

# FORGE YOUR OWN PATH WITH A CAREER AT

WALKER  
MORRIS

WM

2024

# About us

We're an independent commercial law firm, delivering tailored, strategic advice to national and international clients.

We believe in doing things differently. We teach an entrepreneurial and collaborative way of working, led by our partnership. And we're united by our desire to help our clients achieve their goals.

We embrace the fact that everyone is different and unique. Our people all have their own hopes and ambitions for their professional journey. If you join us, we'll give you the opportunities and freedom to forge your own path, plus the care and support to unlock your potential.

Our size and structure mean we offer development opportunities that other firms don't. We're large enough to offer access to high-profile clients and exciting international work. But, we're also of a size where Partners and Directors remain genuinely hands on, so you'll be working with some of the best in the industry.

We think what we've got here is pretty special, and we think you will too.

In our latest annual internal survey, almost 80% of our team agreed that Walker Morris enables them to make the decisions that are 'just right' for their clients.





## Our clients include



# Our values



## Embrace the fact that everyone is different and unique.

Each of our team members and clients is different. Clients may have similar problems, but they're different people. Let's not forget this. Be patient. Be empathetic. Take the time to nurture every relationship. Embrace the fact everyone is different and unique.



## Never lose sight of the bigger picture.

Every client has a vision. A greater goal. Bigger than whatever piece of work you're doing right now. Keep that in mind. Show them you get it. Show them you're helping them get there.



## Two heads are better than one.

Collaborate. Every client could be getting better service if we came together and shared our expertise. 2+2=5.



## You can be serious without wearing a suit.

We call this the 70% corporate rule. We always want to appear reputable to potential clients, but the reality is that the world has changed. You don't need to put on a pinstripe suit to be respected. Look professional. Act professional. But don't feel you need to adhere to a cliché. Everyone at this firm is here because we want you.



## Take the bull by the horns.

This firm wants you to take the lead. If you have an idea, go make it happen. Nobody will do it for you.



## We win and lose together.

We're stronger together. As a team. All staff. All clients. As one.



Our values define what we stand for. They're not aspirational, we're already there. They shape how we work together, interact and make decisions – both internally and with our clients.”

Tracy Foley, Head of People & Culture

# What makes us different?

We want our people to have long and fulfilling careers with us. So, in 2022, we launched our award-winning Sustainable Careers offering. Sustainable Careers supports and encourages development but also aims to combat the pressures of a sector often associated with burnout.

Our approach focuses around 4 areas:

## Personality

Our strength is in our differences. That means we will treat you as an individual — with trust, respect and recognition for what's important to you. We have a welcoming culture and strong sense of camaraderie — it's what helps to make this a great place to work.

## Ambition

In our entrepreneurial environment, you'll have access to high-profile clients and exciting, international work early on. You'll be involved in deals and transactions from start to finish, enabling you to see the big picture and develop legal skills and experience to match.

## Trust

We champion big thinking and we'll stand behind you whilst you pursue success for yourself, your clients and the firm, celebrating accomplishments along the way.

## Humanity

We put your wellbeing first and offer a comprehensive range of wellbeing support to maximise your emotional, financial, physical and social wellbeing.



The International  
Management  
Excellence Awards  
2023

Awarded Best Sustaining  
Culture at the 2023 International  
Management Excellence Awards



The International  
Management  
Excellence Awards  
2023

Won Best in Business theme  
at the 2023 International  
Management Excellence Awards



Won Best Law Firm for Work  
from Home award at  
Legal Cheek Awards 2023

## Here's some examples of Sustainable Careers in action:

- Our chargeable hours target is 1,350, giving you the time to develop your skills as a well-rounded corporate lawyer.
- We've introduced FORGE, an in-house, 8-month-long blended learning programme for aspiring partners; to help shift mindsets from being an individual contributor to becoming a leader and partner of the firm.
- We created a Woman in Leadership committee to get more women into senior positions in our business, especially partnership. 23% of our Partnership is female. We are aiming for 40% intake each year; in 2023 60% of our intake were female and in 2024 66% of internal promotions were female.
- To encourage a healthy work-life balance we have a paid sabbatical scheme which allows you to take a paid sabbatical every 2 or 3 years.



