your free place here](#) ↗

- What do people starting out in their careers expect and what do they need to thrive?
- How can the sector adapt to attract and retain great talent?

- How can firms, in-house teams and chambers bridge the gap between generations?

The webinar isn’t just for Gen Z – it’s for everyone involved in the legal sector who wants to be part of a community that evolves with the times. Allies, leaders, and forward-thinkers, we want you to be part of the conversation.

Please note that this webinar won’t be recorded.

If you have any questions about how to book please email admin@lawcare.org.uk ↗.

Let’s talk about Gen Z

Webinar

Thursday 15 May

12.30 to 1.30pm




Click for more info

Get A Head Start



Greenbank

Preparatory School
and Day Nursery



NURSERY, PRESCHOOL & SCHOOL

Greenbank



Preparatory School and Day Nursery

Cheadle Hulme

Cheshire SK8 6HU

0161 485 3724

SMALL SCHOOL, BIG EXPERIENCE

Mental Health Awareness Week 2025

Don't go it alone: find your community

In the demanding and sometimes lonely legal sector, it's easy to feel like you're on your own. But you're not. This Mental Health Awareness Week, [LawCare](#) is shining a spotlight on the power of community – how it supports us, connects us, and helps us thrive.

Community is one of the best tools we have to protect and improve mental health. When we feel seen, heard, and understood, we're more likely to open up, ask for help, and offer support in return. In the legal sector – where intense pressure, high expectations and long hours are often the norm – building strong, supportive relationships is a way to find the connection, perspective and strength to manage the demands of working in law.

But community doesn't just happen. We build it through trust, honest communication, inclusion, and collaboration. It begins with a conversation, a coffee, or simply asking someone how they are.

Who do you turn to when it's tough?

Communities come in many shapes and sizes. You might find yours:

- In your **workplace**, when colleagues check in and look out for each other.
- At home with **family and friends**.
- Through **professional networks and forums**, where you can talk to others working in similar fields and share ideas.
- In **shared identity groups**, where you can connect with other people who've had similar experiences to you.
- **Online**, via virtual meetups, support groups, or chatting with others on social media.
- With **LawCare** – a welcoming, non-judgemental space offering confidential support, peer support, and resources specifically for the legal sector.

LawCare is more than a helpline

LawCare is a supportive community run by people who've worked in the legal sector and understand what it's really like.

If you're feeling stressed, burnt out, lonely, or just need someone to talk to, you can get in touch with LawCare. You'll speak to a trained volunteer (who has firsthand experience of the legal sector) who will listen without judging. You can get in touch Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, on 0800 279 6888 or use the online chat on the website: www.lawcare.org.uk





LawCare's peer support programme is another way you can find support. Again, you will be put in touch with someone who's worked in law and been through similar struggles.

Alongside one-to-one support, LawCare helps connect the legal community through webinars, practical training, insightful research, and events. We also share helpful resources and real stories on our website and in our LinkedIn newsletter, supported by our brilliant network of volunteers, Champions, and Trustees.

Don't stand on the sidelines this Mental Health Awareness Week

Mental Health Awareness Week is a good time to think about who supports you – and to take small steps that help build a stronger community around you:

1. Talk more

Talking to others really helps – especially when work is busy and stressful. You could grab a coffee with a colleague, check in with a client, or message someone you haven't spoken to in a while. Even picking up the phone instead of sending an email can help you feel more connected and supported.

2. Join LawCare's Gen Z webinar on Thursday 15 May

The legal sector is evolving, and the next generation is already making an impact. Our webinar will talk about how expectations are shifting and what this means for the future of the legal community.

Sign up: Let's Talk About Gen Z webinar: [LawCare – Let's talk about Gen Z](#)

3. Support LawCare

At LawCare, we believe that no one in law should feel they have to struggle

alone. But we need your help to do this. You could:

- Raise money for LawCare – Whether you run, hike, walk or paddle with colleagues, every pound raised helps us to support the legal community. You could also choose LawCare as your Charity of the Year and make a bigger impact.
- Share your story – Telling your story might be just what someone else needs to hear. You could write something for our website, speak at an event, or share your experience in your own workplace to challenge stigma and build solidarity – helping to help create a more open and supportive culture.
- Donate – Every donation helps fund LawCare's free, confidential helpline and online chat, train peer supporters, run webinars, carry out research, and reach more people across the legal community – [donate here](#).
- Join our new 25 Club, a way for individuals and organisations to get closer to our work and be an active part of the LawCare community – [LawCare's 25 Club | LawCare](#)

Being part of a community instils a deep-rooted sense of belonging and drives collective change by influencing culture, policy and organisations in ways that a single voice cannot.

This Mental Health Awareness Week is a good reminder to think about the people around us – where we find support, who we talk to, and how we can be there for others. Whether it's a quick chat with a colleague, a message to a friend, or reaching out to LawCare, the power of community can be transformative.

Micromanagement – Don't be a Jack in the Box

Steve was like a Jack-in-the-Box. He would sit at his desk chomping noisily on his Jaffa Cakes and then bang, he would bounce up out of his chair to check how the team were doing. He would swirl across the office floor speaking with his team, checking on case updates and of course double checking whether they had done the tasks he had given them that morning. After he was satisfied, Steve would scoot back to his desk and jump back into his box for another 30 or so minutes, before springing back out and starting all over again.

In Steve's head, he was managing his team effectively. He knew what everyone was up to and felt he had his finger firmly on the pulse. In reality, Steve's team thought he was a real pain in the backside and thought he was a complete control freak. I've no doubt Steve's heart was in the right place. In his head, he was trying to support and help his team, but in doing so, he was unknowingly creating a culture of complete distrust and disharmony.

Steve needed to put the brakes on. He needed to take a step back and implement some of these tips:


- **Updates** – Instead of hovering over people, agree pre-arranged update meeting times with individuals in the team. Stick to the times agreed.
- **Empower the team** – Hand over accountability and responsibility for certain tasks and projects to individuals. Be there to support them if they need you but definitely don't interfere.
- **Ask the team** – Ask your team/individuals how they want to work. Do



they want quick regular meetings, or one a week? Fit in with their needs instead of your own.

- **Coach don't demand** – Ask questions like, "Walk me through your plan," instead of just telling them what to do. It shows you're involved *without* stripping their ownership.
- **Assess the team** – Don't treat everyone the same. New people will need more handholding, whereas the more experienced members of your team will need less attention.

If Steve had implemented these steps, he would very quickly have started to nurture a culture of mutual trust and respect within the team. Undoubtedly, over time, the atmosphere would change for the better and as a result, individual and team performance would see improvements too.

If you want a chat about how we can help you to become a better Manager, contact Mike on:
mike@potentialunearthed.co.uk 
 or on 07825301660

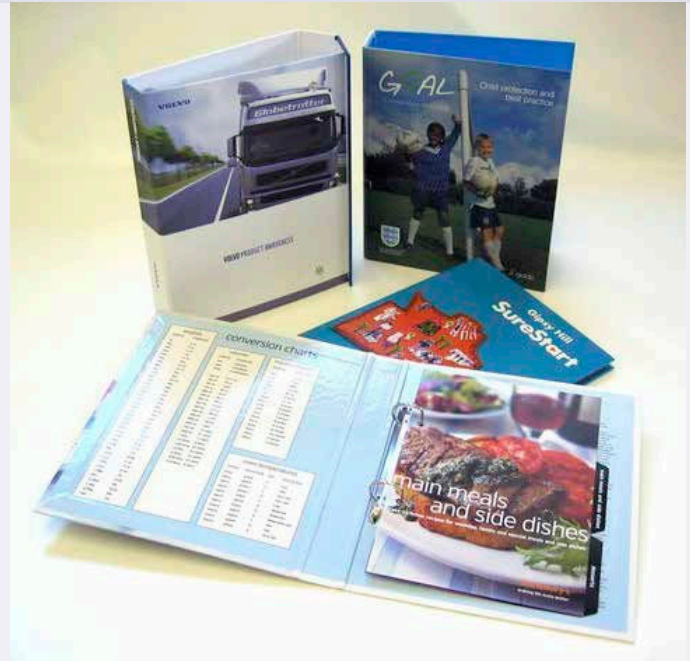
Member offer!

Take advantage of our member offer with [Binders Plus](#) . offering bespoke binders and folders fit for any legal work.

Binders Plus can supply ring binders and folders to your exact specifications for use as legal binders in court or internally.

These binders can be printed with your logo and details and have the relevant pockets as specified by the Law Society.

As a member of the Manchester Law Society you are entitled to a discount by using the code **MLS24 - 25**.



Please contact them for a quotation at: cn@binders-plus.co.uk

[Click for more info](#)

MANDERSTAM INTERNATIONAL GROUP

CONSULTING ENGINEERS IN PROCESS & INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING



Founded in 1941

EXPERT WITNESSES FOR:

- Mechanical & Process Engineering
- Manufacturing Industries
- Oil & Gas Industries
- Petrochemicals & Chemicals
- Fertilizers & Pesticides
- Metallurgical Industries
- Safety & Environmental



 www.mandertsam.com

 PLumley@Manderstam.com

 020 7730 9224

 020 7823 3056

10 Greycoat Place, Westminster, London, SW1P 1SB

22 Regulation Update & News

By **Andrea Cohen**, Compli, Weightmans



At the time of writing, it's been a fairly quiet month in the world of risk and compliance (which could just be the lull before the storm!), but we do have some news to bring you in our monthly round-up of developments and updates from the regulatory sector, and an overview of recent disciplinary decisions.

LSAG guidance approved by HM Treasury

Approval has finally been received from HM Treasury to the updated Legal Sector Affinity Group (LSAG) AML compliance guidance, effective from 23 April. The April 2025 LSAG guidance replaces the March 2023 guidance and the December 2023 addendum.

A full list of the changes can be found within the Schedule of amendments at pages 221 – 228. Amendments include:

- information on the applicability of the Economic Crime Levy for firms with an annual turnover of more than £10.2 million
- updated guidance on the receipt of Third Party Source of Funds contributions
- the introduction of a new high-risk third country definition
- details on the requirement for Overseas Entities wishing to buy, sell or transfer property or land in the UK to register with Companies House.

At the date of writing, the SRA website had not been updated, but the 2025 guidance was on the Law Society of Scotland [website](#).

Reporting your firm's diversity data

All SRA-regulated firms have to collect, report and publish data about the diversity make-up of the firm every two years, and the biannual collection of diversity data by the SRA will be carried out this summer. The date will be published on SRA Update and firms will have 4 weeks to complete the report, and there are apparently no significant changes to the questions asked in 2023. The SRA has updated the information on the [website](#), including the questionnaire, Q&As. As well as reporting diversity data, there are questions about plans for publishing a summary of the data.

