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**BIOMEDTECH**  
**Constructive Bio takes funding haul to \$75m as Sir Greg Winter joins the Board** PAGE 2

**THE LEGAL 500**  
**Top five law firms for East Anglia named in new Legal 500 UK guide** PAGE 11-29

**LOQUS23 RAISES £35M TO FIGHT HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE (p3) • VISA SWOOPS TO ACQUIRE FEATURESFACE (p5)**



Neutreno founder Dr Spencer Brennan with Head of Climate Science, Professor Jonathan Cullen. Credit – Neutreno.

## Neutreno poised to clean up in \$130 Trillion decarb market

Neutreno, a pioneering DeepTech startup spinning out of the University of Cambridge, has secured \$5 million seed cash from a global syndicate of mission-aligned investors to target a \$130 trillion decarbonisation market.

Regeneration.VC led the round alongside Remarkable Ventures Climate Fund (RVC), Closed Loop Partners, Prequel Ventures, Scania Invest and Beacon Venture Capital.

On average, companies have over 90 per cent of emissions in their value chain and 93 per cent will fail to achieve their net zero

goals unless they double the pace of emissions reduction by 2030, the company warns.

This target is even more daunting given a lack of primary value chain data, the inability to influence suppliers and the high cost of decarbonisation.

Neutreno says its proprietary process networks, based on mass and energy flow research, significantly minimise the

primary data burden on suppliers and allows enterprises to map product lines faster and with greater precision than existing tools.

Its easy-to-use and affordable digital system automatically pinpoints solutions that reduce emissions and costs across thousands of suppliers, says the company.

*Continued on page 2*

## Mestag lines up potential \$1.9bn haul from MSD

by Tony Quested

Mestag Therapeutics, a Cambridge biotech harnessing new insights into fibroblast-immune interactions, has entered into a license and collaboration agreement with US giant MSD (tradename of Merck & Co., Inc) to identify novel targets for the development of therapies against inflammatory diseases.

Mestag will employ its Reversing Activated Fibroblast Technology (RAFT) platform, a proprietary platform purposely built to model the pathogenic role of fibroblasts in human disease, to identify novel drug targets.

MSD has the option to license one or more targets, up to a prespecified number and will be responsible for the discovery, development and commercialisation of resulting therapeutics.

A fibroblast is a type of cell that contributes to the formation of connective tissue, a fibrous cellular material that supports and connects

other tissues or organs in the body. Fibroblasts secrete collagen proteins that help maintain the structural framework of tissues.

Mestag CEO Susan Hill said: "Mestag was founded on groundbreaking insights into fibroblast-immune biology and as an early innovator in this area of research we have built a robust pipeline of antibody programs and created a unique and productive target discovery platform.

"We are acutely aware of the significant unmet needs faced on a daily basis by patients suffering from inflammatory diseases. We are thrilled to collaborate with MSD, together driving continued innovation for the benefit of patients."

Mestag will provide MSD options to obtain exclusive licences to develop and commercialise therapeutics directed against a prespecified number of potential targets identified under the collaboration.

*Continued on page 2*

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## Neutreno

From page 1

Neutreno's customers already span Asia, Europe and North America, including S&P 500 and FTSE 250 companies across multiple industries and a broad range of SMEs.

Fredrik Nilzén, Head of Sustainability at Scania Group, one of the world's largest commercial vehicle manufacturers, said: "Neutreno offers a unique and innovative solution that is crucial for tackling sustainability challenges with improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness at scale."

"Scania Invest's support emphasises the strategic importance of advancing Neutreno's pioneering technology in the sustainability landscape."

Dr Spencer Brennan, Neutreno's founder, assembled a team of scientists who over two decades pioneered concepts of circularity and resource efficiency in complex supply chains, informing international climate policy.

He said: "We take a completely novel, robust engineering approach to challenge the Scope 3 status quo."

Professor Jonathan Cullen, the company's Head of Climate Science and Lead Author for the IPCC AR6 Industry Chapter, added: "Neutreno breaks away from the noisy landscape of tedious, form-filling accounting-based carbon software."

Neutreno delivered groundbreaking results for a multi-billion-dollar enterprise customer, identifying a 35 per cent emissions reduction potential across Scope 1-3 for one of its suppliers and automatically pinpointing actions leading to new product designs, procurement changes, and substantial emissions reductions – all in just four weeks.

Enthused by the company's mission to democratise emissions reductions for millions of businesses, Michael Smith, General Partner of Regeneration, commented. "Neutreno has the first technical system able to move beyond Scope 3 reporting to systematically decarbonise industry, unlocking the \$130 trillion of capital waiting to fund the low-carbon transition."

With its innovative approach and strong industry backing, Neutreno believes it is poised to make a significant impact on global decarbonisation efforts, helping companies achieve their climate goals faster than ever before.

Bedford-based digital marketing firm Receptional Ltd is securing updated facilities to accommodate its expanding team after negotiating a \$950k loan from NatWest.

# Sir Greg Winter joins board as Constructive Bio takes funding haul to \$75 million

Constructive Bio, a Cambridge based synthetic genomics company, has raised \$58 million in the first close of a Series A financing, bringing the total amount secured by the company to date to \$75m.

The round was led by Ahren, OMX Ventures and Paladin Capital Group with participation from Fine Structure Ventures, +ND Capital and Abcam-founder Jonathan Milner.

The Series A investment will be used to further develop Constructive Bio's groundbreaking technology that writes genomes from scratch and creates entirely new biomolecules.

Nobel Prize winner and biotech entrepreneur Sir Gregory Winter will join the board as representative of Ahren, bringing his world-leading expertise and experience in the sector to support the company's growth.

Ola Wlodek, CEO at Constructive Bio, said: "Synthetic genomics is redefining how we harness biology. Our suite of proprietary technologies and incomparable team allows us to build novel materials and products that will revolutionise drug manufacturing and discovery."

"This financing will enable us to accelerate bringing breakthrough products and platforms to market, which will grow our revenue through existing and new paths, ranging from exciting therapeutics to sustainable biomaterials. We see the future of biology, and we're leading the charge."

Constructive Bio boasts that it has the unique capacity to produce fully programmable molecules with unprecedented fidelity,



Ola Wlodek. Photograph courtesy – Constructive Bio

specificity, and scalability.

Through genome synthesis, the company is able to write entire custom genomes with full control of the genetic sequence and code. By engineering protein translation, it can create and biomanufacture entirely new molecules with novel properties and functions.

The company is rapidly advancing its technologies to develop new therapeutics and synthesise these and existing pharmaceuticals at scale.

Since launching in 2022, it has unlocked the commercial potential of its proprietary platforms by optimising its synthetic organisms and demonstrating the scalable production of multi-functionalised proteins at commercial titres.

Constructive Bio now has the capacity to bring new products and manufacturing methods to sectors including pharmaceuticals, chemicals, materials and consumer goods.

Its proprietary technology is built on research carried out at the Medical Research Council's Laboratory of Molecular Biology

in Cambridge by company founder Professor Jason Chin, who in 2019 synthesised the entire genome of the bacterium *E. coli* – the first synthetic strain created for industrial use.

With this research as the cornerstone of its approach, Constructive Bio is uniquely able to expand the genetic code of cells to incorporate multiple non-canonical amino acids into a single molecule.

Professor Chin, also CSO, said: "Constructive Bio is the only company that can turn living cells into sustainable biofactories in which we can programme the sequence, composition and chemistry of proteins, and new biopolymers."

"We have the best technology and an unmatched synergy across our three foundational platforms: deeply recoded synthetic genomes, engineered cellular machinery, and new chemistry."

"With additional funding we are accelerating genome synthesis and design from years to days, more rapidly engineering cells' machinery to make molecules with extra building blocks, and expanding the chemistry we can programme into molecules."

Sir Gregory Winter, Ahren Science Partner and board member of Constructive Bio, commented: "With this investment, we aim to develop Constructive Bio's technology to deliver biomanufacturing at scale. By providing a biological, cost-effective production process, we can help overcome shortfalls in global supplies of therapeutic peptides and proteins such as semaglutide."

## Mestag

From page 1

In return Mestag will receive an upfront payment and access fees and will be eligible to receive option fees as well as downstream payments with the potential to total \$1.9 billion.

Marc Levesque, Vice President of Immunology Discovery, MSD Research Laboratories, said: "The role of activated fibroblasts in directing immune activity offers exciting new therapeutic potential. We look forward to collaborating with the team at Mestag to identify new potential therapeutic options for patients with fibrosis and inflammatory diseases."

Mestag's pipeline includes the bispecific antibody MST-0300, which leverages a new understanding of tertiary lymphoid structures (TLS) in solid tumours and their role in driving improved patient outcomes; the M402 program, targeting a stromal checkpoint to dampen down the activation of specific immune cell subsets in inflammatory disease; and earlier programs in discovery stage.

Separately, the company is also identifying novel targets for future therapies through the application of its proprietary RAFT Platform. In 2024, it established a license and research collaboration with MSD to identify novel targets for inflammatory diseases.

Its founding investigators comprise global experts in inflammatory disease, cancer, computational biology and fibroblast biology from the University of Oxford, Brigham & Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

The business is supported by leading life science investors SV Health Investors, Johnson & Johnson Innovation – JJD, Inc., Forbion, GV (formerly Google Ventures) and Northpond Ventures.

## Microbiotica progresses international melanoma trial

Wellcome Sanger Institute spin-out Microbiotica, a clinical-stage biopharma company developing a pipeline of oral precision microbiome medicines called live biotherapeutic products (LBPs), has announced that the first patient has been dosed in its advanced melanoma (MELODY-1) trial.

The international trial is due to recruit up to 40 patients at clinical centres in the UK, France, Italy and Spain with initial data readouts expected by the end of 2025.

PD-1 inhibitor immunotherapies have revolutionised cancer treatment and are now commonly used to treat melanoma. However, new

treatment options are still needed to extend the benefit to patients for whom immunotherapies do not work (treatment-resistant patients). This can be up to 50 per cent of all advanced melanoma patients.

The MELODY-1 study will investigate the safety, tolerability, and initial signals of efficacy of MB097 in advanced (metastatic) melanoma, in combination with KEYTRUDA® (pembrolizumab), MSD's (Merck & Co., Inc., Rahway, NJ, USA) anti-PD-1 therapy, in patients with cutaneous melanoma who have failed to respond to immunotherapies.

MB097 is a once daily, orally administered LBP consisting of a

defined consortium of nine strains of commensal bacteria designed to enhance the efficacy of immune checkpoint inhibitors (ICIs). The bacterial strains in MB097 were identified by analysing the microbiome of patients in multiple studies of ICIs in melanoma, including the MELRESIST study carried out with the company's collaborators at Cambridge University Hospitals, UK.

Collectively, the MB097 bacterial consortium provides microbiome signalling that appears to be needed for ICI response. Pre-clinical studies demonstrate that MB097 activates core pathways of the immune system including Cytotoxic T Lymphocytes and

Natural Killer cells to enable them to kill tumour cells. Research to understand the mechanism of action of the nine bacterial strains has indicated that in addition to this immune-activating effect, the bacteria in MB097 produce metabolites that act directly at the site of the tumour.

All patients in this Phase 1b, first-in-human, randomised open-label clinical trial will receive MB097 and pembrolizumab for up to six months. Half of the participants will also receive vancomycin before starting the co-therapy to determine whether it helps the bacterial strains in MB097 embed and grow in the gut more efficiently.



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## Timely \$5.3 million helps clock.bio boost rejuvenation roadmap

clock.bio, a healthspan biotech working to reverse ageing, has raised \$5.3 million seed funding led by LocalGlobe, with participation from BlueYard Capital, Onsite Ventures and serial Cambridge life science entrepreneur Dr. Jonathan Milner.

The Cambridge company has made significant progress in decoding the biology of human rejuvenation, identifying more than 100 genes that jointly constitute an 'Atlas of Rejuvenation Factors.'

While all somatic cells irreversibly age, stem cells have the unique ability to turn back the clock. Working with human induced pluripotent stem cells

(iPSCs), clock.bio has developed a proprietary ageing model that can force stem cells to age, faithfully recreating the known cellular hallmarks of ageing. This intervention triggers a self-rejuvenation mechanism, whereby iPSCs repair these hallmarks and turn young and healthy.

Located at the Milner Therapeutics Institute at the University of Cambridge, clock.bio has set out to decode this rejuvenation mechanism, understand which genes regulate this process and translate the resulting insights to clinical applications.

Running a genome-wide

CRISPR screen, with single-cell RNA-sequencing of over three million cells that generated 20 terabytes of data, clock.bio was able to decode the rejuvenation mechanism innate in human stem cells, identifying more than 100 genes that jointly constitute the regeneration roadmap.

The company will now focus on validating these hits in somatic cells, analysing the pathways at work and mapping them to specific disease indications.

clock.bio's hypothesis is that understanding these genes associated with rejuvenation will enable the reversal of several ageing hallmarks by repurposing existing drugs for increased

healthspan. In addition, genetic targets for repair of individual ageing hallmarks will be highly relevant for developing novel treatments of age-related disease.

Markus Gstöttner, the CEO of clock.bio, explained: "Our vision is to extend human healthspan by several years in line with growing longevity. Our approach decodes an existing part of human biology, which makes us confident the findings will be translatable.

"Running CRISPR screens across the full human genome constitutes an unbiased, comprehensive methodology, which now gives us more than one shot on target.

"We are thrilled to have

reached this first major milestone with the support of our investors."

The seed funding enabled clock.bio to generate its Atlas of Rejuvenation Factors and will also underpin next steps in validation and target prioritisation.

The company has expanded its team through several critical hires, including the onboarding of Markus Gstöttner (CEO) and Rodrigo Santos (CTO).

Together with Mark Kotter (co-founder and Chairman), the team will now focus on developing its findings and identifying the right partners to initiate clinical trials.

## LoQus23 Therapeutics raises £35m to fight Huntington's disease

by Tony Quedest

Cambridge biotech LoQus23 Therapeutics has closed a £35 million (c.\$43m) Series A to advance its fight against Huntington's disease.

Based at Babraham Research Campus, LoQus23 is a private company investigating small molecule drugs that could stop DNA instability and slow neurodegeneration in Huntington's, myotonic dystrophy type 1 and similar triplet repeat expansion diseases.

The Series A round was led by Dutch VC Forbion alongside existing investors SV Health Investors' Dementia Discovery Fund (DDF) and Novartis Venture Fund (NVF). Forbion General Partner Rogier Rooswinkel will join LoQus23's Board. LoQus23 was founded in 2019 by Entrepreneurs in Residence at DDF Dr David Reynolds, Dr Caroline Benn, and Dr Ruth McKernan. It received additional seed funding from NVF in 2021.

The company has since established a platform of assays and a small molecule series of MutSa and MutSβ inhibitors which are therapeutically relevant in up to 30 triplet repeat diseases, including Huntington's.

The Mismatch Repair branches of the DNA Damage Repair system repair DNA insertions, deletions and misincorporation errors during transcription and/or



LoQus23 Therapeutics CEO Dr David Reynolds. Courtesy - LoQus23.

cellular replication, with two main pathways dependent upon the size of mismatch - MutSa for small mismatches and MutSβ for larger insertion/deletion loops.

Huntington's is an autosomal dominant neurodegenerative disorder for which there is currently no disease modifying treatment available and which has 30,000 patients in the US alone.

By targeting somatic expansion, LoQus23 is hoping to slow or even halt the onset and progression of Huntington's disease - a concept supported by genetic studies and recently strengthened by pre-clinical models.

The proceeds of the Series A will primarily be used to support the pre-clinical development and

initial clinical studies of LoQus23's lead programme, an allosteric small molecule MutSβ inhibitor. The company is preparing its lead programme to enter the clinic in 2026.

CEO Dr David Reynolds, said: "This financing will enable us to develop key clinical data to support the development of our exciting lead programme. The ever-increasing body of data pointing to somatic expansion, caused by aberrant DNA mismatch repair, as being the primary culprit in Huntington's disease provides great support that our approach of developing oral small molecule therapies will be transformative for patients with this dreadful inherited disease.

"We welcome Forbion as the lead investor of this round, alongside our existing high calibre investors, and look forward to benefiting from their support and expertise."

Rogier Rooswinkel added: "Somatic expansion is a key driver of triplet repeat diseases like Huntington's. In somatic expansion, MutSβ seems the most promising and best validated target, with the potential to bring disease progression to a halt.

"LoQus23 is leading the charge in developing allosteric small molecules against MutSβ, and we look forward to working with them to progress their molecules towards the clinic and ultimately to benefit patients."

## Evoralis textile play could unlock \$560bn opportunity

Cambridge University spin-out Evoralis has raised £2.5 million seed funding to fast-track development of technology to recycle textiles and plastics previously deemed unrecyclable.

It literally has LIFTT-off! And this particular 'seed' also has massive growth potential: The £2.5m round could unlock a \$560 billion economic opportunity!

The round was led by LIFTT S.p.A with co-investment from Backbone Ventures and circular economy-focused investors Circular Plastics Accelerator and Archipelago Ventures, and Parkwalk Advisors, the University of Cambridge, as well as angel backers. CPI has successfully converted a loan into equity and acquired shares in the business.

A spin-out from the University's Hollfelder Lab, Evoralis is based in Cambridge and specialises in the discovery and development of plastic-depolymerizing enzymes. It harnesses a unique ultrahigh-throughput screening platform based on microfluidics to discover and refine enzymes capable of breaking down complex plastics into their constituent building blocks.

This platform, which accelerates enzyme screening by up to 1,000 times compared to traditional methods, is regarded as a game-changer in the pursuit of an economically viable circular economy for textiles and plastics.

# Private Business: The way ahead

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# Cambridge on song as ARIA orchestrates brain health revolution

A large cohort spanning the Cambridge life sciences, technology and business worlds has announced a multi-million-pound, three-year collaboration with the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA), the UK Government's new research funding agency.

As one of ARIA's new Activation Partners in the agency's Scalable Neural Interfaces opportunity space, this collaboration aims to rocket-boost progress on a new generation of neuro-technologies designed to treat conditions such as depression, dementia, chronic pain, epilepsy and injuries to the nervous system.

Cambridge's partnership with ARIA will create a home for original thinkers struggling to find the funding, space and mentoring needed to stress-test their radical ideas.

It will scour the UK for innovators from any background with a highly ambitious concept for a technology that could transform brain health. The very best will be offered the resources to test and then scale up their idea at pace, so it can be brought to patients across the world quickly and affordably.

The vision is to unlock more treatments with fewer side-effects, creating a world where personalised brain health care is available to everyone.

Neurological and mental health disorders will affect four in every five people in their lifetimes and present a greater overall health burden than cancer and cardiovascular disease combined.

For example, 28 million people in the UK are living with chronic pain and 1.3 million with traumatic brain injury.

Neuro-technology - used to control the nervous system - has the potential to deliver revolutionary new treatments for these disorders in much the same way that heart pacemakers, cochlear implants and spinal implants have transformed medicine in recent decades.

These technologies also have the potential to treat autoimmune disorders, including rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease and type-1 diabetes.

Original thinking is in the DNA of both ARIA and Cambridge, so this partnership will consider supporting any precise neuro-technology with the potential to solve a global health problem.

It could be in the form of electronic brain implants that reset abnormal brain activity or help deliver targeted drugs more effectively, brain-computer interfaces that control prosthetic limbs, new gene therapies, or cutting-edge technologies that

train the patient's own cells to fight disease.