FORGE has given me invaluable knowledge, insights and tools to set me up for the next step as a Partner, manager and leader."

Charlotte Smith, Partner, Employment



Our ability to attract and retain the best talent is key to our success, which is why investment in our people is front and centre of our Ambition 27 strategy for growth. Feedback from our staff engagement survey is that the quality of work at Walker Morris and the welcoming and supportive culture are highly valued. Our lower than average chargeable hours expectations, hybrid working and sabbatical policies are designed to enhance our offering, enabling our people to shape their careers and fulfil their potential whilst balancing the demands of their personal lives."

Jeanette Burgess, Managing Partner



# Benefits

Maintaining and supporting the wellbeing of our people is one of our key priorities. Our people are central to our success — in return, we provide a package which enables everyone's continued success.

These are just a few of our benefits:



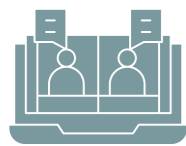
## Bonus scheme

Earn up to 35% of your salary. This is made up of your chargeable and billed hours performance and contribution to Business Development. Don't forget, our chargeable hours target is only 1,350.



## Paid sabbatical scheme

We have a paid sabbatical scheme which allows you to take a paid sabbatical every 2 or 3 years. Accrue 2 weeks' leave after 2 years' service or 4 weeks' leave after 3 years' service PLUS add on up to 2 weeks' annual leave to extend your sabbatical up to a maximum of 6 weeks' leave.



## Hybrid and flexible working

We trust you to deliver, wherever you are. This is why we encourage hybrid and flexible working.



## Enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption leave policy

We offer 20-weeks' paid maternity and adoption leave; and 10-weeks' paid paternity leave.



## Annual leave

You'll get a minimum of 25 days' holiday per year, increasing to 31 days with length of service. You can also buy/sell up to 5 days' holiday per year.



## Medical insurance

Medical insurance and BUPA is on offer to all of our solicitors with no excess or compulsory self-payments.



Grateful for the fantastic sabbatical scheme offered by Walker Morris.

I made the most of mine by getting married in NYC and road tripping around California for four weeks."

Catherine Thompson, Senior Associate



Walker Morris has been incredibly supportive and I've been fortunate to have 10 weeks paternity leave. This was invaluable to support my wife with her recovery and spend quality time in our little bubble with our little girl."

Alex Jones, Director



# Our Corporate team

Our Corporate team is the largest in Leeds, made up of 8 Partners, 1 Director, 8 Senior Associates, 9 Associates, 4 Trainee Solicitors.

