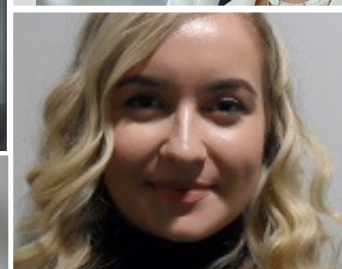
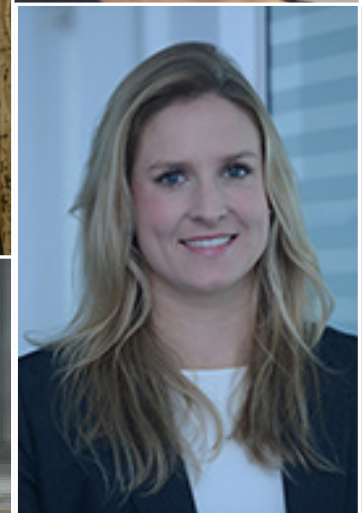


FIRST 100 YEARS OF WOMEN IN LAW

Inspirational Women
Campaign





FOREWORD

On 23 December 1919, the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act was passed, enabling women to become barristers, solicitors, jurors and magistrates. Addleshaw Goddard wanted to mark this anniversary with our own 'First 100 Years of Women in Law' Campaign, as a timely opportunity for both celebration and reflection.

As part of this campaign we decided to focus on female talent connected to Addleshaw Goddard, both past and present. We contacted all of our colleagues and asked that they nominate those women at the firm who have personally inspired them – and I was delighted to see that the list includes a number of colleagues, both lawyers and non-lawyers, who have inspired and supported me throughout my career. I hope you will enjoy the personal stories in these pages as much as I did.

It might seem unusual to some readers that a male lawyer is writing the foreword to this brochure. However, equality of opportunity at work is not just a “women’s issue”. Whilst it is self-evident that we have come a long way in 100 years, there is still a lot to do. A recent study revealed that, according to not only 3 in 4 women but also 2 in 5 men, UK workplace culture stalls women’s careers. Improving the prospects for female talent to thrive remains a key priority for Addleshaw Goddard as it should for any business, and whilst we can take pride in what we have achieved – and in particular the success of our Flourish programme to support female progression to senior positions – there are still challenges to overcome. Involving men as well as women in the discussion as to how we achieve equitable career progression is critical, so that we work together to improve everyone’s experience of working at the firm.

I would like to thank everybody who has helped pull this collection together. I am sure it can inspire our next generation of talent, both male and female, to promote an inclusive culture in which everybody can prosper and achieve their potential.



MIKE HINCHLIFFE

Board Diversity & Inclusion Sponsor

PROFILE:

CARRIE ARMSTRONG, EDINBURGH



Carrie Armstrong

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

20 years, since I joined legacy firm, Henderson Boyd Jackson as a trainee. I am a partner based in Edinburgh in Real Estate (mainstream).

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

AG has a positive, enthusiastic and supportive working environment – for all. The leadership team are vocal and open in supporting greater gender parity such that it is acknowledged as an important strategic priority for the firm, hence the focus at the most recent Partner’s Conference.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

Yes, my confidence levels have grown each year since being promoted to partnership. I was given a lot of support and encouragement together with opportunities and platforms by more senior partners within the business. My two sisters who also work in very senior roles both based in Edinburgh have also been very encouraging (alongside helping out with childcare, we have 8 children between us).

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE ‘BARRIERS’ TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

I had 3 periods of maternity leave in 5 years which without a doubt put a

delay on the speed of my progression to partnership. However, my advice to others facing these types of decisions and challenges would be that “life” is more important than work. A career is a marathon and not a sprint over 40 (or perhaps 50) years, so having 9 months off in that context is really neither here nor there.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

Alison Newton – she has been engaged with my career since the day she joined. She is encouraging, challenging and strategic in her thinking.

Miles Ede – he helps, encourages and supports every member of his team and facilitated and supported flexible working arrangements as much as he could.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU WITNESSED IN THE LEGAL SECTOR FROM THE START OF YOUR CAREER TO DATE IN SUPPORT OF FEMALE CAREER PROGRESSION AND ENCOURAGING GREATER GENDER PARITY?

More females are entering the legal profession in increasing numbers. I understand that 80% of the student population of the law faculty at Edinburgh is female. Undoubtedly we should see greater gender parity in senior leadership roles within law firms in the future. This should be inevitable given increasing intake numbers.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

It just needs to be something which is constantly kept under review by senior leadership teams – to ensure fairness and opportunities for all (men and women).



A career is a marathon and not a sprint over 40 (or perhaps 50) years, so having 9 months off in that context is really neither here nor there.

Carrie Armstrong

PROFILE: SAFINAZ BAJAWA, LONDON



Safinaz Bajawa

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I have been in my role as a Bids Manager since January 2019.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG – HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

Looking back over my inaugural year, there have been many highs and lows. I would say the most important aspect of experiencing any low points is how one can learn from them – both about oneself and giving thought to how one can make positive changes. I have been fortunate to meet some extremely talented and passionate people, in a variety of roles, who are supportive by desire and progressive by nature. Gender only now comes to mind as I'm prompted to think of it. Gender parity is one of the most positive things about AG.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

In 2016 I took a career break spanning two years in order to look after my father who was seriously ill. My father is so incredibly precious to me and after it became clear he would need support, there was never a question in my mind as to what the right decision was. Returning to work with a gap on my CV was something that I was conscious of. Taking that time, however, is something which I knew I would never regret. My advice to anyone in a similar situation is that taking care of your home life gives you strength and support that you can always rely on when things in the office get tough.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

My mother has been and always will be my role model. She is not only the cornerstone of our family but also an incredibly high achiever professionally. She worked shifts to take care of her disabled husband and simultaneously hold the family together. She taught me that anything is possible with the right mind-set and work ethic.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE, IN THE LAST 100 YEARS, HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO HELP WOMEN ADVANCE IN LAW? AND THE ONE BARRIER THAT HAS HELD THEM BACK?

The appointment of Rose Heilbron to King's Counsel in 1949 catapulted the profile of women in law. I would suggest the most constraining issue for women, over the last 100 years, has been the slow uptake on gender parity. Only now are we beginning to see any meaningful progress.

HAT DO YOU BELIEVE, IN THE LAST 100 YEARS, HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO HELP WOMEN ADVANCE IN LAW? AND THE ONE BARRIER THAT HAS HELD THEM BACK?

Men should be encouraged to take part in gender equality events regularly. A lack of understanding of the historical issues their female counterparts have suffered is often misconstrued as arrogance rather than ignorance.



