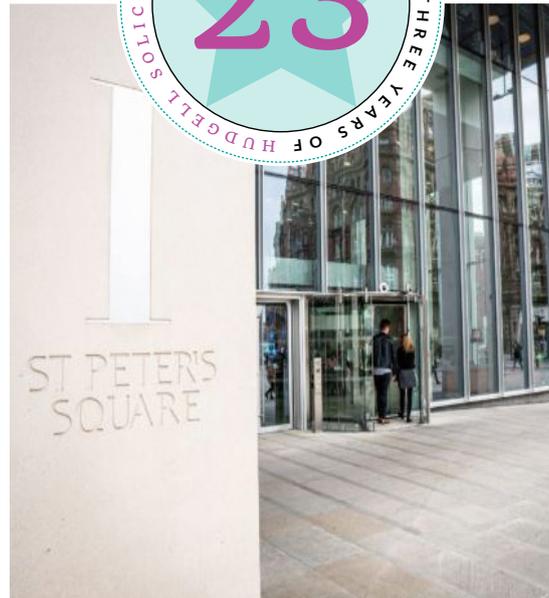


# Hudgell

SOLICITORS

## Annual Review - Financial Year 2019 – 2020



# Introduction from Amanda Stevens

Welcome to our 2020 Annual Review.

My introduction is a brief summary of key areas over the year, but I want to say how proud I am that we were, for the second time in three years, 'highly commended' in a national awards event to identify the best performing law firm. It was a great achievement and reflects continued high levels of performance over a long period of time.

In financial terms we have performed well again. Profits were maintained, with our financial prudence ensuring our progress was achieved through efficiency savings, rather than new investment capital.

Like the rest of the injury legal market, we have had to fight increasing levels of competition to attract new work, and within a smaller marketplace.

Our biggest gain has been in the Inquiry, Inquests & Group Litigation area of work, achieving major national press coverage in particular for a wide variety of cases. The biggest piece of work brought into that team towards the end of the financial year was the Post Office Horizon scandal representation.

Other significant developments have included the launch of a new employment law offering, and Hudgells Financial Management Services, a joint venture with market leading independent financial advisers, Frenkel Topping, to provide 'life after settlement' independent financial advice for clients. This can only serve to enhance the value of the service that we provide to clients as it is a 'one stop shop' for their needs.

We continue to invest in our people and processes. Seven people undertook training contracts with four becoming qualified solicitors and three carrying on their training contracts into 2020/21.

We have also invested significant amounts to make our IT systems faster and more reliable this past year, enhancing our remote working capabilities.

Pleasingly, we were able to get through the major three year audit conducted by Lexcel with flying colours; an exhausting but rewarding achievement, as only about 1,600 firms out of approximately 10,500 achieve the quality kitemark.

It is awarded by the Law Society to practices which can evidence, on audit, a quality management approach to client service and the overall running of the legal practice.

It was especially pleasing that our sustained efforts have also resulted in us now being officially recognised as a *leading* law firm by industry directory Legal 500 which sets us well and truly apart from so much of the competition.

I am glad to report that our charity partnerships and community relations continue to thrive, and one I must mention is our connection with national amputee charity, The Limbless Association. We were already members of their legal panel but have been able to develop the relationship further through their new support hub opened in Hull.

Our ongoing headline association with mother and baby charity, Baby Lifeline, also resulted in nationwide coverage of our campaigning activity, and led us onto the steps of Downing Street to present a petition for improvements in maternity training to prevent avoidable injury.

On the acquisitions front, we rebranded our offering through [webuyanyfiles.com](http://webuyanyfiles.com), and spread our message further which has paved the way for some really interesting ongoing propositions in 2020/21. There has been evidence that the whole acquisition space slowed in 2019/20 due to a delay in the implementation of the long awaited MOJ whiplash and DOH clinical negligence reforms, both of which had been due to start this financial year. For us it has always been about securing the right deals rather than a numbers game, as we really want to add value to the clients who transfer across.