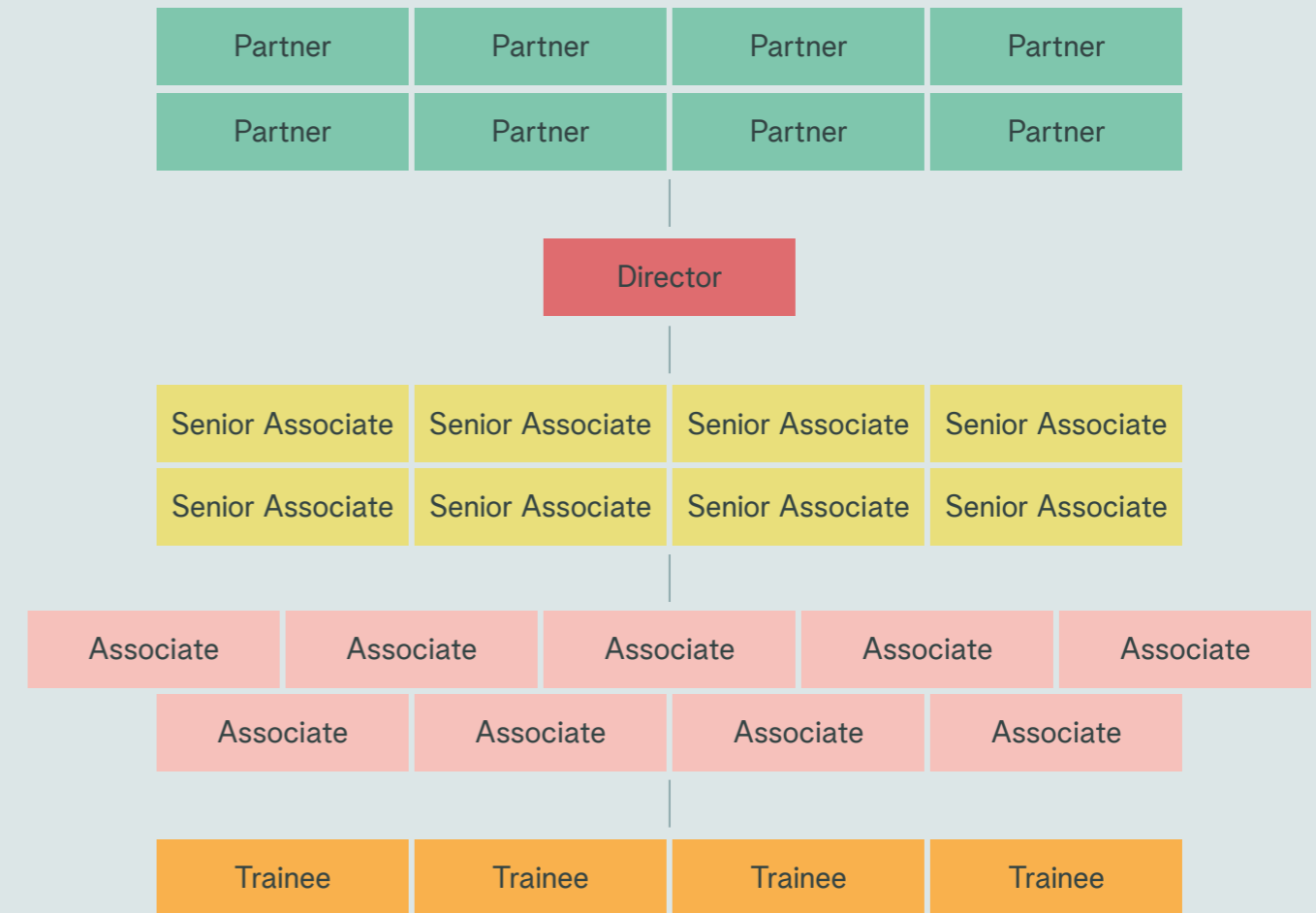
We structure our team to allow our people to experience different styles of working and pick up the broadest range of skills. You'll have the chance to collaborate with all our Partners, rather than being limited to one, while keeping consistent deal teams to see your transactions through from start to finish. Our supportive, approachable culture encourages you to take as much responsibility as you're ready for, while our one-site model makes it easy to get guidance whenever needed.

To ensure you stay up to date, we offer bi-weekly interactive training sessions which includes external speakers covering topics such as W&I and accounting. We'll also encourage you to develop your business development skills and take part in our sector groups.

We believe in investing in you. You'll have personalised developmental objectives, quarterly reviews with a dedicated partner and an annual appraisal with 2 partners.

And we aren't all work and no play. In addition to our monthly team meetings, we have monthly team socials and breakfasts, twice a year we go off-site for a day of activities and socialising, and you'll be encouraged to take part in inter-team activities and firm-wide socials.

## Our team structure



Corporate ranked as Tier 1 by Legal 500



Corporate/M&A £25 million and above ranked as Band 1 in Chambers and Partners

Regularly feature in the **Top 20 law firms for UK M&A**

(Bloomberg, mid-market by deal count up to \$500m)

We've promoted 10 people in the last 3 years

including 7 Senior Associates, 1 Director and 2 Partners



Shortlisted for European Regional Legal Advisor of the Year by the Private Equity Awards 2023



We have ambitious plans to keep on growing, and we look forward to welcoming talented lawyers to help us achieve that. The sky is the limit!"

Richard Naish, Head of Corporate, Partner



# The work we do

Our team typically works on M&A (buy and sell side), private equity (sponsor and management), IPOs and ECM work (company and broker/bank), public takeovers as well as general corporate advisory (such as group reorganisations, capital reductions, etc.). Much of the work we do has an international element.

Examples of our work include:

Advised **Mattioli Woods Group PLC** on its scheme of arrangement in connection with a public offer by a new company formed by funds advised and managed by Pollen Street Capital.  
Value = £432 million.