Legal Ombudsman seeks rise of over £2m in budget

On the basis that levels of demand for its services cannot be met, LeO is seeking a budget increase of over 11%, stating that 'persistently high demand was a clear indicator that consumers are being 'let down', with poor complaints handling by firms and issues with the quality and tone of responses'. If approved, LeO says this would allow an increase in investigator resources and reduction in waiting times. The present backlog of cases to be allocated is similar to that of last July. If the Legal Services Board approves the budget, it would mean an increase of almost £5m since 2022. LeO had previously suggested a case fee increase from £400 to £800 but is not progressing



that proposal pending further consultation.

Legal Services Board report criticises regulators

In its recent regulatory performance assessment, the LSB has ‘serious concerns’ about the SRA following the issues surrounding Axiom Ince and SSB, deeming its operational delivery as ‘insufficient’ for authorisation, supervision and enforcement, and raised concerns about communication and accountability between the Board and senior executives. The LSB’s independent review into the SRA’s handling of SSB is still awaited. In addition, the report comments on the SRA’s failure to publish information relating to SQE training providers. The report also criticises the Bar Standards Board for taking too long to authorise.

New practice notes and guidance

SRA guidance/news

The SRA has published the following since our previous update:

- [The SRA approach to SLAPPs \(strategic litigation against public participation\) cases](#)
- [A new “failure to prevent fraud” offence coming into force in September](#)
- [Can cryptocurrency be used as payment for legal services](#)
- [Understanding your continuing competence requirements](#)

Law Society practice notes

- [Cloud computing](#)
- [Implementing whistleblowing arrangements](#)
- [Raising concerns and whistleblowing: guidance for staff](#)

Disciplinary and regulatory decisions:

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

Fines for not complying with AML regulations

A firm which undertakes significant conveyancing work was fined more than £36000 for failing to conduct client and matter risk assessments from February 2019 to November 2024.

Another firm was fined £25,000 in a regulatory settlement agreement with the SRA for failing to obtain adequate evidence of source of funds or source of wealth, failing to conduct EDD when acting for a non-domestic politically exposed person (PEP), and their associated companies in 36 matters.

Suspended for not disclosing conflict

A solicitor who acted for a property development company which failed and did not disclose to buyers and investors that his wife and two of the firm’s staff were directors of the development company has

Continued on page 24



been suspended for 6 months and ordered to pay costs of over £40,000. He claimed he was not aware his wife was a director and denied acting without independence, a defence the SDT found to be 'fundamentally flawed'. He was found to have acted without integrity and shown a lack of insight into his regulatory obligations.

Suspended for allowing client account to be used as banking facility

A law firm owner who allowed the client account to be used as a banking facility for over £30m over a period of 3 years for one client, has been suspended for 12 months with an indefinite restriction order on his practising certificate preventing him from practising as a sole

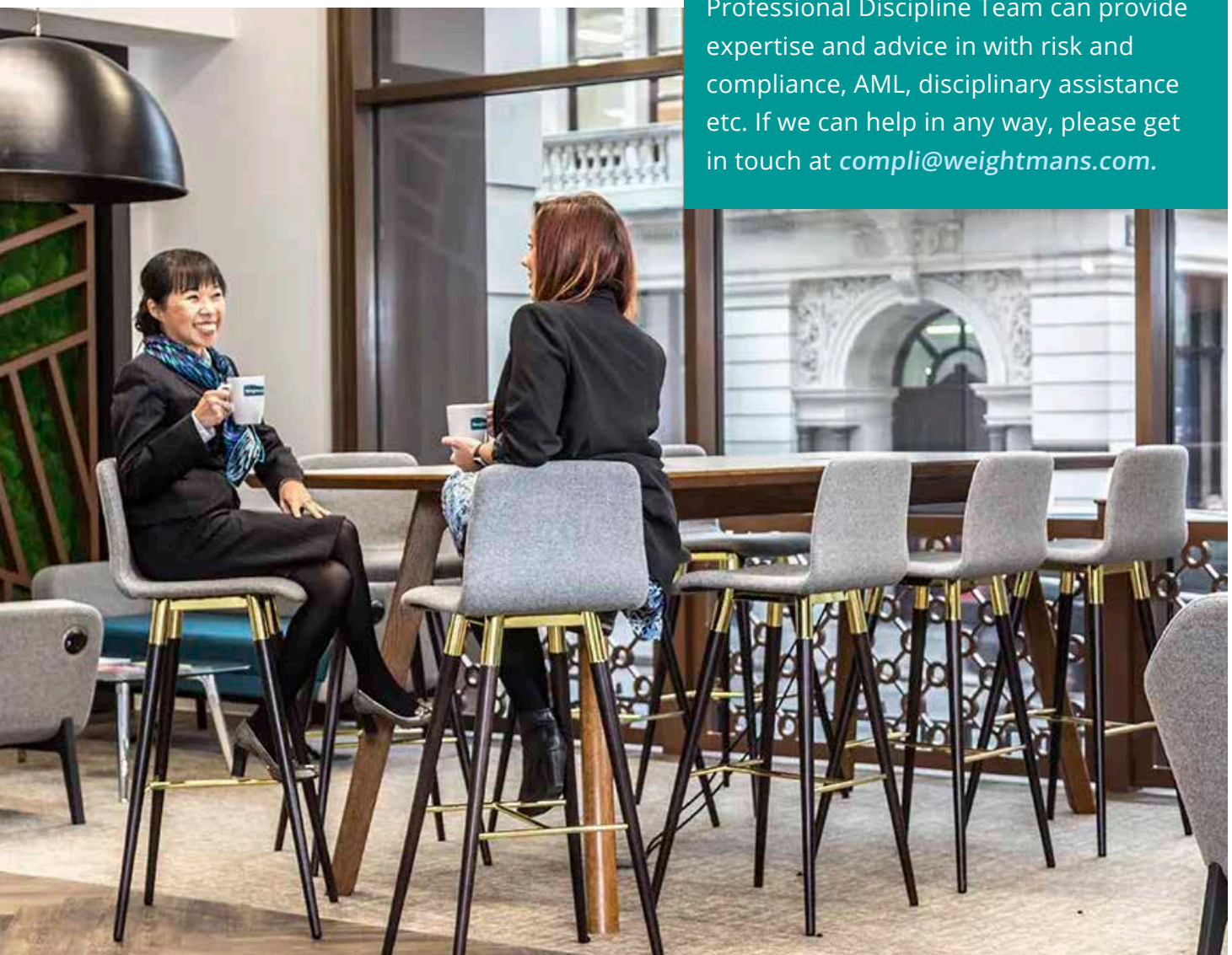
practitioner, a freelance solicitor, a solicitor in an unregulated organisation, being a compliance officer or holding client money and being a signatory on any client account.

Rebuked for holding dormant client funds

Three former directors of a firm now in administration have been rebuked for holding over £350,000 in client account with no activity for over 3 years. They were found to have failed to ensure that client money was returned promptly once there was no proper reason to hold it.

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.





Manchester Law Society

Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT IN AID OF



19 September 2025

Registration 14:00

Kickoff 15:00

Trophies presented 17:00



£250 + VAT per team

Max. 7 per team



Power League Manchester Central,
20 Union St, Manchester M12 4JD

KINDLY SPONSORED BY



legal®



passionate

about matching talent

LEARN MORE



REFUGE



refugemcr.com

info@refugemcr.com

Manchester Law Society Offer

10% off all F&B when dining with 4 or less

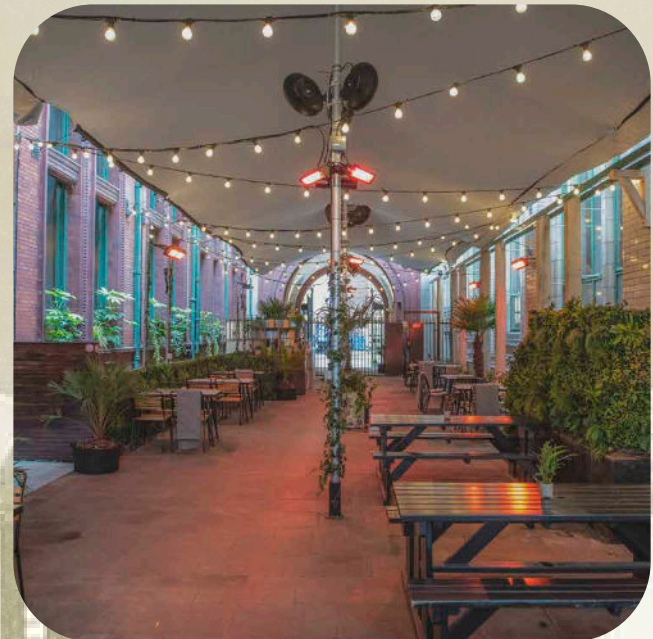
OR

Book a Private Dining Room for 7 or more guests and receive a complimentary bottle of Champagne to elevate your experience. Perfect for team celebrations, client dinners or special occasions.

K I M P T O N

CLOCKTOWER

H O T E L



www.kimptonclocktowerhotel.com/

Sharon.Cameron@ihg.com

- Manchester Law Society members can enjoy preferential rates when booking events at our exceptional venue in the city centre. Whether you're hosting a summer party, festive celebration or conference, we offer a variety of spaces, including the city's largest ballroom and the picturesque and ever unique Winter Garden. Let us provide the perfect setting for your event; contact us today to secure your exclusive benefits!

Sharon.cameron@ihg.com



From p.1

Entries close for the Manchester Legal Awards 2025

All our shortlisted nominees will be invited to Judging Day on 6th June at the Manchester office of Squire Patton Boggs. There, each shortlisted nominee will be interviewed by a panel of judges and the winners decided.

The winners will be revealed at a black-tie ceremony on Thursday 3rd July. The prestigious awards ceremony will celebrate outstanding achievements across the city's legal scene – recognising the talent, exceptional work, and continued excellence that defines Manchester's legal sector.

At our new venue of the splendid Kimpton Clocktower Hotel, one of the changes will be that the long tables we have used at

previous ceremonies will be gone and guests will be sat on round tables of 10 or 12. You can request your tickets [here](#), but please note that if you book less than a full table you may be sat with other guests.

As always, the event will also help raise funds and awareness for the President's charity of the year. This year it is We Love MCR Charity, a Manchester-based organisation dedicated to empowering the city's communities and ambitious young people.

Founded in 1997, We Love MCR is the only charity solely focused on supporting the people of Manchester – particularly through its Manchester's Rising Stars Fund (MRSF),



which helps talented young Mancunians overcome barriers to success.

In the legal sector specifically, the fund is used to support aspiring lawyers from disadvantaged backgrounds in reaching their career goals.