Finally, without any doubt we now find ourselves in a very different world to that of a year ago – chiefly due to the successful roll-out of widespread remote working, which was accelerated in response to the Covid-19 situation. Fortunately we had already started to plan for greater working flexibility and overhead management with the transition, but we can certainly be proud as a business of how we all quickly adapted to a new way of doing what we do best, and retaining our excellent reputation for excellent client care.

Amanda Stevens

Managing Director at Hudgell Solicitors



The  
**LEGAL  
500**  
UNITED KINGDOM

LEADING FIRM

2021



**Hudgell**  
SOLICITORS

“ We have invested **significant amounts** to make our IT systems **faster** and more **reliable** this past year, enhancing our remote working capabilities. ”

# Clinical Negligence

## Cases increase in competitive market

### In Summary

We experienced year-on-year growth in what remains a difficult and competitive market. Our focus remains around growing volume of multi-track cases and a number of outstanding contributions have resulted in a strong financial performance.

The Legal 500 directory saw the Yorkshire clinical negligence team accelerate through the rankings and - the biggest climber over the past five years, from Tier 5 to Tier 3 - including a climb for 2020.

The directory also noted Helena Wood as a 'rising star' and 'key lawyer', alongside Paul Cain.



## Media Highlights

Notable achievements and cases attracting media attention include [Sam Gardner's case](#) in which she represented a client who sadly lost her baby due to the negligent care provided to her.

This case made national media headlines, and soon after [Amanda Stevens](#) headed to Downing Street with representatives of the [Baby Lifeline](#) charity, campaigning for extra funds to be pledged into [Maternity training across England and Wales](#).

Other notable cases included [Tasmin White's case](#) of EB, which settled for £900,000 and [Rachel O'Connor's](#) £125,000 damages settlement for a man who was left with 'significant dysfunction' following a botched circumcision operation. [This case brought extensive media coverage for the firm, including this Daily Mirror report.](#)

[Sarah Scully's case](#) in which a [client was awarded £50,000 damages after a hospital failed to give her medication to prevent blood clotting when undergoing revision surgery on her amputated leg.](#)



## The Mail



## Bosses: 'We are sorry for harm'



# Personal Injury

## Five-star reviews and substantial settlements for clients

### In Summary

The personal injury department has continued to show its expertise and excellence with a string of six and seven-figure settlements and case results which demonstrate the packages of rehabilitation provided to people who suffer life-changing injuries.

Since January, the department has been a key driver towards positive 5 -star reviews of the business since the start of the calendar year.

There have, once again, been some standout cases to highlight, including [Leanne Stephenson securing damages of £2m for a manual labourer who had to have his arm amputated following a work accident. This case was particularly pleasing as the worker was delighted with his settlement, and the support of his employer.](#)

Sam McFadyen's excellent work in supporting those who suffer catastrophic injury led to industry recognition for a second year in succession as he was a shortlisted finalist in the national 2019 Personal Injury Awards, in the category of 'Catastrophic Injury Lawyer of the Year'.

In the independent Legal 500 directory our Hull/Leeds team retains it's ranking as one of the acknowledged specialist firms in the Yorkshire and the Humber region.



### Media Highlights

Sam secured a [£325,000 settlement for a woman whose husband died after being hit by a car when he was cycling without wearing a helmet](#), with the client praising his support and saying he made a 'difficult time and process easier and more bearable'.

Sam continues to support clients [Angela Menzies](#) and [Svilen Mihov](#) through life-changing RTA injury claims, with a huge focus on rehabilitation support, led by dedicated case managers and treatment teams.

His other cases included a £200,000 settlement for a man who suffered an accident at work when falling from makeshift ladders, and a £129,000 settlement for a 40-year-old man who developed chronic regional pain syndrome and was left wheelchair bound just a year after being involved in a serious accident at work.

Jane Woodcock's ongoing support to amputee [Ricky Thompson](#) was featured in the local media and importantly highlighted the excellent work we do to support those who lose limbs through accidents or negligence. It comes as we have established stronger links with the Hull-based support hub of national charity, The Limbless Association.