Advised **Endless and management** on sale of Findel Education, a UK leading educational resources supplier, to Manutan, a Paris head-quartered leader in European B2B e-commerce.  
Value = confidential.

Advised **Voyage Care Limited** on its acquisition of KDL Investments Limited.  
Value = confidential.

Advised **La Compagnie des Desserts SAS** (a portfolio company of PAI), a leading premium frozen desserts supplier for the food service market, on its purchase of London-based premium pastry producer Didier's Patisserie Limited. Value = confidential.

Advised **Renew Holdings PLC** on its acquisition of Excalon Holdings, an infrastructure contractor specialising in high/extra high voltage infrastructure to the UK electricity sector.  
Value = £26 million.

Advised **NASDAQ listed Stagwell Global**, a global marketing network, on its acquisition of Consulum, a leading pan-MENA government advisory consultancy.  
Value = confidential.

Advised **Avacta Group PLC**, a UK-based life sciences company, on a placing to raise £26 million.

Advised **Green Street Advisors** (a portfolio company of TA Associates) on its purchase of Delinian (IJ Global) Limited, a financial media company.  
Value = confidential.

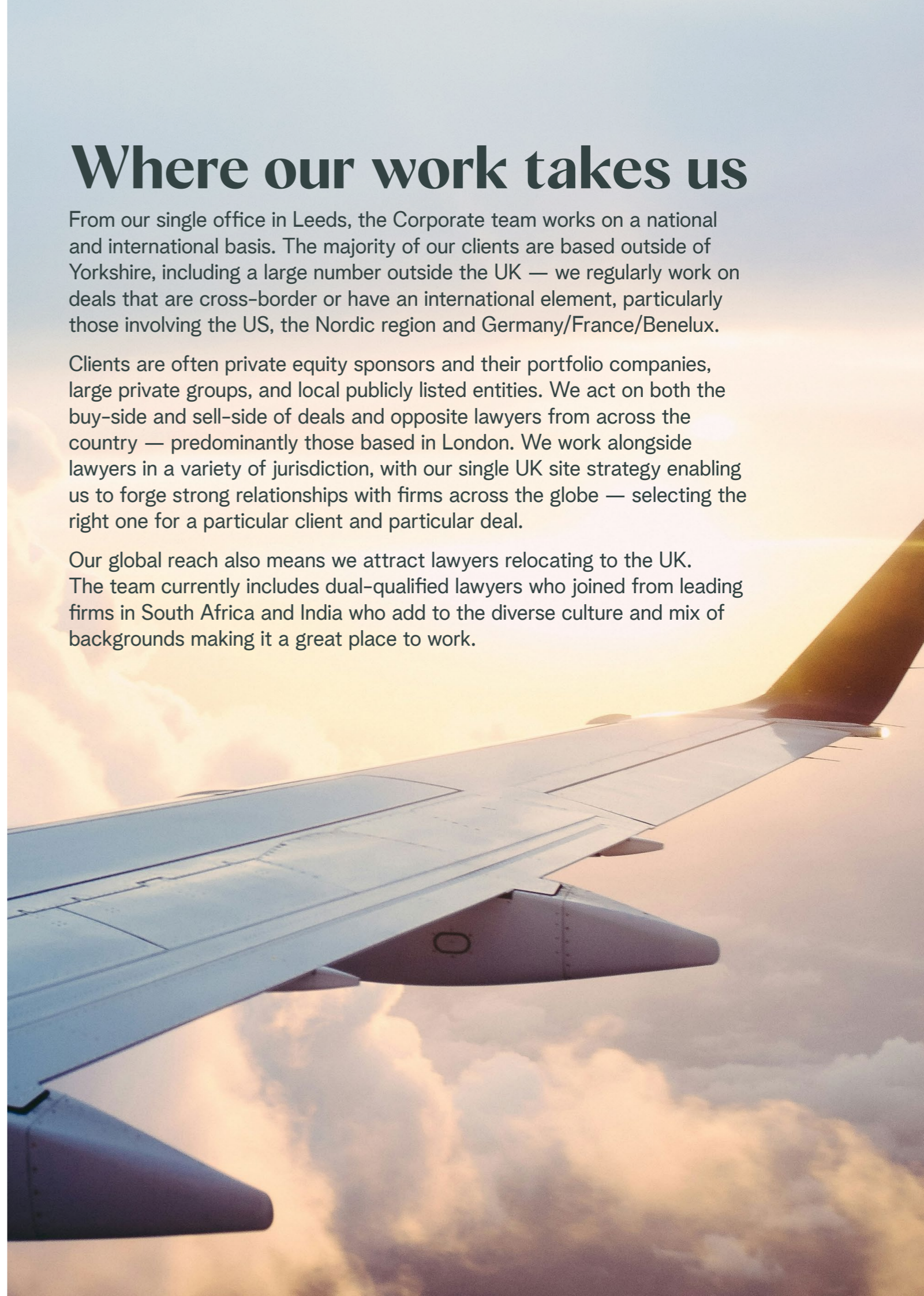
Advised on the sale of the software company SSG to **Aptean Inc.**, a global leader in AI-driven enterprise resource planning solutions.  
Value = confidential.