Fran Eccles-Bech, Chief Executive of the Manchester Law Society, said:

“We know Manchester is home to some of the brightest young minds, and We Love MCR’s mission to unlock opportunities for them is something we proudly support.

“As a strong and collaborative legal community, we’re committed to giving back to the city we work in – and helping shape its future by empowering those who need it most. We’re proud to be associated with a charity that does such inspirational work, helping young people write their own success stories.”

Simon Wright, Head of Charity at We Love MCR, added:

“We’re excited to once again be the chosen charity partner for the Manchester Legal Awards. It’s a real privilege to stand alongside such a respected event that not only celebrates excellence in the legal sector, but also shares our passion for creating opportunities for the next generation.

“The support from the legal community over the past few years has made a real difference to young Mancunians striving to achieve their dreams – and we can’t wait to see the impact we’ll make together this year.”



Simon Wright

“

“We’re excited to once again be the chosen charity partner for the Manchester Legal Awards. It’s a real privilege to stand alongside such a respected event

On the night of the ceremony, attendees will have the chance to take part in a silent auction, with all proceeds going directly to We Love MCR Charity. For more information visit: manchesterlegalawards.co.uk and welovemcrcharity.org and follow [@MLAwards](https://twitter.com/MLAwards).

There are limited sponsorship and advertising opportunities available. Please contact mlawards@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk for further information.



2025 UK midsize law firm priorities: key insights for an underserved segment

How are midsize law firms positioning themselves for growth and efficiency in 2025?

Midsize law firms in the UK are at a pivotal moment. Economic and competitive pressures mount pressuring law firm leaders to re-evaluate their priorities and investment strategies to stay competitive.

In Actionstep's inaugural [2025 UK Midsize Law Firm Priorities Report](#), conducted in partnership with [LPM](#), we surveyed senior leaders from midsize law firms with 20–500 employees to understand how they are harnessing technology, refining processes, and driving transformation to secure a competitive edge.

This report is a benchmarking tool, helping law firm leaders compare their approach with peers and empower them to make informed decisions with confidence.

Here's a glimpse into what was uncovered.

Talent and Client Growth: The Top Priorities for 2025

Law firm leaders are laser-focused on securing top talent (78%) and winning new clients (60%) to drive revenue growth.

With recruitment and retention remaining the toughest challenge (69%), midsize firms are caught between rising salary expectations and the benefits smaller and larger firms can offer.

Despite client expectations evolving, only **26% of firms are prioritising client satisfaction** as a key growth strategy—highlighting a potential blind spot.

To remain competitive, firms must strike a balance between attracting top legal talent, investing in the right technology, and ensuring client service is consistent and efficient.

Client Experience and Digital Transformation: The Missed Opportunity?

Client expectations are changing, but are firms keeping up?

While 35% of midsize law firm leaders feel their firms lack the right technology to fully support clients, a significant number still don't offer key digital tools in their client service experience:

- **38%** provide client portals.
- **31%** enable document collaboration.
- **Just 12%** offer online appointment booking.

At a time when firms need to differentiate themselves, seamless digital experiences can be the key to driving both efficiency and satisfaction.

Automation is Seen as Valuable, yet AI Isn't Fully Adopted

74% of law firm leaders actively seek new technology to boost efficiency, yet adoption remains slow.

- **54%** of firms have embraced process automation for managing workloads.

Continued on page 32

Actionstep

Stay ahead.

Make informed decisions.

Get the insights to steer your strategy and stay one step ahead with the 2025 UK Midsize Law Firm Priorities Report.



Scan the QR code to download your free copy

www.actionstep.com/2025-uk-midsize-law-firm-priorities-report/

- **Only 26%** are experimenting with legal-specific generative AI (GenAI).
- **Cost is a major barrier to AI adoption** for nearly half of midsize firms (46%).

Whilst automation is widely used, GenAI tools in legal work, such as those for document review and legal research, are still in their infancy. Leaders are weighing the benefits of efficiency against risks like compliance, data security, and the unpredictability of AI-generated outputs.

Risk and Compliance: Are Firms Overconfident?

96% of law firm leaders are confident in their firm's compliance with anti-money laundering (AML) regulations, yet key gaps remain.

- **54%** struggle to stay up to date with evolving compliance requirements.
- **47%** identify staff training as a major pain point.
- **85%** feel prepared for cybersecurity threats, yet **72% see human behaviour as the biggest risk to security.**

Firms that proactively invest in compliance automation, training, and risk mitigation will be the best positioned to manage regulatory complexity while maintaining client trust.



Actionstep's Top Takeaways for Midsize Firms

1. **Technology can be a competitive advantage**, but only if it enhances efficiency, supports varying needs of talent, and improves client service delivery.
2. **Digital client experiences matter**, and firms should consider online portals, process automation, and self-service tools to meet evolving client expectations.
3. **AI and automation should be deployed strategically**, explore balancing efficiency gains with maintaining human expertise and oversight.
4. **Change resistance should be challenged**, law firms that embrace innovation and continuously test new approaches will gain a stronger competitive edge.
5. **Risk management must remain a priority**, firms need to align technology, compliance processes, and staff training to stay ahead of security and regulatory challenges.

As 2025 unfolds, the most successful midsize firms will be those that strike the right balance between people, technology, and operational resilience.

Read the 2025 UK Midsize Law Firm Priorities Report to explore the full data and insights.

You can download the full report [here](#) 

Click for more info



Manchester Law Society

Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

THE
EDWARDIAN

MANCHESTER

A RADISSON COLLECTION HOTEL

Pride

afternoon tea

In aid of



Saturday 23rd August 2025
12:00 to 17:00

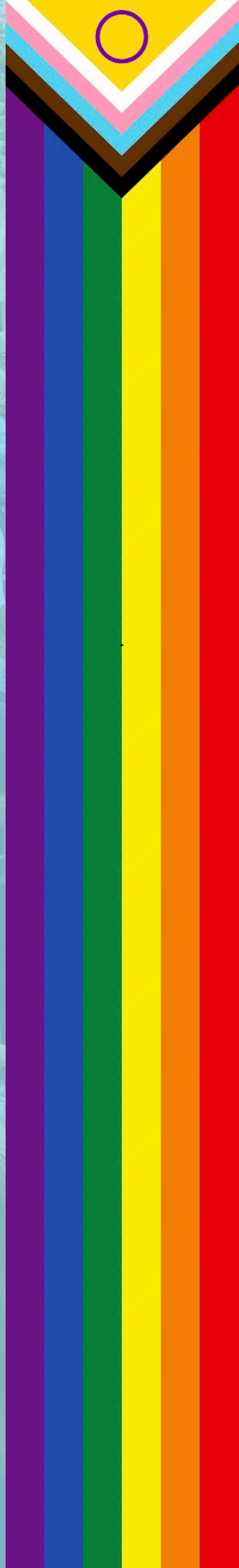


**Peter Street Kitchen at The
Edwardian Manchester, A Radisson
Collection Hotel, Free Trade Hall,
Peter St, Manchester M2 5GP**



£45.00 including VAT per guest

Find out more!



As the nominations have now closed for the Manchester Legal Awards 2025 and the judging process has begun, we asked our Talking Heads what extracurricular competitions and awards they are most proud of. So we asked:

What's the best non-professional award or competition you've been shortlisted for?

Sam Hall
Partner, Hall Brown Family Law

1. I was the only boy to win the U15s Sheffield 100 metres butterfly (swimming) and, at the same time, be the Sheffield and district trampoline champion. Apparently, I was the first lad to ever do that particular "combo" and the only one ever since.... Probably for obvious reasons!

2. Also, I held a world record for being part of the team that play the most consecutive hours of **GoalBall**. It was when I was in the Derbyshire police cadets and it was to assist the GB national team raise funds to go to the world championships in Canada. Think it was 1998 from memory.



3. Finally, and not an "award" as such, but a bit "extra" I was also in a Del Monte TV commercial when I was 10! The ad was directed by the famous director Ken Loach and Del Monte bought my "image rights" to air the ad for 3 full years.. anyway, it only aired for 3 months, and I'm still waiting on my agent to call me back.... 35 years later! I'm not bitter.

Nick Johnson
Director of Compliance, Wealth Recovery Solicitors



My mother tells me I was the runner up at the Butlins Baby Beauty Competition. My sister came first. I have been emotionally damaged for life.

Steve Kuncewicz
Partner – Head of Creative, Digital & Marketing, Glaisyers ETL



Recently I took part in a "Stars In Their Eyes" Event to raise funds for Francis House Children's Hospice. Overall, the event raised £25,000 for an incredibly worthy cause. Less worthy, however, was my outfit and questionable stage moves. Freddie Mercury, it turns out, isn't easy to recreate so next time around I'm going either full Bowie or "performing" as all four members of Metallica at the same time and looking to raise even more money through even more humiliation...



Joanne Ormston
Practice Manager and
Director, Pearson Solicitors
and Financial Advisers.

Despite businesswoman of the year awards and other career accolades I am most proud of being selected to play netball for Oldham, especially as a teenager I did not grow beyond 5ft 3inches.

As my netball peers began

to tower above me I was resigned to not being selected, but then I learned to duck and dive, dodge and weave, and began to realise that being tenacious, being that person that's just annoyingly everywhere on the court would stand me in great stead, even if my stature didn't. Lining up for selection with a group



of amazonian teenage girls was daunting, but when they called my name I was bursting with pride.

Now as a mum to two young boys who are inevitably going to tower above me one day I think my on court netball skills and that tenacity will stand me in good stead – it certainly has in the legal world.

Ruth Shearn
Founder, RMS
PR, Marketing &
Design

The year is 1974, I'm 12 and beyond excited because my best pal and I have been allowed to go to a daytime dance-a-thon at the local YMCA. We put on our coolest clothes, got dropped off by my dad and had our hands stamped as we entered. It was so exciting.



The lights were dimmed and a disco ball flashed shards of light on us as we took to the dance floor. The DJ announced there were going to be spot prizes for the best dancers.

I went into overdrive, looked like I'd been possessed with arms, legs and head all flailing about, completely out of time to the beat. Completely oblivious to everything

around me, my pal eventually got my attention and pointed to the DJ who was standing, looking slightly scared, just behind me. He mouthed "Congratulations!" and handed me a small plaster dog wearing a hat.

I treasured this truly grotesque prize for years, believing it was an endorsement of my ability on the dance floor. I've since come to realise he simply felt sorry for my efforts!

