



PALMERS
SOLICITORS

Moving forward together | **Client Testimonials**

Welcome to Palmers, one of the leading law firms in Essex

As the Managing Partners, it is our goal to help the whole team at Palmers Solicitors provide an excellent, high-value and efficiently-delivered service to all of our clients. From our offices in Basildon, South Woodham Ferrers and Chafford Hundred in Thurrock, Palmers Solicitors provides a cost-effective, high quality service to clients in Essex and beyond.

Our Legal 500 Leading Firm has specialists in Company Commercial, Commercial Property and Commercial Litigation, as well as a comprehensive Private Client department. Across a whole spectrum of legal advice, we pride ourselves on offering quick, accurate and reliable advice with straightforward answers.

The quality of our advice is highlighted by the fact that we have retained our Lexcel accreditation following each annual assessment since the original award in 2008. This recognises the quality of our management and the service we offer to our clients, showing that we are among the best legal practices in the country. Furthermore, we have won the Excellent Customer Service category of the Thurrock Business Awards in 2015 and 2014.

However, we do not rest on these laurels and we are always happy to listen to what our clients have to say about their experiences of working with our firm. It is the best way to find out what they want to achieve and how we can help them in the most effective way. That is why we would like to share some of their feedback with you in this brochure.



Carey Jacobs and BJ Chong
Managing Partners



Richard Snoxall, Rowland Hall

As Rowland Hall is a firm of Chartered Certified Accountants that continues to build its reputation on providing excellent advice and a first class service, the partners look for the same qualities in the professional service providers they work with.

According to administration and finance partner Richard Snoxall, that is exactly what they receive from Palmers Solicitors. “All of the partners know we can trust Palmers to provide a high quality service,” he explains.

The relationship between the two firms began around nine years ago and, since then, Palmers has provided legal advice on the partnership deed, staff and HR matters, property transactions and mortgages, as well as advising Rowland Hall’s clients on wills and estate planning.

The two firms have also completed one or two joint projects regarding business sales and acquisitions, where Palmers helped on the corporate legal work.

In addition to referring clients to Palmers, Mr Snoxall has recommended the solicitors to various professional and social contacts, as well as members of staff who are moving house.

“Rowland Hall is happy with the way Palmers has advised us, so we are always happy to recommend the firm, as it is important people get good advice.

“Palmers provides a good quality, professional service and respond promptly – not all solicitors are as prompt.”





Chris Bowhay, Cartamundi UK Limited

Word of mouth and reputation are invaluable in business. When Chris Bowhay, the finance manager at Canvey Island-based Cartamundi UK Limited, was looking for a firm of solicitors to work with, he followed his auditor's recommendation.

"My auditor recommended Palmers as their dealings with the firm have always been very good," explains Mr Bowhay. "I have a good relationship with my auditor, so I started using Palmers too."

That was 25 years ago and, in that time, Palmers has assisted with a wide range of legal issues. This includes the acquisition and disposal of property, as well as personal matters, such as wills.

Palmers acted for Mr Bowhay and the original shareholders when their company was acquired by Cartamundi – one of the world's biggest manufacturers of playing cards with operations in 17 countries across four continents. Today, Cartamundi continues to use the firm as its solicitors.

"We use Palmers for everything legal, from both a business and personal perspective," says Mr Bowhay. Such loyalty has been inspired by the fact that Palmers has "always been very good and has never let me down".

"BJ Chong and I are around the same age. We started in business together, and have grown old together. Nonetheless, all the people at Palmers have been very good. Their advice is always spot on."

As a result of his professional relationship with Palmers, Mr Bowhay is able to benefit from knowing that he is working with "one of the biggest and best legal firms in Essex".

He continues: "With Palmers, I have a team behind me that I have total confidence in and which provides good advice."

"When we purchased a rival company last year, it went as smoothly as such transactions can, as I had the right advice at the right time from the right people. I had a much better legal team than the people I was buying the company from, which is the position you want to be in when in business."

In fact, Mr Bowhay would recommend Palmers "without hesitation", as the firm has never let him down.

"I have known them a long time and have total faith in what they do and their ability – perfect."

Miles Carter, Gable Hall School

When you are running a high achieving and vibrant school which converted to academy status last July, you want a legal services provision you can rely on.

According to Miles Carter, finance director and business manager at Gable Hall School in Corringham, that is exactly what he receives from Palmers Solicitors.

“Palmers provides exactly what I need in legal professionals. They are on my side, put my interests first and offer a value for money solution.”

