



## Expanding across Cheshire with new **Wilmslow office**

**Our new office in Wilmslow is the latest move in an expansion plan designed to see Poole Alcock become a leading provider of legal services across the whole of the North West.**

Sited in a prestigious and strategic location at the heart of Wilmslow's vibrant town centre, Poplar House is our eighth office and the perfect springboard for developing our client base towards Manchester.

Explained Managing Partner David Gaut: 'We have literally doubled in turnover in the last four years and are looking to expand further, both in terms of growth and geographically.'

**'Our [Committed to Excellence](#) promise is working very well for our clients and this is reflected in our recent growth. Our 10 point promise sets out exactly what our clients can expect from us, and ensures they receive the highest possible standard of customer care and legal advice, every time they instruct us.'**

The new office is headed by Partner and Family Law Specialist **Jane Jacques** and Partner and Head of Civil Litigation **Sarah-Jane Dunhill**, and offers our full range of services including Family Law, Litigation, Wills and Probate, Personal Injury, Employment Law, Conveyancing, Commercial Law, Criminal and Regulatory Defence.



Poplar House has its own parking and is just 100 yards from the station, making it easily accessible by road or train.



Facelift for **Alsager office** – [SEE PAGE 2](#)

Partner – Family Law Department  
**Dan Brooks**



“ We all see this as a fantastic opportunity – we're looking forward to making new connections and building relationships with local people and local businesses. ”

Partner and Head of Litigation  
**Sarah-Jane Dunhill**



“ The opportunity to provide business clients as well as Cheshire's families legal services on their doorstep, without having to travel to Manchester for good, experienced lawyers, is something that we're proud to offer. ”

Licensed Conveyancer  
**Victoria Moetamedi**



“ We wanted to find somewhere that would offer a great environment to work in – and to visit – reflecting the quality of service we offer our clients: Poplar House is exactly that. ”

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Wilmslow



Wilmslow



Wilmslow



Wind Down



Wind Down

Recent events in the Poole Alcock diary included our popular monthly **'Wind Down'** get together for local business people at the Residence in Nantwich and the official opening party for our **Wilmslow office** – thanks to everyone for coming along!

**Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care.**

At Poole Alcock, we continue to maintain our Lexcel accreditation, achieving 19 areas of best practice in our recent Lexcel audit.

Comments from the assessor include: 'It is evident from speaking with Senior Management and people across the organisation that there is a big focus on the delivery of excellent client care.'

'Examples of initiatives in practice include Committed to Excellence, the introduction of a Compliance Team to provide upfront support, and the introduction of the 'Know Your Client' questionnaire to enable a better understanding of clients needs.'



## New look **Alsager**

**As anyone driving through the centre of Alsager will have seen, our office in the town has had a major facelift...**

The modern, stylish frontage includes much larger windows and clean painted walls – and we are also very excited to have taken additional space at ground floor level to include a brand new reception area and client meeting rooms.



**We look forward to welcoming you!**

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**Amie Pine**Partner –  
Divorce &  
Family Law Team

## DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT – FAMILY LAW

**When parents part, how does the law affect what happens to their children?**

**Sadly, more people file for divorce at this time of year than any other. It's rarely an easy decision, and members of our highly experienced team of Family Lawyers are here to help at what can be a very difficult and stressful time.**



One of the most upsetting issues for couples is how their decision will affect any children they have, and this is a specialist area for Partner Amie Pine. She explains: 'Many people don't realise that the Courts will only get involved with arrangements for children (aged under 18) if parents can't agree things between themselves. There are also a lot of misconceptions about the kinds of rulings the Courts make – here are some of the questions people ask me:

**Q Does the Court automatically say that a child should live with its mother?**

**A** No, the Courts' primary concern is what's best for the welfare of the child and they will look at the individual circumstances.

**Q Our daughter lives with me and my ex-husband pays no maintenance, is he still entitled to have regular contact with her?**

**A** Yes. The Courts consider financial arrangements and contact to be completely different matters – one is not dependent on the other.

**Q My children live with my ex-wife during the week, so is it true that I'll only be entitled to have them to stay with me for one week in the summer holidays?**

**A** No, assuming you are both able to offer the children a 'safe environment,' the Courts aim to give parents equal amounts of 'quality time,' i.e. holidays and weekends, wherever possible.