Other significant cases this year included a £600,000 settlement from a fatal pedal cycle accident and a £220,000 accident at work settlement by Jane Woodcock, £655,000 and £500,000 settlements of fatal RTA cases by Sarah Kidd and a £112,000 damages settlement secured by Becci Ashfield in a public liability matter.



# Travel

## Good volumes of complex and high-value travel litigation work secured

### In Summary

The travel market has seen significant challenges over the last 12 months, from Brexit to Covid-19 and everything inbetween, including the demise of Thomas Cook.

Despite these uncertain times, the Travel team has shored up its position in the market and achieved impressive results.

Our team has grown with the additions of Lucy Bevis and Tracy Stansfield, whilst Daniel MacMillan commenced his training contract, providing invaluable support.

We have received good volumes of complex and high value travel litigation work, continuing to receive great work from personal recommendations and significant business-to-business relationships



### Media Highlights

Media stories have included national media coverage of Legionnaires' disease cases, group actions, some significant holiday accident cases and [expert commentary on travel insurance issues](#).

The team was recognised in the Legal 500 directory, which called it an 'up-and-coming entrant to the market led by a very experienced partner', with Paul McClorry again a ranked lawyer in [Chambers & Partners](#) legal directory.

Paul continues to play active roles in APIL's International Group, the Pan-European Organisation of Personal Injury Lawyers, and the American Association for Justice (as Vice Chair of the International Practice Section).

All members of the team have achieved some excellent settlements, one example being a lengthy JSM which resulted in settlement of a fatality case for £1.5 million.



# Civil Liberties/Actions Against the Police

## Department focussed on work quality and high profile cases

### In Summary

Our Civil Liberties team continues to represent clients on many cases of major national significance.

Terry Wilcox continues our work on the Public Inquiry into the [Manchester Arena terrorist attack](#), at which we represent the families of two victims. Terry is being supported by Eliza Hudgell, Lindsay Allison and James Camidge.

Terry was instrumental in our collaboration with BJC Solicitors and together we play a crucial role in the investigation, collectively reviewing over 400,000 pages of documents in preparation for the Inquiry.

Neil Hudgell has been instructed to represent a number of claimants affected by the Post Office Horizon Scandal and is now being supported by Abby Taylor.

As part of this work Neil is representing an increasing number of people [whose cases are being referred to the Court of Appeal to challenge unsafe convictions](#).

The department is also currently instructed on a large number of Article 2 inquests looking at any potential state involvement in the death of a person.



## Media Highlights

Cases the department is instructed on which have attracted national media coverage have included;

[Carl Sargeant](#) – the former Welsh Cabinet Minister who took his own life following his public sacking.

[Katrina O'Hara](#) – Katrina was murdered by her former partner following a campaign of harassment. The police failed in their statutory obligation to protect Katrina.

The Public Inquiry into the death of 22 victims who lost their lives during the attack on the Manchester Arena.

The inquest into four victims of the serial killer Stephen Port.

The inquest into Lewis Skelton who was shot at point blank range by the police.



# Abuse

## Group actions and inquiry work ensure growth of department

### In Summary

Our child abuse team continues to handle group actions involving some 50 clients against a private school from the 1970's and 1980, and some 70 clients who are making claims to the [Lambeth Children's Homes Redress Scheme](#).

The department acts for nine Core Participants in the [Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse \(IICSA\)](#) and it has been instructed by a survivor group to help draft a compensation scheme arising out of the abuse of both children and adults in a religious setting.

This followed experience in handling some valuable core participant cases at the Grenfell Inquiry.

The department also continues to act for a number of Windrush claimants and one interested party in the Croydon Tramways Crash Inquest which is due to take place in October 2020.

Malcolm Johnson was featured in the Legal 500 guide, in which he was described as the 'go-to claimant solicitor' for abuse cases and a 'key lawyer' who is 'always completely calm and unflappable, even when under a lot of pressure'.



# Criminal Injuries

## Team demonstrates technical excellence in reviews and appeals

### In Summary

The CICA team continues to provide technical excellence to clients and has again seen a very high percentage of successful reviews and appeals.