ARIA's Scalable Neural Interfaces opportunity space is exploring ways to make the technology more precise, less invasive, and applicable to a broader range of diseases.

The science of building technology small enough, precise enough and cheap enough to make a global impact requires an environment where the very best minds from across the UK can collaborate, dream up ambitious ideas and test them without fear of failure.

The new partnership is not just for academics; it is open to innovators people from all backgrounds and all locations. The lead organisations want everyone to be able to access their expertise and resources so they can turn their concepts into mass produced, affordable and clinic-ready technologies to benefit millions of people suffering around the world.

The three-year partnership is made up of two programmes:

## The Fellowship Programme (up to 18 fellowships)

**Blue Sky Fellows** will bring together innovators from around the UK with exciting ideas in neuro-technology, and provide the plan and personal skills to translate them. These Blue Sky Fellows will receive funding to rapidly test their idea in Cambridge, along with mentorship from our best medical, scientific and business experts.

A very specific type of person is being sought to become a Blue Sky Fellow. They must be the kind of character who thinks at the very edge of the possible, who doesn't fear failure, and whose ideas have the potential to change billions of lives, yet would struggle to find funding from existing sources. Not so much people who think outside the box, more people who don't see a box at all.

**Activator Fellows** - this programme is for those across the UK who have proof of concept validation for their neuro-technology and need support to turn it into a business. They will be offered training in entrepreneurial skills including grant writing, IP management and clinical validation, so that their innovation can be made ready for the next stage in translation.

The Ecosystem Programme is about creating a vibrant, UK-wide neurotechnology community where leaders from business, science, engineering, academia and the NHS can meet, spark ideas



Credit: Bioelectronics Laboratory, University of Cambridge

## PARTNERS IN THE INITIATIVE

**The Milner Therapeutics Institute** encompasses both a research institute and a global outreach programme, which aims to transform pioneering science into therapies. The MTI is breaking new ground in academic/industry interactions and demonstrates a world-leading model of start-up companies, academics and pharma working side by side at the bench.

The Milner's in-house research teams focus on target identification and validation through AI, ML, functional genomics and the development of human in vitro models. Its aim is to investigate and validate signatures of disease to uncover new high confidence targets for drug discovery.

**The Maxwell Centre** - the centrepiece of academia-industry engagement at the University of Cambridge, it is actively interfacing leading research in Physical Sciences and Technology with industry and catalysing impactful innovation. Its strategy harnesses science and technology to enable a resilient, healthy society of 2051, with a particular focus on Zero Waste and Health Tech.

**Cambridge, Departments of Engineering and Psychiatry:** Cambridge research spans almost every discipline, from science, technology, engineering and medicine through to the arts, humanities and social sciences, with multi-disciplinary teams working to address major global challenges.

A 2023 report found that the University contributes nearly £30 billion to the UK economy annually and supports more than 86,000 jobs across the UK, including 52,000 in the East of England.

**Cambridge University Health Partners** - one of eight Academic Health Science Centres in England whose mission is to improve patient healthcare by bringing together the NHS, industry and academia.

Along with leaders from across the Cambridge life sciences and healthcare ecosystem, CUHP devised and now implements the life science strategy for the Cambridge region. The partners are, Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), Cambridge and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Cambridge.

**Cambridge Network** - The not-for-profit membership organisation brings people together from business and academia to exchange ideas, foster collaboration and build partnerships for shared success.

**The Babraham Research Campus** supports early-stage bioscience enterprise and is distinct in its co-location of bioscience companies with the world leading discovery research of the Babraham Institute. Its Campus home to over 60 companies, 2,000 employees and 300 academic researchers.

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT)** is a health and social care organisation, providing integrated community, mental health and learning disability services, across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and children's community services in Peterborough. Together with global, national and local partners it conducts high-quality and ground-breaking research into mental and physical health and support innovation to improve patient care.

**Vellos** was co-founded by Prof Sir Tony Kouzarides who also co-founded Abcam and the Milner Therapeutics Institute. Vellos is dedicated to advancing life science innovation through company creation. It promotes impact at research institutions by empowering entrepreneurship and drives innovation through the creation of world-class ventures.

**Cambridge Neuroscience** - a virtual Interdisciplinary Research Centre at the University, it serves to connect ~900 neuroscientists across all six schools of the university with membership spanning more than 30 Departments and affiliated institutions. Cambridge Neuroscience works by removing traditional boundaries between basic and translational neuroscience, and nurturing collaborations across research disciplines.

and form collaborations. This will involve quarterly events in Cambridge, road trip events across the UK and access to the thriving online Cambridge network, Connect: Health Tech.

Kristin-Anne Rutter, Executive Director of Cambridge University Health Partners, commented: "This is an incredibly exciting and unique partnership that is all about turning radical ideas into practical, low-cost solutions that change lives.

"Cambridge is fielding its best team to make this work and

using its networks to bring in the best people from all over the UK. From brilliant scientists to world-leading institutes, hospitals and business experts, everyone in this collaboration is committed to the ARIA partnership because, by working together, we all see an unprecedented opportunity to make a real difference in the world."

George Malliaras, FRS, Prince Philip Professor of Technology, University of Cambridge, added: "Miniaturised devices have the potential to change the lives

of millions of people currently suffering from neurological conditions and diseases where drugs have no effect.

"But we are working at the very edge of what is possible in medicine, and it is hard to find the support and funding to try radical, new things. That is why the partnership with ARIA is so exhilarating, because it will empower us to give brilliant people the tools to turn their original ideas into scalable, commercially viable devices that can have a global impact."



# Cambridge the honey pot for US again as Visa swoops for Featurespace in c\$1 billion acquisition

by Tony Queded

Cambridge-based online fraudbuster Featurespace is to be acquired by San Francisco company Visa – quoted on the New York Stock Exchange – for an undisclosed sum. Business Weekly has fielded reports from California that Visa could pay close to \$1 billion.

Featurespace's DeepTech origins combined with Visa's digital payments leadership are poised to strengthen protection from financial crime for millions of people worldwide.

The acquisition of Featurespace will complement and strengthen Visa's portfolio of fraud detection and risk-scoring solutions used by clients around the world to grow and protect their businesses.

It is the second company from the Invoke Capital stable to fall into American hands following the sale of Darktrace to Thoma Bravo. A third, Luminance, is expanding massively in the US.

Since its inception out of Cambridge University's engineering department, Featurespace has developed innovative algorithmic-based solutions to analyse transaction data and detect even the most elusive fraud cases.

Business Weekly is seeking the exact acquisition price and details on whether Featurespace will



Featurespace co-founder David Excell

retain its Cambridge UK base. It is currently headquartered in the city and we expect it to remain.

Antony Cahill, Global Head of Value-added Services at Visa, said: "Providing our clients with solutions that can adapt to and anticipate the changing threat landscape is of the utmost importance.

"Featurespace's strong foundation in AI will enhance our existing product portfolio and enable us to address our clients'

most complex and pressing challenges. We look forward to welcoming the Featurespace team to Visa."

The combined expertise of Visa and Featurespace will enable clients to manage fraud in real-time and further protect the payments ecosystem using AI-fuelled solutions. This investment builds on Visa's commitment to ecosystem security.

In the last five years alone, Visa has invested billions of dollars in

technology, including to reduce fraud and enhance network security. Dave Excell, co-founder of Featurespace, said the best was yet to come. He said: "This isn't the end of the story – it's simply the start of a new chapter in making the world a safer place to transact.

"It is astonishing to see that the company that we've built protects millions of people, across billions of transactions, for trillions of dollars, within milli-seconds. We have delivered on our promise to make the world a safer place to transact."

Excell added: "Over the past 12 years we have served the financial services industry, building a company that has gone from strength to strength, and we are thrilled to become a part of Visa.

"With Visa, we can bring the innovation, integrity and purpose of our platform and our team to more payment service providers and ultimately, stop more people from becoming victims of financial crime."

The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions, including receipt of applicable regulatory approvals. The deal is expected to close in fiscal year 2025 and will provide significant benefits to financial institutions, consumers, and the wider payments industry.

Visa is a world leader in digital payments, facilitating transactions

between consumers, merchants, financial institutions and government entities across more than 200 countries and territories.

More than 80 direct customers and 100,000 businesses have put their trust in Featurespace's technology including HSBC, NatWest, TSYS, Worldpay, Danske Bank, Akbank, Edenred and Permanent TSB.

Founded in 2008, and headquartered in Cambridge, UK, Featurespace has over 400 team members, operating globally from six locations.

Featurespace, backed by global investors including Chrysalis Investments, Highland Europe, IP Group plc, Insight Partners, MissionOG, and TTV Capital, has been at the forefront of developing technology to combat fraud and financial crime worldwide.

CEO Martina King commented: "Emerging from Cambridge University's engineering department, we have deeply enjoyed and appreciated the support of the Cambridge community – with none greater than Business Weekly's.

"Partnering with Visa will empower us to expand our technology and connect with a wider array of financial institutions, bolstering consumer protection against fraud and financial crime and fortifying a secure global payments ecosystem."

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## IXICO plc CEO joins Zetta Genomics board

Cambridge company Zetta Genomics, an innovator in the genomics data technology space, has appointed Bram Goorden as Non-Executive Director to its board.

With a rich background in scaling businesses, strategic operations, and maximising shareholder value, Goorden brings a wealth of expertise that aligns with Zetta Genomics' mission.

Goorden's diverse career in the life sciences spans NCEs, in vitro diagnostics and multi-omics SaaS and AI solutions. He has successfully led both early- and late-stage organisations, driving IPOs, global operations and strategic alliances with industry leaders like GE Healthcare, AstraZeneca and Roche.

Currently CEO at IXICO plc, a London based precision medicine company in neurodegenerative diseases, Goorden previously scaled Eagle Genomics' microbiome AI platform and helped SOPHiA Genetics achieve revenue growth leading up to a \$1.1 billion IPO.

At Foundation Medicine, he led international expansion across 60+ countries, advancing biomarker and oncology research and BioPharma development efforts.



IXICO CEO and NED at Zetta, Bram Goorden. Courtesy - Zetta Genomics.

Goorden says: "As genomic sequencing becomes increasingly cost-efficient, the next significant challenge is effectively managing and leveraging vast genomic data to transform healthcare. Zetta Genomics' platform plays a critical role in addressing this challenge. I am proud to bring my experience and expertise to contribute to this vital mission and advance the future of precision medicine."

Zetta Genomics CEO and Founder Ignacio Medina added: "We are excited to welcome Bram to the Zetta Genomics Board. His vast experience in life sciences and demonstrated ability to scale organisations will be instrumental as we continue to grow and expand our global footprint."

## CS Genetics names life science entrepreneur Bill Colston as CEO

Cambridge Science Park and California genomics power player CS Genetics has appointed long-term life sciences entrepreneur Bill Colston as CEO. He has decades of experience as an inventor, entrepreneur, and executive in life sciences and biotechnology.

Colston founded QuantaLife, where he pioneered the invention of droplet digital PCR (ddPCR), leading the company as CEO until its acquisition by Bio-Rad.

He also founded Sestina Bio, a synthetic biology company, and HealthTell, a diagnostics firm. Earlier in his career, he directed the U.S. biologic and chemical defense R & D program at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and has served on numerous private and public boards.

"I could not be more excited to welcome Bill to the team," said Luke Edelman, founder and Chief Technology Officer at CS Genetics, which has boots on the ground in San Diego.

"He's a successful multi-time founder and CEO who knows the unique challenges of leading venture-stage companies, and the opportunities that come from

successful execution. He has a rare mix of technical vision and aggressive commercial ambition that will serve in good stead as we build a large and enduring company through the years to come."

Privately held CS Genetics has developed a nextgen instrument-free platform for single cell genomics that leverages a molecular process known as Kinetic Confinement to produce simple, scalable, and accessible workflows that plug seamlessly into standard lab infrastructure.

The company says that this disruptive platform will expand the reach of single cell genomics to major underserved segments such as new-to-single cell customers and biopharma and significantly broaden the use of single cell as a tool for scientific discovery, molecular diagnostics, and the development of new vaccines and therapeutics.

Colston said: "I've been fortunate to be at the forefront of several breakthroughs in digital biology and believe now is the perfect time to introduce a new single cell technology."

"The market is evolving

and business advisory firm BDO has welcomed 18 new trainees across its East Anglia offices with more than 600 starting across the UK. The trainees are a combination of school leaver apprentices, university graduates and students undertaking a 12-month industrial placement.

As part of their training, the majority of new joiners will also have the opportunity to undertake a Level 7 apprenticeship programme, resulting in a qualification equivalent to a masters degree.

Peter Harrup, Head of BDO in East Anglia, said: "I'm always delighted to welcome our annual cohort of new trainees to our offices in East Anglia. This young talent never fails to bring a fresh perspective, enthusiasm, energy, and a thirst for knowledge."

rapidly, and there's a clear demand for tools that offer deep biological insights at unprecedented scale. CS Genetics has the right vision, talent, and technology to lead this next phase of innovation."

## A selection of jobs featured on Cambridge Network's Recruitment Gateway

Visit <https://www.cambridgenetwork.co.uk/jobs> for the most up-to-date listings

Cambridge Network's Recruitment Gateway connects candidates and companies, with its recruitment team always looking at different ways to help organisations grow. Its online jobs board offers a diverse range of opportunities, with hundreds of vacancies posted by the Network's member companies every week. A weekly jobs letter features the most recently advertised jobs, along with news of upcoming recruitment events. Here are some of the latest opportunities.

### Scientist, Cell Therapy Innovation with **bit.bio**

We are looking for a Scientist with a strong background in cell biology, characterisation and functional assay development in a drug discovery / translational context to support our efforts in drug discovery from proof of concept studies to candidate selection for cell therapy applications. You'll have a background in Cell Biology inclusive of characterisation and cell-based functional assessments.

### Marketing Lead (Pharma & MedTech) with **Costello Medical Consulting**

As the first Marketing Lead at Costello Medical, you'll be the driving force behind

the expansion and strategic execution of our marketing communication services for clients in the pharmaceutical and MedTech industries. Your leadership will be instrumental in delivering successful, high-impact marketing outputs across various medical and commercial projects. You'll have significant marketing experience within the pharmaceutical or MedTech industries, or in an agency environment.

### Data Specialist with **Redgate Software**

You'll support and influence decision making processes across Redgate by managing, analysing, interpreting and investigating data to deliver rationale for strategic and operational change. You'll also support the wider Data Engineering and Analytics Team's delivery of data solutions by gathering and interpreting requirements. You'll have excellent SQL skills, with the ability to mentor others, along with being highly proficient in Microsoft Power BI.

### Production Manager with **Cambridge University Press & Assessment**

You'll oversee the receipt, QA, transformation, and distribution of a wide range of academic and

educational content to support book publication at CUPA. You'll also innovate with colleagues across the organisation to expand existing and build new workflows and products to meet new requirements. You'll have proven experience guiding a team as well as being a strong collaborator and relationship builder.

### Research Associate on the **LHCb experiment with University of Cambridge**

We are looking for a particle physicist with experience in instrumentation to undertake research and development for future upgrades of the LHCb RICH system. Experience in the application and characterisation of single photon sensitive devices, data acquisition and analysis of data is also essential. You'll be expected to take a leading role in these or other associated areas and to contribute to several aspects of the Group's activities on the LHCb project.

**Professional Education - Business Development and Programme Director with Institute for Manufacturing (IfM), University of Cambridge**  
You'll lead and manage the development and delivery of executive and professional education courses based on

the research outputs from the Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) and Department of Engineering at the University of Cambridge, with a particular focus on Technology and Innovation Management. You'll have a background in education in either technology/engineering/science or business and management.

### Renewals Sales Rep with **Redgate Software**

As a Renewals Rep at Redgate, you'll use your sales talents to build strong relationships with existing customers whose software licenses are due for renewal. You'll be looking to identify any risks to the renewal early and work with the customer to mitigate these and ensure we do all we can to keep their account. This is the perfect role for ambitious individuals looking to progress their career in solution sales or the tech industry.

### Purchase Ledger Administrator with **Sartorius**

In this role, you'll be responsible for all aspects of the purchase ledger, invoice processing, making payments, checking outstanding debit balance accounts, and supplier statement reconciliations. You'll have previous experience with purchase ledger or accounts, along with expenses and credit

card management experience. Ideally, you'll also have experience with SAP.

### Product Marketing Manager with **Riverlane**

Help us make Riverlane's core product, Deltaflow, the runaway leader in the emerging \$20 billion+ quantum error correction (QEC) market. You'll be at the forefront of bringing both Deltaflow and our entry-level product, QEC Explorer, to market. You'll craft compelling narratives around our groundbreaking technology and translate complex quantum concepts into clear value propositions for our clients. You'll have three or more years of experience in a deep tech marketing role.

### Supply Chain Engineer with **TTP**

You'll manage the procurement of our groundbreaking robotic manufacturing system, enabling critical prototype and production builds. You'll be the primary contact for suppliers, including contract manufacturing partners. This position is ideal for someone who excels at communicating with internal and external stakeholders, and who enjoys organising people, documentation and processes to enable successful production.



## Ex-AstraZeneca ace fits executive pattern for Mosaic Therapeutics

Cambridge-based Mosaic Therapeutics has appointed former AstraZeneca director Dr Barry Davies as CSO. The targeted oncology therapeutics company is dedicated to resolving cancer's complexity to power new combination therapies for patients.

Dr Davies will lead the company's scientific strategy and Research & Development team.

He has more than 25 years' experience in drug discovery, including 19 years at AstraZeneca where he most recently held the position of Senior Director, Global Project Leader.

During his time with AstraZeneca, he led multiple projects across phases from lead optimisation to phase 2 proof-of-concept clinical trials, mainly in the cell signalling, apoptosis and DNA damage response areas.

He also led preclinical work on multiple drug discovery programmes including the recently approved Capivasertib/Truqap. Prior to this, he held other senior leadership roles at AstraZeneca, including Senior Director, Clinical and Translational Scientific Alliances, in which he was responsible for partnerships and collaborations in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.

Dr Davies holds a BSc (Hons) Class I in Biochemistry and PhD in mechanisms of breast cancer metastasis from the University of Liverpool. Following postdoctoral



Dr Barry Davies and Magda Jonikas. Courtesy - Mosaic Therapeutics.

work in the laboratory of Professor Bruce Ponder in Cambridge, he established his own research group at the Northern Institute for Cancer Research, University of Newcastle, where he was a group leader, senior lecturer, and Cancer Research UK grant holder.

Magda Jonikas, CEO, Mosaic Therapeutics said: "Barry's extensive experience and expertise in early oncology drug discovery and development will be a significant asset to Mosaic. We are thrilled to welcome him to lead the Research and Development team.

"Barry's deep understanding of cancer biology and early drug development will be invaluable to the company as we continue to

progress our pipeline of targeted drug combinations in novel biomarker-defined settings, and enable us to deliver precision medicines for patients who currently have few therapeutic options."

Dr Davies added: "Mosaic's pedigree is impressive and the potential of the data science platform coupled with deeply characterised preclinical models to identify new combination therapies within oncology is very exciting.

"I'm delighted to join the company at this pivotal stage and look forward to working with the leadership and scientific teams to drive the programmes."

## Bush proves hot property for BioMed Realty

BioMed Realty, a Blackstone portfolio company and leading provider of real estate solutions to the life science and technology industries, reveals that Mark Bush has joined as Senior Vice President, Operations, East Coast & UK Markets.