The solicitors have been involved with the school for at least 15 years, with partner Carey Jacobs, who is also a former pupil of the school, acting as a governor throughout that time. Over the years, the relationship has become more than just a professional one, with Palmers fulfilling a community role.

“Carey is extremely influential in providing advice to the board of governors,” says Mr Carter.

“We have a series of issues coming across the table at governors’

meetings and, as it is an unpaid role, people can be reluctant to put their heads above the parapet, which can stifle meetings.

“Carey provides a cool, calm, logical approach, highlighting the legal connotations that we would not necessarily think of, as well as the practical implications and whether something is a commercial risk. Without this, decision-making would be far more protracted.

“Furthermore, as Carey can research matters, and has access to colleagues with a variety of fields of expertise, governors can focus on the principles and not legal issues.”

This community role is further highlighted by Palmers involvement at career days at the school. For years, two or three members of their senior staff have taken the time to provide the students with mock interviews, with feedback provided to the students along with advice on techniques.

“Palmers takes the career day very seriously,” says Mr Carter, “and the students find it invaluable. The days of work experience are over, so it is very important that students are not frightened by the interview process, especially when meeting professional employers.”



With 1,265 pupils and a recently opened sixth form, Gable Hall School has quite a large site, with many of the legal issues surrounding property and neighbourhood matters.

“The big issues are boundaries, planning consents and neighbourhood concerns,” says Mr Carter. “A lot of the matters are unusual, so avoiding the pitfalls when granting rights to the use of land is very important.

“We work with local charities, so it is vital that we receive advice from Palmers on how to do things for the charity’s benefit and still maintain the school’s rights and responsibilities.

“Palmers provides professional, clear advice to both the governors and myself as business manager. This ensures we recognise the legal position and protect public funds and assets.

“I would certainly recommend Palmers and have already done so to another school facing a legal issue. Palmers has the technical knowledge of what I need as the business manager, knows the education sector, and provides a quality service in a timely and efficient manner.”





David Wall, Kemtron Limited

As manufacturers of components and materials for radio frequency interference shielding, Kemtron Limited has a global reputation for quality, performance and reliability.

It is these same attributes that David Wall, Kemtron's managing director, appreciates in Palmers Solicitors. While the two firms have known each other for 20 years as their offices were in the same building, Mr Wall chose to work with Palmers due to the practice's "good reputation".

Since then, Palmers has taken care of all the commercial legal work for Kemtron, including the leases for its four commercial buildings. The firm has also advised on HR issues, including employment contracts.

Additionally, Palmers has advised Mr Wall personally on wills and probate.

"The people at Palmers know what they are doing. While I have used other firms of solicitors in the past, they have taken a long time to respond as they didn't have the relevant experience. Palmers is responsive, as the team has expertise in the areas I need them for."

Mr Wall would recommend Palmers as he "trusts them" and thinks "they offer a good service and know what they are talking about".

Matt Bache, HBC Group

In the world of modern business, with its plethora of communication tools, companies expect a prompt response from the professional service providers they work with, such as accountants and solicitors.

According to Matt Bache, finance director of HBC Group, this is exactly what he receives from Palmers Solicitors.

“With Palmers, the response is always prompt and their advice is succinct,” he says. “It is frustrating when professional service providers delay matters and it pushes the cost up, but Palmers have never let us down”.

While the core business of HBC Group is the salvage and auction of motor vehicles, the company also provides website design and hosting, as well as managing a large property portfolio.

It was through the latter of these that HBC Group starting working with Palmers, around 16 years ago. When they took advice from another firm regarding a property and sent the bailiffs in, it ended up in an almighty wrangle.

The bailiff suggested that they talk to BJ Chong to get themselves out of the hole and, when they did, HBC Group was so impressed that they have used Palmers ever since.

In addition to dealing with property matters – including anything to do with disputes with tenants, the end of leases, property disputes and new leases – the solicitors also provide commercial law and employment advice.

This covers any required legal advice, whether on the terms and conditions if there is a dispute with a buyer, trademark and copyright issues, contracts of employment and employee handbooks or ongoing employment legislation.

Indeed, the solicitors advised HBC Group a short time ago on how to trademark their business names so only they can use them and also successfully defended the company against a recent tribunal claim.

“The team at Palmers says what your options are – these are laid out very clearly – and the consequences of them. When they are happy that you understand, they ask what option you want to take and pursue it.



“They provide good advice regarding your options and follow up the decision promptly.”

Consequently, Mr Bache will always recommend Palmers if people ask him. In fact, he recommended them on a personal level to a family member for inheritance planning advice and drafting their will.