I have been fortunate to meet some extremely talented and passionate people, in a variety of roles, who are supportive by desire and progressive by nature.

Safinaz Bajawa

PROFILE: PAULA BRUTON, MANCHESTER



Paula Bruton

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I've worked for AG for 26 years and am currently Head of Secretarial & Office Services.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

I'm very proud to work at AG and I'm grateful for the opportunities I've been given which have enabled me to work in a variety of different roles and have a number of promotions. The firm has been very supportive of my career development. I was recruited as a PA and am now a senior manager, something I would never have thought could happen when I joined the firm in 1993.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

My current role has frequently required me to step out of my comfort zone and initially that was very daunting. However, I've been lucky to have the support of current and previous managers who have helped me make the transition, and also the support of my teams who helped me build my knowledge. Finally, and most importantly, I have the support of my family, especially my two sons who are very understanding when I'm frequently travelling around AG's offices and am away from home.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

When I first applied for a team leader role at AG there were some barriers, mainly from others who felt I lacked experience in managing people (which I did). However, I was given the opportunity by someone who believed I had the capability to take on a manager role – so I'd say if someone gives you an opportunity grasp it, and worry about whether you can do it later!

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

I've been fortunate to have some inspirational managers at AG who have encouraged and supported my development, and have given me the opportunity to be involved in projects which have challenged me. I manage a large team and spend quite a lot of time supporting others. I'm constantly inspired by members of my team who are able to succeed and flourish during times of adversity. Outside of work, my parents are my role models. They instilled a good work ethic in me and without their support and encouragement I couldn't have successfully juggled my work/family life.



...most importantly, I have the support of my family, especially my two sons who are very understanding when I'm frequently travelling around AG's offices and am away from home.

Paula Bruton

PROFILE: MONICA BURCH, LONDON



Monica Burch
(former partner)

YOUR LEGAL CAREER WITH AG SPANNED ALMOST THREE DECADES. OVER THAT PERIOD HOW DID YOU SEE THINGS CHANGING FOR WOMEN?

A lot of changes, from many seemingly minor things such as, when I joined the firm there were no female loos on the partners' floor, comments were made whenever trouser suits were worn, expectations that the women would always pour the coffee in meetings, the list goes onTo some more fundamental changes such as consciousness of biases, better structure in terms of flexible working and parental leave, the will at leadership level to increase diversity and an expectation of diverse teams from clients. A gradual if slow increase in women partners and a flood of very very able women lawyers. Questioning about why women weren't retained as opposed to assuming women would leave the business. So we are not there yet as a profession, but I do believe there is a route through.

YOU WERE AG'S FIRST FEMALE SENIOR PARTNER. DID YOU FEEL A RESPONSIBILITY TO BE A ROLE MODEL?

I felt a responsibility to act in accordance with my values, to carry out my role to the very best of my ability and to treat others as I would want to be treated. I also felt a responsibility to be very open about my career path but to recognise that my views should not be imposed on others. And hopefully too to cheer on women, to question assumptions and to champion women. I was actively involved in diversity initiatives for all of my career and diversity board champion in AG from 2008. I have always been very public about my strong belief that diversity makes a better business as well as being the right / moral / meritocratic way to be.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR OWN INSPIRATIONAL FEMALE ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

Mare Stacey - a female partner who as a pioneer at legacy firm Theodore Goddard took an interest in my career.

Janet Gaymer, ex Senior Partner at Simmons who was always very kind and offered an ear/advice.

Peninah Thomson who is CEO of a Foundation I now chair who adopted me early on and arranged for me to be mentored outside the firm by the chair of a multinational plc, which changed my career.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Treat women as people who have and want careers. Question your own opinions and assumptions. Who are your protégées? If they don't include women, why not? Be honest - pledge to yourself to treat all colleagues, superiors and juniors equally and think about whether you actually do this and if not, what you need to change.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT ONE THING WOULD MAKE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE TO ACHIEVING GREATER GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN THE PROFESSION?

Truly shared caring responsibilities. Not stunning I know, but I do think that would make a difference not just to how we act within businesses but also to how those businesses are structured.



Treat women as people who have and want careers.

Monica Burch

PROFILE:

SARAH BUZUK, EDINBURGH



Sarah Buzuk

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I have been working for Addleshaw Goddard for just over a year and was hired as a Paralegal in January 2019 to join the newly-formed TST Hub in Edinburgh. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at the firm and I genuinely look forward to what the future is going to bring.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

My experience of working at Addleshaw Goddard has, so far, been excellent. I have never felt more at ease coming in to work with such a supportive group of individuals. Everyone that I have had contact with has been incredibly approachable and friendly, and they have all managed to provide me with some great advice on how I can develop within my role. From what I have experienced, I strongly believe that Addleshaw Goddard is a progressive firm that is supportive of greater gender parity. There are many women that I look up to within the firm who have achieved great things and are at various stages within their careers. Not once have I considered that there has been any disparity in any of these women achieving their goals within Addleshaw Goddard as the firm continues to develop talent regardless of whether that individual is a man or a woman. By celebrating the achievements of these women, Addleshaw Goddard continues to work towards greater gender parity by emphasising that talent can come from anywhere, as long as one is willing to work hard to show it.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL

CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

Fortunately for me, I would not say that I have experienced any notable 'barriers' to my personal career progression as I see any potential obstacles as challenges. Challenges to career progression need to be tackled head on, and one needs to understand what they need to achieve in order to progress. I do this by sitting down with my manager on a regular basis and going through recent work I have completed - what went well, what didn't go well, what I could improve on in the next instance. I believe that by sitting down and talking through it like this can give one a better clarity on one's capabilities. Sometimes it can be easy to think that we are all the best at what we do, but a little self-evaluation can give us some clarity on how we can improve.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

As cliché as it may sound, my parents have been my role models from day one. They arrived to the UK in the 90s as refugees from Bosnia & Herzegovina and ever since then they have not stopped in helping me pursue my dreams. They encouraged me to dream big and showed me exactly what hard work can achieve - the 'can-do' attitude is definitely appreciated in the workplace. Everything that I do in my career is as a result of their hard work and dedication and I cannot appreciate them enough for teaching me those values. It has helped me to focus on achieving my goals and has allowed me to appreciate the opportunities that I am presented. I cannot be thankful enough.



Sometimes it can be easy to think that we are all the best at what we do, but a little self-evaluation can give us some clarity on how we can improve.

