

HFW

Cc:

ALUMNINETWORK

Catching Up

Cc: speaks to Matthew East, Managing Counsel, bp Oil Trading Legal Team

Diversity & Inclusion Round up

Diversity & Inclusion team shares updates from our six employee networks

In Conversation with Sarah Shaw, HFW's Senior Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager

Meet the newest members of our HFW Community

Lateral hires

Heads & Tales

Giles Kavanagh, Global Senior Partner

HFW

HFW Community: you're invited...

From our alumni to our clients, our current staff to our suppliers, each person in our global network – past and present – makes up an important part of the HFW Community.

HFW's Alumni Network is a place where current and former colleagues can stay in touch with each other, and with the firm. At HFW, we're incredibly proud of our alumni. From boardrooms of the world's leading organisations to

businesses driving innovation across our sectors, our alumni continue to make their mark.

As a member of our alumni network, you gain access to a wide range of benefits, including invitations to alumni events across our global network, referral bonuses, and regular updates on the latest news from HFW and your fellow alumni.

[Join our HFW Alumni LinkedIn Group](#)

Introduction from our Global Senior Partner



Welcome to the April 2026 edition of the HFW Alumni Magazine.

HFW has always been shaped by its people – past and present – and the strength of our community lies in the relationships that endure well beyond any one stage of a career. Whether you are a former colleague, a current member of the firm, a client or a longstanding friend of HFW, you remain an important part of that community.

In this edition, we reconnect with Matthew East, now Managing Counsel in bp's Oil Trading Legal Team. Matthew reflects candidly on a career that has taken him from the Bar, through private practice at HFW, and into senior in-house leadership within a global energy business. His story offers thoughtful insight into career progression, leadership, and the changing nature of legal work in a rapidly evolving sector.

We also take time to recognise the continued growth of the firm through our promotions and lateral hires across the global network. The promotion of new Partners, Senior Manager, Legal Directors/Of Counsel and Senior Associates, alongside the arrival of leading talent across our practices and regions, reflects both the strength of our platform and the calibre of our people.

Diversity, equity and inclusion remain central to HFW's culture and future. In this issue, our D&I team shares updates from our six employee networks, highlighting the breadth of activity taking place across the firm and our sustained commitment to building an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. We also hear from Sarah Shaw, our Senior Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager, whose personal journey and perspective bring valuable insight into the work being done across the business.

Finally, it was my turn in the interviewee's seat, for a personal reflection on the experiences and values that have shaped my own career and the firm we continue to build together.

I hope this edition leaves you feeling connected to HFW and to one another, wherever your career has taken you. Our alumni remain an integral part of our story, and we are always pleased to stay in touch.

GILES KAVANAGH

Global Senior Partner
alumni@hfw.com



- 4 Catching Up**
Matthew East – Managing Counsel, bp Oil Trading Legal Team
- 6 Diversity & Inclusion**
Updates from ENRICH, Gender Equality, Healthy Minds, Proud, Social Mobility and Thrive
- 6 In conversation with**
Sarah Shaw, Senior Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager
- 10 Lateral Hires**
The latest additions across our global network
- 12 Promotions**
New Partners, Senior Manager, Legal Directors / Of Counsel, Senior Associates
- 14 Heads & Tales**
Giles Kavanagh, Global Senior Partner



Matthew East

We caught up with Matthew East, Managing Counsel in bp's Oil Trading Legal Team. Matthew trained as an employed barrister and later a solicitor at HFW, where he worked in the London office from 2006-2012.



“I tried not to be a lawyer, and then realised it suited me.”

I spent a good part of my childhood thinking that I wouldn't follow in my father's footsteps. He was a lawyer, and I was determined not to do the obvious thing. Eventually I had to admit that the analytical and argumentative side of the profession genuinely appealed to me. At university, I chose international trade as one of my optional modules, and that decision quietly set the direction for my entire career.

After graduating, I went into pupillage at 20 Essex Street. Reflecting on it now, that was the most academic extreme of the legal profession, and I would later move gradually away from that, towards the more commercial end. I enjoyed the intellectual challenge of the Bar, but I quickly realised that advocacy was not where my strengths lay. I did not have the natural self confidence required for full time courtroom work, and so when I qualified, I moved directly to HFW as an employed barrister.

“At HFW, I discovered how much I enjoyed working in a team.”

My six years at HFW were extremely formative. I remained broadly in the same team, focused on commodities, trading, and international disputes.