“They had been looking to get this done for quite a while,” he explains, “but had problems with their own solicitor. Palmers got everything done in a couple of meetings and my relative was exceedingly happy with the advice provided.”

“The team at Palmers has a very professional approach and they make me feel like their only client. Their other work doesn’t get in the way and that is a nice feeling.”



Sue Newby, William de Ferrers School

South Woodham Ferrers-based William de Ferrers School achieved academy status in April 2011. Housed in a purpose-built community complex, it has around 1980 pupils from Year 7 right up to sixth form, and shares certain facilities with other organisations.

As part of the complex, the school is committed to establishing ties with the local community and neighbouring primary schools, as well as including knowledge and awareness of the community within its curriculum.

According to Director of Services, Sue Newby, the school's relationship with Palmers fits in perfectly with this ethos.

"As Palmers is based in South Woodham Ferrers, it is a local company with an understanding of how the community works together and how we fit into that," she explains.

The long-standing relationship between William de Ferrers School

and Palmers began at least 10 years ago, which includes working closely with their current partner, Simon Fothergill.

"We have always had a really good service from Palmers across a range of legal questions," says Sue Newby.

Palmers acts as William de Ferrers School's legal point of contact, advising particularly on property leases and building agreements, which is Simon's area of expertise. This includes the legality of agreements with other users of the centre.

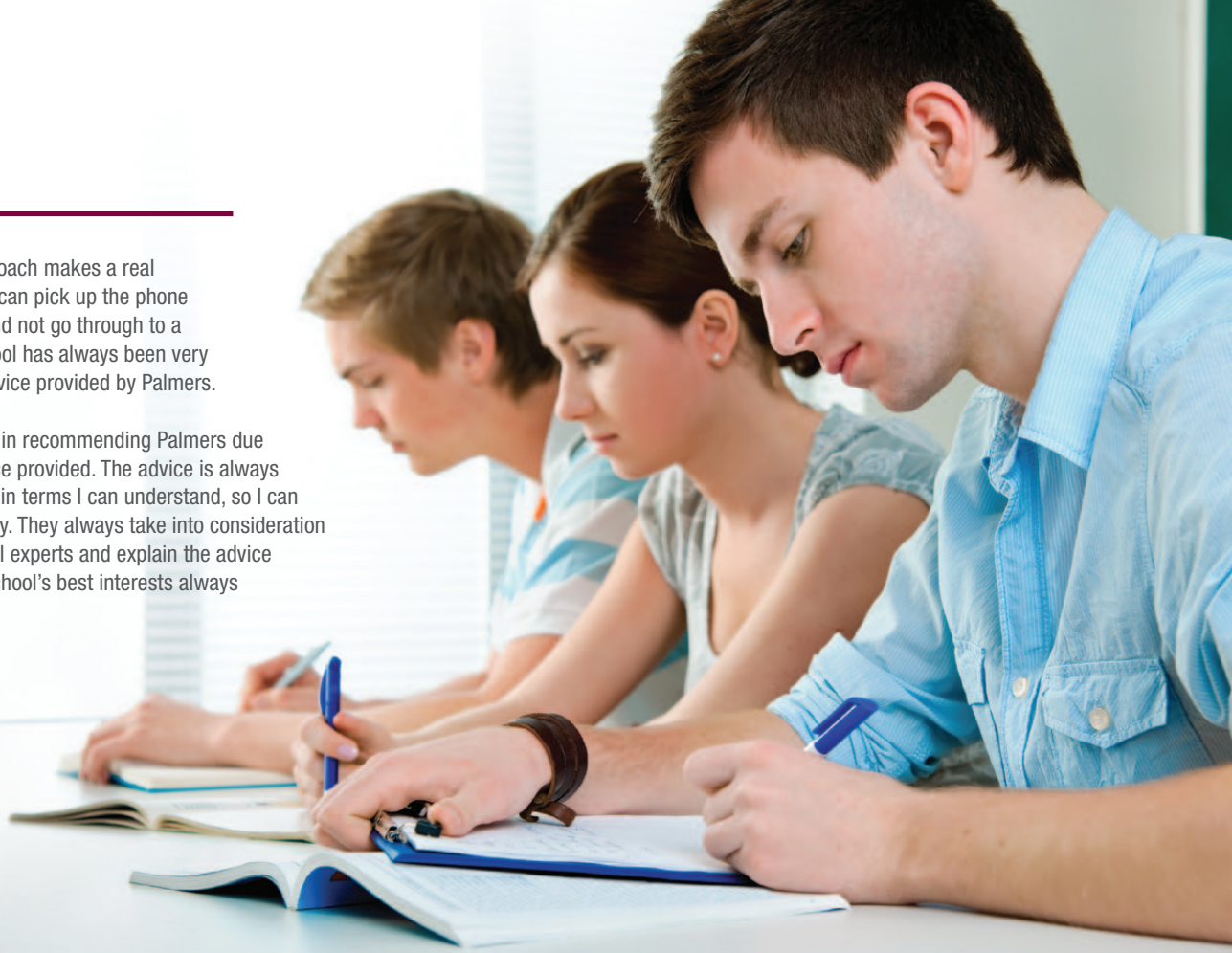
The solicitors also provided advice following the school's conversion to academy status. It now has to write its own service level agreements with providers and, with Palmers' advice, drew up an exemplar which it has since used with a football club and counselling service.

