

McCormicks Briefing

Christmas 2022

Seasons greetings
Praise for practice
Awards return



McCormicks
SOLICITORS

The debate around trans-gender and gender critical beliefs is fast moving and at times contentious. It affects many areas of society and has been the subject of a number of employment law cases looking at the rights of individuals to hold beliefs and how those might be expressed. Here our Head of Employment Law Iain Jenkins looks at some of the issues.

Gender Critical

The Forstater case was an interesting and well publicised decision which reached the Employment Appeal Tribunal. Ms Forstater had gender critical beliefs including that a person's biological sex should not be conflated with gender or a gender identity. These beliefs have also been expressed by other high profile individuals, creating at times a social media storm.

Ms Forstater had written various tweets reflecting her opinion that people are born either male or female and that position does not change even if a trans person has received medical treatment. Complaints were made by colleagues, an investigation took place and Ms Forstater's contract as a consultant was not renewed. The Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) found that her views amounted to a "philosophical belief" and were therefore protected under the Equality Act 2010.

As in many employment cases it was referred back to the Employment Tribunal which upheld her claims for direct discrimination and harassment. The decision not to renew the contract was less favourable treatment on the grounds of her belief.

This is not an invitation to express gender critical views in the workplace in whatever way you wish. In this case the Tribunal found that Ms Forstater had expressed her views in an appropriate manner and whilst those views might be offensive to some, she was entitled

to do so. The important thing is that views are expressed appropriately and not in such a way that might amount to discrimination or harassment. Many employers are undertaking training to help with an understanding of the issues involved.

Another case related to a Christian doctor (Mackereth) who resigned as a Health and Disability Assessor at DWP because he refused to address transgender claimants by their chosen pronoun.

The EAT held that the Tribunal was wrong to find that Dr Mackereth's beliefs were not protected. Under the test, it had imposed too high a threshold in applying the requirement for a belief to be worthy of respect in a democratic society, not be incompatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others. The threshold for a belief to be protected is low. This the free speech aspect of the debate but that freedom is not an open invitation to denigrate and criticise.

However, in this case the EAT was satisfied that he had not suffered direct discrimination or harassment on the grounds of those beliefs. His employer had asked

him to clarify his position but had not put him under any pressure to renounce his beliefs and had not made a final decision to dismiss him. The Employment Tribunal had been entitled to draw a distinction between Dr Mackereth's beliefs and the way he wished to manifest those beliefs.

Another claim which generated some interest was that brought by barrister, Allison Bailey, against her chambers, Garden Court, and Stonewall. She was

found to have suffered victimisation and discrimination as a result of her gender critical beliefs in her claim against Garden Court. They jumped in feet first when complaints were made about her views, publicly tweeting that it would launch an investigation (subsequently shown to be flawed) into complaints they had received. Stonewall made a complaint following assertions Allison Bailey made about their campaigning

on the issue. She also brought proceedings against them, on the evidence the claim against Stonewall failed.

These decisions are of great interest and show how employers have to balance the rights of individuals with competing beliefs. An expression of gender critical views in the workplace might not be contrary to the Equality Act but depending on how those views are expressed could start to amount to harassment/discrimination.

Iain Jenkins is Head of Employment.

He advises on all areas of contentious and non-contentious employment matters including:

- Settlement agreements and negotiated exits
- Directors and boardroom disputes
- Claims for unfair/wrongful dismissal, discrimination and whistleblowing in the Employment Tribunal
- Drafting and negotiating contracts of employment and service agreements
- Advising on grievance and disciplinary matters and the termination of employment

- TUPE advice and advising on employment aspects of corporate and property transactions
- Advising on the implementation and enforcement of restrictive covenants and confidentiality obligations
- Trade union issues, redundancy and restructuring
- Partnership matters and disputes

Iain has advised businesses across a range of sectors including technology, manufacturing, financial services, recruitment, transport and logistics and health and social care.

Iain is a CEDR accredited

mediator and an accredited workplace mediator. He can also be instructed as an independent investigator in relation to employment issues. He also advises on GDPR and Data Protection matters in employment and commercial work, including compliance and data breaches.



Iain Jenkins

Regular readers will be aware that I always find something positive to celebrate in my welcome to our newsletter and, rest assured, this time is no different.

Seasons greetings

I do, however, have to acknowledge that it has, again, not been a year of plain sailing, with the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis, the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and the cost-of-living challenges that are facing so many people.

Thankfully we seem to have weathered the worse of the Covid pandemic at the moment and it has been wonderful to see life beginning to return to some sort of normality, with the resumption of public events, the return of face-to-face meetings and, of course, full stands at the football!

I have had another exciting year as Interim Chairman of the Premier League and we have had the delight of seeing the England Lionesses triumph in the Euros. As I write, our World Cup campaign has got off to a positive start under the guidance of our friend, Gareth Southgate.

As a practice, we have had plenty to celebrate, with another set of great recommendations in the leading legal guides, about which you can read more in these pages. We have also welcomed new faces, made promotions and celebrated the successes of our colleagues in winning cases and

gaining additional qualifications.