I had the chance to work with a variety of partners, each with their own style. Seeing several contrasting approaches early in my career taught me that there is no single way to be an effective lawyer, and gave me an invaluable grounding in how to approach problems in different ways.

Most of my work was in disputes, and I found myself involved in some truly fascinating matters. One that stands out was an arbitration, later heard under appeal in the High Court, where the central question was how rats had got on board a ship. It was an unexpectedly technical and entertaining case. We worked with experts in rat behaviour, discussing everything from rat intelligence and their adeptness at hiding, to what their terminal velocity is when falling out of a cargo spout into a hold and whether they might survive the experience. I spent an extraordinary amount of time watching grain moving along conveyor belt systems, trying to spot any sign of movement that might indicate a rat passing through the footage. It remains the most unusual legal work I've been involved in through my career.

Another period that stands out from my time at HFW was when I found

myself working on three different worldwide freezing orders at the same time. We were in and out of court constantly. The urgency, the strategy, and the level of detail required were both intense and exhilarating. It taught me a huge amount about staying composed under pressure and handling fast moving litigation.

“Dispute work is where the law evolves. That is what makes it so interesting.”

I loved the intellectual side of disputes and the variety of work I handled at HFW. The cases were challenging, fast moving, and often genuinely novel, and they gave me a strong grounding in the fundamentals of how the law develops. As I grew more experienced, I also became increasingly interested in understanding how legal issues operate in context within the commercial world. So when an in-house secondment opportunity came up, it felt like a useful way to broaden my perspective. The experience helped me see how legal advice is used within a business and how closely legal and commercial teams work together, and it added an extra dimension to what I had already learned in private practice.

“Moving in house gave me a new perspective on the work I had already been doing, and I found that fresh angle really energising.”

Through that secondment I found that working in house offered a completely different viewpoint to private practice. I enjoyed being closely connected to the business, understanding commercial drivers, finding solutions and seeing how legal advice fed into day-to-day decisions.

After joining BP permanently, I worked in LNG and oil trading for several years before moving into a more project-focused role in Gas & Low Carbon Energy. That gave me exposure to infrastructure, investments, joint ventures, and some low-carbon initiatives. One of the things I valued about working in a large global organisation was the ability to move across different parts of the business, which allowed me to broaden my experience and learn from a wide range of teams and subject areas. I also had the opportunity to travel for work, including several trips to Asia, the Middle East and Brazil, which added another layer of interest and learning. Each move offered something different and built directly on the foundation I had developed earlier in my career.

In 2024 I returned to the oil trading legal team as its manager. Coming back to the team where I had first started, now with a completely different skill set, really did feel like a full circle moment.

“Becoming a people leader has been the most meaningful change in my career.”

Stepping into a leadership role transformed the nature of my work. My day is now less about being a technical subject matter expert and more about ensuring the team has what it needs to thrive. It is rewarding in a completely different way.

I've been really lucky in my career to work for several really great managers. From them I learned what I consider to be the most important features of a good leader: transparency whenever possible, empowerment rather than micromanagement, genuine care for people and their

development and fostering an environment where everyone feels free to voice their opinions.

One of the biggest realisations for me was how much people value clarity. The more context a team has, the more ownership they take. Sharing the reasoning and process behind decisions, even when those decisions may be controversial, helps create trust and empowerment. That approach also ties closely to something else I had to learn: leadership is not always about being liked. As a “people pleaser” that has not been easy to get used to but I've learned that sometimes the right outcome for the company requires us to do the right thing rather than the most popular thing.

“The energy sector is transforming, and so is the work we do as lawyers.”

The energy industry looks very different from when I first started, and the pace of change has only increased. The transition to lower carbon energy has created new commercial models and new types of risk, especially in trading where biofuels and downstream markets are growing rapidly. Technology is another major driver of change. AI and digital tools are beginning to influence how lawyers analyse information, manage contracts, and support the business. The key challenge for us is to adopt technology thoughtfully, understanding where it can add value and where human judgement remains essential. Navigating that balance is becoming a core part of legal work.

“What I miss most about HFW is the people.”

Amid all that change, the influence of my early years at HFW has stayed with me. My time there gave me a strong technical foundation and introduced me to excellent lawyers with a wide range of styles. Those experiences helped shape how I think, how I approach problems, and how I work with others. The relationships have lasted too. I also continue to work with HFW on matters from time to time, which is a great way to stay connected to a place that played such a significant role in my development.

“Careers are rarely linear, and that is a good thing.”