Damian Gwiazdowski
Trainee Solicitor, Burton
Copeland

One of my tastiest achievements came from a firm-wide Bake Off competition. Although technically a workplace event, it touched on a much older passion of mine—baking. Before starting work at Burtons I spent some time working in a bakery, and

those skills came back in full force when I decided to bake traditional sweet cottage cheese rolls. It was a bit of a nostalgic nod to my roots and a break from the usual cupcakes and brownies. I handcrafted the dough, sweetened the cheese filling just right, and topped the rolls with a touch of lemon glaze. The feedback was incredible, with colleagues

praising the unique flavour and soft texture. To my delight, I took home first prize, and my rolls became the talk of the office for weeks. That little win reminded me that passion and craft always rise to the occasion—just like good dough.





Richard Riley
Partner and Head of
Commercial, Bermans

My most significant non-professional competitive success came on a gym floor battling barbells and burpees.

Last year, I took part in a CrossFit competition at my local gym. It started with two enthusiastic friends wanting to enter as a team of four and needing numbers.

I agreed, and even roped in another willing participant. Cue the inevitable and highly predictable twist – both

original team members had to pull out due to injury.

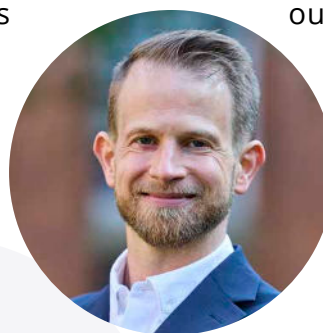
With the event looming and team numbers dwindling, we scrambled for replacements, eventually managing to assemble a last-minute crew. Training was patchy and improvised (to match the team), but we persevered through the prescribed workouts with admirable, if chaotic, commitment.

Somehow, and against all odds, we managed to finish third. Yes, it

was out of four teams, but any solicitor would surely agree the details are not important.

There may not have been confetti cannons or national headlines but there was a genuine sense of pride in having pulled something together in the face of comical adversity. It turns

out you can find success (and a lot of lactic acid!) in unexpected places.

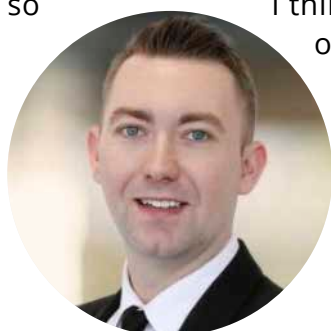


Shane Smith
Associate, Slater and Gordon

I was once nominated for, and then won, the Broad Jump Champion at High School for the longest distance jumped but that was nothing compared to me winning the prize for the 'best and most dressed in red' prize in year 6 of primary school for Red Nose Day – I had red trainers, socks, pants, top and cap.

The only thing was, I was a week early and everyone was dressed in normal uniform, so

I think the prize was out of sympathy and as compensation for having to spend the whole day being the only one dressed in red!



Seraphina Wilkins-Tolliday
Senior Associate, Corporate, TLT LLP

When I was ten I entered the 'pop stars' category at my school talent show. The brief was to dress as your favourite pop star and perform a dance and lip-sync (imagine 'Stars in Their Eyes' meets 'Lip-sync for your Life'). I turned up impersonating Sophie Ellis-Bextor (icon), absolutely winged the choreography and clearly impressed the judging panel, as I came away with the first place trophy (which still has pride of place on my parents' mantelpiece). One of my greatest achievements!



MITIGO
CYBERSECURITY



Keeping your business safe from cyber attack.
It's what we do. It's all we do.
Don't gamble on a generalist. Speak to a specialist.

www.mitigogroup.com



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871



Myerson Solicitors launches Family Law Podcast: MyFamily Pod

[Myerson Solicitors](#) is proud to announce the official launch of its new podcast, MyFamily Pod – a dedicated resource offering professional insight, expert interviews, and practical support for families navigating legal and personal challenges.



Jane Tenquist



Nicola Bright

The monthly podcast is hosted by Myerson's [Family Law solicitors](#) and features conversations with specialists across fields such as psychotherapy, financial planning, and family wellbeing. Each episode is designed to break down complex issues around separation, divorce, parenting, and financial security into clear, accessible advice for listeners.

"We created MyFamily Pod to provide reliable, empathetic guidance at a time when people need clarity and support the most," said Jane Tenquist, Partner and Head of Family Law at Myerson. "Whether someone is facing a relationship breakdown, dealing with co-parenting, or concerned about their financial future, this podcast offers trusted, practical advice."

Featured Episodes Now Available:

- *Narcissism in Relationships* – Recognising coercive control and reclaiming autonomy
- *Divorce & Financial Planning* – Exploring cash flow modelling, pensions and mortgages
- *Bridging the Gender Pension Gap* – Why women retire with less, and how to address it
- *The Psychology of Divorce* – ADHD, emotional wellbeing and co-parenting strategies

Accessible Expertise for a Wide Audience

MyFamily Pod is suitable for anyone experiencing family conflict, considering separation, supporting others through legal challenges, or seeking clarity on complex emotional or financial issues. The podcast reflects Myerson's values of transparency, empathy, and technical excellence in family law. Episodes are available now on all major platforms such as [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [Amazon Music](#).



Raising the Bar – Olliers celebrates new office launch in style

Last month, the drinks were flowing as the [Olliers Solicitors](#) team welcomed guests to their new office to celebrate the firm's expansion – marking the occasion in style. The event brought together peers from across the legal sector, valued suppliers, and longstanding friends of the firm for an evening of drinks, canapes and a shared sense of excitement about Olliers' next chapter.

Olliers has relocated from its previous location on Deansgate to a new space on

Peter Street, marking a significant growth milestone as it doubles its office size to 3,500 square feet.

The new premises represent a significant step forward for the firm, not only offering a modern, collaborative environment for the expanding team but also solidifying Olliers' reputation as one of the UK's leading criminal defence and regulatory law firms. The launch party served as a fitting tribute to the progress made – and a toast to the future ahead.



MLS Advantage



More **added value** for members of the Manchester Law Society

SEARCHFLOW

SearchFlow is one of the UK's largest providers of legal due diligence data for residential and commercial property transactions, having supported over 5,000,000 instructions with more than 26,000,000 searches.

SearchFlow provides confidence and certainty, to any law firm that wants to embrace and benefit from this transformation journey. This is achieved, each day, by delivering concrete due diligence, advanced technology, intelligent data, unparalleled market experience, serious financial investment, and access to exceptional people.

By partnering with SearchFlow, the UK's property law professionals are able to deliver smarter, safer, and faster property transactions to their customers.

SearchFlow is a Landmark Information Group business, which is headquartered in the UK and is part of Daily Mail and General Trust plc (DMGT).

www.searchflow.co.uk 

Follow on Twitter @SearchFlow

LEGALRSS

LEGAL NEWS – up-to-date legal news and court judgments for your website and smartphone.

Legal RSS provides uniquely created, timely, well-written news on the latest court judgments. This can be used on your website and will ensure that your news section is up to date, current, and topical. In engaging with existing and prospective clients this will help your firm maintain and enhance its reputation as being expert in its field, plain-talking, on the ball and client-centred – key attributes for driving practice growth and profitability. This will also help you keep your website up to date with articles designed to drive in instructions and client acquisition. We cover over 60 different areas of the law, and our service can be seamlessly fed onto your website, or you can personalise each article with your own comment and key fee earner contacts. Legal RSS also provides a smartphone app which you can download for free to keep up to date whilst on the move, and we can also provide a bespoke firm version of our app.

martyn.best@legalrss.co.uk 

www.legalrss.co.uk 

Compli provides regulatory and compliance advice and assistance to law firms and



Manchester Law Society

Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

What is MLS Advantage?

MLS Advantage partners are able to identify and advise on core issues facing your business and using their experience, expertise and market knowledge can bring you the right solutions for these issues.

We know that our members recognise the value that technology, outsourcing and

business services can deliver to the client experience as well as business processes and operational efficiency.

Our MLS Advantage partners all offer special packages to Manchester Law Society members.

Why not contact one of them today?

Compli



others in the legal sector. Whether you are a partnership, limited company, ABS or sole practitioner, our flexible, tailor-made service is designed to support you in meeting the evolving regulatory, compliance and risk challenges you face. This is underpinned by incisive commercial advice on business management and structure, all delivered by specialist teams with outstanding experience in their disciplines. Confidentiality, legal professional privilege and peace of mind is assured.

Michelle Garlick: 0161 233 7330
michelle.garlick@weightmans.com 
www.weightmans.com 

Choose... DOCUTECH OFFICE SOLUTIONS

Docutech Office Solutions is the Manchester Law Society's preferred supplier for MFPs, Copiers, Printers, managed print services, secure electronic data storage and electronic signatures. We pride ourselves in great prices, focusing on cost and emission reduction, improving your efficiency whilst maintaining a second to none service.

Before recommending any of our products we make it our business to understand your business allowing us to supply the right solution to your specific needs, whether it be from our vast range of hardware, software, technical services, or a combination of everything.

0844 259 6155
info@docutechsolutions.co.uk 
www.docutechsolutions.co.uk 

Continued on page 42



We know you want to be the best law firm you can be, and we can help you.

Here's a few ways we do that:

- Improving your client service by enabling you to send your letters, contract and response out much quicker.
- Reducing your overheads so that you can become more profitable.
- Helping you achieve the greater flexibility by hybrid working has been giving us in recent times.
- Helping optimise your head count, and your HR and infrastructure.

What do we offer you:

- A very deep understanding of your typing, transcription, document production and e-bundle needs.
- Free digital dictation software to reduce your hardware and software costs.
- A 24/7 typing service that matches your needs and your peaks and troughs in your own work levels.
- Outstanding customer service and responsiveness.
- The comfort of cyber and data security supported by our accreditations to ISO27001, ISO9001, AND ISO22310, and the endorsements of the Manchester Law Society, LawNet, Lawshare and the Cheshire & North Wales Law Society.

Martyn Best: 0345 340 3031

Martyn.Best@documentdirect.co.uk

www.documentdirect.co.uk



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

Without adequate protection in place, victims face ransomware attacks, serious disruption, email account takeover, theft of confidential information, financial loss, as well as reputational damage, and potential for regulator actions and fines.

Mitigo's support has been designed for law firms to offer proportionate and affordable security. After assessing your risks, Mitigo will take care of the three areas needed to keep your business safe. Services include:

- Technology
 - People competence
 - Governance framework
- Mitigo also provides an emergency cyber breach response, which includes:
- Emergency incident response and containment
 - Forensics and investigation
 - Assistance with reporting obligations

0161 883 3083

mls@mitigogroup.com

www.mitigogroup.com



How we help law firms

Trusted by a growing number of law firms across all practice areas and sizes, Shieldpay is the UK's leading ThirdParty-Managed Account and Digital Corporate Escrow provider. Shieldpay's multi-award winning platform streamlines KYC/AML, client money processes and gives you full transparency on the status of funds at all times. Shieldpay is authorised and regulated by the FCA, funds held by Shieldpay are safeguarded and held with tier 1 banks. Shieldpay is able to process transactions of any size and hold funds in escrow for whatever period of time required.