Sarah Buzuk

PROFILE: DIANA CRAVEN, MANCHESTER



Diana Craven
(former partner)

I started my legal career in 1972 as an articled clerk at Herbert Smith in the City, and subsequently spent all my career (since qualification) in property law. I was one of only two women trainees in my year. The standard working hours were 9.30 -5.30 (with an hour for lunch) and I rarely, if ever, had to stay in the office outside those hours. The day's work relied mainly on what arrived in the post – fax and email did not exist, and urgent messages were sent by telegram or telex. All documents were typed on manual typewriters by secretaries, and engrossments were produced by an outside team of worker who individually copy-typed the originals and counterparts. Most completions took place in person, and money was paid over by bankers drafts with no electronic transfers.

There were comparatively few women lawyers working in the City at the time, and for many clients and other professionals it was a novelty for a woman to turn up at a meeting, particularly in corporate work. It was generally assumed, if you spoke to someone on the phone, that you were a secretary. Herbert Smith had a very meritocratic outlook, and while there I was never aware of any gender discrimination. The same was true when I moved to Addleshaw Sons and Latham in 1977 and became the first woman partner there in 1981. Female lawyers were still very much a minority, but I knew several high profile women in practice in Manchester and in the City.

I helped set up a branch of the Association of Women Solicitors in Manchester, and subsequently chaired the group, as well as being on the national committee for several years and the national secretary for a time. My experience in the AWS taught me how fortunate I had been to be in the firms which valued contributions from all participants, regardless of gender, when it was clear from case studies

presented to the AWS that this was far from the case in other practices. The AWS was a strong supporter of women who were encountering difficulties in their career progression and I learned a great deal from it. I was also a member of a number of business women's organisations and found the same barriers were clearly in place in many workplaces, and mutual support was valuable. It is regrettable that nearly 50 years after I started in the law issues of gender equality, discrimination and unfairness still need to be discussed at all.

My role models have always been those who reflected in the practice of law the need for integrity, hard work, knowledge and client service. David Tully was my mentor and good friend for all my time at Addleshaw Goddard and subsequently. The only barriers I ever encountered were partially self-generated, as I always felt the need to work exceptionally hard to justify my place in the partnership. In the main I found this very enjoyable – Addleshaw Goddard was the major part of my life for over 27 years. I feel fortunate to have been able to work on a wide variety of high profile property transactions.

Others may take a different approach to the work/ life balance, and it is good to see that most firms are now able to offer more flexible working hours, aided by technology. New technology without doubt has created one of the biggest changes to working practices, and will continue to do so into the future. It is a great enabler in support of greater gender parity, allowing remote working to suit the circumstances of the individual and should be much encouraged.

Coming up to 70, and having 'retired' several times, I still work occasionally as a consultant property adviser in a local firm, and would not have wanted a career in anything other than property law.



The only barriers I ever encountered were partially self-generated, as I always felt the need to work exceptionally hard to justify my place in the partnership.

Diana Craven

PROFILE: AMANDA DAVIS, LEEDS



Amanda Davis

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

25 years, currently a Managing Associate in the Leeds Real Estate Team. I started in the commercial property team and was one of the first paralegals in the Division.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

In my experience, the firm is supportive of its people regardless of their gender or 'packaging'. As a working mother I was able to work part time when my children were smaller. Latterly I find the working from home policy allows me to manage my 'life admin' around my chargeable client work and gives me the option of working more flexibly to get a better work/life balance.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

Yes, it worried me that committing to a higher role meant compromising my family life. In reality, the ability to work from home, support from the partner group and the strong team I work within has really helped me flourish in this role. My family have always been supportive of my career and have been there to help when work occasionally takes over (which inevitably it does once in a while).

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE

TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

The only barriers I have experienced have been my own. I took a step back from pushing forward in my career whilst my children were small but as they have grown I consciously started to focus on developing my working life and allowing myself the time and commitment to progress. Knowing I can be in the office and not have to rush out to nursery or school pick up has given me the chance to really develop as a lawyer. Equally, if I need to be doing the ballet run etc I can flex my day around it and the team I work with are supportive of that.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

Not a single person exactly but I recall, and have never forgotten, the person (a trainee) who stood up and reminded us all that this is not a life and death industry.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

It makes no sense to me that there should be a pay gap based on gender - people should be rewarded based on their skills and experience alone. The legal sector needs to look at where the gender pay gap still exists and take steps to address the balance. There should be greater flexibility for working parents and better financial support for nursery costs and childcare.



It makes no sense to me that there should be a pay gap based on gender - people should be rewarded based on their skills and experience alone.

Amanda Davis

PROFILE: JUSTINE DELROY, MANCHESTER



Justine Delroy

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I joined the Leeds office in 2001, just over a year qualified, from a firm in London and then moved to the Manchester office in 2005. I'm a tax partner, and I head up the Tax & Structuring team, and am also an elected board member.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

Generally I've had a hugely positive experience of working at AG, otherwise I wouldn't have been here for 18 years (and counting). I've never experienced out and out discrimination here, not even a whiff of it. But of course there have been instances when being a woman has made things harder – through a combination of the kind of self-doubt that a lot of people (but perhaps specially women) feel, and (less so these days) the fact that there can be a perception that women are less credible/influential.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION?

I guess the main challenge has been a perceived lack of 'gravitas'. I think that's a criticism often levelled at women. Is it the fact that women are smaller, have higher voices, often dress a bit less formally?? Perhaps in my case, also the fact that I enjoy a joke occasionally and am quite chirpy!

IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

Overwhelmingly, to be yourself!! Harness the things that make you different, and make you **you**. And don't give up. Resilience is a word that's bandied around a lot these

days, but it's true that you have to pick yourself up when things don't go your way, both professionally and personally.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU WITNESSED IN THE LEGAL SECTOR FROM THE START OF YOUR CAREER TO DATE IN SUPPORT OF FEMALE CAREER PROGRESSION AND ENCOURAGING GREATER GENDER PARITY?

The biggest change has been the gradual recognition that difference is good – diversity of background, upbringing, perspective, opinion is creative and productive. We're not there yet but there does seem to be a real change in landscape.

And more recently, an acceptance that it's harder for women to succeed not because of failings they have, and certainly not just because of the challenge of balancing work with family, but also because of the wider culture – unconscious bias, benevolent sexism, and men looking after each other.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE ALONGSIDE THEIR FEMALE COLLEAGUES TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Back them and be bold about it.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

Every decision making body (promotions committee, performance review team etc etc) should be at least 40% women.



Harness the things that make you different, and make you *you*. And don't give up.