If I could offer one piece of advice to someone starting out at HFW, it would be to say yes to opportunities, even when they feel slightly outside your comfort zone. Some of the most important moments in my career came from trying something new, sometimes without knowing exactly where it would lead. The other thing to remember is that no career decision is final. My own path, which has taken me from the Bar to private practice to an international business, shows just how many directions a legal career can take. What matters most is staying open to learning and being willing to explore different avenues.

“No decision is irreversible. Careers have far more room for movement than you might expect.”

Looking ahead, I am focused on developing my team, helping people build the skills they need for the future, and using technology thoughtfully to support the work we do. At the same time, the business is investing in high quality assets in a fast-changing global market, and it is exciting to play a part in that evolution. The legal profession, the industry, and the world around us are all changing, and there is a real sense of momentum in the work we do.



Linked in

Click [here](#) to connect with Matthew

Would you like to feature in an upcoming magazine? Contact commsteam@hfw.com

Did you enjoy your time with us?

Click [here](#) to leave us a review on



Diversity & Inclusion Round up

At HFW, we are committed to fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential. In this edition of our Alumni magazine, the Diversity & Inclusion team shares updates from our six employee networks – ENRICH, Gender Equality, Healthy Minds, Proud, Social Mobility and Thrive.

ENRICH

Chaired by **Sakina Chenot**, the ENRICH Network plays a central role in celebrating heritage and increasing cultural awareness across the firm by focussing on inclusive events and initiatives that strengthen belonging, respect and understanding.

This year saw the launch of HFW's **name pronunciation tool** as part of Race Equality Week. Learning and using the correct pronunciation of a colleague's name is a simple but meaningful way to promote inclusion, respect and a sense of belonging across our global offices.

ENRICH also supports learning and celebration throughout the year by marking more than 20 cultural and faith based dates, including **Black History Month, Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Easter, Yom Kippur** and **Diwali**. These moments created opportunities for reflection, conversation and shared understanding across regions.

In addition, ENRICH took a lead role in organising HFW's annual **D&I Comedy Night**, providing a welcome opportunity to connect during the winter months while raising valuable funds for charities nominated by each of the six D&I networks.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Network continues to strengthen its impact across the firm under the leadership of Chair **Claire Womersley** and Deputy Chair **Suzanne Meiklejohn**, focussing on building connections, increasing visibility and supporting progression for women.

Several new initiatives were launched including **InclusiviTeas** and **networking lunches** designed to foster informal connection and shared learning, and the **APAC Mentoring Programme**, supporting colleagues across offices to build confidence and capability. The firm also deepened engagement with clients through a dedicated **Women Leaders' Client Listening Programme**, partnering with women legal leaders to enhance understanding of client needs while offering meaningful development opportunities for Senior Associates and Legal Directors.

International Women's Day was marked with a speaker event on resilience and paying it forward and the network also recognised **International Men's Day**, supporting men's mental health through a London based wellbeing walk.

Healthy Minds

Co chaired by **Paul Dean** and **Lynne Jones**, Healthy Minds continues to play a key role in promoting wellbeing and encouraging open, honest conversations about mental health across HFW's global offices.

To coincide with **Mental Health Awareness Week**, the network will host a **Global Wellbeing Week**, bringing together a programme of global and local events designed to give colleagues practical tools to support their physical, mental, social and financial wellbeing. Activities will include a sleep workshop, guided meditation, and a keynote on the importance of art for wellbeing.

Alongside this programming, Healthy Minds is undertaking a review of the firm's **Mental Health First Aiders** to help ensure strong coverage across our offices, reinforcing HFW's commitment to accessible, meaningful support for colleagues wherever they are based.

Proud

Chaired by **David Savage**, with **Ella Wallwork** leading the APAC Proud working group, the Proud Network delivered a wide ranging programme of activity celebrating LGBTQ+ inclusion and allyship across the firm.

Highlights included the global webinar **Innovating with Pride**, featuring educator and inclusion advocate **Sarah Cosgriff** and a tour of **Queer Britain**, the UK's national LGBTQ+ Museum to mark **LGBTQ+ History Month**.

During the year, the network also hosted a learning session delivered in collaboration with HFW's Australia based partner **Pride in Diversity**, exploring inclusive workplace practices and our Sydney office hosted an Interfirm networking event in celebration of **Wear It Purple Day**. These initiatives reflect the network's ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive spaces where colleagues feel supported, visible and able to thrive.

