

Hall Smith Whittingham LLP

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Breakdown of work

	%
Conveyancing	10
Commercial	15
Family	20
Dispute resolution	10
Employment	10
Corporate and agricultural	15
Private client	20

Contacts

Senior partner SJ Wilson
Managing partner CW Dodd

Conveyancing S Coles
Commercial R Morgan-Wynne
Family AK Masters
Dispute resolution CR Fox
Employment CR Fox
Corporate R Morgan-Wynne
Private client JC Percival

Number of UK partners 5
Number of other UK fee-earners 13

Hall Smith Whittingham LLP has high levels of expertise and professional achievement. This is no coincidence: the firm strives constantly for excellence.

The firm: The firm was formed on 1 January 2000 with the amalgamation of Arthur J S Hall & Co (based in Crewe) and Smith Whittingham (based in Nantwich). Each firm was highly regarded locally for their separate specialist expertise.

Arthur J S Hall & Co specialised in family work and litigation and Smith Whittingham specialised in agricultural, business and corporate work. Each firm also had strong private client work forged over many years.

The merger of the two firms enabled the combined firm to give up its criminal practice to concentrate on the extension and further specialisation of its other combined areas of work. The firm is assured and confidently able to deal with all aspects of property, tax, succession planning and trust work to support its private clients, as well as all employer and employee work to support its business and corporate work.

Types of work undertaken: Amongst its numbers, Hall Smith Whittington has two sitting deputy district judges and an assistant recorder. Two of the firm's number have rights of audience in the higher courts (civil and criminal).

The firm has three members of Resolution (formerly SFLA) – each holding accredited specialist status. It has one member of the Family Law Panel – with advanced membership status. It has a member of the Children's Panel dealing with highly complex and difficult public law childcare issues.

Jane Wilson, the firm's senior partner, is a representative member on Resolution's national committee and is chair of the domestic abuse committee. She is also a member of the Parenting after Parting working group. Jane is the author of the Law Society's book on Domestic Abuse: Practice and Precedents. Kay Masters is a qualified collaborative lawyer in family work. The firm also intends to introduce mediation services in the coming year.

The firm maintains its strength of representation in all areas of family work, dispute resolution and litigation. Richard Morgan-Wynne is a member of the Agricultural Lawyers Association (ALA). The firm has members of Solicitors for the Elderly (SFE) and Solicitor Trusts and Estate Practitioners (STEP).

The firm has always been a front-runner in the development and use of information technology (IT) in order to better promote its efficiency and service to clients. This has been a historical feature. The firm was one of the first locally to introduce an electronic accounting system. The firm has maintained a forward-thinking approach to adopt the best of all useful developments. Some of the firm's case management systems have even been written and developed in-house by Chris Dodd, the firm's IT and managing partner. Chris has a strong interest in all things IT-based and has a clear understanding of what systems do, or do not, help the client, as well as the firm. He also developed the firm's conveyancing online case-tracking system.

The firm offers the level of expertise provided by larger City practices but at a more moderate high-street practice cost. It is this ability that helps to make it successful. The firm is fiercely proud and protective of its reputation and avoids complacency by ongoing client satisfaction surveys at the conclusion of matters. Over 97% of all clients who respond (and most do) say they are sure to, or are likely to, recommend the firm to friends or family. Its overwhelmingly significant source of new work is based on existing clients or client recommendation. Its business plan is based on quality and effective service. Its goal is client satisfaction, supporting its banner belief in fast, friendly and effective professionals.

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SOLICITORS &
HIGHER COURT ADVOCATES
LLP