He will lead the operations and facilities functions across two core markets - Boston-Cambridge, MA, and Cambridge, UK. Bush will be based at the company's office in Cambridge, MA, while reporting to Colleen O'Connor, BioMed Realty's Executive Vice President, Market Lead, East Coast & UK Markets.

Colleen O'Connor said: "We are excited to welcome Mark to BioMed Realty, where he brings his leadership, passion and expertise to our team in serving our tenants and their experience."

"Mark's extensive experience in the commercial real estate industry will be a valuable asset, strengthening our efforts and contributing to BioMed Realty's success in providing life science and technology companies with differentiated real estate solutions."

Bush added: "I am thrilled to join this exceptionally talented team at BioMed Realty, a company that I have long admired. "It's an honour to work alongside them as they continue to support their current and future tenants, which include some of the world's most innovative life science and

technology companies."

Bush most recently served as Senior Vice President, Asset Management at The Davis Companies, where he provided strategic oversight and direction for a portfolio of commercial real estate properties.

He brings over 20 years of leadership experience in operations and asset management within the commercial real estate industry to BioMed Realty.

Prior to joining The Davis Companies in 2015, Bush was Vice President, Asset Management, at AEW Capital Management, after holding positions with Brixmor Property Group and Fidelity Investments.

Founded in 2004, BioMed Realty is now the largest private operator of life science real estate, with a portfolio valued at more than \$22 billion. It operates 16 million square feet of life science infrastructure within core innovation hubs in the US and the UK, including Boston/Cambridge, San Francisco, San Diego, Seattle, Boulder and Cambridge, UK.

BioMed Realty entered the UK life science real estate market via the acquisition of the 120-acre Granta Park campus in Cambridge in 2012. It also launched BioMed@Babraham in 2017 - a 99,000 sq ft life science facility at the Babraham Research Campus. The facility is home to Mission Therapeutics, bit.bio and RxCelera.

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## Nu Quantum leverages NQCC alliance to launch computing initiative

The foundations have been laid for a globally significant quantum computing initiative featuring top brains from Cambridge and Oxford.

Cambridge's Nu Quantum and the National Quantum Computing Centre (NQCC) in Harwell, have announced Project IDRA - the first phase of a four-year venture to build a pioneering optically connected, multi-node distributed quantum computing system. Nu Quantum has opened an office at NQCC, in addition to its Cambridge headquarters to maximise the collaboration.

Work on the new project will be based at the NQCC facility, removing scientific blocks to scaling quantum computers and placing the UK in a world-leading position. NQCC's involvement with IDRA is supported by NSSFIF (the National Security Strategic Investment Fund).

Scaling quantum computers to commercial utility requires billions of coherent operations across millions of qubits. Individual quantum cores or quantum processing units (QPU) will soon offer access to thousands of qubits per device.

The most promising route to scale these devices further, and the main focus of Project IDRA, is to network multiple QPUs together. In quantum computing, the term 'networking' means to create entanglement between two distant qubits inside different QPUs - the same sort of entanglement that exists between qubits inside a QPU, and which powers the computation.

In this case, a quantum networking layer creates entanglement between qubits inside multiple QPUs, which can then carry out complex computations by acting as one larger and more powerful machine. Project IDRA is singularly



Dr. Michael Cuthbert and Carmen Palacios. Image courtesy - Nu Quantum.

focused to address head-on the key technical risks limiting the development of distributed quantum processors. Removing this barrier will unlock the distributed quantum computing paradigm.

Nu Quantum is developing a complete distributed quantum processor system, comprising high-efficiency qubit-photon interfaces and low-loss, high-rate, high-fidelity Quantum Networking Units (QNUs) as well as networking control and orchestration architectures.

The collaboration aims to demonstrate entanglement rates and fidelities significantly beyond the academic state-of-the-art. The technologies created by Nu Quantum will be assembled, evaluated and tested in collaboration with the NQCC at the Harwell Campus in Oxfordshire.

There are multiple long-distance entanglement-based quantum networking testbeds - notably at TU Delft (Netherlands), Argonne and FermiLab National Labs (Chicago, Illinois), and Caltech-JPL (Los Angeles, California) around the world.

This project will set the UK apart in that it is the first

specifically targeted at the networking of quantum processors toward scalable fault tolerant quantum computing within quantum data centres developed by an industrial partner.

The work is complementary to the NQCC's 'SBRI: Development and Delivery of Quantum Computing Testbeds', delivered in partnership with Innovate UK, which saw seven award winners announced in February.

Once deployed, the NQCC will become a unique centre in the world with commercial QC systems across multiple qubit modalities available to researchers for the exploration of NISQ-era algorithm development, verification and benchmarking.

Thanks to these initiatives, the Harwell campus is expected to grow a flourishing quantum ecosystem over the next few years anchored by the NQCC as a new national laboratory.

Carmen Palacios, co-founder and CEO of Nu Quantum, said: "The UK continues to lead in the field of quantum computing, which is set to be truly transformational for our society and the planet.

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# Owlstone lands five-year deal with FDA

Cambridge Science Park breath biopsy company Owlstone Medical has secured a landmark deal with the FDA in the US, which holds the keys to billions of dollars worth of life science innovations every year.

The five-year Research Collaboration Agreement is with the FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health - Office of Science and Engineering Laboratories.

The goal of the collaboration is to develop methods for the confident identification of individual chemicals in the complex mixture of breath. Owlstone intends to use the results of this collaboration to support its efforts to identify disease biomarkers and the future development of portable breath diagnostic devices, including in its ongoing work with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The agreement will address the need in the broader breath research community for a set of validated methods to support the identification of Volatile Organic Compounds on breath - an area in which Owlstone is a leader.

Owlstone will separately use the outcomes for the development of breath-based diagnostics, enabling in vitro diagnostic device manufacturers, biopharma, academic research centres and government agencies to confidently identify breath biomarkers related to disease.

Work will also take place to build the concept of the chemical universe on breath that researchers can use to support the efficient and robust design of analytical studies.

Regulatory Science Tools are the FDA's innovative science-based approaches to assess the safety and



Owlstone Medical CEO and co-founder, Billy Boyle. Courtesy - Owlstone Medical.

effectiveness of medical devices and emerging technologies.

This collaboration aims to develop RSTs for identification of VOCs in complex mixtures. It is anticipated that the RSTs will help accelerate product development and disease diagnoses in rural and economically burdened areas globally.

This collaboration will also aid in furthering development and population of Owlstone's Breath Biopsy VOC Atlas<sup>®1</sup>, a unique database of identified and quantified VOCs on breath.

Owlstone recently announced a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop remote-use breath-based diagnostics and identify breath biomarkers for TB and human immunodeficiency viruses as well as advancing Owlstone's Breath Biopsy<sup>®</sup> platform including expansion of the Breath Biopsy VOC Atlas database.

Billy Boyle, co-founder and CEO at Owlstone Medical, said: "As evidenced by the high level of activity and investment being driven through the FDA, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and other groups such as the U.S. Department of Defense, the potential for breath-based diagnostics in high-need areas is becoming more widely realised.

"By defining rigorous practices for analysis and harnessing the collective knowledge and experience of the FDA, we aim to collaboratively create a common set of analytical methodologies that will serve as a valuable reference for the entire breath research community.

"We believe these RSTs have the potential to accelerate the future development of simple and low-cost non-invasive diagnostic tests and portable devices. We are proud and delighted to have been chosen as their partner in this important project."

# Arecor upbeat as shareholders reserve judgement

Quoted Cambridge biotech Arecor Therapeutics, buoyed by a £6.4 million fundraise in the summer, says it is "excited about what can be achieved through 2024 and beyond."

The upbeat comment from CEO Sarah Howell lit up the AIM-quoted biopharma group's interim results for the six months to June 30. But shareholders appeared unimpressed as the stock dipped slightly lower on the news.

Revenue was higher at £2m half-on-half (first half 2023 unaudited: £1.67m) and total income slightly lower at £2.03m (£2.33m). Investment in R & D of £2.09m was down on the £2.86m invested in the first half.

It all meant that the post-tax loss was fractionally higher at £4.6m (£4.53m). Cash, equivalents and short-term investments of £2.53m plummeted from £6.61m at the same juncture of 2023.

The picture seems brighter since Arecor clinched its post-period fundraise of £6.4m before expenses,

including support from two international life science healthcare investors.

The cash is to be used towards delivering significant value inflection points including investment in R & D to drive high-value partnerships and working capital inventory investment for Ogluo<sup>®</sup>, as well as strengthening the balance sheet.

Dr Howell said: "During the period we have significantly advanced and expanded our diabetes and obesity portfolio, reporting very positive Phase I clinical results for AT278 demonstrating its clear superiority and potential to improve outcomes and lower the burden for people living with diabetes, and expanding our technology platform in the development of the oral delivery of peptides, initially GLP-1, a potential high value, high growth proposition.

"With multiple opportunities for value creation, we continue to build momentum across the business. With

a strengthened financial position following our fundraise we are confident in our ability to deliver against our strategy and excited about what can be achieved through 2024 and beyond."

In terms of the clinic, Arecor announced significant progress in development of its AT278 insulin candidate, "demonstrating superiority to current best insulins in a Phase I clinical trial in Type 2 diabetics with high BMI." It also expanded its diabetes and obesity pipeline, with its oral GLP-1 receptor agonist development initiated.

Arecor entered a strategic research collaboration with Medtronic to develop a novel formulation of insulin for implantable intraperitoneal insulin pump delivery, fully funded by Medtronic.

Its Arestat<sup>™</sup>-enabled product, AT220, generated growing royalties under a worldwide licensing agreement.

on that base by collaborating with the NQCC to accelerate the usability and commercialisation of quantum computers, and to work together to build pioneering companies for a better future."

Dr. Michael Cuthbert, NQCC Director, added: "We are pleased to be collaborating with Nu Quantum to deliver the IDRA project, aimed

at building an innovative optically-connected distributed quantum computing system.

"This is an important step towards a quantum data centre of the future. We at the NQCC, extend our hearty welcome to the Nu Quantum colleagues to set up their lab in our facility at Harwell and share the NQCC's goal of making the UK a quantum-ready economy."

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# Game-changing camera launched by Raspberry Pi and Sony

Japan's Sony Semiconductor Solutions Corporation (SSS) and Cambridge UK quoted company Raspberry Pi have launched a jointly developed AI camera. The Raspberry Pi AI Camera, which is compatible with the company's range of single-board computers, will accelerate the development of AI solutions which process visual data at the edge.

The product is now available to buy from Raspberry Pi's network of approved resellers for a suggested retail price of \$70 (£52.20p).

It was only in April that SSS revealed it would make a minority investment in Raspberry Pi. The companies have since been working to develop an edge AI platform for the community of Raspberry Pi developers, based on SSS technology.

The AI Camera is powered by SSS's IMX500 intelligent vision sensor, which is capable of on-chip AI image processing, and enables Raspberry Pi users around the world to easily and efficiently develop edge AI solutions that process visual data.

Because vision data is normally massive, using it to

develop AI solutions can require a graphics processing unit (GPU), an accelerator, and a variety of other components in addition to a camera.

The new camera, however, is equipped with the IMX500 intelligent vision sensor which handles AI processing, making it easy to develop edge AI solutions with just a Raspberry Pi and the AI Camera.

The camera is compatible with all Raspberry Pi single-board computers, including the latest Raspberry Pi 5. This enables users to develop solutions with familiar hardware and software, taking advantage of the widely used and powerful libcamera and Picamera2 software libraries.

Eita Yanagisawa, General Manager, System Solutions Division, Sony Semiconductor Solutions Corporation, said: "SSS and Raspberry Pi aim to provide Raspberry Pi users and the development community with a unique development experience.

"I'm very excited to share SSS edge AI sensing technology with the world's largest development community as the first fruits of our strategic partnership.



Courtesy - Raspberry Pi

"We look forward to further collaboration with Raspberry Pi using our AITRIOS™ edge AI solution development and operations platform. We aim to make the most of AI cameras equipped with our image sensors in our collaborative efforts with Raspberry Pi."

Eben Upton, CEO at Raspberry Pi, said: "AI-based image processing is becoming an attractive tool for developers around the world. Together with our longstanding image sensor partner Sony Semiconductor Solutions, we have developed the Raspberry Pi AI Camera, incorporating Sony's image sensor expertise.

We look forward to seeing what our community members are able to achieve using the power of the Raspberry Pi AI Camera."

Sony Semiconductor Solutions Corporation is a wholly owned subsidiary of Sony Group Corporation and the global leader in image sensors. It operates in the semiconductor business, which includes image sensors and other products.

Raspberry Pi is on a mission to put high-performance, low-cost, general-purpose computing platforms in the hands of enthusiasts and engineers all over the world.

With its low price point and

eliminating the need for a GPU and other costly components, the new AI camera has an enormous number of potential use cases. These include:

- **Factory floors:** The camera instantly detects defects like missing or misaligned parts, preventing costly mistakes before they happen.

- **Labs:** Speeding up diagnostics, identifying and counting different cell types on microscope slides in minutes.

- **Gyms and workplaces:** Analysis of posture in real time, ensuring perfect form in weightlifting or safe lifting in manual handling.

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# THE LAW LORDS

Business Weekly looks at the leading law firms and practitioners featuring in the 2025 Legal 500 Guide

## Top five law firms for East Anglia named in new Legal 500 UK guide

The 2025 Legal 500 UK guide ranks almost 60 law firms across 40 practice areas in East Anglia with over 300 rankings in total.

Editor Amy Ulliott says that leading the pack, Birketts and Mills & Reeve are the only two firms in the market with over 30 rankings; the pair also lead on individual ratings, with each firm having close to 90 lawyer citations across the Hall of Fame, Leading partners, Next generation partners and Leading associates tables.

Ashtons Legal, Howes Percival and HCR Hewitsons complete East Anglia's top five – both in terms of total rankings and number of individuals ranked, she reports.

The Legal 500 UK Solicitors 2025 rankings – now live – show that almost 1,200 law firms have secured spots in the new guide, which ranks the best law firms and lawyers across the nation.

The guide is also the first to launch on the newly configured Legal 500 website – <https://www.legal500.com> – following a comprehensive rebrand in mid-2024.

Ulliott reports that East Anglia's legal market “has continued to demonstrate



Amy Ulliott, Editor, Legal 500

its resilience following the challenging conditions of recent years.”

She says: “While a long-predicted wave of insolvencies is yet to materialise, restructuring practices remain steady in the region, particularly in the SME and mid-market spaces.

“Cambridge, Norwich and Peterborough have all seen notable real estate action, with housing, commercial and mixed-use developments dominating firm workloads. Firms have also

reported a notable volume of work relating to biodiversity net gain requirements and other diversification projects.”

Mills & Reeve shares a top placing for Intellectual Property in the TMT section (Technology, Media and telecoms) with its team led by Mark Pearce. Head of Life Sciences, James Fry, is also singled out as “a key adviser to numerous global companies, among them GSK.”

Birketts and Penningtons Manches Cooper are in Tier 2 and Greenwoods in Tier 3. Mills & Reeve and Penningtons are joint top in Tier 2 for TMT Biotechnology. For IT and Telecoms Mills & Reeve is ranked number one on its own with Ashtons Legal and Birketts sharing the glory in Tier 2 and Greenwoods the stand-out in Tier 3.

Corporate and commercial rankings in the Guide are regarded as gold dust and here again the region's best are highly rated: Birketts and Mills & Reeve make the top five for Cambridge while there are Tier 2 slots for HCR Hewitsons and Howes Percival.

In Norwich, Birketts and Mills & Reeve are joint top for



The Law Society, Chancery Lane, London. Credit – Chaz Bharj / Shutterstock.com.

## Legal500

[www.legal500.com](http://www.legal500.com)

Corporate and commercial work while Ashtons Legal, Birketts and Greenwoods all claim Tier 1 placings for Corporate and commercial work elsewhere in East Anglia.

Patent & Trade mark attorney partner J A Kemp is in the top tier for both TM and patent work.

Commercial property is a hot topic in the region right now as government looks to create a UK Silicon Valley in Cambridge and there is a renewed focus on lab & office space as well as more housing.

In Cambridge, the Guide ranks Birketts, HCR Hewitsons, Howes Percival, Mills & Reeve and Mishcon de Reya equal in Tier 1. Barr Ellison makes Tier 2 and is said to have climbed the rankings as ‘outstanding’ lead partner Kelly Peck spearheads impressive growth. Penningtons shares a Tier 3 placement.

Three firms are rated joint top for Commercial Property work in Norwich – Birketts, Howes Percival and Mills & Reeve – while Birketts stands alone atop Tier 1 ‘elsewhere in East Anglia.’

## J A Kemp makes top tier for each of Patent Attorney and Trade Mark work

### PATMA

J A Kemp secures Tier 1 rankings for the quality of both its Patent Attorney and Trade Mark work.

In the latter arena, the Guide says that with offices in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, and Munich, J A Kemp is well placed to obtain trade mark protection for a wide range of clients, including those from the US, Japan, and Scandinavia.

James Fish sits at the helm of the practice with significant experience in conducting multi-jurisdictional clearance searching and filing strategies, while Tom Albertini leads the designs team.

Charlotte Stirling handles contentious trade mark matters for start-ups, as well as household name clients. Another key name in the team is Oxford-based Ben Mooneapilly, whose client base consists of SMEs and large corporates in the luxury goods, entertainment, sports, food, fashion, and gaming sectors.

### Trade mark attorneys – Tier 1

Boult Wade Tennant LLP  
J A Kemp  
Mewburn Ellis LLP  
Stobbs IP

### Patent attorneys – Tier 1

Boult Wade Tennant LLP  
J A Kemp  
Marks & Clerk  
Mewburn Ellis LLP  
Venner Shipley LLP

In the Patent Attorneys pantheon, J A Kemp is said to be ‘well placed to advise clients on the entire gamut of patent-related mandates, from drafting and filings, to prosecutions, oppositions, and appeals before the EPO, freedom to operate mandates, and portfolio management, with offices located in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, and Munich.’

The Legal 500 Guide adds that start-ups and growing businesses, in addition to large corporations and prestigious academic

institutions, form the group's impressive client base, with a geographical spread across the UK, Europe, the US, and Japan.

It adds that the firm is also increasingly active before the UPC. Senior partner Martin Jackson leads the engineering and IT group, having taken over from Nigel Price following his retirement.

Oxford-based Amanda Simons spearheads the chemistry and pharmaceuticals department, and Patrick Campbell heads up the firm's biotechnology and life sciences practice. Mark Roberts sits at the helm of the medical devices group, while Ravi Srinivasan chairs the pharmaceuticals team and John Leeming steers the software group.

Graham Lewis is also of note as head of the Supplementary Protection Certificates group. In team news, the ‘superbly intelligent patent litigator’ John Hornby joined the firm from Lewis Silkin in March 2024.



Matthew Gowen. Head of regulatory and corporate defence at Birketts.

## Birketts out in front for Transport and Shipping

Birketts is standalone in Tier 1 for Transport and Shipping in the 2025 Legal 500 guide.

The guide states that “The ‘responsive and professional’ transport and shipping practice at Birketts ‘gives clear and sensible advice’. The Ipswich office is home to experts in road transport, logistics, marine cargo, and multimodal carriage, as well as regulatory and licensing matters, customs and duty issues, employment matters and the drafting of commercial contracts.