Social Mobility

Chaired by **Alistair Mackie**, the Social Mobility Network has remained focused on widening access to the legal profession and strengthening pathways into HFW. In November, HFW hosted **Breaking Barriers, Shaping Futures: 10 Years On from Opening Up or Shutting Out?** an event focussed on Social Mobility in the Legal Profession. Leaders from across the sector reflected on progress made, structural barriers to entry and the collective role organisations can play in broadening opportunity within the profession.

Building on this momentum, the firm agreed a new partnership with **The Sutton Trust**, supporting early career engagement through its **Pathways to Law** programme. This sits alongside HFW's **Access to Law** programme for secondary school students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and the firm's **scholarship programme**, which provides financial support and development opportunities to help talented students progress into and through higher education.

Thrive

Chaired by **Michelle Chance**, Thrive has continued to build awareness and practical support for disability and neurodiversity inclusion across the firm. To mark the **International Day of People with Disabilities**, Thrive hosted a webinar for parents and carers of children with special educational needs, titled *Advocating with Confidence*. The session provided guidance, reassurance and shared experiences, helping to build confidence in navigating education and support systems.

Looking ahead, the network's 2026 initiatives include **Everyday First Aid: Skills for Work and Life**, a First Aid workshop designed to equip colleagues with practical, confidence building skills. Thrive will also host a visit from **Support Dogs UK**, welcoming two of their clients and their specially trained support dogs who assist individuals with autism, epilepsy and physical disabilities. This event offers a unique opportunity to learn more about the vital role of assistance dogs, challenge misconceptions, and engage directly with lived experience.

In conversation with Sarah Shaw

We caught up with Sarah Shaw, HFW's Senior Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager. Sarah joined the firm in May 2025 and works closely with colleagues across the business and our networks to help nurture an inclusive culture where our people can do their best work and feel they belong.



I grew up in New York State, and from a young age I was very aware of difference and inequality. As a child, I spent a lot of time at family events with my two cousins. Their parents were from different racial backgrounds, and at a time when this was far less accepted, I learned early on how difference can lead to exclusion.

At the same time, my understanding of disability was forming through my grandmother's diagnosis with multiple sclerosis. My grandparents lived close to us, so we saw them often and I grew up being aware of the challenges she faced.

"I think inclusion just became part of the fabric of my life, and my perception of the world."

I remember how upsetting it was when people parked in disabled spaces when they shouldn't have, and the lack of awareness about the impact on others. My grandfather kept copies of printed notes to put on their windscreens and that stayed with me – the drive to act

when you see something is unfair. When I think back on those formative years of my life, it makes sense that I've ended up following this career path.

"I definitely grew up with a strong sense of equality, fairness and justice."

At the same time, I was also deeply curious about the world outside of the US. My aunt was a travel agent and would bring back coins or little souvenirs from the places she visited. She even brought me toilet paper from Germany, just to show me how different it was. Those details made me want to see more and when an opportunity arose, I took it.

The summer before my final year of high school, I spent nine weeks as an exchange student in the salt-mining town of Wieliczka, Poland. At that time, it was still a communist country and communicating home was difficult. It was three weeks before I could phone my parents to tell them I was OK and I was woken up at 3am when a line was

available. They patched me through to my home number, but my parents were away – all I could do was leave a tearful message. I was homesick, but I also knew the experience was changing me.

I lived with a host family who were incredibly kind and must have sacrificed so much to show me their beautiful country. We travelled all over – from the sea in the north to the southern mountains, even stopping at their cousin's wedding along the way. I think they were surprised when I asked them to take me to Auschwitz. It was something I knew I needed to experience and words can't describe what I saw and learned there and the profound impact it has had on my life. I also visited palaces that were entirely empty and learned that the furniture and art had been taken to another country. Those experiences taught me not just about loss, but about the incredible resilience of the human spirit.

Following a gap year as an exchange student in Germany, I went on to study

at university. I had a scholarship to The Savannah School of Art and Design, and I turned it down and looking back, I think my gender probably played a role in that. At the time, if you were a woman and you were good at STEM subjects, there was definitely some pressure to pursue that type of degree. I had creative interests too and loved mechanical drawing and architecture class, and I won some awards for my photography. In the end, I decided to study electrical engineering at Johns Hopkins. It was clear to me early on that it was not the best choice, but I made the best of it, minoring in German and taking creative writing classes. I ended up doing my master's in Education with my thesis looking at whether people with certain learning styles were more likely to continue studying engineering versus changing their degree.

