

# ANNUAL REVIEW

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Photo: Office Party

## 2015: Launch of our International Service and Ellisons Financial Planning

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#### Dispute Resolution has a great year

It has been a very positive year for the team, working with many big clients, including H.R. Owen.

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2015 also gave us the opportunity to launch our brand new service: 'Ellisons Financial Planning'.

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The scheme is a beacon of quality to clients and potential clients alike.

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#### Ellisons get behind the next generation

Every penny we raise in Suffolk stays in Suffolk to support young people.

## Ellisons: Global Thinking, Local Presence



**The Ellisons Annual Review is a good opportunity for me and my fellow Partners to reflect upon the year and to think about the many positive things to have taken place. It is not possible to address them all, but I hope this Review gives a good insight into some of the many things we've been a part of this past year.**

After such an exciting year in 2014 (our 250th year celebrations no less) it would have been easy to slow down, but not at Ellisons. We've continued to expand our workforce, strengthen our client relationships and ensure that client service is at the forefront of everything we do.

With that in mind, our two newest service areas, Ellisons Financial Planning and International Services, have taken the firm from local, to global – enabling us to assist our clients across a multitude of disciplines. More information can be found later in this review.

In April of this year we were very pleased to receive the Lexcel Accreditation; the Law Society's Quality Mark of Excellence. The accreditation (more of which can be found on page 9) demonstrates to our clients the high standards the practice meets both in client care and management best practice.

The expansion of Ellisons has certainly not taken a back seat this year either. We've seen new staff recruited to all our offices, including Ipswich; which is still only a little over a year old. Colchester has seen much recruitment too, with all departments taking on new hires to meet client demand.

Retaining and rewarding our staff has always been high on the agenda – and this year has been no exception. We've always felt it is important to strengthen the workforce we have and reward the hard work, loyalty and commitment given to the Partnership. We promoted three of our lawyers to Associate level earlier this year, more of which can be found on the opposite page.

Supporting the community within which we work and live, is of foremost importance to us and examples of the groups and events we have been involved with are given on pages 10 and 11.

It has been another busy year for Ellisons, and I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all our clients and contacts for their continued support. We look forward to working with you all in 2016.

**Guy Longhurst**  
Senior Partner, Ellisons Solicitors

## Three Partners celebrate over 70 years between them this year!

**2015 marked a special occasion for three of our Partners**, when we saw Guy Longhurst, Senior Partner; Graeme Wallington, Managing Partner and Nicky Coates, Partner and Head of Family, celebrate a combined 70 years with Ellisons!

Guy celebrated 20 years, where as Graeme celebrated 25 and Nicky 26!



## Ellisons mid-year promotions announced!

**We were delighted to announce the promotions of three lawyers, to the position of Associate this summer.**

Patrick Logan, Licensed Conveyancer; Natalie Simpkins, Solicitor within Insurance Litigation and Gina Westbrook, Solicitor in Wills, Trusts and Probate, all celebrated their recent promotion at the Firm.

Announcing the news at the time was Senior Partner, Guy Longhurst: "I am delighted to be able to announce that the partners have promoted Patrick Logan, Natalie Simpkins and Gina Westbrook to the position of Associate. All three have made invaluable contributions to their respective departments and offices, and the promotions are well earned and deserved. Their promotions confirm the positive direction the firm is taking and we look forward to their further contributions."



## Ingrebourne Valley Visitor Centre opens its' doors

**Ellisons Commercial Property Partner, Philip Roberts, was delighted to act for the Essex Wildlife Trust in connection with their latest visitor centre in Hornchurch Country Park.**

Iolo Williams, BBC wildlife presenter and naturalist, officially opened the Ingrebourne Valley Visitor Centre, on Saturday 3rd October 2015.

The visitor centre is a £1.4 million partnership project between Essex Wildlife Trust and Havering Council, which owns and manages Hornchurch Country Park. The centre, which is run by the Trust, provides long-awaited community facilities and education opportunities to the park, which is a much-loved open space, of great importance to people and wildlife. The centre boasts stunning views over the Ingrebourne Marshes.