“Head of shipping and international trade Henry Adams

is a dry shipping specialist. Head litigation Alex Davey frequently handles cargo disputes. Head of regulatory and corporate defence Matthew Gowen is key adviser to operators and trade bodies.

“Emerging partner talent Tom Hodges frequently assists clients from Asia with dry shipping and marine insurance matters, while legal director Sarah Holsgrove handles charterparty disputes and cargo recoveries. Mediator and dry shipping litigation specialist Nicholas Woo is regarded as an expert in his field.”



## THE LAW LORDS

## Guide to practitioners in the East of England

## Corporate &amp; Commercial rankings show strength in depth of law firms across the East Anglia region

## CORPORATE &amp; COMMERCIAL

## Cambridge

The Legal 500 Guide lists law firms in alphabetical order within its rankings and, for consistency, we review them in the same manner.

In Tier 1, Birketts is said to have a deep bench of talent in the Cambridge office, with corporate finance partner James Allen, private equity specialist Adrian Seagers, and M & A expert Greg Allan, who also works from Norwich, co-leading the practice.

The firm serves as 'a trusted source of expert advice and a resolver of obstacles and problems'. Quentin Golder is a key adviser on early-stage funding. Andrew Priest is in-depth knowledge of the ICT sector, and emerging partner talent Nick Burt has notable experience in M & A transactions involving software or tech businesses, the Guide says. Allan recently acted for Cambrionix Holdings Limited in its multimillion-pound sale to Foresight.

Mills & Reeve is also described as having a broad base of lawyers in its Cambridge corporate M & A practice, which frequently handles high-value regional and national transactions.

Head of corporate Tom Pickthorn, head of commercial Kevin Calder and head of life sciences James Fry oversee 'a very strong practice, with excellent depth of understanding of UK Corporate law, and great ability to distill it down to a practical approach'.

Private equity partner Anthony McGurk 'has a very good sense of market practice'. Claire Clarke has particular expertise in education work and formation of investment funds, and Jonathan Greenwood focuses on mid-market M & A and PE investment. Senior associate Charlotte Bull also plays a key role in the team, the Guide says.

In Tier 2, BDB Pitmans is said to have 'a rounded team, with depth of experience to really look after clients and get the job done', the Guide reports. It adds that, rather than taking a sector-specific approach, the firm is focused on serving a broad base of regional private-client entrepreneurs, SMEs and large corporate organisations across East Anglia and beyond.

The 'exceptional' Duncan Walker leads the practice. Clients remark that he has a 'calm pragmatic approach to getting deals done'. 'Ruthlessly efficient' associate Ross Fletcher plays a key role in the firm's M & A, joint venture, and corporate restructuring work.

HCR Hewitsons is described as a long-established player in the Cambridge market and maintains a strong bench of partners who



Tom Pickthorn, Mills &amp; Reeve



Quentin Golder, Birketts

## Legal500

www.legal500.com



Inger Anson, HCR Hewitsons



Adrian Possener, Birketts

advise both large and early-stage companies.

Head of the Cambridge office Inger Anson leads the corporate practice while Rebecca Quinn is head of the commercial team. Partners James Lawrence, who is a key adviser on corporate finance matters, and Laurence Evans, who frequently handles M & A deals, private equity transactions and venture capital investments in the technology sector, are highly regarded by clients and peers. Anson assisted Immaterial Ltd with its £13.5 million Series



Josie Rogers, Howes Percival

A funding round and Lawrence advised shareholders of Suttons Performance Packaging Ltd on the company's £13.7m sale.

Howes Percival's Cambridge office is said to play an increasingly important role in its firm-wide corporate, commercial and banking practice, led by James Stephen, who has hired at junior level to expand the local team. Associate Josie Rogers joined from Attwaters Jameson Hill Solicitors and legal director Ollie Flowers from BDB Pitmans. Clients appreciate their 'top-class advice and support', and note that Stephen has 'a very pragmatic approach to getting deals done'. The firm is a key adviser to private equity investors and has a strong presence in mid-market deals locally and beyond East Anglia.

CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL  
Norwich

In Norwich, Tier 1 ranked Birketts has 'an excellent team, that works diligently and effectively', the Legal 500 Guide reports. Clients note that the lawyers 'explain

## CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL (LEADING INDIVIDUALS)

## HALL OF FAME

**Birketts:** James Allen, James Austin, Adrian Possener

**Buckles Solicitors:** Nigel Moore

**Goodwin:** David Mardle

**Mills & Reeve:** Claire Clarke, Craig Hodgson, James Hunter,

Anthony McGurk, Tom Pickthorn

**Mishcon de Reya:** Adam Bradley

## LEADING ASSOCIATES

**Ashtons Legal:** Mark Watson

**Birketts:** Emma Bysouth

**Fosters:** Josh Perez-Fosh

**Greenwoods:** Claire Banks

**Mills & Reeve:** Charlotte Bull, John Kahn, Christina O'Brien

**Mishcon de Reya:** Sarah Ilic

## LEADING PARTNERS

**Ashtons Legal:** John Chambers, Geoff Hazlewood, Damian

Humphrey, James Tarling.

**BDB Pitmans:** Duncan Walker.

**Birketts:** Greg Allan, Quentin Golder, Lisa Hayward, Alexandra

Nelson, Karl Pocock, Ed Savory, Andrew Tubb.

**Buckles Solicitors:** Alastair Gunn.

**Fosters:** Jamie Arnall.

**Gotelee Solicitors:** Max Harnden.

**Greene & Greene:** Mark Daly, Simon Ratcliffe

**HCR Hewitsons:** Inger Anson, Laurence Evans, James Lawrence.

**Howes Percival:** Oliver Pritchard.

**Mills & Reeve:** Greg Gibson, Jonathan Greenwood, Natalie Wade.

**Mishcon de Reya:** Charles Fletcher, Sian Scanlon.

**Prettys Solicitors:** Ian Waive.

**Spire Solicitors:** Matthew Downing.

**Taylor Wessing:** Ross McNaughton.

**Withers:** Susanna Stanfield

## NEXT GENERATION PARTNERS

**Ashtons Legal:** Craig Fiddaman, Nick Palmer.

**Birketts:** Nick Burt.

**Ellisons Solicitors:** Petra Sharp.

**Goodwin:** Elizabeth Rhodes, Adam Thatcher.

**Mills & Reeve:** Matthew Short.

**Prettys Solicitors:** Daniel Billson.

things in simple terms, whilst understanding the commercial options'.

Ed Savory, who advises numerous SMEs and family-owned businesses on sales, acquisitions, MBOs, generational transitions and re-organisations, has taken over the role of lead partner and Adrian Possener is now focusing exclusively on deals in the energy and infrastructure sector. Corporate finance specialist Greg Allan is a key adviser on M & A transactions, notably in the care homes sector, and technology expert Paul Palik leads the Norwich commercial team, handling digital transformation projects, knowledge transfer partnerships and more.

Also in Tier 1, Mills & Reeve's Norwich office is home to a "deep bench of talent", says the Guide, with highly experienced corporate and commercial partners handling high-value and complex deals.

Natalie Wade, who frequently handles health sector transactions and head of commercial Greg Gibson, who focuses on outsourcing, commercial contracts and procurement law, oversee the group. Firm-wide head of corporate James Hunter also plays a pivotal role in major

deals and recently advised Arthur J Gallagher on the purchase of Lifesure Limited.

Head of the firm-wide national food and agribusiness sector group, Craig Hodgson, assisted private equity firm Foresight Group with the purchase of Cambionix Limited. M & A and funds specialist Matthew Short and principal associate Christina O'Brien are also prominent practitioners.

In Tier 2, The Guide reports that Howes Percival has 'a team that pulls together and will work hard on your behalf'. The firm handles high-value M & A transactions, as well as commercial matters, across East Anglia and further afield.

The firm-wide corporate, commercial and banking practice is led from Cambridge by James Stephen but the 'calm and practical' Oliver Pritchard in Norwich leads the East Anglia corporate group.

'Calm, patient, very knowledgeable and hardworking' legal director Richard Turner, and associates Lizzy Page and Helaina Mann also play central roles in the practice. Turner recently assisted shareholders of AFA Fostering Ltd on its sale to BSN Social Care.



## THE LAW LORDS

## Guide to practitioners in the East of England

## CORPORATE &amp; COMMERCIAL

## Elsewhere in East Anglia

In Tier 1, Ashtons Legal is 'a firm with a broad range of legal skills that enable it to support business across multiple sectors', and clients praise the fact that the key partners 'understand their business and where they can add value'. Practice head Geoff Hazlewood in Ipswich, who leads the team's corporate advice to care home owners, sets the example.

Newly promoted partner Craig Fiddaman, also based in Ipswich, specialises in share and asset acquisitions and disposals, and takes over the work of retiree Paul Whittingham in advising veterinary practices. The firm also calls upon niche expertise in commercial agency law, franchising, technology and banking.

As a long-established local firm, Birketts has a 'responsive and client-focused' corporate practice in Ipswich. Lead partner Alexandra Nelson is 'calm under pressure' and has notable expertise in high-value corporate finance and M & A transactions, private equity investments and group reorganisations.

She recently worked with employee incentives expert Lisa Hayward on establishing an Employee Ownership Trust for LGS Holdings Limited, and its multimillion-pound sale.

Senior partner and commercial contracts specialist James Austin, commercial and technology partner Mark Gipson; and finance partner Andrew Tubb (who is known for providing 'practical solutions with genuine innovation'), and senior associate Emma Bysouth also play central roles in the practice.

Greenwoods in Peterborough continues to build its corporate and commercial team, which is led by the highly experienced Stephen Jarvis. His 'ultra-professional, efficient and effective' team includes senior associates Claire Banks (who is 'very positive and clear') and head of the charity sector group Victoria Robinson.

Acting as a central hub for the firm-wide practice, the Peterborough office is increasingly involved in multimillion-pound national and cross-border transactions, a recent example being its work for family-owned company Hedin Mobility Group in its acquisition of BMW and Mini retailer Stephen James Group. Charities and education are two of the firm's key areas of expertise.



Stephen Jarvis, Greenwoods



Geoff Hazlewood, Ashtons Legal



Lisa Hayward, Birketts

CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL  
Corporate Tax

Birketts and Mills & Reeve share Tier 1 for Corporate Tax in the guide. It reports that the specialist corporate tax practice at Birketts is well versed in structuring and transactional tax advice, as well as strategic land development, employee incentive arrangements, employee ownership trusts, and advice on Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) and Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) investment.

It also has niche expertise in advising farming businesses on tax-efficient structuring. 'The quality of service provided is excellent at very competitive pricing that is unbeatable when compared to a London city law firm', remarks one client.

'Highly efficient, meticulous, prompt' head of corporate tax Karl Pocock is based in Norwich, as is key associate Ben Clarke. In Ipswich, head of employee incentives Lisa Hayward is the principal contact.

The firm-wide corporate tax practice at Mills & Reeve has a strong presence in its East Anglia offices. Matthew Short in Norwich co-leads the practice with Birmingham-based Kevin Lowe, while Norwich principal associate John Kahn brings to bear his specialist knowledge of employee ownership trusts, and consultant Robert Kent in Cambridge handles corporate tax and real estate tax matters, with notable expertise in corporate funds and VAT advisory work.

The firm's work encompasses advice on complex tax issues arising from M & A and banking transactions, as well as IR35 issues, property tax structuring, social investments, and venture capital transactions. The practice also has specialist knowledge of tax matters in the sports, charities, and education sectors.

## Wheeler hailed as an 'Icon and inspiration to women of law'

## EMPLOYMENT

Birketts, Cambridge Employment Law, Eversheds Sutherland, Greenwoods, Mills & Reeve and Mishcon de Reya are ranked as Tier 1 for Employment Law in the 2025 Legal 500 guide.

The employment practice at Birketts has a depth of talent across all of its offices, with its East Anglian partners forming the core of the firm-wide group.

As well as covering the full range of contentious and advisory work, the firm is also highly regarded for its employment law training programme. 'Icon and inspiration to women of law' Jeanette Wheeler leads the cross-office employment practice from Norwich, where partners Matthew Newnham (who 'always provides pragmatic and sound legal advice') and 'legal training ninja' Sam Greenhalgh, legal director Tom Sharpe and senior associate Lucy Churchill are among a number of standout practitioners.

In Cambridge, partners Abigail Trencher and legal director Olivia Toulson are the key contacts. In Ipswich, partners Catherine Johnson and Sonya O'Reilly take the lead.

The employment practice at Greenwoods is a key pillar of the firm's activity and frequently acts for blue-chip and nationally recognised organisations. It handles the full range of employment law matters, though it has notable experience in large-scale change programmes and works closely with HR teams to ensure effective people management.

Practice head John Macaulay in Peterborough has built one of the largest groups of employment lawyers in East Anglia, with key partner Keith Williams and, in Cambridge, partner Joanna Scally and senior associates Natalie Williams and Siobhan Thomson among the standout practitioners. Scally is a key adviser to university colleges and independent schools.

Mills & Reeve's national employment group is led by the 'outstanding' David Mills from the Cambridge office, which is also home to key partners Nicola Brown, who focuses on work for national higher education and charity clients, Stuart Craig, who is a key adviser to businesses in the health sector, and Melanie James, who acts for large private employers.

James Kidd leads the employment, pensions and immigration practice in the Norwich office, where 'personable and client-oriented' education sector specialist Alex Russell is also a standout practitioner.

Russell and principal associate Patrick Gass recently acted for a UK university in a major restructure and collective redundancy exercise involving more than 100 academic and



Jeanette Wheeler, Birketts

professional services staff.

In Tier 2, The employment team at HCR Hewitsons, led by Michael Stokes in Worcester, has a long-standing presence in the Cambridge market thanks to key partners Valerie Lambert (who is 'diligent, conscientious, always available') and Elizabeth Swinburn (who exhibits 'expert knowledge and great empathy with clients').

The practice is a key adviser to organisations from diverse sectors, among them agriculture, architecture, biotech, charities, construction, education and transport. Its work encompasses High Court litigation, advice on restrictive covenants, confidential information and breach of fiduciary duty matters, Employment Tribunal disputes, TUPE transfers and more.

The employment practice at Howes Percival is known for 'client-focused pragmatism, backed up by deep knowledge and experience'. The practice operates across the firm's extensive office network to service clients across the UK, and the offices in East Anglia play a pivotal role in that work.

Key partner Matthew Potter in Cambridge 'takes time to listen and then advises very pragmatic solutions'. Clients also praise Norwich-based legal director Laura Brown for her 'commercial awareness, coupled with a human-centric focus'.

They frequently handle domestic and cross-border matters in sectors such as leisure, technology, education, energy, motor, manufacturing and food.

Cambridge-based Penningtons Manches Cooper has 'unparalleled experience of employment- and discrimination-related issues', though it handles the full range of employment law matters, particularly for clients in the technology, life sciences, charities and education sectors.

Practice head Hilary Aldred, who is 'a standout lawyer and tactician', has a diverse client base that includes listed companies, not-for-profit institutions and high-net-worth individuals and entrepreneurs, as well as numerous universities and colleges and private education providers.

EMPLOYMENT LAW  
(LEADING INDIVIDUALS)

## HALL OF FAME

**Ashtons Legal:** Oliver Brabbins.  
**Birketts:** Jeanette Wheeler.  
**Eversheds Sutherland:** Simon Tytherleigh.  
**HCR Hewitsons:** Kathryn Gilbertson.

## LEADING ASSOCIATES

**Birketts:** Lucy Churchill.  
**Buckles Solicitors:** Nicola Cockerill.  
**Eversheds Sutherland:** Rachel Bennett.  
**Greene & Greene:** Angharad Ellis Owen.  
**Greenwoods:** Siobhan Thomson, Natalie Williams.  
**Howes Percival:** Laura Brown.  
**Penningtons Manches Cooper:** Sophie Whitbread.  
**Prettys Solicitors:** Sheila Cummins.  
**Spire Solicitors:** June Salmon.

## LEADING PARTNERS

**Ashtons Legal:** Claire Sleep, Ross Strowger.  
**Birketts:** Matthew Gowen, Matthew Newnham, Abigail Trencher.  
**Cambridge Employment Law:** Eleanor Freeman, Oliver Pryke.  
**Ellisons Solicitors:** Julian Outen, Sohan Sidhu.  
**Eversheds Sutherland:** Elizabeth Graves, Matthew Kelly, Constanze Moorhouse.  
**Gotelee Solicitors:** Marie Allen.  
**Greene & Greene:** Selene Holden, Greg Jones.  
**Greenwoods:** John Macaulay, Joanna Scally, Keith Williams.  
**HCR Hewitsons:** Valerie Lambert, Elizabeth Swinburn.  
**Howes Percival:** Matthew Potter, Robert Starr.  
**Mills & Reeve:** Nicola Brown, Stuart Craig, David Mills, Alex Russell.  
**Mishcon de Reya:** Kim Wedral-Rooke.  
**Penningtons Manches Cooper:** Hilary Aldred.  
**Prettys Solicitors:** Matthew Cole.  
**Stone King:** Julie Moktadir.  
**Woodfines:** Nick Sayer.

NEXT GENERATION  
PARTNERS

**Ashtons Legal:** Robert Hickford.  
**Birketts:** Julie Gowland.  
**Mills & Reeve:** Alex Russell.  
**Prettys Solicitors:** Vanessa Bell.

Managing associate Sophie Whitbread (who is 'knowledgeable, thorough and an efficient and effective communicator') and 'very pragmatic and highly intelligent' senior associate Charissa Upton are highly recommended.



## THE LAW LORDS

### Spotlight on J A Kemp

# J A Kemp's expanding Cambridge office proves globally influential

Over the last 12 months, leading European and UK patent and trade mark firm J A Kemp has continued to expand its presence in Cambridge with relocation to a new office at One Cambridge Square – a far cry from the firm's first three-person office in the city less than a decade ago.

This expansion is testament to both the profusion of innovation in and around Cambridge and the confidence placed in the firm's attorneys to provide pragmatic advice to support the best commercial outcome.

The move has coincided with a further expansion of the Cambridge-based team with the arrival of associate Ruth Shelton growing the chemistry team and the relocation to Cambridge of associates Josie Pepper and Hiro Shimazaki further strengthening the biotechnology team in which associates Feng Rao and David Gallagher have both been promoted to partner.

With unrivalled knowledge of the IP landscape in Europe, the UK and across the globe, the firm is able to file prosecute and defend patents and trade marks,



Stephen Hodsdon

advise on IP strategy and offer specialist advice in niche areas such as Plant Variety Rights, SPCs and online domain disputes.

The plant science team, led by Cambridge-based partner Dan Shaw, is a particular strength of the firm and an area in which few other UK firms have significant experience.

This has laid the foundation

for a sizeable base of clients in the AgriTech sector, including leading plant science company Tropic Biosciences. The team was further strengthened by the arrival in October 2024 of associate Richard Payne and trainee Daniel Olatokun.

A notable client acquisition in the last year has been local pharma company Bicycle Therapeutics. The J A Kemp team, led by partner Andreas Theisen, is supporting Bicycle as it develops its revolutionary platform technology including therapeutic candidates in ongoing clinical trials.

The work for Bicycle spans a wide range of technology areas across the biotechnology and chemistry fields, as well as providing advice on trade mark matters.

Startups, spinouts and scaleups are a vital part of the Cambridge story and J A Kemp's Cambridge team have continued their strong record of assisting these companies, providing strategic IP advice at all stages of their journey, particularly in assisting the development of

portfolios which have been key to securing growth funding.