After graduating, I was recruited by Citibank into their management trainee programme. I was one of the first to join as a 'Technical Associate' in IT and they sent me to England as part of the programme. My stay was meant to be for eight months, but after the programme finished, I never left!

At Citi, I moved into managing large scale technology migrations, and programme management. I also joined CitiWomen, their gender equality network, which was a turning point for me. A colleague in Learning & Development recognised that I was doing a lot of D&I work alongside my day job and offered me a secondment in HR. That secondment turned into a full-time role, and D&I became a golden thread through my career.

"It felt like I was coming home when I joined HR, working in Learning and Development and D&I, helping people and the organisation grow."

One of the programmes I'm most proud of from that time was Citi's Coaching for Success programme. Over six months, high-potential women were matched with mentors from outside their department, and every month

the cohort came together for training and networking. It was award-winning, and at the time quite groundbreaking.

"I like getting things done, but I'm happiest when that has a positive impact on people."

Outside work, travel has always been a big presence in my life. I took a sabbatical from Citi and travelled solo for seven months, backpacking and taking budget tours, including in the US Southwest, Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia.

The next year Africa called me, so I booked two back-to-back trips. I climbed Kilimanjaro and did a safari afterwards through Kenya and Tanzania. I came away with more than just memories – on the Kilimanjaro trip, I also met my husband. Somehow after four long days and then hiking through the night, we reached the summit at the same time, so we have photos together at the top.

"Later we realised we worked across the road from each other in London, but we met on a mountain in Africa instead."

We kept exploring after we married and after having our children we travelled around the world for five months. I took a career break and started a cake business, and kept busy volunteering at my kids' school, and taking on leadership roles including leading my daughter's Girl Scout troop.

As my kids got older, it felt like the right time to go back to paid work. I applied for career returner opportunities and went back to work through a programme at Deutsche Bank. I started in a D&I role focused on recruitment and later moved into broader D&I work across UK and Ireland.

I joined HFW in 2025 and it has been busy in the best way. I love the work and feel passionately about what I do. Learning about the firm and more importantly, getting to know my HFW colleagues has been fascinating. What I find most rewarding is working

with colleagues across the business, especially through our networks, and building partnerships that strengthen understanding and belonging.

A lot of D&I work is small, incremental change. It takes both tenacity and patience, and I am definitely more naturally tenacious than patient. The way I like to approach it is by creating experiences that stay with people and build empathy and understanding in a human-centred way.

One initiative I am particularly excited about is our upcoming event with Support Dogs UK. Members of the charity will be joined by some of their clients and their specially trained support dogs. HFW colleagues will be able to meet them, talk about disability, and hear directly how the dogs help them lead independent lives.

"Empathy is around perspective taking, connecting with another person's experience without judgement."

I'm also looking forward to Ben West visiting our London office for Suicide Prevention Day. Ben created a website called **Reasons to Stay**, in memory of his brother who sadly died by suicide. The site shares letters of encouragement and hope to people who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts, offering reasons for them to stay. Ben will speak with us about his work and then run a letter writing workshop to support his website.

When I think about my role, what's clear to me is that it's rarely about grand gestures; it's about consistent and focused action. The experiences that have shaped me throughout my life and career have taught me the importance of being present, listening to understand, and empathy. Our family motto is "Get up, dress up, show up", and that's how I approach this work — by showing up for my colleagues so they feel able to be themselves, do their best work and feel fulfilled.

Lateral hires

We continue to broaden and strengthen our offering to clients by adding leading talent across our sectors and international network.



ARNAUD PÉDRON
Restructuring and
Insolvency – Paris

Arnaud has over 30 years' experience advising debtors, creditors, investors, and management teams on complex restructuring, pre insolvency, and insolvency matters under French and English law. He began his career as a court appointed administrator and insolvency practitioner. His practice spans all stages of corporate distress, including confidential preventative proceedings such as mandat ad hoc and conciliation, formal safeguard, receivership, and liquidation processes, as well as distressed M&A transactions. Arnaud advises clients across a wide range of sectors, including construction, energy, transport, financial services, industrials, and consumer businesses. He is a member of the Board of France's Turnaround Management Association (TMA) and a former member of the Bar Council of the Hauts de Seine department.



OLIVER TEBBIT
Aviation Finance – London

Oliver has extensive experience advising financiers, lenders, owners, operators, and other market participants on aviation finance and asset finance transactions, with a particular focus on the corporate and private aviation market. He advises banks, alternative financiers, high net worth individuals, and operators on high value and complex transactions, including aircraft and engine financing, leasing, sale and purchase transactions, portfolio management, and cross border structuring.