**Q I haven't seen or heard from the father of my eight-year-old son since he was six months old. I want to change his surname to mine, but I've been told that's not allowed – is that right?**

**A** Yes and no... if the father's name is on the birth certificate, then he still has 'parental responsibility' despite his absence, and would have to give consent for a change of surname. If he won't consent, or you're not able to get in touch with him, you can go to the Courts and ask them to 'Approve' the name change – but that can be a time-consuming and costly process, with no guarantee of success.

**Q My partner and I are splitting up after eight years and have two children. Will the Courts treat us differently because we're not married?**

**A** No. In making their decisions about children, the Courts make no distinction between parents who are married, unmarried or in civil partnerships.



For more information on our Family Law Services [CLICK HERE](#)

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# Recognising the achievements of our staff

## At Poole Alcock, we're really proud of our people and the great work they do.

Our version of the Oscars, our annual awards ceremony, recognises those whose achievements really stand out...

### Department of the Year Conveyancing

From the outset, the Conveyancing Team headed by Partner Cherry Riddlesdin had their sights set on this prestigious award. Explained Cherry: 'We were very clear about our goals and both our existing staff and the new people who have joined us this year have totally embraced them and really worked together as a team.'

'This award recognises our growth as a business and the way we have worked together – and we put that down to two factors:

- **really getting to know our clients as people not just a 'case'**
- **giving each other support whenever we need it.'**



Vicky Moetamedi

And this wasn't the only award of the night for Conveyancing – their very own Vicky Moetamedi picked up the prize for Young Lawyer of the Year. Said Vicky: 'At Poole Alcock it's not just about figures and targets, it's professional development and I'm delighted to have recently completed my final qualifications to become a Licensed Conveyancer.'



Conveyancing Team



Helen Stoller



Natasha Mafunga

## We are also recognising:

Lawyer of the Year ★ **Helen Stoller**

Support Team Member of the Year ★ **Ruth Holloway**

Trainee of the Year ★ **Natasha Mafunga**

Caroline Green Award ★ **Josh Phillips**

Given in memory of our highly respected late colleague, this award is chosen by votes from everyone in the firm. 'Helpful' and 'Approachable' were the words most often quoted in the citations for Josh in his role in IT.



Ruth Holloway



Josh Phillips

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## Congratulations...

### ...on your promotions



The Dowery



Sandbach

### We're delighted to announce well-deserved promotions for two of our lawyers:

Luke Pritchard, who joined the firm three years ago, has become a Partner. A member of our Business Services, Corporate & Commercial Department, he has specific areas of expertise including share and asset purchases and sales, corporate restructures, lending and finance agreements and commercial contracts.

Meanwhile, her promotion to Associate was the icing on the cake for Family Department lawyer Helen Stoller... as you will have seen on [page 4](#), she won Lawyer of the Year at our recent awards ceremony and she was also recognised as the winner of our Committed To Excellence award in November...

### ...on qualifying

Well done to Emily Brown who has recently qualified as a Solicitor. She's now working in Residential Property.



The Dowery

## Committed to Excellence

**Alongside our focus on our people and their development, we are equally dedicated to the quality of our customer experience... recognised through our Committed to Excellence awards for staff members who go 'above and beyond'.**

Here are our four most recent recipients including October's winner – our late colleague Sara Jennings who is deeply missed.

October  
Sara JenningsNovember  
Helen StollerJanuary  
Emily GranvilleFebruary  
Tim Edgeley

## Headway Solicitors Directory

**We are extremely proud that Partner and Head of our Personal Injury Team, Anna Burns, has been accepted into the Headway Solicitors Directory for 2019.**

The brain injury association Headway only includes Solicitors whom they have checked out in terms of the quality and level of expertise they can offer.



Said Anna: 'I am absolutely thrilled to have received this recognition from Headway. Claims of this nature can be complex and take time to resolve, therefore I get to know my Clients very well during this time. My work as a Solicitor is not just about recovering compensation, I genuinely care about the circumstances that my Clients are going through and feel like we are on this journey together.'