# Where our work takes us

From our single office in Leeds, the Corporate team works on a national and international basis. The majority of our clients are based outside of Yorkshire, including a large number outside the UK — we regularly work on deals that are cross-border or have an international element, particularly those involving the US, the Nordic region and Germany/France/Benelux.

Clients are often private equity sponsors and their portfolio companies, large private groups, and local publicly listed entities. We act on both the buy-side and sell-side of deals and opposite lawyers from across the country — predominantly those based in London. We work alongside lawyers in a variety of jurisdiction, with our single UK site strategy enabling us to forge strong relationships with firms across the globe — selecting the right one for a particular client and particular deal.

Our global reach also means we attract lawyers relocating to the UK. The team currently includes dual-qualified lawyers who joined from leading firms in South Africa and India who add to the diverse culture and mix of backgrounds making it a great place to work.



# Hear from our Corporate team

Liking what you hear? Don't just take it from us...

## Thomas Mieszkowski

Tom grew up in Yorkshire, went to Durham University and then joined a global firm in London as a Trainee in 2008. He returned to the North in 2013 and joined Walker Morris as an Associate. In 2022 he became Partner.



Walker Morris presented the opportunity to work on complex matters for national and international clients whilst enjoying the benefits of living in Yorkshire.

The firm's commitment to a single site in Leeds as a centre of excellence also appealed as it meant that from my very first day, I was working alongside Partners who would make the decisions about my future career progression. For anyone who wants to build a life and rewarding career in Yorkshire, I really believe that there is no better place to be than Walker Morris."



## Michael O'Halloran

Michael joined Walker Morris as a Senior Associate in 2021 and quickly progressed to Partnership. He took part in our FORGE partnership programme and became Partner this year.



Having spent much of the first decade of my career at Magic Circle or top tier US law firms in London, Hong Kong and Singapore, I now relish the opportunity to be part of a firm with such a unique offering in the UK market. During my time in the Walker Morris Corporate team, I've had the privilege of working with some fantastic clients and colleagues on complex cross-border and domestic transactions."



## Jo Stephenson

Jo joined the firm in 2014 and made Partnership in 2019 while on maternity leave. Jo is testament to the fact that you can be a single mother raising a family and become a Partner. Jo has also enjoyed multiple winter seasons away from the legal industry snowboarding in Canada, again showing you can have a career break or take a sabbatical while leading a successful legal career.



I enjoy the work-life balance at Walker Morris. As a single parent I value the flexibility the firm gives."





## Laura Cavell

Laura is a Senior Associate in the Corporate team. When returning from maternity leave in July 2023, she made a flexible working request and amended her hours to work Tuesdays to Fridays to enable her to spend every Monday with her son.



I value the autonomy given to me to effectively manage my time. Walker Morris' approach to hybrid working allows me to be able to deliver a high level of client service around my childcare responsibilities."