Benefits delivered to law firms include: TPMA's will not be appropriate for every firm, but TPMA's can be a great option for firms looking to reduce their risk exposure to handling client money and in the case of specific transactions or arrangements, including:

- Full client money services
- Card and merchant services
- Corporate escrow arrangements
- Commercial rent deposits
- Trust and guardianship accounts
- Retention amounts

John Donigan: 07966 213957

jdonigan@shieldpay.com

www.shieldpay.com



As part of the UK's largest property and land data business, Landmark Information supports the entire value chain of the property industry.

With more than 25 years' experience, we provide real estate lawyers and property conveyancing professionals with accurate and relevant land and property data. We work closely with property lawyers to provide a dedicated personal approach, supporting the transaction risk and due diligence process. Our data, reports, software and services are in line with the Law Society and SRA requirements. They include environmental reports for both residential and commercial transactions such as, RiskView Residential, Argyll's SiteSolutions Combined, Landmark Flood, Landmark Planning, Landmark Coal and RiskHorizon for ESG due diligence.

www.landmark.co.uk or follow
Landmark on Twitter: twitter.com/LandmarkUK



Autism Acceptance Month

Autism Acceptance Month took place throughout April, with 2nd April being previously designated as World Autism Awareness Day.

An awareness or acceptance day, or month, prompts positive discussions and initiatives. Topics surrounding equality, diversity and inclusivity should, however, be considered all year round. In particular, it is important for us to continue to educate ourselves on those issues that don't directly impact us, so that we can be better allies; equipped to help and empower those around us who are affected.

Autism

Autism is a lifelong neurodivergence and disability, which is understood as a spectrum, impacting on how the individual thinks, feels and communicates. It should be remembered, however, that some autistic people prefer to not refer to autism as a disability, using the term neurodivergent instead.

Whilst autism is a neurodivergence that is commonly cited within society, it is perhaps the spectrum of autism which means it remains misunderstood, with each autistic person having a unique combination of characteristics. This blog can only really scratch the surface of such a vast topic.

More than 1 in 100 people are autistic. Whilst a diagnosis of autism has become much more prevalent in society today, people from marginalised groups continue to face barriers to obtaining a diagnosis and the subsequent support that they require.

Awareness v Acceptance

It is noteworthy that April is described as an acceptance month, rather than awareness month, as is perhaps more common within the discourse of disability, equality and diversity. This is a positive step; acceptance being the next stage following awareness. Acceptance provides connotations of validation; a shift beyond simply acknowledging differences to embracing them.

An example of a shift from awareness to acceptance, when considering autism, may be recognising that an employee, or client, has autism. Acceptance would be empathising with those needs and making suitable adjustments where necessary to make the individual more comfortable.

As a society, we are now a lot more aware of autism, and other disability, than past generations were, however the work doesn't end at awareness. The next step is to facilitate acceptance.

An accepting environment

Autism is a disability, meaning that autistic people have legal protections against discrimination under the Equality Act (2010) and are entitled to the necessary support in the workplace.

The first step to helping autistic colleagues and other individuals is to foster an environment that makes people comfortable to share their difficulties and disabilities. A significant feature of autism is that it can sometimes be 'masked', meaning that the individual suppresses or alters their autistic traits to conform to social 'norms'. This means that in the

“

It is noteworthy that April is described as an acceptance month, rather than awareness month

workplace it may not be immediately apparent that someone is autistic, and they may choose to not disclose this, for fear of discrimination. EDI committees and support groups within the workplace have become a lot more prominent in recent years, with my own workplace having a Disability & Neurodiversity EDI employee Led Network. These committees and networks not just provide a relaxed forum where people can discuss their shared experiences, but more generally they signal to employees and potential employees, as well as clients, a workplace that is accepting of diversity and inclusivity.

It is important not to make assumptions about an individual autistic person's abilities or needs. Some challenges, however, that may impact the daily life of someone with autism include finding communication difficult, finding it hard to understand how others think or feel, struggling with loud noises and social settings, and finding it challenging to have a different routine.

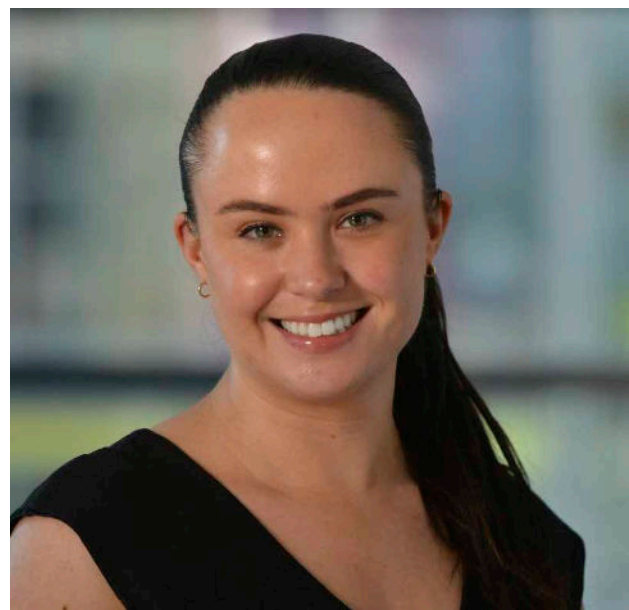
Some examples of reasonable adjustments to consider in the workplace, and when communicating with clients with autism, may include being given a quiet space to work and being allowed to use headphones, using clearer and direct language, allowing additional time to ask questions, giving warning and introducing any changes to routine gradually, providing break-out areas and introducing training for staff.

Autism does not always mean that a person will need additional support to work or to communicate; the only person who can say what if any changes would be the most helpful to them, is the autistic person themselves. Any potential changes or support that could make a big difference, however, can only be implemented by awareness and then acceptance.

Resources and further information

The National Autistic Society notes that there remains a significant gap in the understanding of autism and the ways in which people can support autistic people. Their national campaign, launched in line with Autism Acceptance Month, provides helpful resources and guidance about reducing this gap, which can be found at [It's How You Show Up](#) .

Taking the time to educate ourselves on simple changes or little steps that can be made, could make a big difference to someone else's daily experiences and environment.



Naomi O'Rourke
Associate at Hugh James Solicitors



CFG announces six key promotions as firm expands its legal and wraparound support services

Six colleagues at [CFG](#), including two new partners, are celebrating after being promoted as the firm continues to grow and strengthen its specialist legal and support services.

The newly promoted colleagues, who take up their new roles this week, include Rachael Lomas, who has been promoted to partner in recognition of her instrumental role in supporting the firm's continued growth and success. Joining her at partner level is Steve Maloret, who has also been promoted to head of client support and partnerships, reflecting his leadership in building key relationships and enhancing support services for clients.

Solicitors Sarah Coxon and Jonathan Fogerty have been promoted to senior associate, reflecting their dedication to securing the best possible outcomes for clients affected by serious injury. Additionally, serious injury solicitor Joshua Morton has been promoted to associate, and Court of Protection solicitor Diane Hughes has also been named as an associate. Diane plays a crucial role in ensuring lifelong care and support for people after their claims have settled, helping them navigate complex financial and welfare arrangements to maintain stability and independence.

The promotions come during a period of sustained growth for CFG, which continues to expand its legal services and build long-



Diane Hughes



Jonathan Fogerty



Josh Morton

“

We are incredibly proud of all six of our colleagues who have been promoted

term partnerships across the UK to support those affected by life-changing injuries. Beyond legal expertise, CFG is committed to wraparound support that goes far beyond just claiming compensation, helping individuals and families access vital rehabilitation, financial planning, and emotional wellbeing resources to rebuild their lives with confidence.

CFG CEO Richard Clark said: “We are incredibly proud of all six of our colleagues who have been promoted. Their dedication,

expertise, and commitment to supporting people affected by injury are fundamental to our success as a firm.

“These promotions reflect not only the individual achievements of Rachael, Steve, Sarah, Jonathan, Josh, and Diane but also the continued growth and strength of our business. Each of them plays a vital role in ensuring that we deliver outstanding legal and support services, helping people rebuild their lives after injury.

“At CFG, we value every member of our team, and we are committed to creating opportunities for progression and development. The promotions announced today highlight our continued investment in our people and our unwavering focus on making a real difference in the lives of our clients and their families.”



Rachel Lomas



Sarah Coxon



Steve Maloret



AFG LAW expands family team amid ongoing growth

The Family Department at [AFG LAW](#), has continued its strong momentum, marking its 5th addition of the year with Solicitor Sara Asif.

Sara qualified as a solicitor in 2024, having gained over 4 years' experience in the family law area, handling both legal aid and private matters. This has included representing clients on children matters, pre-proceedings matters, including assisting clients in navigating the PLO process, divorce, and supporting victims of domestic abuse by obtaining urgent Non-Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders.

Sara prides herself of being an approachable and incredibly dedicated family lawyer, who is committed to guiding clients through some of the most challenging times of their lives, using a practical and results-driven approach.

This newest appointment to the family department has seen it grow to 45 staff

members, with 21 fee earners across the three offices of Bolton, Bury and Stockport. The department also expanded its billing team earlier in the year with the addition of Tina Bird as a Consultant Costs Draftsperson to assist the existing team with the volume of work brought in by AFG LAW's Legal Aid services, which support some of the most vulnerable in society across Greater Manchester, and beyond.

Emma Cordock, Head of the family and billing departments, and Director at AFG LAW said:

'This year is shaping up to be a record year for growth in the family department with Sara being the 4th new solicitor to join the team since January. It's an exciting team to be working in at the moment with our increasing expansion of services being offered in the Greater Manchester area, and I know Sara is going to be a great addition to an already ambitious and strong team.'





In conversation with Holocaust Survivor Tomi Komoly BEM

14 May 2025

17:00 - 19:00

**Weightmans, No 1 Spinningfields, Hardman
Square, Manchester M3 3EB**

We are delighted to offer you the rare opportunity to hear from a Holocaust Survivor, Tomi Komoly BEM.

Guests at the event will be able to hear about Tomi's experiences directly from him and there will be an opportunity to ask Tomi questions.



[Learn more](#)

How to book:

To book your free place please email
events@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk

This event is free to attend but you must book as places are limited.



Farleys fuel growth with acquisition of Alker Ball Healds Solicitors

Farleys [↗](#), part of Lawfront has expanded its reach across the North West with the acquisition of Wigan-based law firm Alker Ball Healds Solicitors (ABH).

The acquisition, which will see ABH continuing as a trading name of Farleys, and all 32 employees remaining, adds to the firm's existing expertise and brings a wider full-service legal offering to Wigan and the wider borough.