Justine Delroy

PROFILE:

KATHLEEN GALLACHER, EDINBURGH



Kathleen Gallacher

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I began working at the firm in 2014 as it was then known, in Scotland, as HBJ Gateley. Having returned from travelling during my gap year after university, I applied for a job as a legal secretary thinking it would tide me over with some money before I began studying my diploma. Having been a legal secretary, paralegal and a trainee within the firm, I am now an Associate in the employment team.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

AG is a great place to work, as a junior solicitor it is extremely encouraging to know the firm specifically run programmes focussed on developing women, to equip them with the skills they need with the ultimate aim of seeking senior positions within the firm. The “How to Flourish” initiative, together with the encouragement of agile working practices and the AG Returners’ programme, are complimented by the abundance of females in senior positions within the firm. The various initiatives and working practices in place to assist in overcoming typical barriers traditionally faced by females in law give me confidence and reassurance that the firm is somewhere I would be supported and encouraged to propel my career and reach the goals I want to, however ambitious they may be.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

I have worked alongside many inspirational role models and have been fortunate enough to have similar inspirational individuals among my friends and family, many of which, I’m proud to say, are females. If I had to choose one individual who has been crucial in shaping my career to date it

is Alison Newton. Alison is a partner in the firm’s Real Estate division, Head of the firm’s Glasgow office and is the newly appointed Head of Real Estate in Scotland. I worked in Alison’s team as the legal secretary when I first joined the firm and she has been instrumental in my career ever since. She is an outstanding role model, particularly for young females within the firm. Alison leads by example and working alongside her, witnessing her infallible confidence and relentless work ethic on a daily basis, has instilled a confidence in me that I doubt I’d have found elsewhere.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE ALONGSIDE THEIR FEMALE COLLEAGUES TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

At the moment there is a real disconnect with men and the drive behind gender equality. In order to achieve real gender equality, men need to feel they have a role to play in achieving this. Whilst AG have a real focus on supporting and helping females reach their aspirations, I believe the next step is to offer male similar initiatives albeit, obviously, with different aims. For example, males should be encouraged to be more involved in commitments outside of the office, this could be driven by the encouragement of both parents taking the same amount of time off work when they have a newborn baby. AG are on the front foot and do offer and encourage men within the firm to take paternity leave, however more can be done. Ultimately, until men are as engaged as females in the gender equality drive, real gender parity cannot be achieved.



Ultimately, until men are as engaged as females in the gender equality drive, real gender parity cannot be achieved.

Kathleen Gallacher

PROFILE: AMANDA GRAY, LONDON



Amanda Gray

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I trained at the firm and have been here ever since - 28 years so far. I'm currently divisional managing partner for the Finance & Projects division. I'm also joint client relationship partner for The Royal Bank of Scotland group - the firm's largest annuity client.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

The main reason I've spent my entire career with AG is that new challenges have always been available to me here. I had my two daughters very early in my career and I remember feeling anxious about telling my head of department that I was pregnant when I had only recently qualified, but he could not have been more supportive, saying that a career is a marathon, not a sprint. I got lots of practical help in the early years of my career - for example, I was one of the first people in the firm to trial the use of a laptop on my return from maternity leave and I was always grateful that none of the partners I worked with early in my career "shielded" me from challenging work, but were generous with their time when I needed help.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

Throughout my career I've been prepared to back myself and have made some moves that could be considered to be bold but could equally be considered to be rash! Moving my entire family across the

Pennines when my children were very young was a challenge. That said, I got lots of practical support from new colleagues - Malcolm Pike recommended a school for my children (where, just as he promised, they were hugely happy and thrived), Egan Brooks (then head of BSR) shared his knowledge of the roads around Manchester and cut valuable time off my daily commute and Richard Lee deftly guided me through the technical detail of early deals in Manchester. I am indebted to them and to many others.

A new challenge came when my youngest daughter started school full-time and our nanny asked us to start looking for new childcare arrangements. My children's father volunteered to take a career break. He then was the one taking on the school run, homework, cooking, and sticking sequins on tutus. His decision enabled me to focus on my career, but it also meant that, as the sole breadwinner, the pressure was on. One of the factors that reassured me was someone else demonstrating faith in me. Paul Lee (then Senior Partner) co-opted me to the board. A couple of years on the board, just as the firm plunged into the credit crunch, gave me valuable insight into the fragility of business success, and really sharpened my focus. Without that experience I doubt that I would have gone on to become first head of Banking and then later, divisional managing partner.

Those next steps brought a further challenge - a move to London just as my daughters faced A-levels and GCSEs respectively in Manchester. Had my daughters not achieved universal A-stars, the (self-imposed) guilt of being a working and frequently absent mother would probably have been unbearable. As it was, my eldest daughter was disconcerted when my reaction to her fantastic A-level results was to sob uncontrollably.



I had my two daughters very early in my career and I remember feeling anxious about telling my head of department that I was pregnant when I had only recently qualified, but he could not have been more supportive...

Amanda Gray

PROFILE: CATHERINE JONES, LONDON



Catherine Jones

My current role at AG is as the Evening Enabler based in the London office. It is quite a varied role in which I provide support for those working in the evening and overnight.

Having previously worked in a variety of sectors providing support in different areas, I was a bit nervous about taking on the role at AG as the role was a new role to me and I was unsure as to whether I would be able to provide the level of service required, and whether I would fit in with the culture at the Firm.

On joining AG I was pleasantly surprised to find that not only was the work varied and enjoyable but that everyone was willing to provide me with any assistance I needed to do my job well. I have been, and continue to be, provided with excellent support from Office Services (HR, WP, IT, Security and Hospitality) and also from the solicitors working in the different departments.

As mentioned, I have worked in various sectors and have experienced a lot of corporate office culture that has not always been the most positive, and can say that I have found the work environment at AG to be one of the best that I have worked at. The level of acceptance and inclusion of people's differences has definitely been the best and I was surprised at the number of women that were working at all levels in the Firm.

This is very encouraging and the ways that AG supports women to enable them to progress in their roles is very forward thinking and progressive. AG seem to recognise that women are valuable members of the workforce at all stages in their lives, allowing them to fulfill their potential. I feel confident that if I were to ever want to retrain I would get the support at AG that I most likely wouldn't get at many other companies.

I will always be grateful for the time I have spent working at AG as I have gained a valuable insight into what women can achieve in the right environment.



AG seem to recognise that women are valuable members of the workforce at all stages in their lives, allowing them to fulfill their potential.