We have also had the recent joy of the return of the Yorkshire Young Achievers Awards after a three-year absence due to the pandemic and it is fair to say that the event just keeps on getting better! McCormicks has been the main sponsor since the very beginning and this year's Awards were the 28th – we would have been celebrating 30 had it not been for the enforced three-year break.

Our winners this year

were tremendous: some had used their outstanding talents to achieve amazing things: some had triumphed over adversity to succeed; some were in continuing battles to overcome life-changing experiences; and, for some, all three were true!

It was a great pleasure to see friends old and new, including our much-appreciated sponsors, and if you were unable to attend this year, I urge you to get next year's date – Thursday 16 November

– in your diary for a truly inspiring evening.

With our hopes high for 2023, I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and successful New Year!



Peter McCormick OBE

We have appointed a new Partner, David Birks, who joins as Head of the Commercial Disputes and Sports Litigation team.

New Partner

Before becoming a solicitor David headed up the North Yorkshire Trading Standards Consumer Advice Team and Special Investigations team, dealing with regulatory matters and specialising in anti-counterfeiting matters.

He has also spent time working on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Department of Trade and Industry specialising in Directors Disqualification and Insolvency, and is a member of the R3 Insolvency and Restructuring.

Senior Partner Peter McCormick OBE said: "We are delighted to welcome David on board, bringing as he does in-depth expertise

in a complex area of law which is a key focus for the practice."

David brings significant experience across a range of disciplines, with matters involving breach of contract, unfair prejudice claims, partnership disputes, professional negligence, landlord and tenant, dilapidations claims, HM Land Registry and matters with multi-jurisdictional elements. He has experience in sports disputes, including arbitrations, tribunals and FA, Premier League and EFL regulatory matters. His specialisms include insolvency (individual and corporate) and Directors Disqualification Act Proceedings.

He acts for a broad range

of clients, including insurers, national and international corporates, entrepreneurs, large family estates, insolvency practitioners (and those facing claims by them), charities, the Premier League, Leeds United FC, Norwich City FC, Wycombe Wanderers FC, Harrogate Town FC and the Isthmian League.



David Birks

Our Crime Department at has extended its ability to assist people who are interviewed under caution with the admittance of Criminal Law Executive Kate Develly as an accredited police station representative.

Accreditation for Kate

Despite the name of the accreditation, this means she can assist not only those interviewed by the police but also by other bodies, such as the Department for Work and Pensions, HMRC or the Environment Agency. The accreditation scheme covers publicly funded criminal defence work and accredited representatives are usually called to a police station to advise and assist people who would otherwise have no legal representation.

Head of the Crime Department Peter Minnikin said: "Kate's accreditation brings the total number of the team who can act in legally-aided police station visits

to seven and comes at a time when we have been exceptionally busy so is very welcome."

Kate joined the Criminal team last year. McCormicks was the only Harrogate firm to be ranked for General Crime and Fraud in the latest edition of the UK Legal 500, a leading guide to the legal profession.



Criminal Law Executive Kate Develly

"Sound advice, straight talking and incredibly hard working" and "the best in the business" are just two of the testimonials we received in the latest edition of the UK Legal 500, a leading guide to the legal profession.

Praise for McCormicks from Top Legal Guides

McCormicks has won 38 individual recommendations for its lawyers in 18 areas of law.

Senior Partner Peter McCormick OBE and consultant Neil Goodrum both win places in the London section of the Hall of Fame. Peter is highlighted for Sport and Neil for Mediators. Peter is also listed as a Leading Individual for Sport in Yorkshire and the Humber.

The whole practice wins recommendations in 18 areas of law. New for this year is Employment, while the other areas are Corporate and Commercial; EU and Competition; General Crime and Fraud; Dispute Resolution/Commercial Litigation; Finance/Insolvency and Corporate Recovery; Agriculture and Estates; Charities and Not-For-Profit; Contentious Trusts and Probate; Family; Private Client: Personal Tax, Trusts and Probate; Commercial Property; Property Litigation; and Sport; along with London rankings for Dispute Resolution: Mediators; Professional Discipline; Sport; and Reputation Management.

McCormicks has again led the way for Harrogate and North Yorkshire-based practices as the only

Harrogate practice recommended in eight areas of law, namely EU and Competition; Insolvency and Corporate Recovery; General Crime and Fraud; Contentious Trusts and Probate; Dispute Resolution; Professional Discipline (London); Sport (Yorkshire and the Humber and London); and Reputation Management (London).

Peter McCormick said: "We are thrilled to win praise from a publication which bases much of its rankings' research on the views of clients and it is testament to the dedication and skills of my colleagues that we have done this once more."

The practice's expertise was also recognised in the latest edition of Chambers UK and its sister publication, the High Net Worth Guide.

It was highlighted in the UK-wide Sport category, with Peter McCormick listed as an Eminent Practitioner, and in Band 1 for Crime in Yorkshire. It won praise for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, again with Peter McCormick in the Ranked Lawyers list, and for Mediators, with consultant Neil Goodrum singled out.

