

As a service based business, Ellisons appreciates that it is only as good as the people it employs. In the last twelve months there was plenty to celebrate with promotions, new joiners and a change at the helm for the post of Senior Partner.

All Change

In May, Peter Powell took on the role of Senior Partner from Bryn Smart, who stepped down as senior partner but continues to act for clients in his role as a "Consultant". It was celebrated with a surprise party at Le Talbooth attended by Partners and staff and of course Bryn's own family.



Peter is a Commercial Property specialist and a prominent figure in the local community as a Director of local football team Colchester United and as one of the partners of Colchester2020, the Local Strategic Partnership for Colchester.

Promoted

Also in May, Employment Law specialist Jayne Scott was promoted to Partner and Litigator Judith Winward to Associate. Jayne advises on all aspects of the fast moving area of employment law, including representing clients at Employment Tribunals. Judith started with the firm following a first career in journalism with eight years at the Evening Gazette in Colchester before deciding to study law at Essex University. Judith specialises primarily in resolving civil and commercial disputes but is also a qualified Notary.



R to L:
Judith Winward,
Peter Powell,
Jayne Scott

A Qualified Success



L: Ceri Rogers;
R: Kirsty Panton

Ceri Rogers and Kirsty Panton completed their training this Summer and are now qualified solicitors.

Kirsty advises on commercial property matters whilst Ceri primarily advises local businesses on employment issues and on general commercial law. Ceri joined Ellisons as a Trainee in 2005 following her graduation from Queen Mary University of London. Kirsty graduated in law and completed her Legal Practice Course at Anglia Ruskin University.

House Point



Steven Harris

In March, Steven Harris joined as an Assistant Solicitor in the Commercial Property team.

Steven started his legal career at Swan Housing Association in Billericay where he worked for almost three years before joining a City based firm which is recognised as a leader in the field of social housing. Specialising in Registered Social Landlords work, particularly site acquisitions and disposals, Steven also advises on the broader aspects of both residential and commercial property

Welcome also to: Lucy Spraggon, Ann Welch, Sarah Brown, Sian Parker, Kerry Hawthorne, Kate Cox, Sue Hardwick, Robert John and Patricia Robertson

Places

2007 was a good year for our presence on the Tendring Peninsula, starting with the expansion of the Frinton office

It is doubly nice to be beside the sea...

In April, Ellisons acquired the practice of Peter Leaman, just next door to its existing offices in Fronton on Sea. Peter Leaman, a practising solicitor since 1954 and a sole practitioner negotiated a handover of his practice to neighbouring Ellisons Solicitors. "Ellisons was the ideal choice," explained Peter. "Not only can they provide my clients with all the same services but by taking over

the office, my clients don't even have to use a different front door. On a more serious note, however, having held a practice in the town for over forty years, it was important to me to be able to hand over the interests of my clients to a Firm I respect and trust. I believe I found the right Firm in Ellisons and in particular in resident partner Nicky Coates and her team."



L to R: Peter Leaman, Nicky Coates

The two offices became one by literally knocking through from one building to the other, giving a total space of approximately 2000 square feet. All communication systems were merged by the 23rd April to provide a seamless handover to clients and contacts. A refurbishment programme commenced immediately and the "new" offices were celebrated with an "open house" invitation to clients over the Christmas period.

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Client News

Where would any firm be without clients? This section features a selection of Ellisons' clients and the work it has carried out for them in the last year. This is by no means comprehensive or indeed fully representative as a great deal of the work undertaken by Ellisons is confidential or of such a commercially or personally sensitive nature that it would not be appropriate to refer to it in print.



Cuckoo Farm

Colchester United Football Club is getting ready to say goodbye to Layer Road, its home for 70 years, to move to its new 10,000 seater stadium at Cuckoo Farm in the north of Colchester for the start of the 2008/9 season.

The plans for the new Community stadium were approved in June 2006 when the Championship club joined forces with the Borough Council and the Community Sports Trust.