STEPHEN ANGOVE
Master Mariner,
Shipping – Piraeus

Stephen has extensive experience investigating marine casualties and handling related claims. Before working in the legal industry, he spent more than 20 years at sea, working on oil and gas tankers and cruise ships, with command experience of large vessels, and has maintained his Master Mariner Certificate of Competency. Stephen is also a qualified marine engineer, having held an Engineering Officer of the Watch Certificate of Competency for both motor and steam ships.



CHRISTOPHER ROWDEN
Construction – Brisbane

Christopher joins HFW from CDI Lawyers, alongside a team including two Special Counsel, a Senior Associate and an Associate, as part of the launch of our new Brisbane office. Christopher has particular expertise in large arbitration, adjudication and court litigation, involving issues of termination, delay, disruption, quantum, defects and complex technical disputes.



GUY MARRISON
Aerospace – London

Guy strengthens the firm's aerospace offering in London. His experience spans complex, high value claims in the English High Court and Court of Appeal, and multi jurisdictional investigations and related litigation arising from regulatory actions brought by the FCA, SEC, DOJ, EC, and JFTC.



VANESSA LIBORIO
Commodities – Geneva

Vanessa brings significant experience in commodities and international disputes. She is widely recognised as one of Switzerland's leading international arbitration specialists, with over 20 years' experience acting as counsel and arbitrator in high value, complex disputes across construction, infrastructure, life sciences, and telecoms.



JONATHAN BURNS
Corporate &
Commercial – Riyadh

Jonathan supports the continued growth of the firm's Middle East corporate and commercial practice. He is a Saudi law expert and has been based full time in the Kingdom since 2014, with a broad practice spanning corporate, commercial, and regulatory matters. He is based in Riyadh.



SIMON PETCH
Ship Finance – London

Simon brings nearly 30 years' experience advising banks, financiers, owners, operators, and other maritime industry participants on the full range of debt, leasing, securitisation, structured finance, corporate, and operational matters.



LAURENT CHASSOT
Aerospace – Geneva

Laurent advises aerospace sector clients on disputes, insurance, regulatory, and transactional matters, with a particular focus on complex litigation.



JACKY DARSONO
Commercial
Disputes – Hong Kong

Jacky – who trained at HFW in Hong Kong – rejoined the firm on 13 March 2026. He also has expertise in shareholder disputes, fraud investigations, and cross border asset recovery. His professional indemnity experience spans internal investigations, disciplinary proceedings and professional negligence claims against auditors, solicitors and other professionals.



LOUIS ALEXIS BRET
Commercial Disputes/
Regulatory Investigations – Paris

Louis Alexis has extensive experience in complex disputes and regulatory investigations across a wide range of sectors, including supply chain and logistics, commodities, energy and natural resources, aerospace, technology, and financial services. He previously served as Principal Legal Counsel for Logistics Operations in Europe and has spent over a decade at leading international law firms in the United States and France.

Promotions

This financial year, we have promoted two new Partners, one Senior Manager and six new Legal Directors/Of Counsel. We have also promoted 26 new Senior Associates. The promotions reflect our continued growth across our international network and core sectors.

New Partners



TANYA CHADHA
Partner, London –
Construction

Tanya specialises in complex, high value construction and engineering disputes, with a particular focus on renewable energy, process engineering and infrastructure projects. With an international practice, she regularly advises clients on cross border matters and has extensive experience in both international arbitration and domestic High Court and Court of Appeal litigation. Tanya has particular expertise in the offshore wind and energy from waste sectors.



MARK WATERS
Partner, London –
Aerospace

Mark has been a key part of HFW's Aerospace team since qualification, working for many of the department's most long standing and valued clients. His practice covers both disputes and

commercial work, including major claims handling for operators, manufacturers, airports, ground handlers and tour operators, as well as advising on contractual and regulatory matters. Mark has significant product liability expertise, having acted for major aerospace manufacturers in complex disputes over many years, and regularly delivers seminars and training to clients.

New senior manager



PAUL MILLER
Senior Manager, London –
Shipping

Paul is a Senior Master Mariner in the Admiralty and Crisis Management team within HFW's Shipping Group. Having spent 21 years at sea with command experience, he regularly attends casualties including collisions, groundings, fires, explosions, salvage and cargo incidents. Paul advises and supports clients on casualty management and potential liability and has experience across extensive arbitration and High Court proceedings.