In the High Net Worth Guide, Elaine Lightfoot won recognition for her work.

What the guides say...

Agriculture and Estates

The agricultural team at McCormicks is led by Peter McCormick, who is a longstanding member of the Country Landowners and Rural Business Association. The team acts for a number of substantial agricultural estates, namely assisting landowning clients in the refinancing or diversification of their estates, including developing buildings for office and residential developments. "Their billing is very clear. A very prompt and quick service."

UK Legal 500

Agriculture & Rural Affairs

McCormicks is a well-regarded agricultural



Peter McCormick



James Towler



Peter Minnikin



Iain Jenkins

practice based in Harrogate, providing clients with rural property and tax planning services. It acts for a number of large landed estates on a wide range of matters, including acquisition, disposal, voluntary registration, residential property development and diversification. The group also represents clients on disputes and on matters relating to shooting estates. "Every time I have presented McCormicks with an intricate problem that has to be handled swiftly and sensitively they have worked out a strategy for achieving the desired outcomes and resolved it." Peter McCormick advises rural clients on estate planning, lease negotiations and shooting rights. "Peter brings real value to this, and has strong expertise." "He provides outstanding knowledge and level of service in all respects." "Peter McCormick is a first-class lawyer." **Chambers UK**

Charities and Not-For-Profit

The charities offering at McCormicks is headed by Peter McCormick. It advises various well-known charities on high-value matters from incorporation and registration with the Charities Commission, to the negotiation of a variety of commercial and charitable arrangements between

the charity, its specialist providers and its funding partners. "Everyone is really friendly and helpful. The practice deals effectively and quickly with all the issues we raise. They clearly explain things, converting technical terminology and issues into simple language." "Everyone we deal with at McCormicks is excellent. We appreciate their swift responses, thorough understanding and clarity in explanation."

UK Legal 500

Commercial Property

McCormicks counts property developers and portfolio investors, as well as landed estates and charities, among its list of key clients, and continues to build its roster of commercial property and residential investors.

UK Legal 500

Contentious Trusts and Probate

Elaine Lightfoot heads the contentious trusts and probate team at McCormicks in Harrogate. Its workload mainly involves advising executors, trustees and potential beneficiaries of family estates and trusts of significant value. The team advises on a variety of cases from will drafting and registration to complex division of assets cases.

UK Legal 500

Corporate and Commercial

McCormicks is an established advisor to sport sector clients in particular, with clients such as Premier League, the EFL and Leeds United FC on its roster. Here, it advises on commercial contracts and sponsorship agreements. The practice also offers support to hospitality and leisure as well as private clients. The key contacts and practice heads are James Towler and senior partner Peter McCormick. "Excellent corporate advice, value for money, huge experience." "Peter McCormick: fantastic client service and unrivalled sector expertise."

UK Legal 500

Dispute Resolution/ Commercial Litigation

McCormicks has a strong track record in sports disputes, acting for the Premier League and Leeds United Football Club and other EFL Clubs. In the commercial space, the group also covers contractual disputes, construction disputes, debt recovery issues, professional negligence claims, and contentious probate work for a variety of clients. Peter McCormick is noted as a reputed sports lawyer. "Excellent commercial litigators. Value for money. Very strong commercial advice with senior respected lawyers." "Peter McCormick is my go-to lawyer, deep unrivalled sports sector experience. Great investigator, commercial advice, fast response times." "Commercially astute with sound advice." "Great commercial approach. Make you feel like the most important client and readily accessible."

UK Legal 500

Dispute Resolution: Mediators (London)

Peter McCormick and Neil Goodrum are ranked in this section for their Mediation work.

Peter McCormick OBE – McCormicks' Senior Partner Peter McCormick OBE has "an outstanding reputation". Appointed chairman of the Premier League in January 2022, McCormick is widely recognised for his sports-related mediation expertise; and is a member of a panel of legal specialists at Sport Resolutions (UK), which provides mediation and arbitration facilities for parties involved in sporting disputes.

Neil Goodrum – CEDR Chambers "Clearly a very skilled mediator", Neil Goodrum at CEDR Chambers (also a consultant at McCormicks) has mediated over 200 cases to date. In a recent 12-month period, his cases involved commercial contracts, employment issues, franchising, clinical negligence and shareholder matters, along with personal injury, sport, professional negligence, probate and commercial property.

UK Legal 500

Employment

Based in Harrogate, McCormicks is best known for its pre-eminent sports practice, with the Premier League and various football clubs making up its client roster. Practice co-head Peter McCormick is responsible for the recruitment and terms of employment for all senior executives of the Premier League and the FA. Iain Jenkins jointly leads the practice and handles the full range of contentious and non-contentious

employment issues, including TUPE, redundancies and cases at the Employment Tribunal, amongst others. "In-depth knowledge of sport and complexities. Very reliable and discreet." "Fast analysis and detailed action. Friendly, honest, always in contact and responsive." "The care, attention to detail, communication and overall approach is outstanding in all departments." "Iain Jenkins is extremely responsive and pragmatic, with a calm, friendly, professional manner. His expert advice and mediation experience was invaluable as he guided us through a difficult matter with sensitivity and complete professionalism." "I wanted an experienced top lawyer and knew this firm would have it. I was right. I was supported, understood and that expertise was exemplary." "The diverse skill set the practice has and the way it is delivered. The clear sound advice given goes beyond what you would expect from others."