Catherine Jones

PROFILE: GLENYS JONES, MANCHESTER



Glenys Jones

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I've worked for AG for 44 years and I am a Legal PA.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

I feel privileged to have worked at AG and especially to see how it has grown to an international firm. I started as a junior secretary on joining in 1975 and now a Legal PA. I do feel that the firm has always been supportive of my career development. Since joining I have worked in three divisions, all of which I have thoroughly enjoyed.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

When I joined I was a junior secretary, worked between two partners' secretaries and they were so helpful and supportive to me. I was always given time to grow. I do think that they modelled me for my current position to be a team player. I have always had the support of my family, particularly my husband in the early years when I had to work late, come in early and work lots of weekends.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

I have to say that I do not feel that I have. People have always been supportive of me. I must say, particularly having been here for all those years, I have recently asked for a work life balance and I have been able to work from home two days a week.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

I have worked with some great people in my career and have had some really inspirational managers, but I have to say that the people who stand out for me are my sister-in-law Barbara James, Pauline Middleton (these were the two secretaries I worked with when joining at 16), and also Lisa Mifsud. Lisa was my Group Divisional Secretary for a number of years and was always there to help and support her staff. I particularly single Lisa out because when she became a secretary I was her mentor, and that for me is such an honour to see how she had progressed.



I have always had the support of my family, particularly my husband in the early years when I had to work late, come in early and work lots of weekends.

Glenys Jones

PROFILE: BONNIE LAM, HONG KONG



Bonnie Lam



In Asia, I think law firms should have more campaigns and events to allow females to share their experiences about how to become a successful professional and how to manage work-life balance to help champion gender equality.

Bonnie Lam

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I have been working for AG as Office Manager at our Hong Kong office for 15 months.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

When I have faced challenging and difficult situations since joining AG Hong Kong, I'm glad that I have always had support from the firm, whether from senior management or the support teams, from the UK offices or the Singapore office. We all work as one team. I found that the firm treats everyone equally and there is no gender discrimination. I can say that the firm supports female colleagues especially during the maternity period. They support colleagues at the workplace during the pregnancy period and when returning to work after maternity leave. The firm knows how to retain female talent.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

My mother has been my inspirational role model. She is a full-time housewife and looks after the family 24/7. My mother always thinks positively, is very supportive, shows patience and forgiveness and is respectful and loving. This has influenced my personality and the way to get along with people and deal with situations.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE, IN THE LAST 100 YEARS, HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO HELP WOMEN ADVANCE IN LAW? AND THE ONE BARRIER THAT HAS HELD THEM BACK?

Gender equality and independence of women have been the biggest changes to help women advance in

law. Organisations are now recruiting more females into important roles, for example, The Hong Kong Government employed the first female Secretary for Justice in 1997, and the current Secretary for Justice is also female. The barriers holding women back may stem from the pressure of media, or thinking linked to old traditional Chinese society, which is still characterized by male domination and female subordination.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE ALONGSIDE THEIR FEMALE COLLEAGUES TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

AG Hong Kong office employed its first female partner in October 2019, she is also the first female partner in our Asia offices. I believe we will see more female partners in the firm and the ratio between male and female partners will become more equal. I think support, encouragement and respect from male colleagues helps gender equality in the workplace.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

In Asia, I think law firms should have more campaigns and events to allow females to share their experiences about how to become a successful professional and how to manage work-life balance to help champion gender equality.

PROFILE: LOWRI LLWYD, DUBAI



Lowri Llwyd

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I have been working at AG for six years and I am currently a partner in the Dubai corporate and commercial team.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

AG is a very forward-thinking firm. I was promoted to partner when I was six months' pregnant with my second child and I was very much encouraged and supported by the wider partnership team, both locally and internationally, to put myself forward for promotion (notwithstanding my existing and impending family commitments). I have been impressed with the progressive ethos of AG.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

Of course I had doubts but I receive a great amount of encouragement from my internal support network – from my fellow partners as well as the wider associate base and support staff. I could not do my job without the help of my wider team. Support from family and friends is also important, especially when juggling the pressures of work and parenthood.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

Motherhood is always a perceived 'barrier' to career progression but that perception needs to change if women are to forward their careers. Hopefully we can work together to demonstrate to everyone (both men and women alike) that it need not be a 'barrier'. My advice would be to (i) realize that you cannot do everything perfectly – it is important not to be too hard on yourself – but it is equally important never to stop trying to do your best job and (ii) surround yourself with a positive team.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

All men and women who balance children and careers and take an active involvement in both.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE, IN THE LAST 100 YEARS, HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO HELP WOMEN ADVANCE IN LAW? AND THE ONE BARRIER THAT HAS HELD THEM BACK?

Biggest change? Technology – the ability to work remotely so that women can balance work and motherhood.

Biggest barrier? Often, each other – we are still too quick to judge others based on our own beliefs.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

In a move that would benefit both clients and colleagues alike, change the billable hours structure to one that encourages efficiency and output based solutions including the use of technology and/or other methods that reduce costs and streamline the processes involved in the provision of legal services.

Emphasise the importance of male involvement in family life – a more even sharing of parenting responsibility will benefit everyone.



Emphasise the importance of male involvement in family life – a more even sharing of parenting responsibility will benefit everyone.

Lowri Llwyd

PROFILE: NANCY MCGUIRE, MANCHESTER



Nancy McGuire

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

It came as a surprise to me when I read in Friday News that I had been with the firm for 25 years. I am really not sure where the years have gone. I wanted to be a commercial litigator when I joined Addleshaw Sons and Lathan but was offered a job on the basis I worked in the Construction Team for the first 6 months. I seem to have forgotten to leave the area of Construction Law ! To give you flavour when I joined Addleshaw Sons & Lathan, we could not wear trousers to work, women needed to wear dark suits, we had no computers on our desks and the fax machine was a big feature in our lives.

I am now head of the Construction, Engineering and Environmental Team at AG. There are now around 80 members of the team in the UK and circa 10 in the International Offices. I absolutely love my role and the team I work with !

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

I have always found the firm to be massively supportive of me and my progression to partner and then head of the team. At no point have I felt held back by my gender. In the early years of being a partner, some of my colleagues could be slightly patronising and it seemed to come as a surprise when I knew anything about law but that was very rare. Working in the Construction Industry in the late 80s and 90s was entertaining. I would regularly be the only women at meetings or on site but I often felt this gave me an advantage. Contractors were more reluctant to be rude to me than my male counterparts and people remembered you.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU WITNESSED IN THE LEGAL SECTOR FROM THE START OF YOUR CAREER TO DATE IN SUPPORT OF FEMALE CAREER PROGRESSION AND ENCOURAGING GREATER GENDER PARITY?

The most important for me is the work that is on-going to support flexible working to allow careers to fit with family and other commitments. That needs to be supported for everyone though not just women. It has been great to see the take up in shared leave and men also looking at how to build sustainable careers around families and life in general.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

Jacqui Langley-White. I worked for Jacqui in my first 4-5 years at AG and she was fantastic as a mentor and at teaching me all the drafting and negotiating skills for my career. The support is on-going to date. She also taught me my love of champagne, which is not so good!