The move is the second deal since Farleys joined legal services group Lawfront in 2022.

ABH was formed in 2014, following a merger between Wigan law firms Alker & Ball and Healds Solicitors, who had a local presence in Wigan dating back to 1852.

Led by joint managing directors Gary Shepherd and Keith Whitehead, ABH has developed a strong and trusted reputation with clients both locally and nationwide, with expertise in commercial litigation, commercial property, corporate; and a range of private client services including family, residential property, personal injury and wills and probate.

Daniel Draper, Managing Partner at Farleys said: "We are delighted to welcome the ABH team to the Farleys family as the next step in our plans to increase our presence across the region and grow our firm further.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for Farleys and will unlock many more opportunities for our firm as we look to build upon the existing well-known brand, quality service and strong client base that are already associated with the ABH name in the local community. We also look forward to building the team further through recruitment in the local area."



Speaking on the acquisition, Gary Shepherd said: "It is great to be joining a forward-thinking team of people who share our down to earth values, and a focus on delivering straightforward legal advice. When the opportunity presented itself to join Farleys, we knew that it was the right fit culturally for our people and our clients, who will all benefit from the greater resource that Farleys as a Lawfront firm can provide."

Keith Whitehead added: "We have built a fantastic team of skilled and trusted lawyers and want to continue that growth. With access to a wider range of services and resources and the well-recognised brand of Farleys, we look forward to growing our own professional family here in Wigan to continue looking after our clients, their families, and the wider business community across Greater Manchester."

Neil Lloyd, Lawfront CEO, said: "It is great to see Farleys complete its second acquisition since joining Lawfront. We back our regional firms to accelerate their growth ambitions. Acquisitions such as this are a positive demonstration of our commitment to invest in our firms. We are proud to welcome the ABH team to Farleys and look forward to watching the team grow and develop."



What do we do?

Audio transcription service: (Available 24/7)

- All of your typing output including letters, contracts, file notes, memos, and email narratives.
- Reports such as Lease Reports and Surveyors' Reports.
- Court documents (pleadings) and standard court forms (eg: Land Registry/Family Law/County Court).
- Barristers' Advice, Opinions, and draft pleadings.
- Transcripts of multi-speaker recordings - meetings/conferences, interviews, focus groups, telephone conversations, and Court hearings.
- Zoom and Teams meetings can be transcribed with optional subtitles on recordings.

Document Production Service:

- Complete document formatting (or re-formatting into house style) to include advanced functions such as tables of contents, cross-referencing, page numbering, headers, footers, etc.
- Copy typing (both handwritten notes and printed text).
- PowerPoint presentations and Excel spreadsheets.
- Amendments to documents from PDF manuscript mark-ups.
- Conversion of PDFs to Word/Excel/PowerPoint.
- Manipulation of PDFs (splitting, moving/deleting pages, redacting text, etc.).
- Retyping of old documents, such as leases and wills, that need updating.
- Production of electronic Court bundles that follow all of the guidelines laid out by HMCTS.

Electronic Bundle Creation

Our document production specialists can produce Court bundles to HMCTS guidelines and include full optical character recognition (OCR), hyperlinks from Index, and full pagination.

- Save time on what is a very detail-oriented task.
- Save on software and training costs.



**Please scan for more
information and to set up your
free trial**

Document Direct facts:

More than 200 UK based typists

- All security and capability checked
- Specialists in legal and medical
- 24/7 service
- Fast turnaround times

Supports all workloads, peaks, holiday and absence cover

500+ UK and International Law firms use the service

Transcription and all document production – creation and enhancement

Endorsed by:

- Manchester Law Society
- LawNet
- LawSave
- Cheshire & North Wales Law Society

Fully compliant and secure:

- ISO 27001
- ISO 22301
- ISO 9001
- Registered with the Information Commissioner's Office
- GDPR Compliant
- B Corp certified



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871



lawsave.



**Cheshire &
North Wales
Law Society**



Cert. no. 10046



Six new starters join Glaisyers ETL's Manchester team

Glaisyers ETL [↗](#) has boosted its team in Manchester with six new starters in the first quarter of 2025.

Its real estate team has been strengthened with the appointment of solicitor Jasmin Knowles, who joins from Salehs Solicitors.

The private client team, meanwhile, has taken on paralegal Amelia Mansfield, who was previously with Gorvins Residential. The firm's back office has also been strengthened with the appointment of legal cashier Nisha Patel.

Three trainee solicitors have also joined the firm's Spinningfields office.

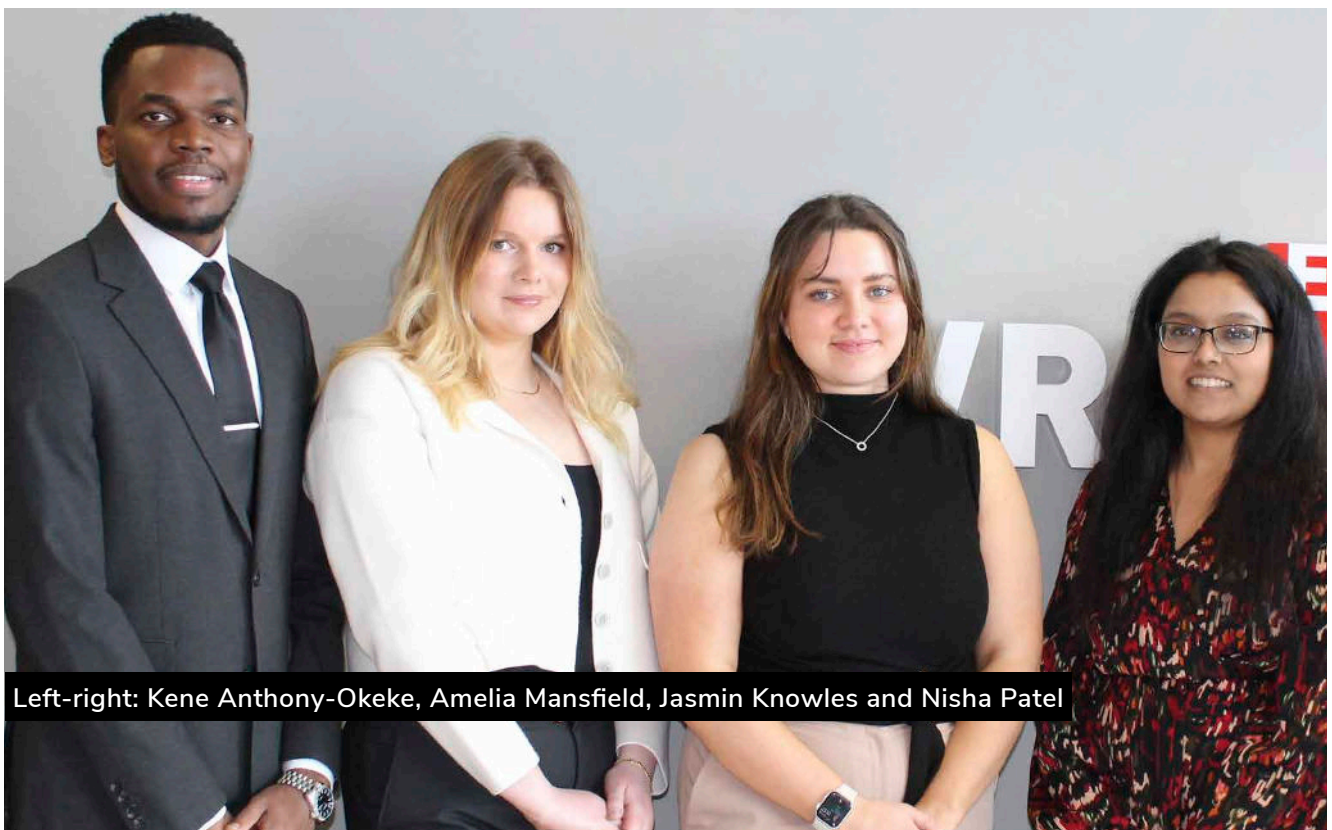
Nottingham and BPP University graduate Kene Anthony-Okeke was a paralegal in the real estate team at Gorvins before commencing his training contract with Glaisyers ETL this spring. Patrick Dutton is University of Liverpool graduate who has

recently completed his SQE qualification with the University of Law.

Hafsa Khan has also joined the firm as a trainee, on secondment from the cryptocurrency and investment fraud specialist WRS ETL, a fellow member of the ETL GLOBAL group.

Russell Brown, managing partner at Glaisyers ETL, said, "It is a real pleasure to welcome Jasmin, Amelia, Nisha, Kene, Patrick and Hafsa to the team. They are already making great contributions to the firm, and I look forward to witnessing their progress over the months ahead.

"I would like to extend an especially warm welcome to our three new trainees. At Glaisyers ETL we are committed to developing talent for the future of our firm and the profession as a whole, and I wish each of them all the best as they embark on this journey with us."



Left-right: Kene Anthony-Okeke, Amelia Mansfield, Jasmin Knowles and Nisha Patel

Lewis Silkin broadens corporate offering with hire of partner in Manchester

Lewis Silkin has hired Arshnoor (Ashi) Amershi as a partner in its corporate practice.

Ashi has built a strong reputation for venture capital, private equity and M&A work, and played a key role in building the corporate team at her last firm over the past ten years. During that time, she advised a broad range of clients on high value cross-border M&A transactions, and institutional investors and management teams on prominent regional and national venture capital and private equity deals.

Ashi has particular expertise in the tech, energy and financial services sectors, and has regularly worked with high growth, disruptive businesses looking to reinvent a market or undertake an aggressive consolidation strategy.

She was listed as a Corporate Rising Star across the North of England at the 2024 Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards, and is ranked as a Next Generation Partner by Legal 500. She is also recognised as Up and Coming by Chambers and Partners, for Corporate/M&A in Manchester and the wider Northwest region.

Paul Rajput, Partner and Head of Corporate at Lewis Silkin, said: "It's a real pleasure to welcome Ashi to our team in Manchester, where she will contribute her valuable expertise and experience to an already growing firm-wide practice.

Her hire not only aligns with the existing international M&A offering of our corporate team as a whole, but also represents the latest success in a drive to boost and widen our corporate offering in the North of



Ashi Amershi

England – a drive that is ongoing with more appointments to be announced shortly."

Ashi Amershi, Partner at Lewis Silkin, said: "I'm delighted to be joining Lewis Silkin's top tier corporate practice, and to be given the opportunity to establish the Lewis Silkin corporate offering in the North.

I have built some great relationships in the thriving professional community across Manchester and beyond and I am excited to continue to put the city of Manchester and the North of England on the map for top tier legal services.

Lewis Silkin gives me the perfect platform to do that, in an environment that is progressive, tech enabled and has DEI principles at the core of its corporate values, evidenced by the firm picking up Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Firm of the Year at the Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards 2025."