John Hall, Essex Wildlife Trust CEO [who retired on 30 October 2015] commented on Ellisons work: 'Ellisons always give first class advice, and this time was no exception. Philip Roberts ensured a smooth and prompt transaction.'

John Hall, commented further: "Ingrebourne Valley Visitor Centre delivers facilities that the local community has long wanted and reflects Hornchurch Country Park's important wildlife and heritage, for all generations to enjoy. It is fantastic to be working with Havering Council on the project and I would like to thank all funders who have made it possible - and the hard work of all involved in bringing it to fruition."

The official unveiling of the centre was part of a Grand Opening event, which also celebrated Hornchurch's rich heritage. The park was formally Suttons Farm airfield, which later became RAF Hornchurch. The airfield played a vital role in the defence of London in both World Wars. The Grand Opening marked, to the day, the centenary of Suttons Farm becoming operational.



Photo : Gabby Milligan

## Corporate Commercial act for shareholders in important acquisition

**The Corporate Commercial Department was pleased to advise the shareholders of Countrywide Accident Assistance Limited ('CAA'), during the acquisition of CAA by Gallagher Bassett International, on 30th June 2015.**

Seamus Clifford, Head of Corporate Commercial, led on the transaction, assisted by Associate Paul Forsyth and Employment Partner, Julian Outen.

CAA, a long standing client of the firms Insurance Litigation practice, provides market leading Motor FNOL (First Notification of Loss) and TPA (Third Party Administration)

services to Insurers, Brokers and Commercial clients across the UK and Ireland.

GBI is a global Third Party Claims Administrator, with decades of experience in proactively managing claims, particularly personal injury claims, and more than 25 years' experience operating in the United Kingdom.

Seamus said: "We were delighted to be selected to work with the sellers on this exciting opportunity for them. The deal was a strategically important step for our clients and GBI in creating a strong proposition for the future."

"The deal is one of a number of large complex transactions in which our team is involved and is further evidence of Ellisons ability to provide a strong corporate and commercial offering."

## Dispute Resolution Department has a great year

**The firm was pleased to announce earlier this year that Lee Pearce has become the Head of the Dispute Resolution Department. The Dispute Resolution Department encompasses Civil, Commercial and Property litigation, and Lee will head up the team of six lawyers and support staff from the firms Colchester Office.**

It has been a very positive year for the team, working with many big clients, including H.R. Owen and The East of England Cooperative.

The property litigation team were extremely pleased to continue to act for H.R. Owen Dealerships Ltd, one of the leading sports and prestige car dealers in the UK. Highlights include advice and assistance with the renewal of the lease of the company's flagship Rolls Royce dealership in Berkeley Square, London W1, and the successful resolution of High Court proceedings over the building housing the company's Ferrari dealership in South Kensington.

In addition, the civil and commercial team continue to enjoy a strong relationship with locally based 'The Book Service' who are the UK's leading book distributor. Following their recent merger with Penguin Books, The Book Service frequently call upon the team for assistance.



## Aaron Heating Services Acquired

Ellisons and international accountants and business advisers BDO LLP based out of Ipswich; have advised the owners of Aaron Heating Services Ltd ("Aaron") on the company's sale to London Stock Exchange listed Lakehouse Plc for up to £10M.

The Ellisons team was led by Seamus Clifford, and assisted by Associate, Paul Forsyth.

The acquisition represents a further step in Lakehouse's growth strategy as the Group continues to expand and develop through targeted, complementary acquisitions which broaden its offering and geographical reach.

Aaron, a long established company founded in 1985 by Dawn Wright provides heating and installation services for housing associations and local authorities in East Anglia and the surrounding region. Dawn and her husband Allan were the driving force and owners of the company, with Allan having brought over 40 years engineering experience to the company in his role as Chief Executive Officer.

The company had grown steadily over time with over 350 staff and completing an annual installation rate of around 1500 new heating systems every year whilst servicing and maintaining approximately 100,000 individual homes across East Anglia and the

Midlands. For the year to March 31, 2015, Aaron reported turnover of £26.3m and a profit before tax of £900,000.

Following the acquisition, managing director David Lummis, commercial director Jon Posey and the current management team will remain with the business.