The reputation of the team also attracts early stage ventures from further afield, both in the UK and internationally.

As well as advising their clients in the Cambridge area and beyond, the local team is very active in the Cambridge ecosystem, mentoring entrepreneurs, founders and startup companies from the universities and beyond and working with local accelerators and venture builders to assist their members to navigate the world of IP.

This has included the continued support by the firm's attorneys for entrepreneurship programmes run by the Cambridge Judge Business School, including partner Vicki Allen and associates Jenny Soderman and Josie Pepper delivering a workshop as part of the inaugural EnterpriseWOMEN programme.

J A Kemp are one of only two UK patent attorney firms recognised in the Legal 500 Green Guide 2024 and CleanTech features high on the firm's



Vicki Allen

Cambridge agenda, with partners Stephen Hodsdon and Joe Simon-Brown leading their partnership with Cambridge Cleantech on their flagship Cleantech Venture Day including hosting pitch training for the participating companies.

The achievements of J A Kemp's Cambridge team were again recognised at the Cambridge Law Society's Legal Excellence Awards 2024, where Stephen Hodsdon was awarded "Senior Lawyer of the Year", Josie Pepper was Highly Commended in the "Trainee of the Year" category with the team as a whole also being Highly Commended in the IP & IT Firm of the Year category.

## Top Tier IP Advice across the Golden Triangle

**J A Kemp is one of the largest UK and European patent and trademark attorney firms.**

We are ranked in the top tier by *The Legal 500*, *IAM Patent 1000*, *World Trademark Review 1000*, *Chambers & Partners* and *Managing Intellectual Property*.

From our offices in London, Oxford, and Cambridge we provide patent services across all technologies and a full range of trademark services. Whatever the nature of your business, J A Kemp has the expertise and resources to help you develop strategies to protect and exploit your intellectual property.

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PATENTS • TRADE MARKS • DESIGNS

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"There is a depth of knowledge within the team and clearly expertise running through at every level."

The Legal 500

"J A Kemp stands as one of the top patent prosecution practices in Europe."

IAM Patent 1000

"The firm listens to the needs of customers and delivers the solution in the best possible way."

Chambers & Partners

"One of the most reputable firms in the UK."

WTR 1000

"Thoroughly professional and excellent when engaging with inventors."

MIP



# “True experts” HCR Hewitsons achieves record rankings in 2025 Legal500

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Partner and Head of  
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## THE LAW LORDS Spotlight on Birketts

# Birketts on the up with Legal 500 rankings boost

2023-24 saw another year of growth for Birketts and the success of the firm has been reflected in this year's Legal 500 results.

The directory has recognised Birketts as a Top Tier Firm in 39 practice areas, up from 37 in 2023, including Commercial Litigation, Banking and Finance, Shipping, Agriculture and Estates, Charity and not-for-profit, and Commercial Property.

Birketts has also been listed as 'Firms to Watch' within four areas, including Charities and Not-for-Profit (London), Family (Kent, Surrey, Sussex), Employment (Kent, Surrey and Sussex) and Property Litigation (South East).

A total of 53 lawyers have been listed in the elite 'Leading Individuals' group, 20 in the 'Next Generation Partners' group, and 31 in the 'Leading Associates' category. A total of 117 lawyers have been mentioned by name in Legal 500 commentary for their standout client service.

Eleven individuals at Birketts have been recognised in the Legal 500 Hall of Fame - those who are at the very top of their profession: James Allen (Corporate and Commercial and Banking and Finance), James Austin (Corporate and Commercial), Adrian Possener (Corporate and Commercial), Laurence Weeks (Commercial Litigation and Insolvency and Corporate Recovery), Matthew Atkins (Commercial Litigation), Jeanette Wheeler (Employment), Jack Royall (Agriculture and Estates), Chris Schwer (Commercial Property), Melissa Loucas (Commercial Property), Deborah Sharples (Planning and Environment), and Rafael Ruiz (Corporate and Commercial).

The firm also continues to grow geographically. Following Birketts' expansion into the South East, and opening of its Sevenoaks office in 2023, the firm is expanding into the South West in 2024, with its seventh office based in Bristol.

The office will have a strong sector focus, including Financial Institutions, Insurance, Private Wealth, Renewables and Clean Energy, Agribusiness, and Shipping and International Trade.

On the announcement, Jonathan Agar, Chief Executive at Birketts said: "The opening of our Bristol office is a key step in Birketts' growth trajectory and will further expand our network of offices in southern England.

"Our hub has been extremely successful and has laid the foundations for the introduction of our brand of Next Level Law to the South West. The feedback from clients in Bristol has made it crystal clear how much potential



Planning and Environment specialist Deborah Sharples (above) and Head of Corporate Rafael Ruiz (below)



Birketts Chief Executive, Jonathan Agar. Photographs courtesy of Birketts LLP.



Jeanette Wheeler, Head of Employment Law at Birketts.



Melissa Loucas leads the Norwich Commercial Real Estate team



Corporate and Commercial Partner James Austin (left) with Senior Partner Chris Schwer.

there is for the firm to operate competitively from an established office in the city, and we look forward to being able to provide both new and existing clients a more comprehensive legal service from our new location."

Birketts has also seen its lawyer numbers grow this year, having recruited over 201 new colleagues across the firm. Alongside this, Birketts is committed to making the firm the best place to work for women lawyers. The firm has put in

place a range of initiatives, which combined, have increased the percentage of female leaders within the firm - as of 2023/24, 41 per cent of Birketts' Partnership is women.

Birketts has also recently seen success at the Norfolk and Norwich Law Society Excellence Awards for its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The firm has also been shortlisted in the legal services category for the Social Care Premier Supplier Awards 2024, in

two categories at the LexisNexis Family Law Awards 2024 (Family Law Firm of the Year - South and the Family Law Workplace of the Year), and for six awards at the Central and East Insider Dealmakers awards.

In some ways, the increasing success of Birketts can be seen through the transactions and client work on which the firm has been instructed. Notable deals from the past year include:

- Advising OCS, a leading global facilities service provider,

on their acquisition of Profile Security, one of the largest independently owned providers of security services in the UK.

- Advising the shareholders of Castons Consulting Limited and CCAS Limited in their sale to Artelia Holdings SAS.

- Advising the shareholders of Geosense Limited, a leading manufacturer offering a broad range of geotechnical solutions to a wide spectrum of infrastructure, construction, and mining companies, on its sale to international technology and industrial group, Indutrade.

- Advising Curious Pier Limited (part of Gough Hotels, a Suffolk owned family business) on the business sale of Southwold Pier to Amy and Charles Barwick.

- Advising Anglia Ruskin University on its merger with Writtle College.

On this year's rankings, Jonathan Agar, added: "This year's rankings not only reflect Birketts' upward trajectory, but also the hard work and dedication which sits at the heart of our firm.

"We are growing both geographically and in terms of the legal expertise we provide - but most importantly, our commitment to client service remains high. These factors mean we are well placed for another strong year ahead."



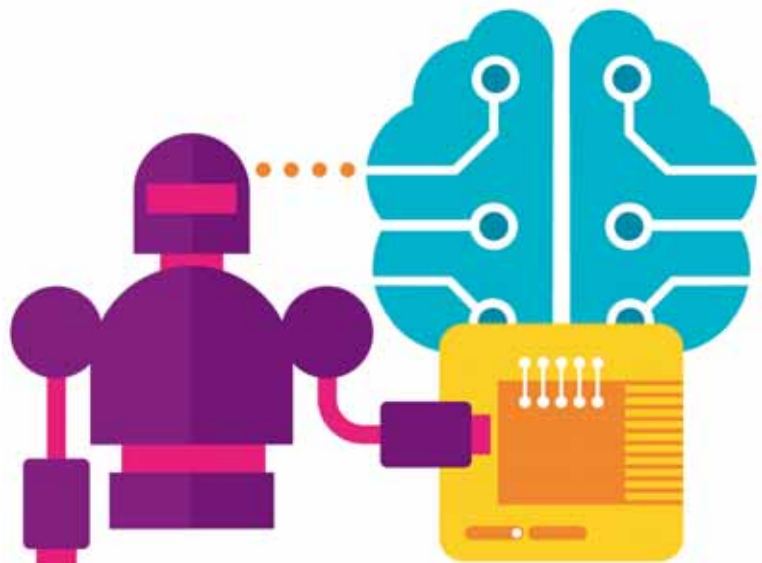
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## THE LAW LORDS

## Guide to practitioners in the East of England

## Mills &amp; Reeve praised for 'can do' attitude

## TMT (EAST ANGLIA)

## Intellectual Property

At Tier 1 ranked Mills & Reeve, 'the IP team has an excellent 'can do' attitude and its responsiveness and communications are superb'.

Led by Mark Pearce, who works from both the Leeds and Cambridge offices, the practice is active in both contentious and advisory matters for clients in the technology, life sciences, automotive, food and agriculture, and education sectors.

Head of life sciences James Fry is a key adviser to numerous global companies, among them GSK. He assisted F-star Therapeutics with an international strategic discovery collaboration and licence agreement. Principal associates Richard Plaistowe and Nicola Hanglin 'show humour, restraint, and patience' in complex matters. In Tier 2, The Cambridge office of Birketts is home to the core or its intellectual property practice, principally through IP disputes specialist Maria Peyman and technology partner Quentin Golder.

Legal director and barrister Alec Cameron also assists with contentious IP matters, and Andrew Priest focuses on non-contentious matters including copyright and brand protection.



James Fry, Mills &amp; Reeve

Legal director Melanie Harvey, who is 'exceptional in her role', leads the trade marks and branding team from Ipswich. The firm is known for 'responsive service with quick turnaround times'. Golder assisted NIAB with the assignment of trade marks and plant breeder varieties as part of the sale of its strawberry breeding business.

At Penningtons Manches Cooper, 'the entire team exhibits exceptional expertise', and clients note that they 'consistently receive high-level service at a reasonable price'.

The firm-wide IP practice



Maria Peyman, Birketts

is led by Rachel Bradley in Cambridge, Anna Frankum in London, and Chris Shelley in Oxford. Bradley's 'responsive, co-ordinated, friendly' team in East Anglia advises on patents, designs, trade marks, copyright and rights in confidential information to clients in the life sciences, publishing, and not-for-profit sectors.

Bradley recently assisted The Company of Biologists with contractual negotiations for the licensing of copyright in its scientific journals.

Greenwoods earns a Tier 3 ranking. The Guide reports that



Rachel Bradley, Penningtons Manches Cooper

Greenwoods handles both non-contentious and contentious IP matters, though its main focus is on disputes through litigation partner Jamie McConnell in Peterborough, who leads the technology practice.

He handles IP rights claims alongside his broad portfolio of commercial disputes. He also draws on the firm's corporate and commercial group to advise on licensing matters. He recently advised clients in the entertainment and technology industries on contentious regulatory and partnership matters.

## TMT (LEADING INDIVIDUALS)

## HALL OF FAME

**Goodwin:** Malcolm Bates, Tim Worden.

**Mills & Reeve:** Kevin Calder.

**Mishcon de Reya:** Patrick Farrant.

## LEADING ASSOCIATES

**Goodwin:** Georgia Powell.

**Mills & Reeve:** Katy Carson.

## LEADING PARTNERS

**Birketts:** Quentin Golder, Andrew Priest.

**Goodwin:** Malcolm Bates, Tim Worden.

**Marks & Clerk:** Simon Portman.

**Mills & Reeve:** James Fry, Peter Wainman.

**Mishcon de Reya:** Gareth Dickson, Louisa Dixon.

**Penningtons Manches Cooper:** Rachel Bradley.

**Stobbs IP:** Chris Sleep.

**Taylor Wessing:** Ross McNaughton, Adrian Toutoungi.

## NEXT GENERATION

## PARTNERS

**Birketts:** Paul Palik, Maria Peyman.

**Mills & Reeve:** Sophie Burton-Jones, Nicola Hanglin, Richard Plaistowe.

**Taylor Wessing:** Tasmina Goraya.

## TMT (EAST ANGLIA)

## IT &amp; Telecoms

In Tier 1, Mills & Reeve's IT work focuses on major projects for government agencies and large technology companies operating in the Cambridge region, says the Guide.

The firm provides 'seamless and valuable support, and first-class client service'. Kevin Calder leads the technology group and is responsible for the firm's relationship with the Crown Commercial Service.

He advised the Ministry of Defence on its £1.2bn digital and IT professional services framework. Peter Wainman leads the health technology sector group and counts Siemens Healthcare among his clients.

Newly promoted partner Sophie Burton-Jones is 'approachable and engaging and takes a clear pragmatic approach'. Principal associate Katy Carson and partner Alison Ross-Eckford, who works from both London and Cambridge, also stand out.

In Tier 2, The commercial technology practice at Birketts 'always does what has the client's best interests in mind'. The firm advises a broad range of clients but has particular expertise in the financial services, social media, security software and aerospace industries, acting for small owner-managed businesses through to large, listed companies.

Quentin Golder and Andrew Priest are the key contacts in Cambridge. Mark Gipson



Peter Wainman of Mills &amp; Reeve (above) and Andrew Priest of Birketts (below)

in Ipswich handles complex commercial contracts including energy supply contracts and distribution agreements. Up-and-coming partner Paul Palik in Norwich is 'second to none when it comes to knowing the details'.

Tier 3 ranked Greenwoods handles both non-contentious and contentious IP matters, though its main focus is on disputes through litigation partner Jamie McConnell in Peterborough, who leads the technology practice.

He handles IP rights claims alongside his broad portfolio of commercial disputes. He also draws on the firm's corporate and commercial group to advise on licensing matters. He recently advised clients in the entertainment and technology industries on contentious regulatory and partnership matters.



## TMT (EAST ANGLIA)

## Biotechnology

Mills & Reeve and Penningtons Manches Cooper earn Tier 2 rankings for Biotechnology in The Legal 500 Guide.

It says Mills & Reeve has a large, cross-office life sciences practice led by experienced partner James Fry in Cambridge. The firm is a key adviser to numerous global organisations, among them GSK, as well as new startups, high-growth companies, and highly regarded university research groups.

The multi-disciplinary offering service calls up on funds specialist Dona Ardeman, corporate partner Jonathan Greenwood, employment expert Melanie James, corporate finance adviser Zickie Lim and many others to support biotechnology clients.

Fry recently assisted F-star Therapeutics with a collaboration and licence agreement with a global pharmaceutical company.

Penningtons Manches Cooper is said to have a prominent life sciences group that is 'trustworthy and consistently produces high-quality work with very quick turnaround'.

Led from Cambridge by IP, IT and commercial partner Rachel Bradley, and from Oxford by technology transfer specialist Chris Shelley, the practice provides advice on corporate transactions, employment law, IP and commercial issues.

Employment partner Hilary



Zickie Lim and Jonathan Greenwood of Mills &amp; Reeve



Aldred and commercial property managing associate Georgia Mayes play key roles in the practice. Bradley recently advised US health technology company Flatiron Health Inc. on data protection and GDPR issues concerning new product offerings.



# Success in Cambridge means knowing when not to take a punt

Confidence and security come  
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Life more sure.





## THE LAW LORDS Spotlight on Howes Percival

# Client care at heart of Howes Percival’s success

The 2025 edition of The Legal 500 – the authoritative guide to the UK’s leading law firms – has recommended Howes Percival for 21 different legal specialisms firm-wide and awarded top tier ranking for 13 (two more than last year), including Commercial Property, Corporate & Commercial, Employment, Litigation, Private Client and Intellectual Property.

In total, 47 Howes Percival lawyers are individually recognised in this year’s directory as either ‘leading individuals’, ‘next generation Partners’ or are honoured with the guide’s ‘Hall of Fame’ status.

The results highlight the journey the firm has been on in the last 12 months to continue to invest in and grow nationally and locally with the partnership expanding to 63 and the opening of a new Howes Percival office in Oxford earlier this year.

The Cambridge office has continued to go from strength to strength and is now well and truly embedded in the Cambridge business community, as demonstrated by the Cambridge Corporate Finance Club.

Founded by Howes Percival in 2019 and now hosted jointly with PwC, the club hosts regular events for the region’s corporate finance community, with the aim of increasing the number of corporate transactions in the region which are supported by local advisers and funders.

With ongoing recruitment in all areas of the practice to bolster and grow existing teams, the Cambridge office hopes to move in the New Year to larger premises within its existing Hills Road location to accommodate the growth.

Howes Percival are the current Dealmakers Corporate Law Firm of the Year in the Central and East region and are shortlisted eight times across six different categories for this year’s awards.

The Legal 500 2025 Directory says the Cambridge Corporate Team provides “Top class advice and support”. The team has seen continued growth this year with the arrival of Corporate solicitor Ollie Flowers as a Legal Director, joining Josie Rogers (Associate), Tom Maksymiw (Associate) and Faye Meredith (Banking Director). Cambridge Partner James Stephen is now also heading up the firm-wide corporate team.

Recent deal highlights include the sale of leading school uniform company Schoolblazer Limited to an Australian listed business.

Howes Percival’s Tier 1 Commercial Property team is one of the largest in the region and provides a full service across the spectrum of real estate legal services – including planning, construction and property litigation. The team offers a comprehensive service for investors, developers and other organisations in the real estate sector.

The team continues to grow with the appointment of strategic land development Partner Tim Bacon, who acts for promoters



Cambridge Partner Matthew Potter (above) and Faye Meredith (below). Photographs courtesy – Howes Percival.



and landowners across the East of England.

The team has advised Turnstone Colchester Ltd in relation to the multi-million-pound development of the 160,000 sq ft Northern Gateway leisure park in Colchester since 2016, with a multi-screen cinema, hotel, bowling alley, drive thru restaurants and other leisure facilities which will be operated

by Colchester City Council.

The Employment team’s reputation under the guidance of Matthew Potter has continued to grow in the region and beyond, acting for employers of all levels.

The Legal 500 With the growth of M & A activity in Cambridge office, the team has provided invaluable employment support on client disposals and acquisitions. The Legal



Ollie Flowers

500 describes the team as having a “very collaborative and professional approach in supporting clients”.

The Dispute Resolution team in Cambridge has seen significant growth over the past seven months, with Alexandra Wilson joining the team from Mischon De Reya as Senior Associate, Olivia Horseman qualifying into the team in March 2024 and Shay Kelly starting his Apprenticeship in September 2024. They join Michael Green and Victoria Sandell dealing with a growing practice of national and London-based commercial litigation work, including as a Crown Services panel member.

The team’s work includes company, shareholder and partnership matters, warranty claims and technological disputes, as well as complex contentious trust and probate work.

Contentious insolvency work sees the team making claims on behalf of liquidators and trustees in bankruptcy against directors and other third parties where there are allegations of fraud, in challenging transactions to recover monies for the insolvent estate, overdrawn directors’ loan accounts and wrongful trading.

Stephen Patch continues to grow the Cambridge Private Client team with the recent arrival of a Paralegal, Francesca Peace, as he builds on the success of achieving a ‘new entry’ Tier 2 Legal 500 ranking in Cambridge.

Cambridge partner Matthew Potter commented: “Across the firm this year we have received improved rankings again from



Alexandra Wilson

The Legal 500 and it reflects the leap we’ve made in recent years through investing in our offices and our people.

“We are involved in many of the biggest property and corporate transactions in the East and rightly seen as a go-to firm for a wide range of instructions, and that is down to growing our capability and expertise.