Legal Directors/ Of Counsel



SIMON BANNER
Legal Director, London –
Insurance & Reinsurance

Simon specialises in international commercial dispute resolution, with a particular focus on the insurance and reinsurance sector. He advises clients on major, high value and complex cross border losses across a wide range of business lines, including energy (onshore and offshore), construction, property, marine, liability, financial lines and reinsurance. Simon has extensive experience in insurance and reinsurance coverage disputes, policy defence work, subrogated recoveries, policy wording reviews and general contractual disputes, acting in court litigation, arbitration and alternative dispute resolution proceedings, including mediation.



JUSTINE BARTHE DEJEAN
Legal Director, Singapore –
Energy, Commodities

Based in HFW's Singapore office, Justine specialises in energy, commodities, transportation and international trade. Her practice spans disputes, advisory work and transactions, and she regularly represents clients in international arbitrations involving trade, transportation and joint ventures on energy projects, with particular expertise in LNG and voluntary carbon market disputes. Justine also advises on complex cross border energy and commodities transactions, including long term sales and purchases, project offtakes, financing, transportation, tolling and processing arrangements, complemented by regulatory advice. She has completed secondments with global commodity trading and mining corporations and was recognised as an Asian Legal Business Rising Star in 2025.



PETER EMERY
Legal Director, London –
Corporate & Commercial

Peter is a transactional lawyer advising clients on a wide range of shipping, corporate and commercial matters. He has a particular enthusiasm for tackling contract drafting and negotiation in novel or bespoke situations and supports clients across a variety of complex commercial arrangements.



PETER JONES
Legal Director,
London – Costs

Peter is HFW's Head of Costs and regularly advises on costs matters arising from high profile and high value commercial litigation, often involving multiple jurisdictions. His experience spans arbitration (including

international), substantial High Court matters, the Court of Appeal, Privy Council, Employment Appeal Tribunal and the UK Supreme Court. In 2007, Peter was awarded the Association of Law Costs Draftsman (ALCD) Cup for achieving the highest mark nationally in the Associate examination.



CAROLINE WEST
Legal Director,
London – Commodities

Caroline has more than a decade of experience advising clients across the commodities sector on all aspects of the international sale of goods, from contract drafting through to dispute resolution. A specialist in soft commodities, she regularly advises traders and charterers on physical sale contract terms, exchange traded futures, charterparties, bills of lading and storage agreements. Caroline has extensive experience acting in GAFTA, FOSFA, RSA and LMAA arbitrations, as well as LCIA and ICC proceedings. Prior to returning to London, she spent six years in Geneva, developing in depth knowledge of the trading and finance markets.



VIVIEN WONG
Legal Director,
Hong Kong – Aerospace

Vivien is a Hong Kong qualified aviation liability specialist and plays a prominent role in the firm's Greater China aviation litigation practice. She advises both Hong Kong and CAAC regulated airlines and airport groups and has handled close to 400 civil aviation disputes, spanning passenger and crew injuries, contractual and operational disputes, and baggage and cargo matters. Vivien also advises on regulatory investigations and interviews conducted by public authorities and is fluent in Cantonese, Mandarin and English.

Senior Associates

Aerospace

Taylor Crydon (Sydney)

Corporate & Commercial

Adela Ottermann (Dubai)

Audrey Hsieh (London)

Chloe Chow (Hong Kong)

Constance Ollat (Paris)

Joey Sze (Hong Kong)

Commercial Disputes

Geraldine Valenzuela (London)

Matthew Lam (Hong Kong)

Shelby McGrechan (London)

Tom Serafin (London)

Commodities

Andrew Shinnick (Melbourne)

Frazer Watt (London)

Hermance Schaeerlig (Geneva)

Joshua Prest (London)

Roxanne Johnson (London)

Samantha Marigold Cash (London)

Tony Wong (Hong Kong)

Construction

Alexander Jullienne (London)

Chelsea Woodward (Sydney)

Junaid Tariq (Dubai)

William Lowes (Brisbane)

Insurance & Reinsurance

Alice Saunders (London)

Dom Pereira (London)

Frédéric Creuset (Paris)

Rhys Durbin (London)

Congratulations also to **Gabrielle Garriga** at our Brazilian cooperation firm, CAR, who has also been promoted to Senior Associate.