Squire Patton Boggs announces new Managing Partner in Manchester

Squire Patton Boggs [✓](#) is pleased to announce that James Fitzgibbon has been appointed managing partner of the firm's Manchester office. He succeeds Rob Elvin, who has led the office for 12 years, and who will continue to lead the firm's European Environmental, Safety and Health Practice.

James Fitzgibbon joined the firm's top tier corporate practice in 2017. He is a well-known deals partner with almost 20 years' experience in private equity, M&A and joint venture arrangements, acting for a broad base of financial institutions, private companies, entrepreneurs and management teams across the private equity life cycle.



James Fitzgibbon

“

It is a privilege to work with many of the region's best enterprises and growth businesses, and to be a part of its thriving deal community

“I am delighted to accept this additional role and represent this fantastic global firm in my home city,” said Mr. Fitzgibbon. “It is a privilege to work with many of the region's best enterprises and growth businesses, and to be a part of its thriving deal community. I am grateful to Rob for his leadership over the years and excited by the opportunity to continue his success. Manchester always has, and always will, have an international outlook and with our expertise and the quality of our people locally, and the continued global growth of our firm – with new offices in Dublin, Amsterdam and Geneva adding to our already comprehensive global coverage – we are well placed to serve clients wherever they have interests.”

Rob Elvin added: “It has been a privilege to lead our talented team in Manchester and I am proud of what we have achieved together. A measure of our success can be seen in the next generation of leaders coming through the business – and in James, we have someone who has made a significant contribution to our office and who has the ambition and drive to take the business into its next phase of growth.”

TLT continues Manchester expansion with appointment of new corporate partner

TLT [↗](#) has continued to expand its footprint in Manchester with the appointment of Paul Keohane as a partner in the corporate team.

Joining TLT from Addleshaw Goddard, Paul brings with him over 15 years of experience working with many of the UK's largest privately owned and listed companies on their most strategically important transactions. He specialises in advising clients on M&A (including cross-border matters) and on UK public company transactions.

Paul is known as one of the leading capital markets lawyers in the North-West and has extensive experience advising on UK public company transactions including takeovers, initial public offerings and equity fundraisings on AIM and the Main Market of the London Stock Exchange.

At TLT, Paul will be based in the firm's Manchester office and will help the firm embed itself into the regional business market. He will also add strength and depth to TLT's UK-wide corporate practice, supporting clients across sectors developing their offering and preparing them for challenges ahead.

Paul's appointment will support the continued growth of TLT's Manchester team. His appointment follows the arrival of fellow corporate partner, [Victoria Zivkovic](#) [↗](#) in May 2024 and [Alexander Murdie](#) [↗](#) in the PIC team in September 2024. In August 2024, the firm [moved into the new Eden office](#) [↗](#) in Salford, demonstrating the firm's ambition in the Northwest and advancing its growth.



Paul Keohane

Commenting on his appointment, Paul said: "TLT's corporate team has an impressive track record of undertaking outstanding work for its clients, and I'm very excited to join such an impressive team of innovative and focused individuals. I'm looking forward to helping the team continue to deliver first-class results and preparing our clients for what comes next."

James Chadwick, partner and head of location for Manchester added: "Paul's appointment is another declaration of our intent to continue growing our presence in Manchester. His experience working with many of the UK's largest privately owned and listed companies on their most strategically important transactions is well-suited to the needs of our Manchester clients, and his broad corporate expertise will make him a major asset to our national corporate team as well."



Private Client Solicitor Vacancy at Brabners

We have a fantastic opportunity for an experienced Private Client Solicitor to join our well-respected Private Client team at [Brabners](#).

Our award-winning Private Client & Charity group is one of the largest in the Northwest. The team was awarded the 'Private Client Award' at the 2017 & 2019 *Liverpool Law Society Legal Awards*. The team has a Tier 1 ranking in the Legal 500 and Chambers Private Wealth Law.

The team work with a wide range of High-Net-Worth individuals, families, business owners, elderly clients and Landed estates dealing with complex private client matters including wills and probate, Lasting Powers of Attorney, trusts, Capital Gains tax and estate planning. The team are the go-to trusted advisor for clients and contacts alike.

Due to the growth of our team, we are looking to recruit an experienced Solicitor to work on a range of complex private client matters. Ideally you will have a minimum of 3 PQE and be confident in dealing with a broad range of private clients matters offering exceptional levels of client care. We will consider candidates working at Solicitor to Senior Associate level.

We are looking for a candidate with:

- ✓ Experience in a range of private client matters including complex wills, trusts, business succession planning, inheritance tax planning and estate administration, Landed estates.
- ✓ A strong background of working with an established network of referrers and of developing strong relationships with a range of clients an, including HNW individuals, multi-generational families, elderly clients and business owners.
- ✓ Ability to work independently manage their own caseload and supervise others in the team as needed
- ✓ Ambition to play an integral role in further developing the private client offering in Manchester
- ✓ Ideally you will be STEP qualified or working towards the STEP qualification.

Benefits

Our successful candidate will have an incredible opportunity to develop a rewarding and successful career with an award-winning law firm in a flexible and agile working environment.



Brabners
 — we make the difference —

hello@brabners.com | 0333 004 4488

We provide a competitive salary and benefits package, including 25 days' holiday (increasing to 32 days through our loyalty recognition programme) plus the option to purchase an extra five days each year.

We also offer a pension scheme, private medical insurance, life assurance and income protection insurance, as well as plenty of opportunities to get involved in our colleague committees to make a real impact in our local communities.

About Brabners

Brabners is purpose-led independent law firm. A certified B Corp with award-winning environmental credentials, we seek to demonstrate that business can bring about positive change by being innovative, diverse and sustainable.

With over 200 years of history, we're proudly anchored in the North but serve businesses and individuals across England and Wales.

Brabners is the best law firm to work for in the UK in the Best Companies aware league table and we have won awards for being innovative at the Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards and diverse as Manchester Law Society's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champions. We are also recognised as one of the 25 best large companies to work for in the UK and have won The Legal 500 Future Lawyers awards for job satisfaction, quality of work, social life and work/life balance.

To apply or for a confidential chat please contact Sophie Mawdsley, Head of Talent Acquisition at Brabners via sophie.mawdsley@brabners.com or [01772-229816](tel:01772-229816)



Upcoming events: Social Events

14 May 2025 - [In conversation with Holocaust Survivor Tomi Komoly BEM](#)

15 May 2025 - [Posh Pub Quiz](#)

3 July 2025 - [Manchester Legal Awards Dinner](#)

19 September 2025 - [5-a-side Football Tournament](#)

Upcoming events: Legal Education

Wednesday May 14, 2025 - [Employment Law Conference](#)

Management Matters

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



This Article

- **Avoiding Compliance and Regulation Disasters**
- **Being on top of financial management**
- **Resource skills**
- **Sorting the basics**

Last month I covered many action items needed by law firms as a matter of priority and essential performance, which you can read [here](#) and available [here](#) also.

In all honesty those points have not gone away and meetings and gatherings over the last month with very successful and experienced law firm managers, some of whom are now advising others plus market activities has confirmed how important it is for firms to take these issues seriously and ensure that appropriate actions are in place.

- **Data Security**

A law firm fined for £60,000 for the failure to ensure the security of its client data is one example, which you can learn more about [here](#). Over the last couple of years there has been a number of failings of data security with firms with their own databases, plus cloud and hosted environments.

It is so important that all firms conduct the necessary due diligence in this arena and the right expertise needs to check the systems plus it is critical that staff utilising the systems are also fully aware of operational requirements. There may be an appeal for this but the problem does not go away.

[Brian Rogers](#), the Regulatory Director of Access Group, has also posed the question

on whether the SRA may also take action.

MLS Advantage Group members [Compli](#), led by [Michelle Garlick](#), is also available for essential advice. Both across the whole regulation and compliance sector.

IT hosting and security advisers to the sector [etiCloud](#) have recently shared advice, supported on LinkedIn by one of their clients in terms of the actions and attitudes that firms need to take. Firstly, the potential suppliers need to understand more about the basic infrastructure and objectives of their clients and to come up with a solution that takes the firm from A to B in line with the strategy. It really does mean management participation in the strategy development as well as getting the due diligence and proof of success in such installations.

Over the last few years there has been a major shift to hosted and cloud environments driven by the PMS/CMS suppliers and firms needing to ensure reliability of their infrastructure particularly with working methodology changes. The cloud/hosted environment if done correctly does seem to be a route. Even with the existing and new PMS/CMS suppliers the necessary due diligence of their IT infrastructure is essential.

During April, [Netprotocol](#) has also identified that a number of firms at the moment see the need to protect themselves rather than go to “the cloud”.

Law firm management really needs to be clear on the way forward.



- **Compliance and Regulations**

Again, many issues here.

Failure to conduct the right AML supervision is beginning to cost many law firms a lot of fines and credibility issues. (Some of them with CQL and Lexcel). It is essential that on receipt of the searches that they are reviewed and the firm's authorisation process is actioned. Again this should be part of the management process but also included in the CMS workflow. If not there get it built in including checking ID.

Access Regulatory and Compli again are skilled resources.

- **Management of Accounts**

There appear to be so many firms at the moment who are struggling to forecast their profitability but at least equally important their working capital requirements and as a result there is diminishing confidence in the relationships with the banks. This should be a monthly routine where the Ops Board reviews forecasted new business and gross profits but also reviews monthly update billing against WIP by fee earner and department.

A number of banks are aware that the right communication with them is not in place

In addition to this there is also a specific area in terms of Client Account Management. A number of the PMS/CMS suppliers do not have the added value date and workflows here so it needs to be reviewed very seriously. Again, a number of firms without the in house skills or disciplines are referring to their accountants and outsourced accounting, such as

[Cashroom](#) . There are one or two added value PMS suppliers that could also be involved.

- **Skilled Resource and Delivery**

More firms are beginning to realise that they are short of the right level and resource skill and there is a large growth in collaboration and outsourcing. The more obvious ones are book keeping, document production and legal skills. I referenced this back in [November](#) . The businesses referred to [Cashroom](#) , [Document Direct](#) and [Lawshare](#) are seeing a steady growth as firms understand more about the delivery of the right service levels to their client base and how important this is in client retention and development. That internal stock-take is so important along with the right development.

It is also not just in these areas because irrespective of size of firm or the nature of its business, it still needs the right skills particularly in the difficult commercial world but with the added challenges of compliance, regulation, client satisfaction and development, financial management, people development, image, diversity and equality – expertise needs to be available – part time from accountants or independent lawyers but there are now consultancies offering the right levels – again due diligence is essential along with clear specification of involvement.