**David Lummis, Managing Director of Aaron Heating Services Ltd said:**

"We're thrilled to be joining Lakehouse, which will allow us to build on a successful period of strong and consistent growth. Combining our specialist skills with the Group's experience and client base means we are in the best position to bolster our presence in the compliance market, strengthening our existing relationships and extending our high levels of customer service across a widened geographical reach."

**Seamus Clifford, Managing Partner and Head of Corporate Commercial, said:**

"We are delighted to have been selected by David and his co shareholders to act for them in this strategic transaction. The deal, one of many large and complex transactions which the Corporate and commercial Department is involved with, included multidisciplinary advice from across the firm and is further evidence of the strength of Ellisons' offering and position within the M&A market place."

They were also pleased with new client wins Haven and Sabre who joined an already strong client base the department remain proud of.

The team were delighted to be invited to present yet again at the GII in Gibraltar this summer, to attendees from Insurance firms based in Gibraltar, the UK and Spain. Robert was accompanied by colleagues Louise Bland and Natalie Simpkins, as well as Neil Block QC. The team created bespoke seminars and workshops for the delegates, specifically focusing on Liability for Psychiatric Injury and Chronic Pain.

Gibraltar has established itself as a leading financial services hub and the opportunity to lead seminars has further cemented Ellisons Solicitors as a major player within the world of Insurance Litigation.

## Success continues for the firms' Insurance Litigation Team

**Robert Jones, Head of Insurance Litigation, and his team, have seen yet another successful year during 2015.**

During the summer, Robert and Associate Solicitor, Natalie Simpkins (advised by Neil Block QC) were pleased to represent Markerstudy Insurance Company Limited in a fundamental case which reconsidered the principles set down in a historical case, *Froom v Butcher*. The decision was extremely important to insurers looking to argue the full 25% deduction for claimants who fail to wear a seatbelt.

## Kevin Wilsher acts for Mersea Homes' beautiful Chesterwell Development

**Kevin Wilsher, Head of Commercial Property, is pleased once again to act for Mersea Homes, a leading property developer in the region. Kevin has worked with Mersea Homes for over 35 years, and was delighted to be asked to work with them on their largest residential development yet.**

'Chesterwell', a beautiful development of three and four bedroom homes, will be situated in the desirable location of north Colchester, incorporating Chesterwell woods. These beautifully designed homes offer an opportunity to be part of 'Chesterwell' a growing community on the outskirts of Colchester.

Mersea Homes vision for Chesterwell is to create a distinctive and high quality extension to north Colchester that will add and benefit the already lively community.

The development will consist of 1,600 homes including community facilities; and some of the new owners will be moving in by early 2016!



Kevin Wilsher and Stuart Cock, Managing Director of Mersea Homes

## Ellisons client develops warehouse the size of 5 football pitches!

**A talented team led by Ellisons Commercial Property Partner, Philip Roberts, worked with DSV earlier this year on a huge 400,000 sqft new warehouse development.**

The team working on this exciting site in Rounds, Northamptonshire included Paul Forsyth (Associate Solicitor in Corporate Commercial), Joanna McKenna and Stewart Nicholson (Assistant Solicitors in Commercial Property).

Philip commented on the project: "DSV have invested in the very latest equipment and systems. It boasts sustainable building construction and design, therefore it was

an incredibly exciting matter for the firm to be a part of."

Derek Gibson, director for DSV Solutions UK: "Since 2003 we have experienced substantial growth in the UK. The team at the new Warth Park warehouse will service a range of existing clients as well as fulfilling some significant new customer activities. We're delighted this new facility is taking shape and look forward to seeing the site come to life."

Derek commented on the work carried out by the Ellisons team: "As always, Ellisons carried out the legal requirements with the ease and professionalism required. There were many aspects to this project, which involved different members of the Ellisons team. However, at all stages there was clear communication, which ultimately led to a successful outcome."

## Ellisons expands with International Service

The Firm is very pleased to now offer our clients an international service, with our membership of the Alliot Group.