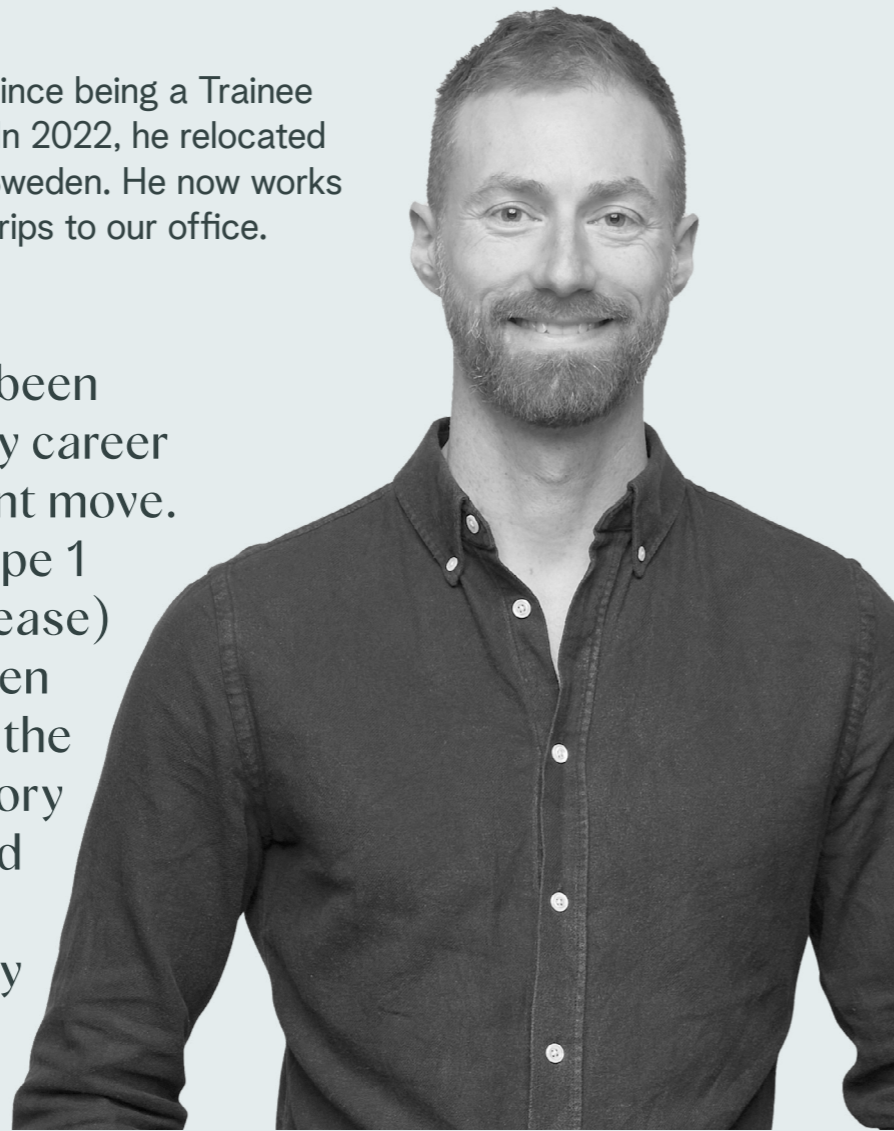


## Oliver Duke

Oliver has been with Walker Morris since being a Trainee and rose to Partner within 10 years. In 2022, he relocated to live with his family in Stockholm, Sweden. He now works from home in Sweden with periodic trips to our office.



Walker Morris has always been there for me throughout my career progression and subsequent move. I'm technically disabled (type 1 diabetes and Addisons disease) and the firm has always been very supportive, giving me the opportunity to share my story to help raise awareness and understanding, but also allowing me to the flexibility to work to my strengths."



## Thato Mashishi

Thato joined Walker Morris from Adams & Adams in South Africa. He was attracted to Walker Morris due to our large team in a single-site firm.



Joining Walker Morris has been a rewarding experience. The HR team was always available and responsive to any queries I had before joining and there was already another lawyer from overseas, which made my transition into the firm and adapting to life in the UK much easier. One of the things I truly appreciate is the number of clubs the firm has – being part of the 5-a-side football club helped me grow my social network both within and outside my team. The firm's vast English law resources have been invaluable to me as an international lawyer adjusting to a new legal landscape."



# Having a positive impact

Our success as a business isn't just about the numbers. It depends on the wellbeing of our people, clients and our communities — and we must play our part in tackling some of society's biggest challenges. Here's how we are doing it:

## The environment

We're planning to achieve Net Zero by 2040 and be a recognised influencer for positive change in our community. We're minimising our impact on the environment, reducing our carbon emissions, and working with others to promote climate action and the transition to a Net Zero economy.