- **PMS/CMS**

Again, something that I have gone on about for the last 6 months. Some of the

Continued on page 60



newcomers are doing very well and a couple of the old teams are communicating a little better about product delivery strategy and development with the provision of essential added value solutions – immediately or at some time in the future.

Existing law firm clients should be challenging their suppliers in terms of their product development plans, the delivery of essential added value – such as MI/BI, client communication – two-way security in terms of accessibility (portals), forecasting, client account management. They also need to demonstrate a clear policy for client account management and development.

• **Further Added Value**

I cannot finish without just a mention again of the other lessons

- Existing clients – are we really doing enough to ensure the right service level for our Will clients. Updates, challenges – finance, accountants, separation, equity release. Doing a full and proper job first

time around and then managing with Will Bank which is such an important asset

- Developing our clients with internal communication, networking and referrals
- What does the market really see us as
- Do our staff understand the added value that the firm is looking for and how much they as individuals can be clear about their work opportunities and what they can achieve

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](#)

Messenger Deadlines for 2025



Don't miss your chance to promote your news to the Manchester legal community. You can submit your news any time to Messenger@manchesterlawsociety.org.uk but if you have something time sensitive you want to get in a particular issue here are the deadline dates for 2025.

June 2025	23/05/2025	October 2025	19/09/2025
July 2025	20/06/2025	November 2025	24/10/2025
August 2025	18/07/2025	December 2025	21/11/2025
September 2025	22/08/2025	January 2026	12/12/2025



ARE YOUR SONS
& DAUGHTERS...

...READY FOR
NEW YORK?

CAMP
NEW
YORK

APPLY NOW FOR SUMMER 2025

Let **CAMP NEW YORK** help them prepare for New York in 2025, and have:

- A summer camp placement in the New York State area
- Minimum \$2,000 salary
- A life enhancing experience – and great for their CV
- Preferred age range 18–28 years
- Full guidance and support from some of the best professionals in the business



WATCH THE VIDEO!

CLICK HERE TO APPLY NOW
CAMPNEWYORK.ORG

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.

A big month in the costs courts! We start with the headline grabbing case of [Rebekah Vardy v Coleen Rooney](#) [2025] EWHC 851 (KB) 11 April 2025. On appeal from the Senior Costs Judge, Cavanagh J held that there had been no misconduct by Mrs Rooney's solicitors (within CPR 44.11) that justified any sanctions being imposed against them. Her Precedent H costs budget had been completed on the basis of costs already spent, it represented an estimate of the costs likely to be recoverable on a standard basis, rather than the actual costs that had been incurred already, which were higher. Where that was the case, the judge held that it would be prudent for those preparing the budget to clarify that point, but the solicitor's lack of transparency in not having made the position clear, did not amount to misconduct, so Mrs Vardy's appeal failed.

Less headline catching but very important nonetheless has been the decision of the Court of Appeal decision in **Gutmann v Apple** [2025] EWCA Civ 459, 16 April. This is a collective class action on behalf of iPhone users who allege that Apple abused its dominant position through a lack of transparency when it introduced software to deal with an iPhone battery problem. In issue was whether the group of funders of the actions could be paid out of compensation recovered before any damages can be distributed to members of the class. The court held that they could

thereby providing certainty against the risk of there being insufficient funds to meet their fees. The consequence of the judgment is that it is likely to give greater confidence to the funding market to invest in such cases: remember that without such funding, Mr Bates would never have got his case against the Post Office off the ground.

Next fixed costs. In **Attersley v UK Insurance Limited** [2025] EWHC 884 (KB) 11 April, the issue was whether the claimant was stuck with fixed costs (FRC) after she had accepted a Part 36 offer outside the "relevant period". The offer had been made pre allocation (when fixed costs applied) but accepted much later following allocation to the multitrack (when hourly rate/time spent costs applied). The insurer's argument that FRC should apply to the date of expiry of the relevant period failed. Stacey J concluded that both on a purposive and a literal reading of the rules, where an ex-Protocol case was allocated to the multi-track, it came out of Section IIIA by the wording of CPR 45.29B, and Part 36(20) did not apply. In other words, once a multi-track case, always a multitrack case so far as the costs are concerned. However, such a finding does not prevent an argument from a paying party that, under the blunt tool of 'proportionality,' the hourly rate/time spent costs could be reduced to a sum equivalent to those of fixed costs if it were to have been found that an offer should reasonably have been accepted earlier.

Next, a duo of Part 36 judgments. In **Henderson & Jones Ltd v Salica Investments Ltd** [2025] EWHC 838 (Comm) 7 April, the issue was the validity of the claimant's Part 36 offer which had failed to specify the "relevant period" for acceptance. Fortunately for the claimant, Calver J held that the history of correspondence showed, clearly, that the parties knew full well what the relevant period was: indeed, taken in context, a reasonable solicitor would have understood the offer to be referring to a period of 21 days, consistently with the other Part 36 offers which had been made. It followed that the offer was valid and compliant, but in future, practitioners would be well advised to take heed of the sage words of Birss LJ – use the form!

Meanwhile in **Barry v Barry** [\[2025\] EWHC 819 \(KB\)](#) 8 April, Dexter Dias J dealt with not only Part 36, but also "consequential". Following an acrimonious and contested trial in a contract dispute between two parents and their son, costs were payable by the son on the indemnity basis. The parents had beaten their own offers and the judge held that it was not unjust for them to receive the CPR 36.17(4) benefits. The £75,000 was all or nothing, so they received that in full, plus interest on costs at 8% above base rate, which was discretionary.

As to costs budgets, it was too late, after trial, to vary the budget upwards for disclosure and witness statements (lack of promptness) under CPR 3.15A, but trial preparation had experienced a "significant development" due to a late amendment to the defence. The application for more for that item succeeded, but it does not clear from the judgment why there was any need to vary the judgment. Costs were payable on the indemnity basis, meaning that the parents would not be held to their budgets on detailed assessment – see *Lejonvarn v Burgess* (2020) Costs LR 45 at [92].

Finally, the Solicitors Act has not let us down! In **Spanakis v Schillings International LLP** [\[2025\] EWHC 873 \(KB\)](#) 14 April, Tipples J dealt with the proverbial problem of solicitors' estimates. The issue here was whether the appellant's costs should be limited in any way to a costs estimate provided in respect of part of the work anticipated, which had been £10,000 for "phase one". Subsequently the solicitors billed £15,000. The judge held that it had been open to the judge below to find that the client did not rely on the estimate, and there was no basis for an appellate court to interfere with those findings of fact, so the appeal was dismissed.

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



Pet of the Month

Name: Grace Lindsay

Organisation: Manchester Law Society

Pet Name: Ziggy

Pet Nickname: Zigs or Zig Zigs

What kind of pet do you have?
Ginger cat

Is your pet male or female? Male

How old is your pet? Four years old

Favourite Toy: Green ball with feathers

Favourite Activity: Sleeping!

Favourite Treat: Mini prawns

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

My perfect day would be: Waking my dad up at 6am to sit outside the fridge and try and get some food, sleep for twelve hours (with no interruptions from Grace petting me), then go out exploring other people's backyards until another cat chases me off!

My favourite thing my parents do: Keep my food bowl full



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!

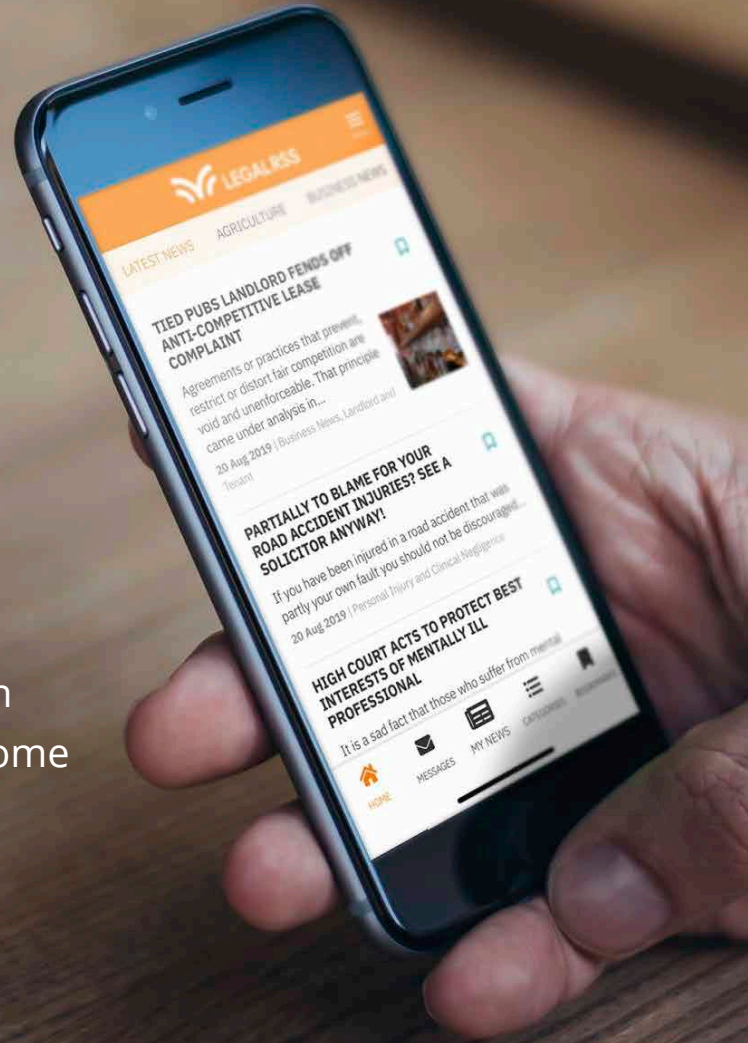
Each month we'll pick a couple of 'Pets of the Month' for the next edition so keep a look out to see if your pet has made it, modelling in *The Messenger* magazine!

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



Legal news content for your website, social media, and your smartphone

LegalRSS supports your client acquisition and retention efforts and helps you become a better and more profitable practice.



Keep up to date with the latest developments in the legal sector by downloading our **free** smartphone app today.



**If you have any questions about LegalRSS,
we'd love to hear from you.**

[CONTACT US](#)

Are **you** missing out?

Networking and referrals with over 4,600 members

An industry sounding board

Lobbying – have your voice heard

Support your local profession and join a committee

Individual and corporate memberships available

Training, development and social events throughout the year

News and insightful updates delivered directly to your inbox and MLS App

Valuable discounts from legal suppliers

Help, advice and support

Out of city members welcomed

Manchester Legal Awards

Promote your successes in our monthly magazine

Together we can make a difference!

Be part of the most vibrant local Law Society in the UK.

For more information on membership visit:

www.manchesterlawsociety.org.uk



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871