

Kennedys to open Leeds office with 36 strong insurance team

Date published

13/01/2021

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Kennedys continues to grow in 2021, with the acquisition of Langleys' insurance team. This sees Kennedys opening an office in Leeds, our 12th in the UK and 42nd globally.

The new office will be headed up by David Thompson formerly Managing Partner and Head of Insurance at Langleys. He will be joined by Partners, Huw Edwards, Laura Collins and Carol Dalton along with 32 team heads, lawyers and staff from Langleys' Insurance Team.

- **David Thompson** is recognised as a leader in his field for his expertise in handling large loss claims, complex employers' liability claims, high value product liability claims and for advising on policy and interpretation issues. He acts for major insurers, Lloyds Syndicates and large corporations.
- **Huw Edwards** advises on motor liability and regulatory matters, dealing with a broad spectrum of motor claims, including fatal accident and catastrophic injury claims. He is regularly instructed by insurers to act for clients in relation to health and safety prosecutions and police investigations arising from major incidents.
- **Laura Collins** manages a team which provides pre-litigated claims handling services to insurers and self-retained corporations. Laura's team specialises in liability and first party claims of unlimited value arising out of multiple jurisdictions, including coverage and indemnity issues. Laura also handles catastrophic and large loss litigated claims for a number of insurers.
- **Carol Dalton** acts for insurers, corporates and public sector organisations advising them in relation to employers' and public liability matters as well as property damage claims. Carol has a particular expertise in handling complex claims involving abuse and stress in the workplace.

As a result of the team's move to Kennedys their clients will have access to Kennedys' national and global network including their full range of legal expertise spanning all lines of commercial and personal lines insurance including aviation, marine, property, energy and construction, professional, political and cyber risks, casualty and motor.

Richard West, Partner and Head of Liability, says: "Our new Leeds office grows our personal injury division, expanding our practice further with an experienced and well-regarded team whose culture fits closely with our own and whose business complements our existing capability in Scotland, Northern Ireland as well as in eight locations in England.

"I am delighted that David, Huw, Laura and Carol will join Kennedys Liability Division at a time of exciting growth and continued success. It has been a pleasure to get to know them, to regard them so quickly as our friends – and to receive such wonderful feedback from clients and the market about their move to Kennedys. I am very much looking forward to working alongside them.

"Leeds is recognised as a hub for insurance work and we see real opportunities to expand our legal and claims handling team building further on David and his team's significant client base which will benefit hugely from the breadth of Kennedys full-service insurance offering."

David Thompson says: "Kennedys has a first-class reputation in insurance, as well as an incredible global reach. The depth of the firm's expertise, its culture and its market leading innovation through Kennedys IQ will be very attractive to our clients. It puts us in an excellent position to further grow our practice from our new base in Leeds. Many of our clients already work with Kennedys so I know that it is a move that our clients will very much support."

Tim Cross, Managing Partner of Langleys, says: "While there is naturally some sadness in seeing our friends and colleagues leave the firm, this is a move that benefits everyone. It allows Langleys to focus on growing its core specialisms and explore new opportunities in the regions we serve, while also enabling the insurance team to benefit from being part of a larger, market-leading, international insurance firm."

Nick Thomas, senior partner at Kennedys, says: "This latest office opening is part of our continued strategy of expansion in the areas that will benefit our clients most. Last year saw us continue to grow, achieving record turnover and opening new offices across the world. We intend to continue expansion in 2021 and the arrival of this well-respected team of insurance lawyers is a strong start to the new year."

This is the latest development in Kennedys' growth agenda which last year saw the firm report a record turnover of £238m, the opening of its first US West Coast office, in San Francisco, a new association with Canada's leading national insurance specialty law firm Dolden Wallace Folick LLP, and the opening of a new office in Israel.

The Leeds office will be located in 6 Queen St, Leeds LS1 2TW.