“As an office and as a firm, we understand that it isn’t just about growing our business – it is about helping clients and communities grow. By focusing the whole firm on the mantra of client care and constantly challenging ourselves to be more accessible, more collaborative in our working and more responsive, we are building some incredible client relationships.”

• For more information, visit <https://www.howespercival.com/>



Tom Maksymiw



Victoria Sandell



James Stephen



Stephen Patch



## THE LAW LORDS

## Guide to practitioners in the East of England

## No disputing East Anglia's leading corporate litigators

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

## Commercial Litigation - Cambridge

Birketts, Mills & Reeve and Mishcon de Reya are all Tier 1 law firms for commercial litigation work in Cambridge.

'The Cambridge office of regional powerhouse Birketts is 'pragmatic and gets excellent results in a cost-effective manner'.

Along with its sector specialisms in shipping, education, public law, procurement law, defence and transport, the firm also acts for many local clients in fraud, insolvency and general commercial disputes.

Practice head Laurence Weeks is 'outstanding in getting disputes resolved for clients'. Up-and-coming partner Sara Sayer takes the lead on public and administrative law matters, for which senior associate Naomi Westcott is also recommended.

Alec Cameron is a key adviser on matters concerning defamation and reputation management, and his work includes right to be forgotten claims, and IPSCO complaints.

Mills & Reeve has a deep bench of litigators in Cambridge and one client remarks that 'the firm can now compete with pretty much anyone in the field, whilst still being more responsive than the bigger players'.

Practice head Douglas McDonald frequently acts in high-value commercial disputes for clients in the technology and life sciences sectors. Principal associates Helen Prandy, who handles procurement disputes for government departments, the NHS and pharma companies, and Lino Di Lorenzo, who focuses on insolvency litigation, complex contract and shareholder disputes, are highly regarded. 'Tactically and strategically astute' senior associate James Shiel is a key adviser to the life sciences sector.

In Tier 2, the litigation practice at HCR Hewitsons 'approaches complex matters with a high level of professionalism and dedication'. Stewart Morrison is the lead partner for commercial disputes, and focuses on challenges to procurement contract awards and applications for Judicial Review.

He is currently advising a leading awarding body in the education sector on a Freedom of Information Act appeal. Simon Biggin has in-depth expertise in contractual, shareholder and partnership disputes, and professional negligence claims. 'Extremely knowledgeable, very hardworking' associate Emma Elston is also recommended.

Howes Percival has an 'expert, approachable and commercial' dispute resolution group, which has a strong presence in its Cambridge office. The 'tenacious, detailed and very competent' Michael Green leads the team, which is able to advise on high-value, urgent, complex and high-



Laurence Weeks, Birketts



Douglas McDonald, Mills &amp; Reeve



Sara Sayer, Birketts



Michael Green, Howes Percival



Rachel McDonnell, Mills &amp; Reeve

profile matters both within the UK and overseas.

The firm is currently involved in disputes with parties in the Middle East, North Africa, Taiwan and Slovakia. Director Victoria Sandell is frequently involved in multimillion-pound disputes and is 'a fantastic lawyer, leader and litigator'. She is currently working with Green on a multi-jurisdiction shareholder dispute with a Saudi minority shareholder.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
Commercial Litigation -  
Norwich

The Norwich office of Tier 1 placed Birketts plays a central role in its region-wide litigation practice, being home to lead partner and qualified barrister Andrew Kinnison and 'extremely efficient and prompt' senior associate Adam Blenkinsop.

The firm climbs the ranking this year having been involved in numerous multimillion-pound cases, notably in Kinnison's area of contractual disputes, insolvency, and shareholder disputes.

Blenkinsop handles complex and high-value disputes for corporate, charitable, and private clients, while associate Chloe Bird has a varied caseload that includes breach of contract and contract interpretation matters, unfair prejudice petitions, and breach of directors' duties cases.

The Norwich office of regional powerhouse Mills & Reeve is a key pillar of its firm-wide litigation group, which handles a growing caseload of national and international work, as well as many of the biggest cases emerging from the East Anglia region.

Practice head Rachel McDonnell is 'an exceptional lawyer with great instincts'. She has notable expertise in financial services disputes, including regulatory investigations, economic crime and enforcement proceedings.

In her 'proactive, very client-friendly' team, consultant Rachel Higgs, who handles high-value fraud, breach of warranty and shareholder and partnership disputes, and associate Abaigh Compton, who excels in defamation and restrictive covenant matters, are key practitioners.

In Tier 2, Howes Percival's Norwich office litigation group is led by Gordon Simpson, who 'tackles every issue in a very considered and professional manner'. He has developed a specialism in shareholder disputes, acting for a number of directors and shareholders in unfair prejudice proceedings, though he also has notable expertise in high-value disputes in the energy sector.

Associate Sam Leaver, who joined from Spire Solicitors in late 2023, assists with shareholder and contractual disputes, and associated damages claims.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
Commercial Litigation -  
Elsewhere in East Anglia

The cross-office litigation practice at Birketts has a key hub in Ipswich, where the vastly experienced Matthew Atkins and up-and-coming partner Josh Ripman are the standout practitioners.

They have 'both commercial acumen and pragmatism, and deal with matters with great efficiency

and drive'. The firm handles the full range of tortious and contractual claims, commercial fraud, shareholder's disputes, breach of restrictive covenant agreements, product liability matters, partnership disputes, and matters arising from corporate transactions.

Legal director Ceri Rogers, who is 'a very assured litigator, with a steely determination', formerly at Fieldfisher, and senior associate Hayley Songhurst, previously of Ellisons Solicitors, joined the Ipswich litigation group in 2023.

Greenwoods has a deep bench of litigators across its Cambridge, London and Peterborough offices, the latter being a key hub and home to vastly experienced practice head and 'highly tenacious litigators' Huw Wallis. Emerging partner talents Adele Whaley and Jamie McConnell (who is 'diligent, with an excellent eye for detail') are also highly recommended by peers and clients alike.

The firm is 'incredibly committed and thorough in advancing its clients' interests'. Its high-calibre work sees it frequently pitted against London or international firms, as well as regional heavyweights, in multimillion-pound claims, often with an international angle.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
Debt Recovery

Birketts and Howes Percival share top spot for debt recovery in East Anglia. Birketts has one of the region's largest debt recovery practices, which has a rapidly growing client base across the region and beyond. It counts among its clients local and national private companies, professional partnerships, and major PLCs across various industries, notably the utilities, logistics, food and beverages and agricultural sectors.

Head of commercial litigation Josh Ripman in Ipswich is the contact partner for the team, which is 'a cut above the rest'. Norwich-based Adam Blenkinsop also provides in-depth knowledge of contentious private client matters. Their work includes issuing claims against foreign debtors.

Howes Percival has the region's largest debt recovery team and frequently handles high-value

DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
(LEADING INDIVIDUALS)

## HALL OF FAME

**Ashtons Legal:** Michael Frape.  
**Birketts:** Matthew Atkins, Laurence Weeks.  
**Buckles Solicitors:** James Maxey.  
**Greenwoods:** Huw Wallis.

## LEADING ASSOCIATES

**Birketts:** Adam Blenkinsop, Naomi Westcott.  
**Fraser Dawbarns:** Joshua Shuardson-Hipkin.  
**Mills & Reeve:** Abaigh Compton, Helen Prandy, James Shiel.

## LEADING PARTNERS

**Ashtons Legal:** Tom Bailey.  
**Greene & Greene:** Rob Adam, Michael Batty.  
**HCR Hewitsons:** Simon Biggin, Stewart Morrison.  
**Howes Percival:** Michael Green, Gordon Simpson.  
**Mills & Reeve:** Lynne Lawn, Douglas McDonald, Rachel McDonnell.  
**Mishcon de Reya:** Gareth Dickson, Luke Hibbert.  
**Prettys Solicitors:** Peter Blake.  
**Tees Law:** Sara Stabler.

NEXT GENERATION  
PARTNERS

**Ashtons Legal:** Annabel Mayer.  
**Birketts:** Josh Ripman, Sara Sayer  
**Greenwoods:** Jamie McConnell, Adele Whaley.  
**Howes Percival:** Victoria Sandell.  
**Nicholsons Solicitors:** Robert Tiffen.  
**Roythornes Solicitors:** Alex Forster.

and complex matters, not least through its position on the Crown Commercial Services Panel, which generates significant work for The Insolvency Service.

Insolvency partner Morris Peacock and contentious debt recovery specialist Gordon Simpson in Norwich, and Cambridge-based litigator Michael Green are the lead partners. Simpson frequently handles the enforcement of hire agreements for car dealer Bussey & Sabberton Bros. Ltd.

William Shirley in Norwich is the client partner for the work carried out on behalf of the Official Receivers across England and Wales.

In the Norwich office of Tier 2 placed Mills & Reeve, legal executive and debt collection specialist Lynne Lawn, is highly regarded by peers and clients alike. Clients note that the 'professional but friendly' Lawn 'is always quick to respond, happy to help and gets a resolution from even the trickiest of customers'. The firm's fixed-fee collection service is popular with corporate clients in the region, and the practice is also highly experienced in the drafting and issuing of court proceedings.



THE LAW LORDS

Spotlight on Penningtons Manches Cooper

# Breadth of skills and experience helps Penningtons Manches Cooper attract top clients and specialist talent

“Clients are often attracted by the way we combine an international mind-set with being very much embedded in the Cambridge community: we act locally but bring a wider perspective when it’s needed. Our broad skill set enables us to keep on top of changes to the law and offer commercial, sector-focused advice quickly,” says partner Hilary Aldred, an employment law specialist who also leads Penningtons Manches Cooper’s education sector group.



Hilary Aldred

Her team are at the forefront of many high profile legal issues affecting the sector. “Schools, universities and other higher education institutions are currently facing a perfect storm of complex challenges relating to regulatory, legal and systemic changes. We really thrive on helping clients navigate these challenges and find practical solutions,” she added.

With so many education related issues being high on the political and policy agenda – not least VAT on school fees, the university funding crisis, and the continuing commercialisation and internationalisation of the sector – the team is in high

demand and expects that to increase over the next year.

Hilary’s team, and the firm’s wider Cambridge offering, was recently boosted with the arrival of partner Virginia Henley, a specialist lawyer who joined the firm at the end of September as head of the charities practice.

Virginia says: “There are a lot of crossover points between the education and charities

sectors and I was specifically drawn to Penningtons Manches Cooper as I knew my skills and experience – especially in governance, fundraising, mergers and trustee related work – would complement the brilliant work the team is already doing. There are many fantastic clients with whom I’m excited to work, as well as further building the charities team and developing our work in the not-for-profit space. Additionally, I look forward to working with the firm’s private client team to help deliver philanthropy advice – there is definitely demand for this in the local market.”

Another specialist area for the Cambridge office is life sciences. Partner Rachel Bradley, who advises life sciences businesses in relation to IP and commercial issues (and who previously worked in-house for AstraZeneca), has seen the industry continue to thrive, resulting in strong demand for her team’s expertise. “This has been a really busy year for us and it’s good to see so many Cambridge clients continue to thrive and expand,” she says.

She continued: “Cambridge

plays a pivotal role in the UK life sciences sector and my team and I get so much out of supporting businesses that are making significant contributions to its standing both here and globally. We particularly enjoy working with start-ups and spin outs in the sector, helping them to exploit and commercialise their innovative technology and to navigate complex contracts with partners, collaborators and services providers. The sector is constantly evolving with new challenges faced by organisations in the area, not only in the field of regulatory/legislation but also in other areas such as technology (eg the opportunities and challenges posed by AD), or funding (through grants or VC investment).”

Rachel has also already seen a fantastic opportunity for crossover between the office’s life sciences and charities capabilities. She has recently been providing specialist advice to not-for-profit organisations who undertake and fund important research in the field of neurology, and she can see a great fit between her wider work for these charitable research

institutions and Virginia’s expertise.

Georgia Mayes, a Cambridge-based managing associate in the real estate team, also plays a key role in advising clients in the education, charities, life sciences sectors and beyond. She acts for investor landlords and science park occupiers, and her clients also include developers, occupiers of commercial property and lenders.

The Cambridge office is aligned to Penningtons Manches Cooper’s national strategic plan, which is focused on a full-service, sector-focused approach to serving clients and driving growth.

The firm also recently brought together its efforts in the areas of environmental sustainability, diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) and social impact under one responsible business programme, ensuring a co-ordinated approach to pro bono, volunteering and fundraising initiatives. It will also help drive the firm’s commitment to achieving its 2040 net zero target, as well as the continued development of DE&I and wellbeing initiatives.



## PROVIDING ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE

Our award-winning lawyers deliver specialist advice tailored to individual business needs.

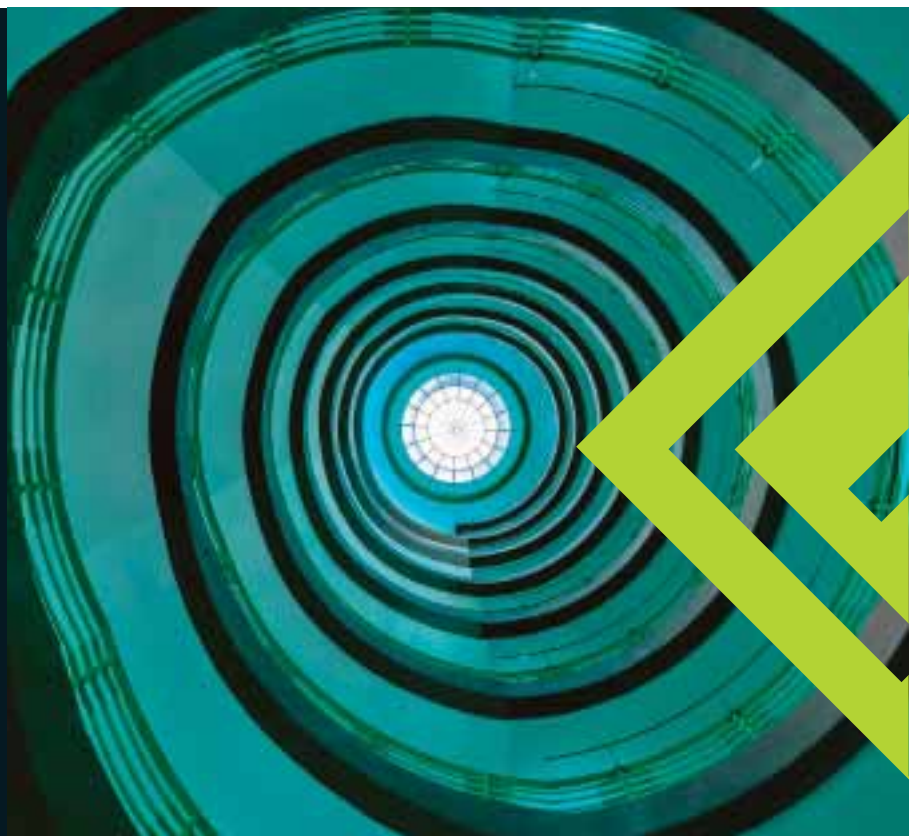
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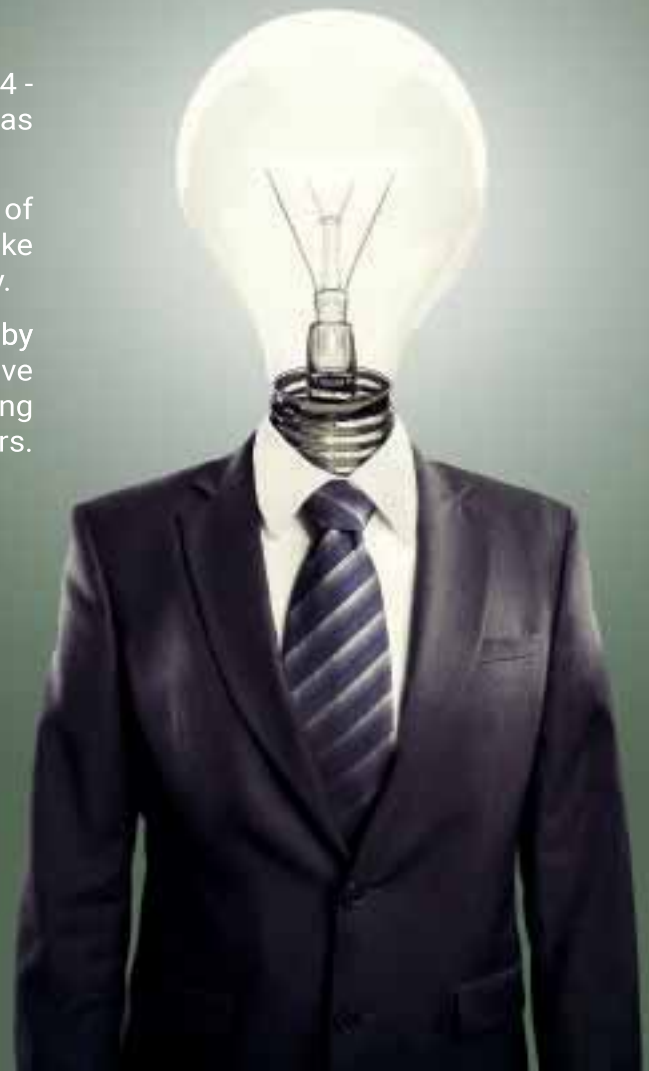
BE LAW  
BARR ELLISON  
150 YEARS

# STILL SHINING BRIGHTLY

Barr Ellison Law traces its roots back to 1874 - the time when the first electric light bulb was developed.

Our clients have always been at the centre of our 150 year journey, thriving and helping make Cambridgeshire the success story it is today.

We are celebrating our 150th anniversary by supporting the Arthur Rank Hospice, who have played an important part in our city by caring for thousands of people over the past 40 years.



#StillShiningBrightly  
[law@barrellison.co.uk](mailto:law@barrellison.co.uk)



## THE LAW LORDS Spotlight on Barr Ellison

# Driving growth in property development at the heart of an expanding Cambridge

Barr Ellison Law climbs the rankings in this year's Commercial Property Legal 500. Known for its unwavering commitment to excellence, the firm is highly regarded for delivering outstanding service to its clients.

Under the expert leadership of the 'outstanding' Kelly Peck, Barr Ellison continues to flourish, expand, and manage high-value, complex transactions, all while offering a personal, client-focused service.

Clients describe the commercial property team as 'an integrated practice with the lead partner ensuring continuity, knowledge transfer, and quality service'.

Peck's efforts have ensured that Barr Ellison consistently handles transactions of increasing value and complexity, cementing its place as a leader in the property sector.

Associate Lucy Harrison is also key to the property team's success, advising numerous landlords with large property portfolios. Harrison is the primary contact for the firm's Cambridge University College clients, bolstering Barr Ellison's long-standing connections with the city.

Fellow associate Joshua Smart successfully delivers major development projects, demonstrating the team's ability to handle sophisticated and challenging transactions.

Among the firm's recent notable deals are advising OpenArch Estates Limited on the £3.5 million sale of a multi-let property; and representing AbbeyMill Homes in the acquisition of an option site, managing disputes, and concluding plot sales within six months.

Barr Ellison also advised Astrum Homes MK Ltd on the acquisition of a complex development site valued at £2 million, showcasing its proficiency in navigating high-stakes transactions with skill and professionalism.

### Exceptional Family Law Practice

Barr Ellison's niche family law practice is highly respected. The team, led by Sarah Martin, handles a comprehensive range of family law matters, including divorce, financial settlements involving international assets, property settlements, and arrangements for children.