Proposed Community Stadium Cuckoo Farm West, Colchester

Working alongside the club from the beginning of the development has been a multi-disciplinary team from Ellisons. Seamus Clifford has been involved in the commercial aspects of this prestigious development. Meanwhile, Guy Longhurst acted for Colchester Borough Council in connection with the sale of land to the Easter Group, and the agreement that will procure the construction of the new road and infrastructure that will serve the new stadium, which needs to be in place by the time that construction of the stadium itself is completed in May 2008.

Jarmin Road

In the week before Christmas a dispute between Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council was settled. The dispute arose following plans to sell the Jarmin Road depot for redevelopment. As a result of local government reorganisation in 1974 following the Local Government Act 1972, Essex County Council were entitled to use part of the site owned by Colchester Borough Council. An Arbitration hearing was listed to determine how much, if any, Essex County Council should receive from the proceeds of sale of the site. Louise Bland acted for Colchester Borough Council.

The settlement which was endorsed by the Arbitrator is good news for council tax payers.

Bastin Day Westley

In March, Ellisons advised the shareholders on the sale of Bastin Day Westley Limited (BDW) to the AIM listed Mission Marketing Group Plc for up to £14.5 million in cash and shares. Financing for the transaction was provided by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

BDW is one of the UK's leading specialist property and real estate marketing agencies. It offers creative, marketing, media and technical services to many of the UK's largest house building and estate agency

companies including St George, Bellway and Crest Nicholson. Recent work undertaken by BDW includes marketing of the development at 'The Stadium' - Arsenal's landmark residential development at Highbury, and Bellways Park Royal development of the Guinness Brewery building. Advising BDW on the deal was a team from Ellisons led by Corporate Partners Seamus Clifford and Sally Hudson. Guy Longhurst advised on property matters and Jayne Scott on employment issues.

Kesgrave Hall



In October, Kesgrave Hall near Ipswich was purchased, in a joint venture arrangement, by Hills Group and Milsom Hotels. The Grade II listed building, which dates from 1850, will be fitted out to create a 100 seat bar/restaurant, an outside dining area with views across its 38 acres of grounds, meeting and private dining facilities and 15 bedrooms. It will operate as "milsoms at Kesgrave Hall" and is due to open in Spring 2008, creating about 60 new full- and part-time jobs and representing an investment of around £4million.

Besides the existing milsoms business, Milsom Hotels also owns Le Talbooth restaurant and the Maison Talbooth hotel in Dedham and The Pier at Harwich but milsoms at Kesgrave Hall will be its first permanent venue in Suffolk. The Hills Group is a broad based construction and development group of companies based in Colchester specialising in this type of property investment.

The team from Ellisons advising on the venture included Corporate Partner, Seamus Clifford and Commercial Property Partner, Guy Longhurst.



Ellisons
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Photo L to R: Peter Powell, Senior Partner, Ellisons; Guy Longhurst, Jt Managing Partner, Ellisons; Tim Logan, Managing Partner, of PTL; Seamus Clifford, Partner Ellisons; Andrew Tilsley, Partner PTL.

It's official – We're engaged

On 1st May 2008 Ellisons Solicitors is to merge with PTL Solicitors to become one of the most prominent providers of legal services in Essex. Ellisons has offices in Colchester, Frinton on Sea and Dovercourt ; PTL has offices in Colchester and Clacton. The merged Firm, to be known as Ellisons Solicitors, will have a total of 125 staff, approximately 100 of whom will be located in Colchester town centre. The combined firm will offer greater strength in the following areas of practice: Commercial Property, Corporate Commercial, Residential Property, Wills, Probate & Trusts, Employment, Family and Personal Injury.

Key to the negotiation success was PTL partner *Tim Logan* who explains why the merger with Ellisons was the next logical step for his firm:

"Historically, the emphasis in Colchester has been on small to medium sized firms and in that context, with its acquisition of modest bolt-ons, we think PTL's strategy has been sensible. But Colchester, like most other towns in the south-east, is changing. Smaller firms are finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the professional demands of a modern Practice. There has been a gradual widening of the gap between smaller and larger firms, which continues to increase. Nowadays, because of competition, law firms have to maintain levels of profitability by reducing overheads (as well as trying to expand levels of income) and this is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve. Reductions in overheads make it more difficult for those firms to meet clients' expectations of quality and service and to attract new business. Other complications are the modern trend towards specialisation,

the need to provide a broad range of legal services and the difficulty of attracting and retaining the very best staff. Our conclusion was that we needed to be part of something bigger but still be able to retain the personality of PTL and our approach to quality client service."