Significant cases included Tracy Thames securing £16,500 damages for a woman who was abused by her elder half-brother as a child 50 years ago. [The case was one of the first settlements secured after a change in law](#) which we, and others, had long campaigned for, which had previously prevented abuse victims claiming compensation if they lived under the 'same roof' as their attackers.

There have been some excellent results for clients through appeals also.

These included a case to re-open an award where the Tribunal had to consider if there was sufficient evidence of a disabling medically recognised condition against the background of a complex pre-existing condition. The Tribunal accepted that there should be further evidence to consider the issue of whether the applicant's condition of ME could have resulted from domestic violence.

In another case our team persuaded a Tribunal to accept that a crime of violence had taken place during an alleged period of abuse involving a minor in the early 1990s, despite a lack of police investigation.

The Tribunal was also persuaded to prefer Tracy Thames representations in relation to a complex arm fracture, and the correct level of compensation within the tariff, over the CICA valuation.



# London And The South

## Highly-regarded team of specialists in place to build reputation as serious injury leaders

### In Summary

Some top level recruits and the welcome return of Sue Jackson after a short stint at a defendant law firm has helped us continue to gain wider recognition of our offering of unrivalled support to those who suffer injury or loss.

We were delighted to add [Victoria Gofton](#), a former National Head of Clinical Negligence at Slater and Gordon, to our team. Victoria is a Law Society accredited Clinical Negligence specialist who has in excess of 17 years' experience supporting seriously injured clients to resolve their litigation.

Victoria specialises in assisting clients who have suffered brain injuries, spinal injuries or amputations with a focus on their rehabilitation needs, to help them achieve the best possible outcome for their future.

Victoria followed [Sharon Lam](#) in joining Hudgells in London,.

Sharon has represented many families in hearings and inquests associated with clinical negligence. She is a Solicitor Advocate and sits part-time as a Deputy District Judge. She also has extensive experience of brain damaged baby cases.

Our personal injury team remains well regarded under the leadership of Kent Pattinson. Kent was described in the Legal 500 directory as a 'key lawyer' who 'exemplifies absolutely everything that one would wish to see in the skill sets of an ace personal injury lawyer.

It added: 'He is professional and sociable and will let nothing get in the way in his efforts to achieve the best result for his clients.'

A highlight for Kent was a £12m settlement in a long-running case with international elements.