UK Legal 500

EU and Competition

McCormicks is a go-to name for sports clients requiring competition advice, in particular those in the football sector; the team is especially highlighted for its work for the Premier League. Peter McCormick is well versed in investigations.

UK Legal 500

Family

The family department at McCormicks in Harrogate is led by Stephen Hopwood. The team predominantly advises on division of asset matters following relationship dissolution. In addition, the team lends a portion of its



Elaine Lightfoot



Stephen Hopwood

focus to children's matters, namely custodial disputes. Its cases often involve technically and emotionally complex factors such as domestic abuse or criminal allegations against one of the involved parties. "A strong practice comprising of individuals, expert in their field, working as a team with a customer-centric ethos." "Stephen Hopwood is a hands-on solicitor who works closely with his clients."
UK Legal 500

Finance/ Insolvency and Corporate Recovery

McCormicks is primarily instructed by clients in the national sports sector; the group has a strong foothold in the football industry with the Premier League being a notable client. It also acts for local insolvency practitioners on a number of transactions that include breach of director duty and constructive trusts. "Fast commercial advice – this is crucial in insolvencies." "Peter McCormick – great unrivalled experience." "We work with a small number of individuals predominately in relation to recovery actions. These can be complex and extremely difficult to manage but they are handled with skill, delicacy when required and professionalism."
UK Legal 500

General Crime and Fraud

Though adept in the full array of criminal matters, McCormicks is especially reputed for serious fraud, corporate manslaughter, drug conspiracy and sexual abuse cases. Peter Minnikin, a High Court Advocate, leads the team which also holds

distinct track record in representing solicitors, pharmacist and accountants, among other professionals. "Sound advice, straight talking, and incredibly hard-working." "The people who make up the crime team are all excellent. They deal with the full spectrum of criminal offences and are knowledgeable and confident in their approach to cases. The lawyers, led by Peter Minnikin, are all approachable and obtain good results for their clients." "Peter Minnikin – responsive, efficient, extremely knowledgeable, and he can do the job. Great charm and style, he inspires confidence, and is a great communicator and persuasive advocate. Extremely hard-working, he is the master of his cases." "Peter Minnikin leads the criminal team. He is an exceptional lawyer and extremely hardworking. Peter is supportive of his clients and dedicated to securing a good outcome for them. He is available at all times to answer a client's questions if required to. He ensures that no stone is left unturned when preparing his cases and is a pleasure to co-defend with."
UK Legal 500

Mediators

Neil Goodrum of CEDR Chambers is a sought-after mediator for a wide range of commercial and contractual disputes. His areas of strength include professional negligence, contractual and sport-related disputes.
Chambers UK

Private Client: Personal Tax, Trusts and Probate

The personal tax, trust and probate offering at McCormicks is co-headed by Elaine Lightfoot and Peter McCormick. The team advises trustees, beneficiaries, attorneys and deputies on a range of matters, including: the establishment and running of possession trusts and charitable trusts; the appointment of income and capital from trusts; the effect of incapacity in LPA matters; and Court of Protection applications and contentious cases. In addition, it advises on the administration of estates.
UK Legal 500

Private Wealth Law (York, Hull and surrounds)

Elaine Lightfoot of McCormicks "is diligent and proactive. She has a real passion for serving her clients," states a

source. Lightfoot advises high net worth clients on a wide range of matters in the private wealth field, such as wills and trusts, inheritance tax, and Court of Protection cases.

Chambers UK

Professional Discipline (London)

McCormicks is well known for its football-related disciplinary and regulatory work. The practice also handles SRA investigations and SDT defence work. Peter McCormick is a renowned sports lawyer; Peter Minnikin's practice includes disciplinary matters involving medical practitioners and physiotherapists. "Good knowledge of the football industry means the firm can apply any area of law with relevance." "Peter McCormick makes you feel like the most important client all the time."
UK Legal 500

Property Litigation

McCormicks advises its roster of clients, including private investors, developers, landed estates and charities, on landlord and tenant work, dilapidation claims, boundary disputes and

possession matters. Key clients include The Premier League, Leeds United FC and GMI Holdings Limited.
UK Legal 500

Reputation Management (London)

With a focus on advising clients in the sports sector, McCormicks offers a broad range of reputation management services including defamation and privacy protection. Peter McCormick OBE has a wealth of experience working with leading sports organisations, and leads the practice in advising the Premier League on all potential reputational issues. "Massive strength in its industry knowledge and understanding." "A strong team with fee earners at the correct level for all work and a full team if needed. The firm is aware of the need to balance the level of lawyer to the needs of the client and his/her finances." "Peter McCormick himself is head and shoulders above the competitors in this field. Shrewd advice keeps his clients safe."
UK Legal 500

Sport (London)

Peter McCormick is listed in the Hall of Fame. McCormicks handles matters for an array of



General Crime and Fraud

"Peter Minnikin – responsive, efficient, extremely knowledgeable, and he can do the job. Great charm and style, he inspires confidence, and is a great communicator and persuasive advocate."