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE, IN THE LAST 100 YEARS, HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO HELP WOMEN ADVANCE IN LAW? AND THE ONE BARRIER THAT HAS HELD THEM BACK?

Flexible working has been the biggest change to help people advance. I think confidence holds women back and also the need to balance careers with family commitments.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE ALONGSIDE THEIR FEMALE COLLEAGUES TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Just be inclusive – make sure all team members are given equal opportunities to work on matters, to attend client events and to get involved with pitches and other targeting work.



I would regularly be the only women at meetings or on site but I often felt this gave me an advantage. Contractors were more reluctant to be rude to me than my male counterparts and people remembered you.

Nancy McGuire

PROFILE: LISA MIFSUD, MANCHESTER



Lisa Mifsud

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I have been at AG for 30 years and I am currently a Legal PA in the Banking team. I have also been an office junior and a secretarial co-ordinator.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

AG is a great place to work and I was given the opportunity to work my way from an office junior to be the Legal PA I am today. I have supported the firm through 3 mergers and have seen the international focus of the business and the evolution of technology grow from strength to strength from when I started 30 years ago. It was a male dominated firm at that time and, from what I can remember, there were only 2 female partners and very few female lawyers. The majority of females were secretaries and reception staff. We weren't allowed to wear trousers and when the partners were at a lunch at a certain restaurant near the office on Marsden Street, we weren't allowed in as it was "men only" and had to pass written messages through the door.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

During my career with AG, I have definitely stepped out of my comfort zone on many occasions. I have been a mentor to Junior PAs for a few years now and I'm also involved with projects where I've had to deliver training sessions to the Junior PAs. I am also a member of the Manchester

PA Networking team, and throughout all this I've always felt supported by PA colleagues in my team and also by Paula Bruton, our Head of Secretarial and Office Services.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

The only barrier I really ever came across was when we first set up the Manchester PA Networking Team. Some of the feedback we received from partners was 'why'? They didn't realise how powerful PA networking could be to the business. With the 100% support of Mike O'Connor, and the team being shorted listed for the past 2 years for the Manchester PA Awards, this has raised our profile within the firm.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

I have been fortunate to have supported throughout the years, and continue to support, some very inspirational female partners. I currently support 5 female lawyers and 1 partner and they've all encouraged me to push myself to be involved with different projects and have supported my development. Also when I was promoted to a secretary at the age of 18, Glenys Jones was my mentor and to this day, 32 years later, she is one of my closest friends.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE ALONGSIDE THEIR FEMALE COLLEAGUES TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

I still feel that the female partners take on the pastoral role for the team, more so than the male partners.



The majority of females were secretaries and reception staff. We weren't allowed to wear trousers and when the partners were at a lunch at a certain restaurant near the office on Marsden Street, we weren't allowed in as it was "men only" and had to pass written messages through the door.

Lisa Mifsud

PROFILE: KATIE MILNER, LEEDS



Katie Milner

This year I will have been at AG for 10 years – I joined in 2010 as a trainee solicitor, qualified into the Construction team in Leeds in 2012 and have recently been promoted to Managing Associate.

As a trainee, my main career goal was to successfully qualify (obviously!). I worked hard, putting in a lot of hours and enjoyed what I was doing but I knew some day I wanted to start a family. I questioned whether that would be compatible with the demands of my position – I wasn't totally sure whether I could have a successful career in law and have a family.

Ten years on and I now have two children – I'm currently in the middle of my second period of maternity leave. Returning to work after having my first child was a daunting experience – it took me a while to re-gain my confidence, to re-establish myself in the team and to get used to having to manage my time so as to balance the demands of the job alongside my new family commitments. I think these must be common feelings experienced by both women and men returning from longer term parental leave. Knowing I had the support of the colleagues in my team to help me with the transition was vital to me. Everyone has been supportive of my decision to come back to work part-time (I currently work four days a week) and I've never felt that working in this way has excluded me from opportunities or hindered my development. Those around me are fully aware of my ambitions and want me to succeed professionally, whilst also respecting my personal life, and this has been so important.

The firm has/is taking many positive steps with the aim of helping promote a better balance between work and family life – e.g. agile working, new parent events, the implementation of the Mindful Business Charter, the "How to Flourish" programme etc. All these initiatives will no doubt in turn play a role in promoting greater gender parity. I also think we can't underestimate the importance of taking the time to communicate and connect with those around us. We should share our experiences and discuss our motivations and goals, so we can identify what support might be needed to achieve these. It's not always easy to do this, especially when people are working remotely or because it's sometimes seen as easier to drop someone an email rather than sit down face to face. However, I think it's really important that we don't forget the value of talking to each other and, in turn, this should encourage us to be more considerate and mindful of each other.

I'm looking forward to returning to work later this year and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. There will no doubt be new challenges that I will face trying to juggle work with two young children but I no longer have the doubts that I did when I was a trainee. With the support of my colleagues I'm certain I can make it work.



Returning to work after having my first child was a daunting experience – it took me a while to re-gain my confidence, to re-establish myself in the team and to get used to having to manage my time so as to balance the demands of the job alongside my new family commitments.

Katie Milner

PROFILE: JULIE NAYLOR, LEEDS



Julie Naylor

I have just started my 22nd year at AG, my current role is as Senior Manager and I oversee the paralegals who support the Real Estate departments within the UK.

I think my years of service at AG is testament to the firm's progressiveness. I have been well supported by senior members at AG over the years. When I showed that I wanted to challenge myself during my early days at AG I was given those opportunities. I originally joined AG as a secretary supporting what we now know as the RED team. Within a year of joining AG, the firm was looking at new ways to provide a quality service to clients, which solicitors were not necessarily required to undertake. So I, along with another secretary, became the first legal assistants within AG. From there, my career path within AG became more rewarding, and I was given more opportunities to help build the team of legal assistants.

I now manage around 70 paralegals and managers. There are definitely challenges to leading such a big team, making sure that KPIs are met and that the right support is provided to meet individual needs. I have received plenty of support from the Head of TST, other senior managers and HR. Also, the partners and associates who work in RE have been very supportive.

As a senior manager who has the responsibility of nurturing, training and satisfying our paralegals' aspirations of progressing towards a legal career, I have spoken to them about Leona Ahmed and her story, how she started out on her career path and become one of the top professional women in her field. The paralegals find her story very inspirational.

The legal sector has seen many changes over the years. The 'Me Too Movement', equal pay and Wellbeing. AG have embraced these issues and shown support to their female employees. I know from working in and supporting the Real Estate Division that there are a high number of female workers. The firm has shown its support for those who go on maternity leave and encourage agile working, in that they let people work from home, which helps with childcare support.