HEADS & TALES

Giles Kavanagh, Global Senior Partner

I grew up with the tragedy of violence. I'm a Belfast boy and 'the troubles' were a feature of my young life. I remember vividly after school one day going across to a coffee shop opposite the library in Belfast, during a bomb scare. I was sitting next to a big window, and thought I'd better move, just in case a bomb went off. As I picked up my coffee cup to sit somewhere else, the bomb blew up and the window smashed over the table where I'd been seated. Another time, one of my friends was being driven to school by his dad and some paramilitaries walked out into the road and riddled the car with bullets. He was killed. We were brought in to see his body a few hours later in the hospital, which was next door to our school. I learned a lot from that time. It taught me the damage that intolerance can cause in dividing people – and the legacy that can have for many, many years.

I studied law at Cambridge – unplanned, but life changing. Cambridge was never on my radar – I had planned to go to Queen's University in Belfast as I wanted to stay with my family and friends. But I was staying with my girlfriend in England one summer and working on a building site in London to earn some money. I really grew to like England and was looking for an excuse to stay. One day, on a rare day off from work, I decided on a whim to take the train to Cambridge. I walked around the university colleges and it was absolutely mind blowing. I thought St John's looked particularly attractive, so I took the earring out of my ear, walked into the office and asked to speak to whoever dealt with admissions. I was told to wait, which I did for over an hour. I was finally invited to see the admissions tutor and asked him how I would go about applying. He said "just apply", so I did. To my genuine surprise, I got in.

I went on to become President of the Union at Cambridge. The Cambridge Union is well known for its debates, which attract some really high-profile guest speakers. I wanted to broaden the appeal of Union events, making them less formal and more inclusive. We did a series of interviews for radio with people like John Cleese, Jonathan Miller and Barry Norman – they went down really well. The debates used to be preceded by a formal dinner. I remember at one of these dinners, I looked over at the very senior Tory MP who was going to be speaking at the event, and noticed that he wasn't eating his meal. I suddenly realised it was because he was nervous. I thought "wow – he's a cabinet minister and he still gets nervous". It made me realise that even the people at the top get nerves, so nervous is completely okay.

I played a lot of sport growing up. I rowed at university, but my main sports as a kid were basketball and Gaelic football. That's a tough sport – lots of physical contact. One of my friends became one of the best Gaelic football players in the history of the sport – there was nothing he couldn't do. He had a farm and we used to play Gaelic football in the fields and I'd help take in the crop. Lots of really happy memories. The extent of my sporting endeavours these days is as a mediocre golfer.

I started my legal career as a barrister. I did quite a range of work, but increasingly specialised in aviation law. I was in the process of moving chambers and asked the head of the aero department at Barlow, Lyde & Gilbert for a reference. He said instead of moving chambers, I should join them. Initially, I treated it as a joke, but I ended up joining BLG as a Partner. Being a barrister is quite a lonely life. You're a sole practitioner and a hired gun, rather than a strategic partner to clients, and you are limited to practice

in England and Wales. I wanted to be part of a team that I could help develop as well as being able to handle aviation cases around the world. When I discovered the joys of time sheets, I honestly thought about resigning on the spot, but I got used to those and really enjoyed my time at the firm, and was fortunate eventually to lead the aerospace practice.

The decision to join HFW was difficult for me. BLG had been very good to me and the team I then led had grown significantly. But it became clear that BLG was becoming a UK law firm with a domestic focus and we simply couldn't compete on that platform for work in an inherently international industry. When HFW approached, I was struck by the firm's international outlook and network, and the potential it offered to service an international client base. HFW was immediately welcoming as a firm – one where the Aero team have thrived. When we joined HFW, we were 27 lawyers in four locations. The group is now approximately 100 lawyers in 10 locations. I'm very proud to have been a part of that growth, and I hope that as Group Leader I was a good ambassador – that I helped clients to see that we really do genuinely work as a team and that we're not just a bunch of individuals. That's something that is personally really important to me.

I was honoured to be re-elected as the firm's Global Senior Partner. HFW is a firm with exceptional people, an impressive global platform, a distinctive and powerful sector-focused approach, and a culture that is ambitious and deeply collaborative. I believe there are significant opportunities for HFW and I'm looking forward to building on the momentum we have established as we continue to drive growth, support our people, and deliver outstanding service to our clients around the world. To be a good leader, you have to trust your judgement, and be willing to fail as well as succeed. I feel very privileged.





www.hfw.com | **LinkedIn**

© 2026 Holman Fenwick Willan LLP. All rights reserved. Ref: 008137

Americas | Europe | Middle East | Asia Pacific