Sport (London)

"Highly specialised and hugely experienced"

sports-based clients, predominantly within the football industry. Practice head Peter McCormick was appointed interim chairman of the Premier League in January 2022 and continues to fulfil a number of other renowned governing roles across football. James Towler also leads the Harrogate practice; while the former deals with corporate and commercial transactions in the sports space, the latter takes charge of litigation portfolios for sporting clients. "The team is very commercial and understands the dynamics and nature of the football industry." "Peter McCormick has an outstanding understanding of the industry." "Highly specialised and hugely experienced in sports law generally and football in particular. Very few firms in any sector can claim to be unique but Peter McCormick's profile and reputation in football supports the claim for his firm. His ability to provide legal advice with a high level of strategic input makes his participation in our relationship of the utmost importance."

UK Legal 500

Sport (UK-wide)

McCormicks houses a notable sporting practice that provides expertise in a range of matters including contentious and non-contentious football work, continuing to be a principal adviser

to the Premier League as well as being involved in grassroots football development. It advises on a broad range of corporate and commercial issues, including sponsorship, governance issues and insolvency. Continued recent activity in shooting, advising shoot proprietors on regulatory and employment matters. "They understand the demands of the sports industry and are available at all times." Peter McCormick remains at the forefront of sports law, with market-leading expertise in commercial and regulatory football work. "He's an outstanding lawyer with a good commercial focus."

Chambers UK

Sport (Yorkshire and the Humber)

Peter McCormick is also listed as a Leading Individual.

Commended as 'the best in the business', Harrogate-based McCormicks attributes its reputation to founding partner Peter McCormick, who is praised as 'the UK's leading football lawyer by a mile' and was recently appointed as interim chairman of The Premier League. McCormick leads the practice alongside James Towler, who advises sporting clients on acquisitions and disposals, joint ventures, group reorganisations and commercial agreements.

UK Legal 500

Solicitor Alex Harrison is part of our Commercial Litigation team. When he's not battling on behalf of clients, he is likely to be found enjoying other extremes, such as freezing mountain streams.

Out of hours

Other than the law, what would your dream career be?

I knew from a young age that I wanted to become a lawyer. Having first undertaken work experience in the Crown Courts and the Old Bailey with a KC, it was the criminal side that initially drew me to the law; therefore, if I had not gone down the commercial route, then I am sure that I would be practicing criminal law now. If I had not qualified as a solicitor, I would have liked to have become a vet because of my love for animals. That said, my friends in the profession tell me that they spend a large part of their time at work putting down animals so I think I will stick to the law!

If you could win any sporting trophy or title, what would it be and why?

I am going to choose two options, one as an individual and the other as part of a team.

As an individual, it has to be an Olympic gold medal for modern pentathlon.

Personally, I think an Olympic gold is the highest sporting accolade or title on offer and whilst I admire all athletes, I am particularly inspired by an ability to compete at the highest level (or close to it) across different disciplines. I like the history behind modern pentathlon and the fact that the five events were selected to reflect skills that cavalry soldiers of the 19th century ought to possess and refine.

Regarding each of the five events:

- I have been a keen pistol shooter since I was 13 and was taught well by my grandfather who was heavily involved with the National Smallbore Rifle Association (NSRA). I have competed across the country, in rifle shooting also, but freehand pistol was always my primary discipline;
- I like swimming wherever and whenever (particularly outdoors and I completed my first Olympic distance triathlon last year);
- I enjoy horse riding (horses being my

second favourite animal after dogs) and used to ride frequently when I was younger, although it has been a while so perhaps it is time to get back on the horse;

- running is a great way to relax and provides an opportunity for time to think (I have run a couple of marathons and a few half marathons, now I am considering signing up for another, Snowdonia marathon); and,
- fencing is the area where I would need an awful lot of practice.

As part of a team, it would be a dream (and nothing more!) to play rugby for England at number 12, inside centre and win the Rugby World Cup. My favourite sporting moment of all time has got to be England winning the Rugby World Cup final against Australia on home turf in 2003, I will never forget the moment with 28 seconds remaining on the clock when Jonny Wilkinson scored a drop goal with his

right foot to secure a 20 – 17 victory for England. To do the same with my left is an unfathomably great thought.

Where is your favourite place in Yorkshire and why?

The Druid's Temple in Ilton, three miles south west of Masham.

The surrounding area is beautiful, full of wildlife and great for both walking and cycling. The temple itself has a great atmosphere and there is also a bird of prey centre around the corner.

Interestingly, the temple is in fact not a real temple, but a nineteenth century folly styled in the same way as stone circles and well-known prehistoric monuments such as Stonehenge.

The Druid's Temple was built to alleviate local unemployment at the time, enabling William Danby, a wealthy landowner to pay workers a shilling a day for their labour. Counterintuitively the temple is less than 200 years old but it is nonetheless an atmospheric and intriguing location.