Having decided that size did matter, PTL needed to start looking for the right partners. Tim continues: "The choice of Ellisons was an opportunity just too good to miss. We may be the smaller party in the merger but we feel more than comfortable that our clients and our people will benefit from the greater opportunities presented by the merged firm, which will combine two very similar cultures. When two firms enter into merger talks, it is all about testing out compatibility and identifying synergies. For an agreement to be reached so quickly confirms our initial instincts that PTL and Ellisons are a natural match."

Tim concedes that the next few months will not be without its challenges: "Merger is not always an easy concept as it implies change

and a change which is not always sought by everyone. We are sensitive to the fact that many of our clients chose PTL because of who we are and may at first feel a little uncomfortable about this news. Fortunately, most of those with whom we have spoken have been very positive and have congratulated us on our choice of partner."

Tim reassures clients that this decision is positive: "Our message to our clients is very much that it will be "Business as usual" but come May we will be able to offer an enhanced service with more resources, better technological and administrative back-up and an extended capability in a number of areas such as Licensing, Mergers & Acquisitions, Matrimonial and Employment"

And Colchester is not the only community to benefit from the merger adds Tim, "One area which will become increasingly important is the Tendring Peninsula. With offices in Clacton, Frinton and Harwich the merged firm will be the undisputed pre-eminent firm of Solicitors in the region"

And as for future, Tim Logan and his Partner, Andrew Tilsley, see this merger as only the beginning, "We are both agreed that the scope for development is enormous. Ellisons has a fantastic history in Colchester and by merging our firm with its established brand, we put our trust in its future".



Jayne Scott and members of the Colchester Scout Band

Ellisons is proud to continue its support of the Youth Arts Awards which is now in its third year, by sponsoring the Arts Award. The winner this year was The Colchester Scout Band which is to celebrate its 30th birthday in 2008. The band is no newcomer to the awards as they have in fact played at this awards ceremony for the past two years and gave a further impressive performance for the entertainment of those present in 2007!

The Band was the first non-military band to perform at the Menon Gate memorial at Ypres in Belgium and the youngsters have proved themselves worthy ambassadors for both the Scout movement and the Youth of Colchester. They have travelled and played throughout Europe, with the ages of members of the band ranging from 8 years of age and upwards. Partner Jayne Scott was at the Moot Hall ceremony in December to present the award.

University Challenge



L to R: Dan Messenger, Graeme Wallington, Bethan Onions

Ellisons Solicitors is delighted to continue its support of the Mooting Team at Essex University. The sponsorship of £500 is used to support the University mooting teams which compete in the three major mooting competitions: ESU Essex Court Chambers; Midlands and Oxford University Press. It also funded the University's internal mooting competition which took place in April. The winners, Dan Messenger and Bethan Onions, were presented with the shield and the new Ellisons cup, as well as a cash prize of £75.00 each, by Graeme Wallington, Partner and Head of Litigation at Ellisons. Runners up were Tomasz Hara and Alicja Szczesniak, and Matthew Bennett and Jennifer Woodham, came third.

2020 Power



Power Breakfast at the Barn Brasserie in Great Tey



David Frost



L: Rachel Bridges R: David Frost

On Wednesday 17 October 2007, Colchester 2020 held its inaugural Power Breakfast at the Barn Brasserie in Great Tey, sponsored by Ellisons Solicitors. Over 100 local business people listened to presentations from David Frost, the Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, and Rachel Bridge, Enterprise Editor of the Sunday Times.

A passionate advocate for business, David Frost referred to Colchester as a 'really strong brand' and 'somewhere people want to live'. He outlined the large-scale investment taking place in the town and spoke of the £17 billion economy which has a 'real sense of driving forward'. David also lamented the recent rise in Capital Gains Tax, over which he was due to meet the Secretary of State the same afternoon.