The Alliot Group is a worldwide alliance of independent accounting, law and consulting firms. With more than 160 member firms in some 60 countries, the group meets the local and cross-border needs of its members and their clients.



A Worldwide Alliance of Independent Accounting, Law and Consulting Firms

Seamus Clifford commented: 'We are delighted to join this worldwide alliance of professional firms, which will strengthen our firm and our clients by providing international thinking to our local presence. We were attracted to the Alliot Group due to their energy and professionalism, as well being able to connect us and our clients with some of the best likeminded individuals across the world. We very much looking forward to working with them.'

Seamus Clifford and Tim Logan are the lead contacts for Ellisons International Service, and would be delighted to discuss your legal needs with you.

<http://www.alliotgroup.net>

## Ellisons launch new service: Ellisons Financial Planning

2015 also gave us the opportunity to launch our brand new service: 'Ellisons Financial Planning'.

We joined forces with Financial Advisors, Matthew Douglas Ltd, to launch this new venture to new and existing clients.

Clients of Ellisons Financial Planning are able to meet with Financial Advisers at any of our branch offices, whether that is Colchester, Clacton, Frinton, Dovercourt or Ipswich.

Guy Longhurst: "We decided to embark on this new venture because legal advice so often comes hand in hand with a change of personal circumstances and new financial responsibilities. Ellisons Financial Planning is here to help its' clients cope with new financial circumstances, with a firm they already know and trust."



The areas of specialism will include:

- Inheritance tax planning
- Estate and Trustee Investment
- Individual investment planning
- Business exit strategies
- Property acquisition and disposal
- Arranging protection, business and personal
- Matrimonial division of assets
- Retirement Planning

## Ellisons Solicitors secures top accolade from the national Law Society

The firm was extremely pleased to have secured the national Law Society's law management quality mark, Lexcel back in April 2015.

Lexcel is developed specifically for the legal profession. It is an optional, recognised accreditation scheme for law firms and in-house legal departments which gives assurance that a practice meets high client care and business management standards.

To gain and retain Lexcel accreditation, the practice must undergo a rigorous initial assessment process then a further annual application and assessment. This includes conducting background checks and a five day on-site visit from an experienced, trained Lexcel assessor.

Guy Longhurst, Senior Partner said: "While we are proud to have secured Lexcel, it is



our client's and staff who are the main beneficiaries. They can be assured that the way we manage the practice has their interests at heart and runs efficiently. There is a lot of choice in the legal services market, but being Lexcel accredited demonstrates our commitment to client care and best practice."

President of the Law Society, Andrew Caplen said: "Gaining and maintaining Lexcel is not easy and the application process is extremely rigorous. There are many facets of being a Lexcel accredited law firm, including client care. A commitment to customer service in an increasingly competitive legal services market is vital in order to stay competitive. Firms that make the grade should feel proud of their achievement.

"The scheme is a beacon of quality to clients and potential clients alike."

Julian Outen, Partner and Ellisons HR Specialist, hosted a series of successful HR Seminars at Wherstead Park, Ipswich, throughout 2015.

The popular event, is aimed at HR professionals across the County and proves to be an informative and interesting discussion group every time.

If you are an HR Professional based in the area and would like to attend, please contact [marketing@ellisonssolicitors.com](mailto:marketing@ellisonssolicitors.com) for more information.



## Breakfast Series proves a Summer hit!

Our Tendring Branches were delighted to host a series of 'Summer Breakfasts' from June to September, providing an informal environment for discussion and networking.

The three networking sessions were aimed at local businesses within the Tendring Peninsula and were held at The Pier in Harwich, the Kingscliffe Hotel in Clacton and the Frinton Golf Club.



## Ellisons supports the regions activities

Ellisons were pleased to support numerous events, charities and other community led projects throughout 2015.

To name just a few:

- Tendring Show
- Colchester Rugby Club
- Colchester Hockey Club
- Ipswich & East Suffolk Hockey Club
- Colchester Medical Careers Day
- Colchester Careers Convention
- Dedham Run
- KATS Netball
- Langham Run
- Clacton Airshow



## Ellisons Sponsor Mersea Island Rugby Football Club!

We were delighted to announce our support of the Mersea Island Rugby Football Club, for the season just past, as well as the coming season.