If you could choose your last meal in advance, what would it be?

A full seafood platter to start with lobster, crab, mussels, clams, langoustines, prawns, smoked salmon, mackerel and oysters, the full works with lots of lemon and some fresh chilli. I am sure it is apparent from this choice of starter that I am a huge fan of fish and shellfish, I would also be happy to switch this option for some good quality sushi with authentic wasabi or ceviche instead.

Main course must be a fillet steak, cooked medium rare with lots of garlic, pan fried greens (with anchovies), potatoes of some sort or maybe sweet potato fries, all accompanied by a blue cheese sauce with some horseradish or English mustard on the side for an extra kick. A nice glass of red to go with the steak (grape preferences include Syrah/Shiraz, Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Rioja and Merlot).

For pudding, something chocolatey or a fresh tropical fruit salad.

To finish, a cheese board with caramelised onion chutney. Amongst my



Alex tests the water

favourite cheeses are stilton, cambozola, roquefort, baked camembert, various goat and sheep cheese and who doesn't love a nice mature cheddar.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever been given?

Believe in yourself and play the odds; the harder you work, the more likely you are to succeed.

If you suddenly came into a significant amount of money, what would your first five purchases be?

Firstly, I would buy a large, detached house with land in the countryside, most likely somewhere near Pateley Bridge and preferably close to a body of water I can jump in.

Secondly, I would buy new homes for my mum, brother and twin sister (her name is Tori, she is one minute older and, no, we do not look anything alike, quite the opposite).

My third purchase would be a property in the Scottish Highlands, probably on the West coast as a base camp for outdoor pursuits (cycling, kayaking, paddleboarding, hiking, scrambling, rock climbing, wild swimming and canyoning/coasteering) plus Munro bagging of course.

Finally, I would fund an expedition to Nepal to go trekking in the Himalayas and summit some big mountains.

What do you do to wind down after a

busy day in the office?

Rugby training one or two nights each week, cycling, yoga and specifically hot yoga, playing chess, swimming, listening to music or going for a walk and twitching along the way (I am a bit of an ornithologist). Also spending time planning cycling routes for the weekend; I have been on some serious and arduous cycling adventures over the years and notably last year I did the North Coast 500 (NC 500) in Scotland with two friends, we carried all our own gear and wild camped every night along the way.

What is your favourite season of the year and why?

Definitely summer. I enjoy all the seasons and like the changes throughout the year, but I love the long days and hot weather of summer most, the possibilities are endless. With so much daylight, there is more opportunity to get out and about and enjoy the great outdoors, during the week especially.

Game changers

McCormicks has been named as Race and Culture Equality winner in the Gamechangers Progress Champions Awards 2022.

Founded in 2003, Gamechangers is a corporate news magazine with a global audience of more than 261,000 subscribers.

Quiz Time

A team from McCormicks were among the contenders when Harrogate businesses took part in a fundraising quiz organised by Handelsbanken.

The event took place at Roosters Brewery on Hornbeam Park and proceeds went to Yorkshire Cancer Research.

Here Family department Trainee Lucy Harbron and Accounts Manager Hayley Firth get ready for some tough questioning.



A talented footballer, a young woman fighting back after a catastrophic road accident and a Commonwealth Gold medallist were among seven young people who were recognised at the 28th Yorkshire Young Achievers Awards, sponsored by McCormicks Solicitors.



Gold medallist Hannah Cockcroft OBE receive the Achievement in Sport Award from Eddie Gray on behalf of Leeds United

Oh! What a Night!

The England Lionesses Golden Boot holder Beth Mead, who helped the team to its 2022 Euros win, took the Personality of the Year title, while Paralympic and Commonwealth gold medallist Hannah Cockcroft took the Achievement in Sport title in front of 340 guests at Leeds United's Centenary Pavilion and the Unsung Hero Award went to Lucie Maguire

who is rebuilding her life after an accident.

The Chairman of the Awards, Peter McCormick OBE, said:

"It was a very special evening after a break of three years because of the Covid pandemic and there was much to celebrate. There were stories of incredible fortitude and outstanding success and it is fair to say we

continue to be amazed by the fantastic young people in our region.

"These Awards are our main fundraiser of the year and none of this would be possible without the support of our sponsors and our guests, many of whom have been with us almost since the beginning, and I am very proud that with their help, we were able

to continue our grants programme helping young people across the region throughout the pandemic."

The Awards mark the achievements of young people in seven categories, from the Arts to Sport, and are organised by the Yorkshire Young Achievers Foundation which has now raised more than £1.3m to support young people in Yorkshire. An eighth Award is made to a Foundation supporter.

The full line up of winners was:

Personality of the Year, sponsored by Ridding Park

Beth Mead
of Whitby

Beth's talent helped the England Lionesses to their historic Euros win this summer. She grew up in a village north of Whitby, joining Middlesbrough Football Club's Centre of Excellence at the age of

ten and beginning her career in the under 14 and under 16 sides.