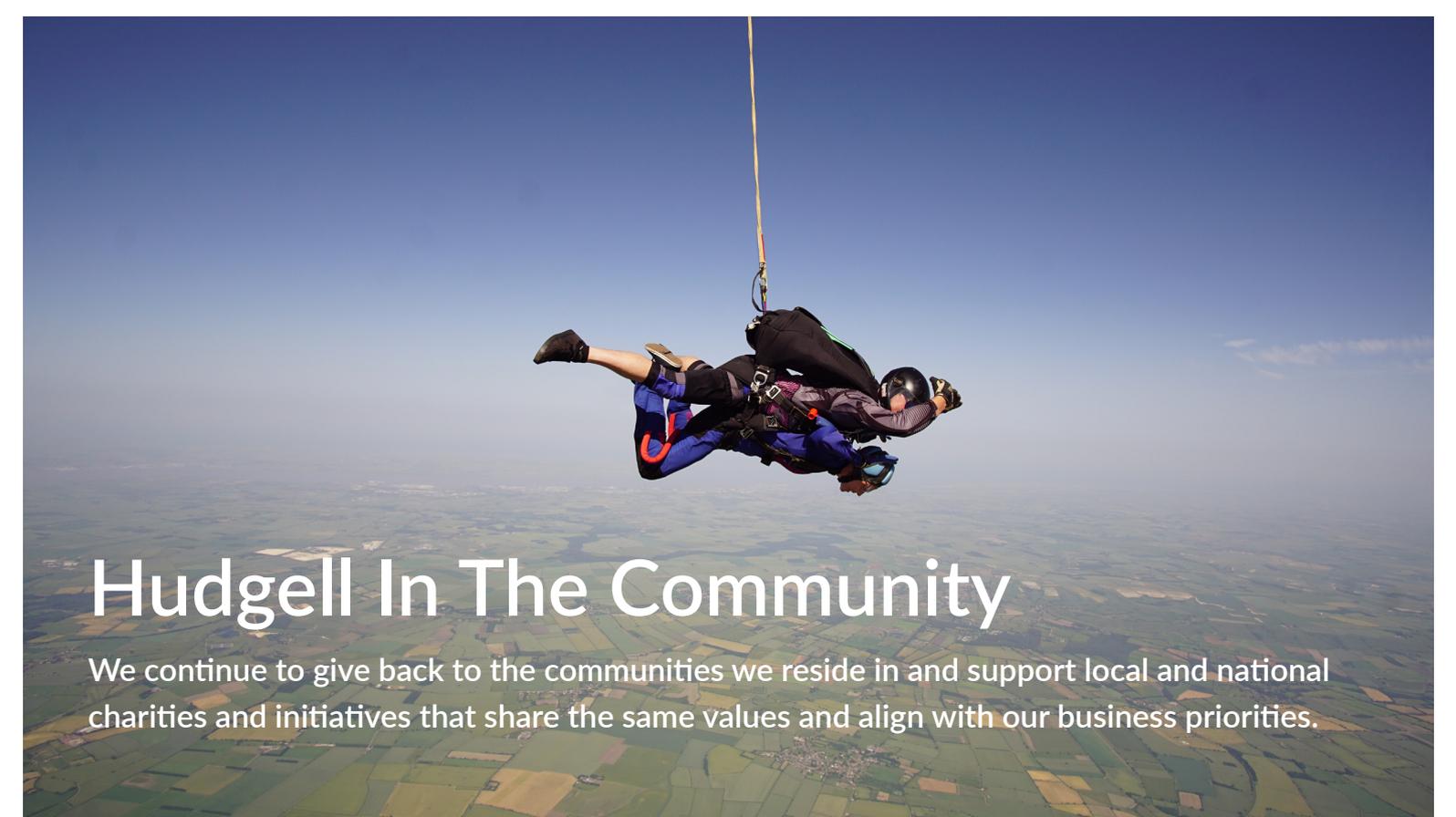
Malcolm Johnson has won national acclaim for his work, representing a number of core participants at the high-profile national Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and those affected by the Windrush scandal.

The year has seen continuing media coverage of Josie Robinson's representation of a number of women who suffered life-changing injuries after having vaginal mesh treatment under the same surgeon brought excellent profile for our southern team.

The cases are subject to an ongoing GMC investigation and our cases for clinical negligence surround the lack of information patients were given about the known risks and complications of mesh implants, information which would, without any doubt, have informed their decision as whether to go ahead.

[Josie worked with client Ceri Baker to bring our work to the attention of the national media.](#)





# Hudgell In The Community

We continue to give back to the communities we reside in and support local and national charities and initiatives that share the same values and align with our business priorities.

Over the 12 month period that has seen:

**£26,015**  
DONATED TO  
CHARITY EVENTS

**£18,098**  
DONATED TO  
NEIL HUDGELL  
TRUST CHARITIES  
OF CHOICE

**£38,100**  
DONATED TO  
GRASS ROOT  
SPORTS

It has been a very busy and rewarding year for staff who have raised over £5,000 for our 2019/2020 charities of choice.