With two partners and many staff living on the Island, it seemed like a perfect match and so the firm offered £2,000 of sponsorship to support the Rugby team. The money will go towards purchasing new kit for the 1st, 2nd and Youth teams.

Dave Murrell, fundraiser and Sponsorship officer, said: "The club is proud to be associated with Ellisons Solicitors. Their generous support of many sports in the region is a testimony to their commitment to provide facilities for sports people of all ages. Mersea Rugby Club has for some time been looking to start Youth rugby on the Island and now with the recent move to the Glebe Recreation ground this has become a reality. The sponsorship offered by Ellisons Solicitors will provide a kick start to establishing this and the Rugby Club and its members are extremely grateful."



## Ellisons and other Ipswich businesses get behind the next generation

Ipswich businesses came out in force in September to demonstrate their support for the next generation of sportsmen and women from the county.

A capacity audience of 240 people descended on Wherstead Park near Ipswich for the inaugural Ipswich Sporting Lunch Club event keen to raise money for SportsAid, the national charity for sport.

Led by event sponsors, Ellisons Solicitors, Pound Gates Chartered Insurance Brokers, Crafted, Ensors Chartered Accountants, Handelsbanken, Corbel and the Suffolk Institute of Directors, the club has been established to raise vital funding to help young sportsmen and women from the county overcome the financial challenges they face as they bid to become Britain's next generation of Olympians and Paralympians.

SportsAid research shows that on average young athletes will train 15 hours a week after school, travel more than 600 miles a month to train and compete and they will spend £6,000 a year on their sport, relying almost entirely on their families for support.

Former England cricketer and current sporting speaker of the year Geoff Miller was guest of honour at the lunch. Miller spent 20 years on the professional cricket circuit, representing Derbyshire, Essex, Natal and England. He was also appointed National Selector by the England and Wales Cricket Board in 2008.

Chief Executive of SportsAid Tim Lawler added "I really do commend the businesses behind the Ipswich Sporting Lunch Club. Their drive, enthusiasm and generosity is superb and thanks to their fantastic efforts we will be able to support more aspiring sportsmen and women from Suffolk on their journey to national and international honours. Every penny we raise in Suffolk stays in Suffolk to support young people from Suffolk."



## Ellisons were in the Pink this October

To support Breast Cancer Now's 'Wear it Pink' Day on Friday 23rd October, Ellisons played host to our third annual 'Pink Party' on Wednesday 21st October.

The event was held at the beautiful Wivenhoe House Hotel and we once again secured a fabulous selection of stall holders to keep the ladies entertained.

A raffle and free prize draw was also organised with some fantastic prizes!

This year we managed to raise £600.

## High Rankings once again in both Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners

**It's been yet another fantastic year for the firm within the Legal Directories. Both Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners UK have given Ellisons some fantastic results.**

Here's what Chambers & Partners had to say about us:

Seamus Clifford, Ranked 1 for Corporate and Commercial is a "responsive, professional and well-informed" lawyer with experience dealing with a full amount of corporate matters.

"Its (Corporate Commercial's) client service is first-class and the levels of service are consistent from the senior partners to the junior members of staff."

The "excellent" Guy Longhurst [Commercial Property] is "very commercial and very bright" according to clients, who add that "he's very assertive; people take notice of what he says in meetings."

Clients describe his (Commercial Property's Philip Robert's) efficiency and reliability in the face of tight deadlines.

"Ellisons [Property Litigation Department] are a very effective, efficient operation - they get things done and they are a firm that really gives you added value." One client described Lee Pearce as "highly diligent, totally reliable and always available," adding: "He is everything you would want in a lawyer."

High-profile lawyer Nicola Coates (Family) is "somebody who has a terrific manner with clients, but also fiercely determined when it comes to negotiating the best outcome for her side."

Clients state that "he's (Julian Outen Employment Partner Ranked 1) clear, concise, and his knowledge is spot-on."

Robert Gair [Ranked 1 for Personal Injury] "has a great appreciation of the tactical realities of situations and a very good eye for detail."



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- Court of Protection