From there, she moved to Sunderland at the age of 16 and it proved a successful move, with her helping them win the league in both 2012-13 and 2013-14, winning the FA WPL Golden Boot and being named Sunderland Player of the Year in both seasons.

In 2017 she joined Arsenal, helping them to the 2017-18 FA Women's League Cup and finishing as their top goal scorer. The same year she made her debut for the senior England women's national football team, having represented England at every age level from under-15.

Beth became a household name during Euro 2022, claiming the Golden Boot and player of the tournament as the Lionesses won their first major tournament. She is the only English



The Personality of the Year Award was received on behalf of Beth Mead by Andy Hughes, centre, from Peter Banks, Managing Director of Ridding Park, and Awards Chairman Peter McCormick

player to win the Golden Boot and player of the tournament at a senior Euros or World Cup and holds the record for most assists in WSL. She has also scored the most goals for England in a season this year, with her 14 surpassing Jimmy Greaves' record of 13.

Youngster of the Year, sponsored by Nabarro McAllister

Archie Flintoft
seven, of Harrogate

Archie has a very rare life-changing condition which is currently incurable.

He was first diagnosed with Diamond-Blackfan anaemia (DBA) when he was a baby. His mum notice he was pale and unresponsive and after visiting the GP he was rushed to hospital, receiving two transfusions at two different hospitals in two days.

He has to undergo three-weekly blood transfusions as well as medication all night every night to protect his liver and heart. He has now reached a total of nearly 100 blood transfusions, coping with endless visits to hospitals both in Yorkshire and London. Because he receives donor blood, the iron levels in his blood can build too high, hence the nightly medication.

His family have fundraised both for the

DBAUK group and to help cover the cost of the frequent London trips.

Achievement in the Arts, sponsored by Martin Gerrard

Austin Haynes
of Leeds

Austin was signed up to drama school to help improve his confidence as a youngster and gained his first speaking role aged eight in 'The A Word' series two for the BBC, alongside Christopher Ecclestone.

Now at secondary school, he works hard to keep up with his studies, guitar playing and boxing, all whilst taking part in some major roles on screen, with a number of Yorkshire-based dramas, including 'Gentleman Jack', as well as a host of other productions such as 'The Duke', alongside Jim Broadbent and Helen Mirren.

Most recently, he played the lead role of Thomas in 'The Railway Children Return', alongside Sheridan Smith, Jenny Agutter, Tom Courteney and John Bradley, and has just wrapped on another film, 'The Boys in the Boat', where he was directed by George Clooney.

He was on television in October in both Channel 5's 'All Creatures Great and Small' and Channel 4's 'Somewhere Boy'.

He is interested in making his own films and finished his first formal script, a short film entitled Pride and Glory at the age of 13 and he is now working with Idle Work Factory to take the next steps in securing funding to direct and produce his own film.

Achievement in Management and Enterprise, sponsored by CHR Estates

Lucy Winn
of Whixley

Lucy Winn has overcome adversity to set up and run her own successful clothing business in London.

When she was 15, she woke up one morning to find the left-hand side of her face was paralysed. Investigations revealed a brain abscess, necessitating surgery and months in hospital for rehabilitation. She missed time at school but still went on to achieve her GCSEs and A-levels in Business, Art and Textiles.

However, at 19 she began to suffer seizures through epilepsy, brought on by the scarring to her brain. Despite this, she studied at Leeds College of Art before joining Westminster University to gain a degree in Fashion Marketing and Promotion.

After a spell back at home in Whixley



Achievement in the Arts winner Austin Haynes receives his Award from Martin Gerrard

while her epilepsy was investigated and treatment began, she returned to London to take up a sales post. Then the pandemic hit, and she was furloughed. She used her skills in upcycling old garments into new looks, and her business, the Vintage Studio, was born.

Working at home initially, she built up a social media following, including a number of influencers, and now has an Instagram following of more than 13,000 and some high-profile customers, including singers Mimi Webb and Zara Larsson.

Lucy now has a studio in Fulham and is keen

to build her business yet further by employing a small team to offer sustainable small collections, retaining a unique look but enabling more customers to purchase something they may have seen on her sites.

Achievement in Sport, sponsored by Leeds United Football Club

Hannah Cockroft
OBE of Halifax

Hannah added to an already impressive tally of medals in August when she took a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham to add to her seven Paralympic golds.

Born in Halifax, she had two cardiac arrests soon



Unsung Hero Lucie Maguire is presented with her Award by Liz Green on behalf of Jamboree Entertainment



Youngster of the Year Archie Flintoft with Simon Nabarro of Nabarro McAllister



Foundation Treasurer Ron Miller received a special Award from Chairman Peter McCormick to mark his retirement from the role.



Achievement in Education winner Benji Chandra is presented with his Award by Sarah Barry of Harrogate Town

after birth which left her with permanent physical damage and she needs a wheelchair much of the time.

Her sporting life began at school where she first competed in swimming, seated discus and wheelchair basketball. Her first success came with a silver medal in the seated discus at the UK School Games which led to an invitation to a British Paralympic Association talent day at Loughborough University in 2007 when she was given her first opportunity to try an elite racing wheelchair.