Moving forward we need leaders/ future leaders in the legal sector to help move us through the next 100 years by ensuring opportunities, support and encouragement is given to those women who want to make an impact. The past 100 years have already shown what can be achieved!



Moving forward we need leaders/ future leaders in the legal sector to help move us through the next 100 years by ensuring opportunities, support and encouragement is given to those women who want to make an impact.

Julie Naylor

PROFILE:

ALISON NEWTON, GLASGOW



Alison Newton

I am currently a partner based in Glasgow in Real Estate.

INSPIRATIONS

I have always had friends and role models who were energetic, self-directed (or seemed to be) and definitely (and defiantly) did not self edit – that has included:

- people who started their own businesses, failed and started again;
- people who recovered a sofa in a weekend because “how difficult could it be” and, after all, they had looked it up in a book;
- people who chair public companies;
- people who have finished their first career and now have a jewellery business or a garden design business or a games pony training business;
- people who direct BAFTA award winning films and documentaries;
- people who are champion show jumpers.

Did I say “people”? - I meant “women”.

WHAT DID I LEARN?

- Most people think they are “imposters” some of the time.
- The wider your circle the more ideas and energy you get.
- I have no skill at crafts but I will write a book one day.

WHAT HAS HELPED ME?

- Being part of competitive debating and public speaking teams at school and uni – no fear on a platform.
- Taking part in the competitive and sometimes dangerous sport of eventing (also a glorious obsession) – nothing in business matches the adrenalin and fear of the start box on a cross country course.
- Being part of a youth group in the 80's which in retrospect was in some ways miles ahead of its time e.g. doing presenting, treating everyone with respect, equal voice for women in meetings (really).
- Being mentored by an inspirational leader in my early career which

was basically being on the end of a few “hard truths” and learning “business before self”.

WHAT DO I RECOMMEND?

- Listen to “Sunscreen” by Baz Lurhmann at least once a year - it stops me in my tracks every time.
- Listen to Radio 4 randomly in the evening – I learn things (which I repeat the next day as mine).
- Always have an opinion.
- Always have a personal challenge which is just for your own defiance/smugness/reward.
- Care.

WHAT DO I HOPE FOR IN AG?

- That in five years time we look back and can't believe we needed this.
- That this is a work place of choice for talent.

WHAT DO I HOPE FOR ME?

- To be so articulate and authoritative on a subject that I am asked to give a TedTalk.
- In the meantime to be challenged, challenging, fit and successful.
- To thrive.



Always have an opinion.

Alison Newton

PROFILE: KIRSTY NICHOLSON, EDINBURGH



Kirsty Nicholson

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

14 (total years with HBJ and AG).
I'm a Real Estate partner based in Edinburgh.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING AT AG - HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE FIRM IS PROGRESSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE OF GREATER GENDER PARITY?

I love what I do and being part of AG. The firm has a great culture and the people really do make it. I am very lucky to work with a great group of inspiring, supportive, fun and interesting colleagues.

Gender wise I'd say we have much more to do to ensure we do not lose talent from the firm when we lose experienced senior women (which we do, most commonly around the 30-40 age bracket). However I know that is a priority at board level and I am looking forward to seeing the issue of progression and retention of talent being a focus throughout 2020 and beyond.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

I started having children at a time when part time roles for lawyers was not common place and home working was not really a 'thing'. I had many battles to fight in order to prove that I could do my job whilst working part time/at home. I had to work long hours at anti-social times and was sorely aware I was working harder than others to show my worth and for the 'luxury' of having flexibility. Things have moved on so much and so rapidly since then and I am delighted that this fight has largely been won. That said, I know there are still many hurdles around culture and in my

world of transactional real estate I am sorely aware there is still an issue with how we combine part time working with a transactional role and that is something as a law firm that we still need to find a way to accommodate better.

In terms of advice I would say stick with it and try and continue to focus on your career as much as you possibly can throughout those years of juggling work and the demands of small children. In that time pull in as much help and support as you can muster. They don't stay small for long and it is ultimately worth it to come out the other side with a flourishing career that your children will be inspired by and be proud of you for having.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

My first inspirational role model (and still my main one now) is my mum. She had a busy full time head teacher role from when we were young and I saw how much she got out of her job and how much respect she had from her staff and pupils who recognised her incredible work ethic and focus on high standards. I was always very proud of her (I still am!).

When I started work as a trainee I worked mainly with a young female partner who was at the top of her game in the midst of maternity leaves and babies. I was in complete awe of her and what she had achieved in what was then a predominantly male partnership. Thank you GC for inspiring me to become a Real Estate partner just like you!



I am looking forward to seeing the issue of progression and retention of talent being a focus throughout 2020 and beyond.

Kirsty Nicholson

PROFILE: ELIZABETH SALMON, GLASGOW



Elizabeth Salmon

Almost 6 years ago, and 18 years into my career as a real estate solicitor, I was looking for a role within a firm whose ethos and people I admired, and which would enable me to combine a fulfilling job with bringing up my 3 young boys. When I met Alison (Newton) and Caroline (James) at HBJ Gateley's offices that Spring it felt just right.

When I think of who has inspired me, women or men, Alison and Caroline are definitely two of them. Both were (and are) recognised in the Scottish legal and commercial world and beyond as two of the top in their field, and that notwithstanding having to forge a legal career in more difficult times for women than now. Both understanding of the demands of juggling time but trusting that I would step up to the mark, I eagerly accepted their offer to join their teams as an Associate and haven't looked back since.

I have always found HBJ and now AG to be very supportive of gender parity. I've found that it provides the structure but flexibility, and also the support, which is essential if women are to work on a level playing field with their male colleagues. The nature of the work itself is not always conducive to being fitted into shorter working hours but that is where your teams, bosses and colleagues are so important. I have never been made to feel awkward in having to ask someone to help or step in – in fact everyone is always happy to do so and I am grateful for that. Advances in technology over the years have also helped a lot – it is now so easy to keep up with messages and work when not in the office, a lot of the pressure of leaving the office early has gone.

Enlightened progressive thinking backed up by support and flexibility from firms and colleagues have in my view helped women hugely in enabling us to advance in the law to be on a par with men. But there is one thing that I feel has been a backward step, for all genders, but I think particularly some girls who like I did perhaps lack some confidence in their own abilities. That is the lack of financial support for those starting on their journey towards a legal career. If I was considering going to university to study law now, I wonder if I would need a stronger conviction than I had back then that law was the job for me, when I was safe in the knowledge of financial support from the state - which not only paid the university fees but also paid an (albeit meagre) grant towards living expenses. While I quite literally kept a note of every penny which I spent, I did not have an increasingly huge cloud of debt hanging over me which students today face. If I could change one thing to help those in the same position as I was, it would be to support those potential legal minds of our future, financially and emotionally, to encourage them into a profession which for me is among the best.