Martin, supported by the highly experienced associate Karen Anker, is praised for delivering "a personal service of an extremely high quality". Newly qualified solicitor Victoria Hill has settled into the team well and has developed expertise in children matters. Clients consistently commend the team's clarity, meticulous attention to detail, and dedication to



Kelly Peck. Photographs courtesy of Barr Ellison.



Lucy Harrison



Joshua Smart



Sarah Martin



Karen Anker

safeguarding their interests.

The team's experience in handling high-net-worth family law cases, especially those involving academics and entrepreneurs, has made Anker and Martin sought-after advisers for Cambridge's elite.

### Trusts and Personal Wealth: A Personalised Approach

The personal wealth team at Barr Ellison Law is recognised for providing personalised, high-quality advice to high-net-worth individuals, academics, and entrepreneurs. Whether managing



Tim Metcalfe



Francesca Tubb



Chris Jones

wills, trusts, or estate planning, the team has earned a reputation for being 'very knowledgeable, reliable, and personable'.

Associates Chris Jones, Tim Metcalfe, and Francesca Tubb form a crucial core to the personal wealth team. Clients describe Metcalfe as 'calm, patient, and helpful'.

Solicitor Courtney Searle is praised for being 'very caring and professional'. This deep pool of talented lawyers ensures that Barr Ellison can continue delivering outstanding service in this increasingly complex area of law.

### Leading the Way in Personal Injury Law

Barr Ellison Law is home



Grant Incles

to one of Cambridge's leading catastrophic personal injury practices. Known for its client-centred approach, the team has built a strong reputation for its welcoming manner and relentless focus on maximising the rehabilitation prospects for clients.

'The team has a super local and welcoming feel, which belies the steely approach to litigating cases hard for their clients,' remarks one client. Award-winning lawyer Grant Incles was brought in to lead the Personal Injury Team in March and, working alongside lawyers Charlotte Dixon and Wendy Langridge, focuses meticulously on putting clients in a position where they have the best quality of life possible.

This unique combination of compassion and determination has made Barr Ellison Law the go-to firm for catastrophic injury cases in the region.

### Growth on the Horizon

Looking ahead, Barr Ellison Law has set its sights on continued growth and expansion, maintaining its focus on providing high-quality service. The firm has ambitious plans to recruit top legal talent, ensuring that it remains equipped to meet the evolving needs of its clients.

The firm's high-end residential property team, led by Helen Murphy, has been rejuvenated with new talent positioning the department to handle more complex and high-value transactions.

Similarly, the firm's Court of Protection team, led by the vastly experienced Chantal Ul-Haq Weedon, has seen considerable growth in recent years.

As Barr Ellison Law looks to the future, its commitment to delivering excellence, maintaining high standards of client service, and driving growth remains stronger than ever.

Kelly is keen to acknowledge the reason behind the firm's success: "Our people! It's the people within a business that make it a success. They're the ones that give it personality and allow the business to shine."

"Every single person has their part to play and without each of those cogs in those turning wheels, we wouldn't be the success we are today."



# GREENWOODS

**‘ultra-professional,  
efficient and  
effective’**

- Legal 500 2025

## GREENWOODS

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Telephone number: +44(0)20 7242 0631

### Peterborough

Email: [enquiries@greenwoods.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@greenwoods.co.uk)  
Telephone number: +44(0)1733 887700





## THE LAW LORDS Spotlight on Greenwoods

# Greenwoods: ‘ultra-professional, efficient and effective’

Greenwoods seems to have a track record of linking the launch of the annual Legal 500 Guide with a major new team hire.

Last year, it was a nine-strong team joining to significantly expand the firm’s Wealth Preservation team.

This year, it’s a six strong IP team and a competition and regulatory consultant joining from a US law firm. It’s a neat way of highlighting the firm’s growth and ambition alongside a client-driven and independent assessment of its performance.

But first, more about the new IP team: New IP partners Jim Boff, Martin Hammler, James McAllister, and Arthur Boff have joined Greenwoods alongside CITMA and CIPA-qualified paralegals Francesca Bonfield and Laura Palmer.

The team members’ experience is stellar. Jim has a wealth of knowledge as an intellectual property practitioner in a diverse range of technologies. Practising primarily in patent preparation, prosecution, and opposition he is also experienced in trademarks, IP licensing, and patent portfolio management.

Martin, a mechanical engineer turned chartered patent agent, offers a distinctive combination of technical proficiency and legal acumen. His approach is deeply rooted in a profound comprehension of the inventive process and the complexities of patent law, guiding every aspect of his work – from crafting robust patent applications to navigating intricate infringement issues.

James is a Chartered Trademark Attorney who thrives on helping clients realise the strategic value of their brands. His approach is rooted in understanding their business goals, which informs every aspect of his work - from devising focused trademark filing programs to identifying new brand opportunities.

Arthur’s journey in intellectual property is rooted in a strong scientific foundation. With a doctorate in Physical and Theoretical Chemistry from Oxford University, his research spanned cutting-edge fields from chemical vapour deposition to DNA sequence identification. When bright ideas have value, they are the team to talk to.

So, back to the Legal 500 results, where the commentary and feedback from clients say it all about the Greenwoods’ approach. For example: About the tier one Disputes team: ‘The firm is ‘incredibly committed and thorough in advancing its clients’ interests’. Its high-calibre work sees it frequently pitted against London or international firms, as well as regional heavyweights, in multimillion-pound claims, often with an international angle.’

‘Huw Wallis and Jamie McConnell are highly tenacious litigators, and very creative in their approach. Sam Baxter is an associate to watch - very bright/engaged.’ And, ‘Adele Whaley is an emerging partner talent’.



Greenwoods Managing Partner, Robert Dillarstone. Photographs courtesy of Greenwoods.



Adele Whaley



Jamie McConnell



John Macaulay



Joanne Scally (above) and Huw Wallis (below)



Keith Williams



Whilst of the tier one Employment team: ‘Practice head John Macaulay in Peterborough has built one of the largest groups of employment lawyers in East Anglia, with key partner Keith Williams and, in Cambridge, partner Joanna Scally and senior associates Natalie Williams and Siobhan Thomson among the standout practitioners.’

‘The ability to build fantastic client relationships shines through client comments about Greenwoods’ Wealth Preservation team, including: ‘I find the Greenwoods approach refreshing against an age of hiding behind an email and no sense of relationship being built.’ And, ‘Clare Harris is an excellent example of a proactive, commercial lawyer who has great technical competencies.’

Property disputes feedback includes: ‘Amy Castleman - very experienced and competent, available when we need and always provides advice/feedback we need to support our decision-making.’

In terms of Residential Property work, the team is highlighted as a ‘firm to watch’ and the practice head, Will Thomas, is described as a ‘brilliant communicator’. (If you’ve met Will, you’ll know this is true.) The comments show that the firm’s focus on not being ‘identikit’ resonates with clients. As Managing Partner Robert

Dillarstone says: ‘We invest in the stories of our clients. We work with real people, doing remarkable things across a variety of situations.’

‘We’re dedicated to providing tailored advice and support that positively impacts the people who need us. What is brilliant to see is that this approach is reflected in the feedback our clients

have provided to the Legal 500 researchers and in our rankings.

‘Celebrating success is an important part of our culture, so forgive us for highlighting some of our results. Not to be arrogant or to show off, but because we want to acknowledge the achievements of our brilliant teams and, importantly, thank our clients for putting their trust in us.’

So, if you need a law firm that ‘combines commercial nous with excellent case and client management skills’, give Greenwoods a try.

If you’re reading this and thinking you’d like to be part of a firm that’s ‘not identikit’ and isn’t afraid to do things a little differently, we’d love to hear from you. Check out the ‘Join us’ pages of our website at [www.greenwoods.co.uk](http://www.greenwoods.co.uk)



## THE LAW LORDS

## Guide to practitioners in the East of England

## East Anglia builds on strong foundations in property work

## REAL ESTATE

## Commercial Property – Cambridge

Birketts, HCR Hewitsons, Howes Percival, Mills & Reeve and Mishcon de Reya are all named in Tier 1 by The Legal 500.

The guide says Birketts is known for commercially-focused and City-quality advice at very competitive prices'. The firm has a deep bench of talent in Cambridge led by strategic land expert Kath Herbert, who brings to bear 'extraordinary depth of experience'.

Simon Keen handles all aspects of commercial development and is 'truly expert in his field'. He acts for News Corp UK & Ireland Limited in all its property activity in England and Wales, including matters concerning its London headquarters.

Up-and-coming partners Dwight Patten, Claudia Haisman-Green and Helen Stewart are recognised experts in advising landowners, developers and promoters on major projects. Gavin Acheson and the 'knowledgeable and tenacious' Gemma Goddard lead the real estate investment team.

HCR Hewitsons continues to expand its team in Cambridge as it cements its place in the elite group of local firms. National head of property development James Simpson and head of the Cambridge commercial real estate group Helen Mutucumarana, who has specialist experience in the life sciences, biotechnology, technology, media and emerging tech markets, are recognised leaders in their fields.

The 'approachable, friendly, and knowledgeable' Ceri Riddell acts for landowners, promoters and developers in complex land deals. Experienced senior associate Becky Woodcock joined from Mishcon de Reya, adding valuable experience in landlord and tenant matters. 'This team knows the UK property market inside out' remarks one client.

The Cambridge office of Howes Percival plays a pivotal role in its national commercial property offering, which is known for 'value, high standards, and quick turnaround'.

Practice head Michaela Henson has long been acknowledged as a standout adviser on strategic land development. She recently assisted Mortar Investment Group with the financing of a portfolio of buy-to-let properties. Commercial property investment partner Steven Beach, emerging partner talent Elizabeth Thomas, who handles complex matters in the education, commercial investment and development sectors, and experienced landing and tenant adviser Susanne Hinde round out a practice that is 'helpful and delivers consistently'. Tim Bacon joined in June.

Mills & Reeve has a real estate practice that has built a strong national reputation across its



Nick Finlayson-Brown, Mills &amp; Reeve

office network and it is frequently called upon to handle complex and high-profile projects.

Head of real estate Richard Hanson focuses on disputes but oversees a strong bench of talent in the Cambridge office, which handles corporate real estate transactions, real estate investment deals, development projects, and landlord and tenant work.

Real estate investment partner Charles Staveley, life sciences sector specialist Vincenzo Maggio, and development project advisers Michelle Cookson and Nick Finlayson-Brown are all at the top of their game. Principal associate Christopher Pike and newly promoted partner Tom Nash also stand out. Christine De Ferrars Green retired in May 2024.

Tier 2 ranked Ashtons Legal's cross-office commercial property practice has a strong base in Cambridge, where head of real estate Magnus McManus leads a group that has 'the ability to problem solve and explain things with clarity'.

Up-and-coming partner Sheila Small, who focuses on residential and commercial development matters, is 'an excellent and knowledgeable lawyer who looks for solutions not problems'.

She recently assisted W N Developments Limited with a £60m housing project. Newly promoted partner Rhian Brook is experienced in landlord and tenant matters, as well as portfolio management.

Barr Ellison climbs the ranking as 'outstanding' lead partner Kelly Peck continues to expand the practice at junior level and secure



Michaela Henson, Howes Percival



Kath Herbert, Birketts

transactions of higher value and complexity.

'It feels like an integrated practice with the lead partner ensuring continuity, knowledge transfer and quality service', remarks a client. Associate Lucy Harrison advises numerous landlords with large property portfolios and is the key contact for the firm's Cambridge University College clients.

Fellow associate Joshua Smart is increasingly involved in major development projects.

In Tier 3, The commercial property group at Penningtons Manches Cooper is led from London by James Nadin, but the Cambridge office has a promising managing associate in Giorgia Mayes, who 'works quickly and is prepared to be pragmatic'.

Associate Joanna Wilde also plays a key role in the practice. The firm handles work for institutional investors, developers, housing associations, science park tenants, wealthy families and office tenants, as well as supporting the corporate team in transactions involving property.

## REAL ESTATE

## Commercial Property – Norwich

Birketts, Howes Percival and Mills & Reeve are Tier 1 for Commercial Property work in Norwich.

Birketts has a commercial property group that is 'highly adaptable and responsive with a pragmatic approach'. Practice head Melissa Loucas, who also leads the retail sector group, calls upon a strong line-up of talent, including head of real estate investment Cameron Barlow and residential development specialist Chris Hoxley.

The 'highly experienced and always available' Bhargav Trivedi leads on strategic land matters. Residential and commercial development partner Nicola Curle joined from Howes Percival in early 2024.

Senior associate Thomas Maxey, who joined from Clyde & Co, handles high-value property transactions. Real estate finance specialists Elizabeth Lee and Laura Jones, and senior associate Andrew Ridout also play key roles in the group.

## REAL ESTATE (LEADING INDIVIDUALS)

## HALL OF FAME

**Anchor:** Andrew Rush.

**Ashtons Legal:** Ron Clare.

**Birketts:** Kath Herbert, Melissa Loucas, Chris Schwer, Deborah Sharples.

**Eversheds Sutherland:** Dominic Lacey.

**Howes Percival:** Steven Beach, Tessa Haskey, Michaela Henson.

**Mills & Reeve:** Michelle Cookson, Nick Finlayson-Brown, Richard Hanson, Charles Staveley.

**Mishcon de Reya:** James Slinger.

## LEADING ASSOCIATES

**Barr Ellison:** Joshua Smart.

**BDB Pitmans:** Katy Klingopulos.

**Birketts:** Katrina Bretten, Patrick Cooney, Nicola Doole, Sarah Fish, Chloe Glason, Alice Harris, Andrew Ridout, Laura Tanguay.

**Fosters:** Katy Dickinson.

**Greene & Greene:** Julia Cardy.

**Greenwoods:** Amy Castleman.

**HCR Hewitsons:** Georgia Dinallo, Brendon Lee, Becky Woodcock.

**Howes Percival:** Jonathan Parker.

**Hunt & Coombs:** Rebecca Beynon-Phillips.

**Mills & Reeve:** Howard Felstead, Ed Freeman, Emma Nash, Christopher Pike, Beth Price.

**Mishcon de Reya:** Keven Fehmi.

**Penningtons Manches Cooper:** Giorgia Mayes.

**Tees Law:** Alex Waples.

## LEADING PARTNERS

**Anchor:** Ruth Kavanagh.

**Ashtons Legal:** Magnus McManus, Amy Richardson.

**Barr Ellison:** Kelly Peck.

**BDB Pitmans:** Simon Burson

**Birketts:** Gavin Acheson, Cameron Barlow, Vicki Chilton, Oliver Crichton, Nicola Curle, Richard Eaton, Stefan Harris-Wright, Simon Keen, Tom Newcombe, Stuart Raven, James Robinson.

**Buckles Solicitors:** Paul Branch, Colleen Gostick.

**Ellisons Solicitors:** Jonathan Greenhalgh.

**Eversheds Sutherland:** Tom Douglas.

**Greene & Greene:** Tim Mendes da Costa.

**HCR Hewitsons:** Gemma Dudley, Colin Jones, Natalie Minott, Helen Mutucumarana, James Simpson.

**Howes Percival:** Estelle Corner, Jamie Kidd, Jay Mehta, Simon Murphy.

**JG Poole & Co:** Katherine Souter.

**Mills & Reeve:** Carina Davis, Caroline Dean, Vincenzo Maggio, Richard New, Peter Seaborn, Stuart Thompson.

**Nicholsons Solicitors:** Mark Rymarz.

**Prettys Solicitors:** Peter Blake.

**Tees Law:** Sarah Coates.

## NEXT GENERATION PARTNERS

**Anchor:** Oli Worth.

**Ashtons Legal:** Kirsteen Durrant, Charlotte Vallins.

**Birketts:** Catherine Andrews, Gemma Goddard, Claudia Haisman-Green, Dwight Patten.

**Buckles Solicitors:** Chris Mundell.

**Greene & Greene:** Sarah Western.

**HCR Hewitsons:** Ceri Riddell.

**Howes Percival:** Jamie Childs, Leanne Davis, Elizabeth Thomas.

**Mills & Reeve:** Anna Aldous, Caroline Bywater, Zoe Cooke, James Hordern, Lisa-Marie Kennedy, Samuel Maw, Tom Nash, Alexandra Pike, David Siddall, Julian Steed.

**Mishcon de Reya:** Elliot Wilson.

**Nicholsons Solicitors:** Sabina Haag.

Howes Percival has 'a great group of specialist property lawyers who work well collaboratively and as part of a wider professional team'. The firm is highly regarded for commercial and residential development projects, investment and property finance, and has notable expertise in specific sectors such as energy infrastructure.

The practice is led by Joanna Nicholls, who handles property finance and landlord/tenant matters, and development specialist Christopher Cubitt. Real estate finance specialist Tessa Haskey and social housing partner

Estelle Corner also play key roles in high-value transactions. Nicola Curle joined Birketts, but the firm hired development specialist James Henderson from Aviva. Cubitt advised Persimmon Homes Limited in numerous site acquisitions.

Mills & Reeve has a cross-office practice that has a heavy concentration of talent in Norwich, where practice heads Caroline Dean and Carina Davis are standout partners for development projects and strategic land matters.

The firm has 'a very large widely skilled practice with a



## THE LAW LORDS

## Guide to practitioners in the East of England



Anna Aldous, Mills &amp; Reeve

good range of specialists available to provide advice'. Among the many highly regarded partners are mixed-use development specialist Anna Aldous, residential development expert Zoe Cooke, portfolio acquisition adviser Lisa-Marie Kennedy, corporate real estate structuring specialist David Siddall, and principal associate Judy Day, who handles education sector projects. Cooke recently advised Lendlease on a £250m residential project at Elephant Park, London.

## REAL ESTATE

## Commercial Property – Elsewhere in East Anglia

The Ipswich office of Tier 1 firm Birketts is home to a substantial proportion of the firm-wide commercial real estate practice. Among its standout partners are Chris Schwer, who is a key adviser to housebuilders and developers, and major corporate occupiers, and practice co-head Oliver Crichton, who has notable expertise in freehold and leasehold acquisitions and disposals, as well as landlord and tenant matters.

The 'friendly, attentive and knowledgeable' group also includes Stuart Raven and Paul Squire who are key advisers to corporate and developer clients; utilities specialist Vicki Chilton and Keith Andrews, who handles all property work for an active NHS Trust. Legal director Amanda Timcke and newly promoted partner Sam Froud are also key to the practice.

## REAL ESTATE

## Construction

Anchor, Birketts, Eversheds Sutherland and Mills & Reeve all make Tier 1 for Construction law.

Birketts has a construction and engineering group that 'has strength and depth in both contentious and non-contentious business, and consistently takes a pragmatic approach'.

The 'very commercial and responsive' Stefan Harris-Wright in Cambridge leads the practice, in which Ipswich-based Catherine Andrews is an emerging partner talent. The firm handles all aspects of construction work from development funding and contract documentation through to dispute resolution.

In Cambridge, legal director Patrick Cooney and senior associate Katrina Bretten (who is



Tom Newcombe, Birketts

'extremely calm under pressure' are key members of the practice. Bretten assisted Grovemere Property Limited with a Pre-Construction Services Agreement for a £15m project.

Mills & Reeve's Cambridge office is replete with experienced practitioners at both senior and junior levels, fielding strong teams on high-value and complex projects, as well as contentious matters.