She was invited to join the Great Britain Paralympic Team in 2009 to represent the country in the T34 wheelchair race category, making her

team debut at the 2011 IPC Athletics World Championships in New Zealand, taking gold in both the 100 and 200 metres.

By the time she reached the London 2012 Games, records were tumbling and she became the first British Paralympian to win a gold on the track since 2003, taking the 100m in a record time and the following it up with another record and another gold in the 200m.

She followed this with three golds in Rio and two more in Tokyo before winning her first Commonwealth Gold this summer. She currently holds the world records for the 100, 200, 400 and 1500 metres.

Achievement in Education, sponsored by Harrogate Town

Benji Chandra of Leeds

Benji grew up in Kenya before moving to Birmingham. His father died when he was just ten and after their bereavement, his mother had severe mental health difficulties and was no longer able to support her children, leaving Benji taking responsibility to keep the family together.

Despite this, he went on to achieve eight A stars in his GCSEs, before moving to Hull to study for his A-levels where he achieved grades in the top one per cent in the UK. He went on to study Optometry at Aston University, gaining a

first-class degree.

During his pre-registration year, when he also completed his Masters, he moved back to Yorkshire.

Not only has he worked in a variety of different settings within Optometry, including high street, locum, university, domiciliary and hospitals, including in York and Bradford, he has also found the time for helping others, including a charity which works with young people in Leeds to provide opportunities, a pioneering group to achieve racial equality in churches and the Refugee Council and he now works a four-day week so that he can volunteer for Vision Care for Homeless People on the other.

Unsung Hero, sponsored by Jamboree Entertainment

Lucie Maguire of Kirkby Malzeard

Lucie Maguire was 19-year-old apprentice working with babies at a nursery in Ripley near Harrogate in 2021 but driving home from work with her mum, Sue, their car began to fill with smoke. Lucie got out to try and help her mum but was hit by a passing tractor, receiving catastrophic injuries.

She lost her right leg at the hip, broke her back and suffered internal injuries and has spent months in hospital, undergoing numerous operations, and is awaiting more.

The nerve damage she



Jan Fletcher OBE of CHR Estates presents the Achievement in Management and Enterprise Award to Lucy Winn



Special Award winner Chris Blundell, left, receives his trophy from Peter Gilman of GMI Property

suffered in the accident meant that doctors were not sure if she would ever even be able to sit up. But she has worked hard to regain movement and is now able to use a power wheelchair for short periods and has learned to stand again with a frame.

Her recovery received a setback when she suffered a serious infection in her leg while undergoing rehab, meaning her next operation had to be delayed, but she is still making plans for the future and has just moved into her own home to live as independently as she can.

She is determined both to find a way to work with young people in the future and to share her experiences, including her time in various hospitals in ITU and major trauma wards, to help other people deal with their own life-changing circumstances.

Special Award, sponsored by GMI Property

Chris Blundell
of Thirsk

The Special Award is made to friends and supporters of the Yorkshire Young Achievers Awards who have gone the extra mile to help raise funds to support young people in the region.

Awards Chairman Peter McCormick said: "Chris has been a long term supporter of the Foundation, regularly hosting events such as our annual launch party and donating prizes where appropriate. He is also the organiser of the Yorkshire Charity Clay Days, from which the Foundation has benefited twice to the sum of tens of thousands of pounds. "We are delighted to recognise Chris's contribution with this Award."

...and we were there!



Hosts and Patrons Duncan Wood and Christine Talbot



Hamilton Matlock, Claire Kentominov, Jo Towler and Roy Charleton



Steve Rawnsley, Suzanne Watson, Paul Tighe, Austin and Rocco Haynes, Stacey Burrows, Lucy Millington, Gemma Haynes and Shaun Haynes



Lizzie Jones joined the fun for the Heads and Tails game



Hannah Goodwin, Ellis Lander, Jamie Simms and Mike Jones



The Yorkshire Regiment



Simon and Candy Theakston, Sharon and Tim Canavar, Fiona Movley and Scott Armitage



Avihai and Elsie Sivtiel



Alex Harrison, Stephen and Jane Hopwood



Poonam Mistry, Dipesh Mistry and Jayna Mistry



Peter and Pammi Gilman



Sam Lewis, Callum Bowmer, Vidya Patole and Jakub Palasz



Oliver Hanman, Karen Matteson and Elisabeth Scott



Jack and Linda Marshall



Jess Mayho and Ashley O'Loughlin



Jan Fletcher OBE, Kathryn McCormick and Caroline Bayliss



Lady Ingilby and guests



David and Helen Birks



Peter Banks and Wallace Sampson



Gavin Bell and James Towler



Josh Thornton, G Owen, Philip Davey and Rod Faustino



Fiona Movley, Judy Thompson and Sally Wall



Charles Cudjoe, Mike Jones, Ryan Chitson, Kevin Friend, Ellis Lander and Hannah Goodwin



Shaney Stevens and Alex Barton

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