## Highlights included:

- Helen Saunders launching a fundraising challenge and raising £1,200 for Candlelighters by completing a 15,000ft skydive
- Neil Hudgell running the London Marathon with his efforts going to charity AvMa
- Andrew Crisp completing a half marathon
- Sarah Kidd running her first ever 10k in June
- Daniel Gaylard and Michelle Nurse completing an abseil challenge
- Claire Walmsley, Beth Carr, Lauren Tobin, Alexandra Eldon, Danielle Johnson, Helena Wood and Eliza Hudgell representing Hudgells at the Costello Inflatable 5k
- Katie Barrass, Laura Larkin and Tasmin White completing the Leeds 10k
- Helen Saunders and Neil Hudgell competing in the 2-leg Hull marathon
- The firm has sponsored the first ever mascot, 'Champ' for the children's cancer charity Candlelighters, which is helping raise spirits and vital funds towards supporting families and treatment research

## Benefiting charities and community organisations in 2019/2020

Candlelighters, Coram, Special Stars, Limbless Association, Brain Injury Group, Headway, Baby Lifeline, Back Up Trust, AvMa, Inquest, Air Ambulance KSS, Hull & East Yorkshire Power Chair Football, SANDS, Paul For Brain Recovery, Barton FC, Bridlington FC, London Legal Walk, Hull Kingston Rovers, Hull Dockers, Rob Burrows Gala Dinner for MND, Mose Masoe ,Oscars Chance, Tommy Coyle Boxing Academy

# Hudgells In The Headlines

Our work has repeatedly made national media headlines again over the past 12 months, reflecting how our teams continue to work on cases of national interest and significance



**INDEPENDENT**

Police dismissed woman's rape claim and refused to investigate four years before same man allegedly struck again.

[Read article](#)

**Daily Mail**

Hairdresser was stabbed to death by jealous ex-boyfriend days after he was released by police for harassing her, inquest hears.

[Read article](#)

**BBC**

Woman flung from fair ride 'lucky to be alive'

[Read article](#)

**Evening Standard.**

Woman abused by brother wins payout after 50 years as 'cruel' same-roof law is scrapped.

[Read article](#)

**DAILY Mirror**

Mum calls for vaginal mesh implant ban after pain ruined sex life with husband.

[Read article](#)

**Daily Mail**

British intelligence officers will give evidence on Manchester Arena terror attack in private rules Priti Patel as she sets up public inquiry.

[Read article](#)

**itv NEWS**

Patient died after surgeon failed to record transplant error.

[Read article](#)

**THE Sun**

Man left with 'buried penis' is suicidal and unable to have sex after botched circumcision.

[Read article](#)



**INDEPENDENT**

'I want Matt Hancock to look at this photograph': Mother releases picture of her cradling stillborn baby who died because of NHS maternity failings.

[Read article](#)

# Hudgell

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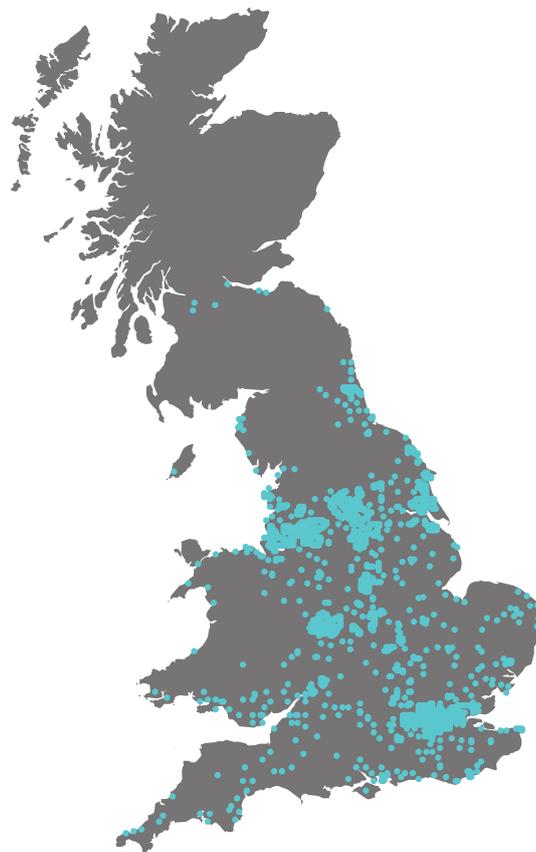
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Departmental summaries provided and correct at the end of the Financial Year in April 2020. This report is published each year in September to coincide with the final audited company accounts being completed.