Rachel Bridge used her journalistic experiences with hundreds of successful businessmen and women to relate the qualities and determination needed to succeed as an entrepreneur. She inspired members of the audience, many of them leaving breakfast with a desire to start up or improve their own business.

All this enterprising talk was extremely appropriate for Colchester, which is the SME (small and medium size enterprise) capital of East of England and has over 2,300 business start-ups each year.

Sweet Charity

Ellisons' nominated Charity for the financial year beginning 2007 was **The Essex Autistic Society**.

The Head Street windows helped publicised the charity's Autism Awareness Week in October. The Firm was also happy to support the 30th anniversary of Doucecroft School.



Going **WILD** in Essex



In February Trainee Solicitors Marsha Robinson and Victoria Barclay helped out with some tree planting at Abberton Reservoir showing that we are happy to offer practical as well as financial and legal support for the Essex Wildlife Trust.



Later in the year, former Senior Partner Bryn Smart celebrated 10 years of the Firm's membership of the Trust by being presented with a long service award by Essex Wildlife corporate officer Stan Brailey.

Colour Me Beautiful!

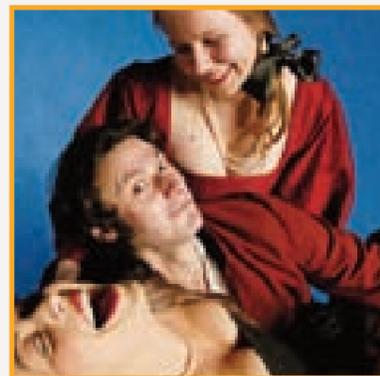


Front row: Mary Beverley, Louise Bland Back row: Sue McCarthy, Rob Mann

In July partner Louise Bland joined the Headway Essex team of 22 walkers for the "Moonlight Colourthon", a 13 mile overnight sponsored walk organised by the Southend Round Table.

The team raised a credible £8,500 as result of their nighttime stroll. The event will take place again this year and Mary Beverley would be pleased to hear from any interested walkers on (01206) 547616

Window Pain



Ellisons Solicitors is delighted to support the Mercury Theatre as Corporate Community sponsors. As part of this programme we are also happy from time to time to feature some of the Mercury's promotional material in our Colchester reception.

In April for example, the Head Street windows focused on She Stoops to Conquer by Oliver Goldsmith with the Mercury's promotional artwork amended to reflect a divorce theme, an initiative which was complemented by a Family department trip to see the play.



Colchester Rugby

Still a winner with Ellisons

Ellisons renewed its sponsorship of Colchester Rugby Club 1st XV for the 2007/8 season. Club Charirman, John Powell said 'We are very grateful to Ellisons for their continuing sponsorship. Links between local businesses and Community Sports Clubs are vital to the sustainability of sport and we freely acknowledge that without such support from Ellisons our task would be very difficult'



Left to right: James Gee,Captain; Robert Jones, Ellisons; John Powell, Chairman; Guy Longhurst, Ellisons; Len Nieuwenhuis, President; Andy Cryne ,Head Coach



RACE For Life



Team Ellisons consisted of: Sarah Crawford, Gill Deag, Vicky Franklin, Chris Lowden, Yvonne Moore, Sam Mortimer, Clare Parkins.

Since it started in 1994, Race for Life has grown to become the UK's largest women-only fundraising event. Women run to raise money for Cancer Research UK but perhaps more importantly most complete the 5km in support of friends and family who have won,

but also sometimes sadly lost, a battle with cancer. Running the Race for Life on the 13th May in Colchester' Castle Park in 2007 was a team from Ellisons. Together they raised just under £1500 and completed the race in about 1 hour.

Ellisons Solicitors is involved in and supports a number of other community initiatives: AFC Sudbury, COLBEA, Colchester 2020, Colchester Choral Society, Colchester Town Partnership, Colchester United Premier Partners, Essex Wildlife Trust, firstsite, Harwich Sea Festival and more... Individual members of the Firm are further involved in local charities and community projects on a personal level. We hope that the initiatives and events highlighted in these pages give a flavour of how Ellisons take its role in the local community very seriously indeed and we would welcome any ideas from you, our clients, for future initiatives.