I have never been made to feel awkward in having to ask someone to help or step in – in fact everyone is always happy to do so and I am grateful for that.

Elizabeth Salmon

PROFILE: CATRIONA SMITH, ABERDEEN



Catriona Smith

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I started my traineeship with the firm (HBJ as it was then) in 2004 and, other than a spell working for Herbert Smith in London, I've been in the firm ever since. I'm a partner in the banking team, based in our Aberdeen office.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

As a female in law, I have certainly suffered from bouts of imposter syndrome but I don't think that is entirely gender specific. Surrounding yourself with good people (both personally and professionally) who want to support each other is key to overcoming personal doubt and insecurities and achieving your potential.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

Being a mother of two small children certainly makes the day job more demanding and time out of the business on maternity leave does add an additional factor to your career progression. In hindsight, I wish I had been kinder on myself on my return to work – I expected to return and be able to immediately operate on the same level as I did before I went off to have children. It took longer than I expected to get back into my stride (and even then, my stride is now different to how it looked like before I had children) – understanding that that is a natural reaction to an

extended period out of the business (and the market) would have helped me cope with that period of time better.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

Alan Shanks – I've been lucky to have him as a key supporter throughout my entire career and it's safe to say I've learnt a huge amount from him over the many years that we've worked together. I value his counsel, his calmness and his support for our people (me included).

Addi Speirs is another person in the business who inspires me on a daily basis – her commitment to the business, our clients, getting the deal done and the people she works with is unwavering and extremely motivating.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

In order for all colleagues to feel that they can make the most of initiatives like flexible working patterns and remote working, the leaders (male and female) in our business need to ensure they are using them too – this will help ensure that any negative stigma or archaic connotations and myths placed on these working practices are dispelled and these initiatives are used to the best of their potential to create and maintain a balanced, mindful, progressive and respectful working environment in which we can all thrive.



As a female in law, I have certainly suffered from bouts of imposter syndrome but I don't think that is entirely gender specific.

Catriona Smith

PROFILE: JACKIE SMITH, LONDON



Jackie Smith

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR AG AND WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I joined the firm in January 2017 and my current role is as a PA in the Real Estate Division.

DID YOU EVER DOUBT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE? IF SO, WHAT SUPPORT HAVE YOU BEEN GIVEN, EITHER FROM AG OR FROM ANOTHER SOURCE TO HELP YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE DOUBTS?

I have had leverage in my work experience to date and try to remind myself to be open to new challenges (it can be a work in progress)! When you work in a great team you recognise each other's strengths which is useful when we need support.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER TO DATE, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY NOTABLE 'BARRIERS' TO YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PROGRESSION? IF SO, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO MAY FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES?

When people see a visible barrier such as race and you face that in different situations almost daily it can be draining and, if experienced often enough, there can be a tendency to be on alert for the barrier when it may not be there. I'm a believer that "what people think of you is none of your business" so use less energy worrying about barriers, focus and keep looking ahead.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODELS TO DATE AND WHY?

My daughter. She is living testament that as a family of people we have raised a fully functioning adult who can contribute to society. Being a parent is the one thing in my life I have constantly strived to do well.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU WITNESSED IN THE LEGAL SECTOR FROM THE START OF YOUR CAREER TO DATE IN SUPPORT OF FEMALE CAREER PROGRESSION AND ENCOURAGING GREATER GENDER PARITY?

When I joined the law it was frowned upon for women to wear trousers to court! Thankfully there have been lots of changes in both conduct and dress code since then. I'd like to believe that everyone I support and work with has the same opportunities available to them to progress.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE, IN THE LAST 100 YEARS, HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO HELP WOMEN ADVANCE IN LAW? AND THE ONE BARRIER THAT HAS HELD THEM BACK?

Pursuing the conviction that change can happen when you lift each other up and the principle that you need to be better (rather than as good as) your male counterpart to get a seat at the table.

WHAT ACTION DO YOU BELIEVE MEN CAN TAKE ALONGSIDE THEIR FEMALE COLLEAGUES TO ENCOURAGE GREATER GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Be ready to call out inequality for all genders when you see it - with respect and integrity.

FINALLY, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 100 YEARS, WHAT PRACTICAL ACTION DO YOU THINK LAW FIRMS SHOULD TAKE, ACROSS THE LEGAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE, TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY?

The next time you are in a meeting look around the table. If the representation isn't what it should be ask yourself and others why.



Be ready to call out inequality for all genders when you see it- with respect and integrity.

Jackie Smith

PROFILE: KERRY WESTLAND, LONDON



Kerry Westland

I always wanted to be a lawyer – I knew that at primary school. I studied law at university, followed by the bar vocational course and found myself, after returning to work following the birth of my second child looking for legal work experience that would help me gain a pupillage. That was just over 9 years ago when I joined AG as a paralegal in the brand new TST. My career has been a bit a whirlwind over those 9 years (at one point I seemed to be changing my job title each year) and I'm now Head of Innovation and Legal Technology. This involves running a team of people who work with the divisions and clients across our business to look at how we can improve the delivery of legal services.

I'm always asked how I ended up doing my role – I'm not a traditional 'techie' and how I approach problems can be different to others. All of my roles (in AG and also before) have been brand new roles – I've never stepped into someone else shoes and have been able to forge my own path. AG is a great place to enable that. It's a very supportive firm and I've had a lot of support and guidance (and freedom) to develop along a different career path. I wouldn't have been able to what I've done without that open and honest culture and willingness to take risks on something different.

One of the interesting things I've noticed in the last few years is that a number of people leading innovation teams are women. I think the focus on creativity and problem solving can attract women to teams like that and it has been great to see people in those different roles be recognised for their contribution.

Although a century seems a long time, it is still relatively short in the context of the legal profession. And whilst we have made progress, we have some amazing women in senior roles in our firm, women are still not represented as they should be at the senior end of the profession (as whole, not just in AG). Last year at the trainee on-boarding residential I was taken aback to see 1 male on each table of 10 – the ratio of men to women was in stark contrast to the profession as a whole, so I'd like to see that filter through as those entering the profession filter through. And whilst I think there is a lot still to focus on, I'm a strong believer of changing the system and not the women and hope that over the next 100 years we'll see that shift.



I'm a strong believer of changing the system and not the women and hope that over the next 100 years we'll see that shift.

Kerry Westland

**PROBLEMS. POSSIBILITIES.
COMPLEXITY. CLARITY.
OBSTACLES. OPPORTUNITIES.
THE DIFFERENCE IS IMAGINATION.
THE DIFFERENCE IS **AG.****

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