## Wider society

Everyone in the firm is encouraged to participate in community projects, whether it's through their own initiative or as part of our corporate programme.

We like to take a hands-on approach to making a difference. For example, providing pro bono legal advice to charities and not for profit businesses.

## Our people

We're making our people feel cared for by providing the tools to develop a sustainable career, and making sure those tools are used to both develop each individual to their unique potential, as well as progressing the firm's outcomes for clients.

## Governance

We're committed to the highest standards of governance, compliance, and responsible, ethical business practices.



## Social mobility

As well as our D&I journey we are also constantly challenging ourselves, to ensure that the very best people, regardless of their background, can reach their full potential. We take Social Mobility seriously, here are some highlights:

- Engaging with local schools from underprivileged areas, offering career taster days, CV writing workshops, mentorship and more.
- By working closely with non-traditional local universities, we offer a number of mock vacation schemes allowing students access to valuable experiences and networking opportunities they may not get elsewhere.
- We regularly share best practice and help drive change across the law industry and elsewhere around social mobility, being used as an example of best practice at InterLaws MDS Summit, presenting recommendations to Parliament as part of a social mobility working group and updates on our website.

Some of our pupil feedback:

“

I've learnt many skills e.g. problem solving, communication, leadership and teamwork. I've also learnt to never give up and persevere as well as staying resilient.”

“

I've learnt from this mentoring programme if you have any specific ideas or thoughts you should put it forward and not be shy and scared to share your thoughts.”

“

I've learnt that it takes a while to understand what career path you want to take, but it's important to widen the path and be open to every opportunity given.”

“

I've learnt how to improve my interviewing skills and what my strengths and weaknesses are.”

# Diversity & inclusion

We're proud to be building an inclusive culture where everyone is able to bring their whole self to work, where differences are valued and celebrated for the benefit they bring us, which allows us to respond to the dynamic and diverse needs of our clients.

For us, it's about more than just policies. It's a key part of everything we do and this allows us to help our colleagues progress, regardless of their background.

We take a proactive approach to Diversity and Inclusion, we're at the forefront of the legal industry, resulting in us being nominated for numerous awards and called upon for our expertise in this area several times:

- We've developed an in-house mandatory D&I in person training programme that allows all our people to understand not only the basis of D&I but the importance of it to our colleagues, clients and wider community.
- Our people are welcome to join any of our several active diversity networks. This allows them to not only network informally, but suggest ideas, and get hands on with our D&I Journey.
- We provide everyone with the opportunity to have pronouns and phonetic pronunciation of their name in their email signatures. This highlights the importance of getting pronouns and names right and being an active ally.
- We're a part of Stronger Together, a collaborative network of other large law firms and accountancy firms, with the aim to help improve racial diversity in and around the Leeds area. We're also a founding member of Club Out Together a professional services network for businesses in Leeds for LGBTQ+ colleagues and allies.



Shortlisted for 'Social Mobility: Best to attract and retain talent' at the Legal 500 ESG Awards 2024



Won Diversity and Inclusion Initiative of the year at the Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards 2023



It's hard for me to pick a single highlight around the D&I initiatives at WM, from our brilliant external speakers and networking events, our fabulous presence at Leeds Pride and the insightful Q&A from our Muslim colleagues at Eid al-Fitr, which all create a truly inclusive place to work."

Jessica Harvey, D&I Manager



As a member of Fusion, Walker Morris' racial diversity group, it was great to be involved in discussions regarding a recent initiative where the firm introduced the option for staff to include the phonetic spelling of our names in email signatures. Since names are a fundamental part of our identities, it's empowering to be part of a workplace that not only accepts individuality but celebrates it."

Kavan Mankoo, Paralegal



Now you've heard a bit about us,  
tell us about you...



**Joely Cook**

**Resourcing Business Partner**

+44 (0)113 399 1720

+44 (0)779 687 7607

[joely.cook@walkermorris.co.uk](mailto:joely.cook@walkermorris.co.uk)

Or go to our website where you can find more  
information on careers at Walker Morris

[www.walkermorris.co.uk](http://www.walkermorris.co.uk)

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Walker Morris LLP, 33 Wellington Street,  
Leeds, LS1 4DL