Head of the regional construction group Stuart Thompson and 'calming, funny, and incredibly knowledgeable' disputes specialist Alexandra Pike are the standout practitioners.

Both are key advisers to Urban&Civic plc on numerous development sites across the region. Principal associates Ed Freeman, who focuses on senior living and large-scale regeneration work, and Emma Nash, who focuses on employer clients, are among the practice's many skilled lawyers. The group has 'extremely good market knowledge and the ability to offer commercial solutions'.

In Tier 2, The construction group at HCR Hewitsons in Cambridge is part of a firm-wide practice that is frequently called upon to handle large-scale developments, public procurement projects, and disputes.

It has notable expertise in the education, charity, real estate, engineering and energy sectors, and the local team counts residential developers, manufacturers, contractors, investors, Oxbridge colleges, government agencies, and numerous leading national charities among its clients. Practice head Colin Jones and associate Sardeep Gill are the names to note.

In Tier 3, Howes Percival has a small but highly capable construction practice in Cambridge, where director Simon Franklin is the firm's sole practitioner.

He works closely with the real estate group to mainly advise on non-contentious matters across the UK, though he also handles some construction disputes. Franklin counts commercial developers, contractors and consultants among his clients. Recent work includes a £70m leisure development for Turnstone Colchester Limited.

## REAL ESTATE

## Planning &amp; Environment

In Tier 1, Birketts has an 'innovative and creative' planning and environmental law group that has a stellar client base of national and regional housebuilders, local authorities, and private businesses in sectors such as agriculture, waste, chemicals, minerals, and transport, as well as infrastructure clients including Northumbrian Water.

Tom Newcombe in Cambridge (who 'always has a practical solution to any issue') and the 'always attentive and professional' Deborah Sharples in Ipswich are the lead partners.

Legal directors Nicola Doole and Nikki Fonseka, and senior associate Chloe Glason are also active in the practice. Fonseka handles planning obligations and planning enforcement matters, while Doole has vast experience in negotiating complex section 106 agreements.

Howes Percival has a strong planning practice in East Anglia and further afield, and it handles Environmental Impact Assessments and applications for planning permission on behalf of both developers and landowners.

Jay Mehta, who works from both Norwich and Cambridge, co-leads the practice along with Paul Hunt in Leicester. 'It truly feels as though they have the client's best interests at the forefront of their advice', clients remark. 'His attention to detail and speed to turn work round has been fantastic', say clients of director Jamie Childs. Mehta and Childs recently acted for Persimmon Homes in several new



Colin Jones, HCR Hewitsons

developments across Suffolk and Essex.

Mills & Reeve is highly regarded for its 'local knowledge and expertise, and prompt and clear advice' on complex planning matters and environmental law.

The firm advises developers, strategic land owners, investors, funds, major corporates, and public sector bodies, among them Urban&Civic, Marshall Group Properties Ltd, and housebuilder Taylor Wimpey.

In Cambridge, practice head Peter Seaborn specialises in the promotion of complex planning projects. Principal associate Caroline Bywater handles strategic planning matters, and senior associates Howard Felstead (residential), Hannah Edwards (planning and highways law), and Alex Round (strategic land) are also recommended. Consultant Beverley Firth plays a key role in residential development projects.

Ashtons Legal and HCR Hewitsons are named in Tier 2. 'They provide practical advice in a clear manner', say clients of Ashtons Legal's standout performers in Cambridge, partner Amy Richardson and consultant Bob McGeady, who works between his home in Shetland and the firm's Bury St Edmunds office.

The 'utterly reliable, highly skilled' McGeady assisted Framlingham Town Council with a potential judicial review in relation to a proposal to grant planning permission for a self-build scheme. Richardson is a key adviser to regional housebuilders.

The firm-wide planning, highways and environment practice at HCR Hewitsons, which is led from Worcester by Rosalind Andrews, is frequently involved in large-scale development projects, including residential and mixed-use sustainable urban expansions, acting for national and regional developers.

It also advises farmers, investment owners and landed estates on new projects, the compulsory acquisition of land and compensation, and High Court matters. Partner



Simon Murphy, Howes Percival

Gemma Dudley and senior associate Brendon Lee are the main contacts in Cambridge.

## REAL ESTATE

## Property Litigation

'Professional, knowledgeable, caring', notes one client. The property litigation practice at Birketts is 'very proactive and commercially aware, particularly in high-profile matters'. A diverse workload encompasses Telecoms Code property matters, rights to light, leasehold enfranchisement, town and village green issues, and more.

In Ipswich, 'sharp, incisive' practice head Richard Eaton and telecoms property expert James Robinson are the key practitioners. Legal directors Alice Harris and Laura Tanguay are notable for housing law and TOLATA respectively. In Cambridge, new partner Lynsey Ellard is 'reliable, responsive and resilient'.

'Market nous is as good as any City firm', say clients of the Norwich team led by senior associate Simon Woodhead, who advises on the management and disposal of surplus property. John Scannell retired.

Howes Percival's property litigation group is 'responsive and geared to getting good commercial outcomes'. East Anglia is a significant hub for the firm-wide practice, which is led by the 'knowledgeable, tenacious and committed' Jamie Kidd in Norwich, and the 'responsive, practical and pragmatic' Simon Murphy in Cambridge.

Kidd's team focuses on land and development issues for landed estates, housebuilders and large corporates. Murphy's team, in which director Leanne Davis is a key figure, has in-depth experience in landlord and tenant matters, and manages numerous property portfolios, as well as handling lease renewals and exits.

Mills & Reeve's property litigation group has 'a good understanding of the dynamics of the market and an excellent presence'. Led from Cambridge by Richard New, the firm provides comprehensive advice on high-profile national, and increasingly international, property matters.

New is a leading expert in business rates. In Norwich, the vastly experienced Richard Hanson and special counsel James Hordern, who is a recognised expert in agricultural law, are the names to note.

The team is heavily involved in disputes in the telecoms sector. Principal associates Julian Steed in Norwich and Samuel Maw in Cambridge (who is 'down to earth, but extremely sharp and knowledgeable') are also recommended.

Legal500

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## PRE-BUDGET SPECIAL

In association with Ensors Chartered Accountants

# What could happen with a painful budget?

by Ivan Woolgrove,  
Corporate Tax Director, and  
Helen Kent-Woolsey, Private  
Client Director with Ensors  
Chartered Accountants

The Prime Minister in his speech in Downing Street on 27 August warned that tough action would be necessary to 'fix the foundations of the country', and that there will be difficult decisions ahead including a 'painful' first budget in October.

The Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, with her eyes on the prize of a stable economy and economic growth will deliver this painful budget on 30 October.

This budget will be delivered against the background of what Labour say is a £22bn black hole in the Country's finances. They say this black hole has been discovered since polling day, although this is disputed by the previous government.

The Chancellor is also facing criticism of her decision to remove the winter fuel payments from all but the poorest pensioners, that was the first step in dealing with the black hole.

One way of plugging this black hole would be by reversing last year's National Insurance rate reduction that cut taxes by £20bn, but the Chancellor has ruled out this out.

The Government is making it clear that those with the broadest shoulders will be asked to bear the greatest of the burden, so the question becomes what taxes/charges are in the Chancellor's sights.

## What has been ruled out?

We have been told that working people will be protected from additional taxes, with increases in Income Tax, National Insurance or VAT already ruled out. Also, the main rate of Corporation Tax will remain capped at 25 per cent and capital allowance full expensing will remain for the duration of the parliament.

The Prime Minister defined working people as someone who earns their living, relies on public services and does not really have the ability to write a cheque when they get into trouble.

It is not clear just who this definition is targeting, for example we can all be said to rely on the NHS (it is after all the only place where you can get an ambulance) and a person with a heavily mortgaged property may not have the cash flow to just write a cheque whenever they need to. Therefore, could this definition be quite wide?

The Chancellor has stepped in and said it means someone who goes out to work and earns their money through 'hard work', and that it can also include someone who has savings from being able to save up while working.

With this lack of clarity about who a working person is, does it leave us with an attempt to draw a line between a worker and someone who derives their income



Ivan Woolgrove,  
Corporate Tax  
Director with  
Ensors Chartered  
Accountants

from some form of investment activity, or is it just that they are excluding pensioners (see the winter fuel allowance comment above) or are they suggesting someone who works in say a supermarket is a working person whereas a professional who earns more than the living wage or can make larger personal pension contributions is not a working person for these purposes?

The Chancellor also appeared to rule out the possibility of a wealth tax when speaking to the BBC on the second day of the Labour Party Conference. This would have been a bold step and would likely have required extensive consultation on the operation and collection of the tax together with a major exercise to value assets.

## What could change?

After many years of fiscal drag, we are all aware that a headline of "not increasing taxes" does not necessarily mean that the population does not pay more tax.

With the Chancellor already committed to the freezing of personal allowance and other tax thresholds until April 2028, a further extension of this freeze could be attractive to her. This is because income growth pulls more people into the higher and additional tax rate bands and so increases the tax take for the government without having to change rates.

## Capital Gains Tax

One of the most likely tax changes would be to the Capital Gains Tax (CGT) regime where current CGT rates are lower than those for Income Tax, and as well there are a number of reliefs that operate to restrict the tax raised from CGT.

However, the Government has a difficult balance to strike when looking at proposals to increase the charge to CGT as their manifesto promises have been built on a foundation of

increased economic growth and the activities of entrepreneurs will be a key factor in that growth. Making changes that put entrepreneurs off will likely restrict growth and cause the government other issues.

For example, if the new rules to increase CGT were to prompt changes in behaviour such as there being fewer transactions then not only may the over-all CGT yield fall, but there could also be a knock-on effect on other taxes such as Stamp Duty Land Tax.

## What could we see for CGT?

Rates of CGT being raised to equal those of income tax, this would follow the logic expressed by Chancellor Lawson in 1988.

- A return to taxing gains at a fixed rate of tax below the 45 per cent additional rate.

- Reducing or abolishing current exemptions or reliefs.

- A return to distinguish between rates of tax on short term gains as opposed to those on the longer term holding of assets.

It is anticipated, though by no means certain, that any changes would not come into effect until April 2025, allowing for a one-off boost in tax receipts as taxpayers look to sell assets before the rates rise.

We can expect anti-forestalling rules designed to catch planning that triggers a notional disposal.

In terms of reliefs, currently if a taxpayer meets the requirements for Business Asset Disposal Relief (BADR) there is a beneficial tax rate of 10% on the first £1m of capital gains.

The operation of the relief has been tweaked over several years since its introduction in 2008. Although the benefit of this relief is no longer that significant we could see further changes to tighten up the qualification criteria for BADR especially if the gap between the main rate of CGT and the preferential BADR rate widens.

Alternatively, there could be

an increase in the lifetime limit alongside an increase in the rate of tax to be applied under BADR.

It is often said that death and taxes are the two certainties in life, but in the case of CGT at least you do not suffer that as well as Inheritance Tax (IHT) on a death.

There could be a change to introduce a CGT charge on death although we would expect this to be at a lower rate than those for lifetime gains. Alternatively, the current tax-free uplift to market value that occurs on a death for CGT is being widely trailed as being in the Chancellor's sights to be abolished.

## Inheritance Tax

Although Inheritance Tax (IHT) is suffered by fewer than 4% of estates it is the wealthiest individuals who are generally able to plan around it or use the valuable exemptions to prevent being exposed to the tax. We could, therefore, see a wider overhaul of IHT to focus the tax on the wealthiest estates.

We could see a tightening up on the IHT reliefs of Business Property Relief (BPR) and Agricultural Property Relief (APR). Some commentators are suggesting that a cap on the total amount of relief that could be claimed will be introduced, perhaps at the same limit as BADR at £1m.

The purpose of BPR and APR is to enable the continuity of businesses and so we think it is unlikely they would be withdrawn completely. However, it would be relatively simple to restrict the relief to exclude say AIM listed shares or to increase the current two-year holding period before the reliefs are available.

Further changes to the relief could include modifications to the dividing lines between trading businesses and investment businesses and aligning these with the similar rules that operate for CGT.

We could also see

simplifications to the IHT nil rate band (NRB) and the residence nil rate band (RNRB) that could be merged to give a combined band of £500,000 at a relatively low cost.

There may be other changes to IHT, such as the use of bands to calculate the IHT on death rather than the current single death rate, or we could see the combining of the different lifetime reliefs into one single gift relief as well as larger gifts out of income being included within death estates rather than being excluded.

CGT and IHT together produce less than £25bn a year in total, so for the Chancellor to raise say £5bn in additional tax is going to take very substantial changes. For example, including 80 per cent of defined contribution pension pots in taxable estates is expected to raise just £0.25bn, but at what political cost?

## Non-Dom Regime

The Labour manifesto promised to go further than the announcement by the previous government in abolishing non-dom status and replacing it with a more modern scheme.

The full details are yet to be announced and commentary on Rachel Reeves' plans in this area seems to be released on an almost daily basis with those against the idea suggesting the changes will cost the Exchequer rather than be a revenue raiser; indeed, there has been some talk of reigning back on any further changes.

## Pensions relief and taxation

Currently tax relief is given for contributions as they enter a pension scheme, increases in value are tax free whilst in the scheme and then tax is charged when the pension is drawn out, except of course for the 25% lump sum that is tax free. Overall, it is believed that the yearly cost of this is in the region of £50bn, and because of the way the relief operates it is broadly for the benefit of wealthier individuals.

## What changes could we see?

- A restriction to tax relief given to individuals for the contributions they make. This could be at a flat rate of say 30 per cent.

- Limiting the amount of the tax-free lump sum to say £100,000. Imposing IHT on the value of pension funds on death, currently they are exempt.

- Reducing the annual allowance that applies to the amount that can be contributed into a pension scheme in a year from the current £60,000, or perhaps preventing the current system of carry forward relief.

- Reintroduce the lifetime allowance (that the previous government abolished) but maybe with an exemption for public sector pensions (protecting the NHS from losing Doctors to retirement).

All the above could raise significant sums of tax but have



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Helen Kent-Woolsey, Private Client Director with Ensors Chartered Accountants



Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves arriving at Number 10 Downing Street in July. Credit - Fred Duval / Shutterstock.com

varying levels of political risk and introduce even greater complexity into the tax system as well as potentially stopping or reducing the amount individuals save for their retirement.

Therefore, purely form a pension viewpoint imposing National Insurance (NIC) on employer contributions could avoid the above, but raising costs on business has the potential to inhibit growth and so be counterproductive.

Some form of change to pension tax relief is highly

likely, but where the Chancellor goes with it will depend on her political bravery on the day.

What else could there be? We can see the fuel duty escalator being reinstated but being deferred until the first quarter of next year thereby preventing inflationary pressures at the end of this year.

Given the drop off in the sale of electric vehicles and with the government committed to the ban on the combustion engine could there be a significant increase in the benefit in kind for

non-electric vehicle to come?

The business taxation roadmap will be published on Budget Day. We could see much higher rates of SDLT being introduced for super high value properties.

After the compliance activity into Research and Development tax credits it seems likely that there will be further changes to the way R&D tax relief operates.

The Government has published details of the imposition of VAT on private school fees, but we are hopeful

that there will be further information on how this will be implemented. Even though there are challenges to the policy and a suggestion that it will not be a revenue raiser for the government, but rather it may produce a negative cash flow we do not see the policy being reversed.

We are anticipating increases in the windfall tax on energy companies and the bank tax surcharge.

Also, an increase on the residential property developer

tax could be on the cards.

Finally, there are always measures to further counter tax avoidance. We have details of a £555m investment in HMRC to fund a further 5,000 compliance officers and collect an additional £5bn a year to close the tax gap. Could we see additional funds allocated to HMRC to crack down further on tax avoiders?

Overall, it feels like the Chancellor has few options available to her if she is going to close the £22bn gap that she has identified.



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# J.P. Morgan and CIC leverage Cambridge Entrepreneurs Forum to inspire future growth

Last month, in partnership with Cambridge Innovation Capital, J.P. Morgan hosted its annual Cambridge Entrepreneurs Forum, bringing together J.P. Morgan's leading multi-disciplinary capabilities to address the opportunities and challenges of scaling up ambitious UK companies with a global outlook.

The South is home to some 14,000 high-growth companies, with Cambridge having one of the highest concentrations of startups in the UK.

This event connects Cambridge-based entrepreneurs and investors in the life sciences and deep tech sectors with J.P. Morgan's network, market intelligence and access to global capital to assist throughout critical stages of the financing lifecycle of ambitious, knowledge-intensive companies through to exit and beyond.

Oliver Gregson, Region Head for the UK, Channel Islands & Ireland at J.P. Morgan Private Bank, said: "Our firm's rich history with Cambridge spans over a century, from Jack Morgan receiving an honorary degree from the university to our continued commitment today, with our

data scientists partnering with university researchers during the pandemic.

"At J.P. Morgan, innovation and excellence are at the core of our purpose — values that strongly resonate with Cambridge's entrepreneurial spirit.

"This unique forum harnesses the firm's unparalleled global capabilities to connect the Life Sciences, Tech & Deep Tech sectors, aiming to grow, scale, and ultimately propel pioneering ideas from Cambridge to the international stage."

Cambridge's unique entrepreneurial ecosystem, bolstered by its world-class institutions including the University of Cambridge and innovation hubs such as the Cambridge Science Park, serves as an incubator for startups and growth companies alike.

In the last three years, £7.1 billion has been spent by R & D companies on 40 key business parks in Cambridge.

Andrew Williamson, Managing Partner, Cambridge Innovation Capital said: "The convergence of world-class research and entrepreneurial ambition in Cambridge creates

a unique environment where knowledge-intensive companies can thrive.

"With access to global capital and expertise, these companies are not just driving innovation — they are shaping the future of industries and creating solutions with far-reaching global impact,"

The process of raising capital for companies operating in knowledge-intensive sectors in 2024 remains a critical topic in the increasingly complex global investment landscape.

The right strategy will help generate an appropriate investor group that will bring both capital and expertise. With majority of spinouts led by professionals from an academic background, the Cambridge Entrepreneurs Forum plays a crucial role in connecting these experts with commercialisation expertise.

This synergy brings together global leaders in both academia and business, ensuring that startups can pursue the optimal capital formation strategy. Given the specialised nature of these companies, it's critical that founders can translate their companies' capabilities and potential to avoid limiting



From left to right: John Derrick, Maya Prabhu, Oliver Gregson, Andrew Williamson, Zeynep Ozturk, Edward Digby. Photo © – Ben Fisher.

themselves to a small pool of specialised investors.

This event coincides with the launch of J.P. Morgan Private Bank's fourth annual Top 200 Women-Powered Business Report, which highlights the invaluable contributions of women-led enterprises across the United Kingdom.

The report reveals that 29 per cent of the South's 14,000 high-growth companies are women-powered. The top 10 in the South include Panaseer, MPB, and Speechmatics.

Katy Wigdahl, Chief Executive of Speechmatics, participated in the tech panel and shared her valuable perspectives on the capital formation process for growth companies in the UK.

Speechmatics was founded in 2006 by Dr. Anthony Robinson, who pioneered the use of neural networks in speech recognition. In the report, Katy says: "We need to encourage more women to think about investing, highlighting the available vehicles and options, and support female leaders on their investment journey.

"We also need to see more phenomenal women in board roles, because balanced boards are better for business."

Healthcare is also well represented in the regional top 10, demonstrating the region's strength to incubate companies in this sector, with firms like clinical trial supplier BAP Pharma and medical data analysis firm Costello Medical standing out.



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