If you would like to have any further information on making a claim following a head or brain injury, please do not hesitate to contact **Anna Burns** on **01270 762325** or [Anna.Burns@poolealcock.co.uk](mailto:Anna.Burns@poolealcock.co.uk)

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## WELCOME ABOARD

More great people have joined our team across  
all of our offices – they're looking forward to meeting you

THE DOWERY,  
SANDBACH &  
NANTWICH ROAD



**Joy Sansom**  
Receptionist

SANDBACH

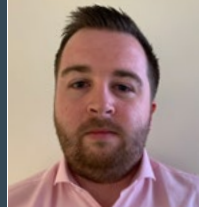


**Selina Hollies**  
Probate Assistant to  
Andy Roberts

THE DOWERY



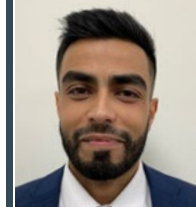
**Sophie Barrett**  
Paralegal,  
Business Services



**Thomas Chappell**  
Paralegal,  
Conveyancing



**Nicola Grant**  
Conveyancing  
Assistant to  
James Williams

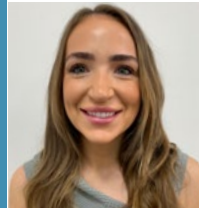


**Mohammed  
Hasanath**  
Paralegal,  
Business Services

HIGH STREET



**Wendy Hamlyn**  
PA to  
Cherry Riddlesdin



**Jade Pearson**  
PA to  
Scott Harding



**Karen Thompson**  
Compliance Assistant



**Chloe Williams**  
Client Support Assistant,  
New Enquiry Team

WILMSLOW



**Haseena Ahmed**  
Conveyancing  
Assistant to  
Vicky Moetamedi



**Holly Hopwood**  
PA to  
Sarah-Jane Dunhill and  
Litigation Department  
Assistant



**Sarah Porter**  
Solicitor, Litigation



**Nathan Walton**  
Receptionist

ALSAGER



**Victoria  
Bowyer**  
Conveyancing  
Assistant to  
Sarah McCleary

CONGLETON



**Amelia  
Johnson**  
Conveyancing  
Assistant to  
Tania Zompi

NANTWICH ROAD



**Hilary  
Bateman**  
Secretary to  
Gill Mealor



**Michelle  
Hall**  
Conveyancing  
Assistant to  
Gill Mealor

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## Time for a story...

Some of our staff reading to children at Offley Primary Academy as part of **#randomactsofkindness** day in February.



We are delighted to announce that the winner of **Dabber's Den 2018 – the local business competition we co-sponsor – was [The Weston Biltong Company Ltd.](#)**

It was founded by Sheryl and Ryan Walker who began making handmade South African dried meats for family and friends before establishing the business in 2016.

Maintaining their strong focus on sourcing quality, locally produced ingredients, they now have customers across Cheshire, Staffordshire and other parts of the UK.

## Know anyone who'd like to join us?

**We're expanding fast and while we have no specific vacancies at the moment, we're always looking for high quality staff to join our team:**



As a leading firm of solicitors providing a broad spectrum of specialist and general legal services, we recognise that our staff are our most valuable asset.

We are always keen to hear from driven and committed people and welcome speculative career enquiries, so if you are enthusiastic and feel you could make a difference to our firm, then we would love to hear from you.

Please send your CV along with your covering letter to: [careers@poolealcock.co.uk](mailto:careers@poolealcock.co.uk)

See the new team members who have joined us in recent weeks on [page 6](#)

## JARGON



In the legal world and conveyancing in particular, there's lots of jargon – **Nicola Fury** helps to shed a little light.



I J K L M N O P Q R S T U

**Joint Tenancy:** this is where two or more people have equal ownership of a property, with possession passing automatically to the remaining owner(s) in the event of another's death.

**Leasehold:** This is where you own the property, but the land under which the property is built is owned by the Freeholder. The lease grants you a right to occupy the property for as long as the lease is granted.

**Licensed conveyancer:** a lawyer specialising in property law who has been trained to deal with all aspects of property law and is regulated by the **Council for Licensed Conveyancers.**

**Local authority searches:** These are searches undertaken prior to exchange of contracts, which look at all the information held by a Local Authority about a property, including any restrictions or charges registered against the land or property and information relating to public highways and planning decisions.

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