Sue Newby explained: "The firm has a real bank of knowledge about the school which it has built up over a long period of time and has developed an in-depth understanding of how we work."



“This personal approach makes a real difference. I know I can pick up the phone to ask a question and not go through to a call centre; the school has always been very pleased with the advice provided by Palmers.

“I wouldn’t hesitate in recommending Palmers due to the level of service provided. The advice is always good and explained in terms I can understand, so I can apply it appropriately. They always take into consideration that we are not legal experts and explain the advice carefully with the school’s best interests always being paramount.”



Meet the team

We are pleased to introduce you to the leading advisers at Palmers.



BJ Chong, Partner BJChong@palmerslaw.co.uk

BJ is a partner at our Thurrock office specialising in Company and Commercial Law.

After completing his LLB (Hons) degree, BJ received an LLM in Company Law from University College London. BJ trained with Palmers and qualified in 1993, becoming partner in 1996.

BJ continues to specialise in advising and representing our clients on matters ranging from corporate finance work, protection and exploitation of intellectual property rights and business law matters. He acts for a number of commercial clients including professional partnerships and large companies.



Carey Jacobs, Partner CJacobs@palmerslaw.co.uk

Carey Jacobs graduated in Law from the University of Kent at Canterbury in 1994. She trained with Palmers and was admitted in 1997, becoming a partner in 2001. Having qualified into the Residential Property Team, Carey moved across to undertake solely commercial property work in 2003 and now heads our Commercial Property Team.

Carey enjoys mind-bendingly complex matters, including challenging site assembly work for developers, conditional contracts and overage agreements. She undertakes a wide portfolio of property work, including work relating to educational and charitable institutions, investor landlords and developers.





Andrew Skinner, Partner ASkinner@palmerslaw.co.uk

Admitted in 1989, Andrew joined Palmers as an assistant solicitor and became a partner in 1996. He works in the Basildon office and is head of the Debt, Possession and Insolvency Department. He advises on bankruptcy and corporate insolvency, as well as undertaking all aspects of insolvency litigation, investigative work and recovery of assets.

Andrew enjoys his working relationships with insolvency practitioners, bankrupts, directors of insolvent companies and third party defendants.

He is prepared to act on a conditional fee agreement (CFA) basis.



Matthew Poli, Partner MPoli@palmerslaw.co.uk

Matthew is a partner based in the Basildon office and is head of the Company and Commercial Law Department.

Matthew qualified as a solicitor in 2006 after reading law at Queen Mary, University of London. He went on to complete his Legal Practice Course at the College of Law, London.

He specialises in a broad range of corporate work with an emphasis on share and asset sales and purchases. In addition, Matthew has significant experience in corporate restructuring and has acted on numerous matters involving complex share issues, swaps and buy-backs with values exceeding 1.5 billion (in various currencies).



Jeremy Sirrell, Partner JSirrell@palmerslaw.co.uk

Jeremy was called to the Bar in 1981 and, having qualified as a barrister, was then offered a position as a legal adviser in the Magistrates Courts Service. He remained there until he joined the Crown Prosecution Service in 1987 as a crown prosecutor.

Since joining private practice and qualifying as a solicitor in 1989, Jeremy has been engaged in both prosecution and defence work. His wide experience of the criminal justice system enables him to act on road traffic work, licensing issues and any criminal matter.



Tim Steele, Partner TSteele@palmerslaw.co.uk

Tim was admitted in 1993, joined Palmers in 1996, and became a partner in 2000.

Tim undertakes residential conveyancing and probate work, along with advising on estate planning using wills and trusts.

He is a member of the Probate Section of the Law Society and Solicitors for the Elderly, as well as a former chairman and secretary of the Essex branch of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP).



Lee McClellan, Partner LMcClellan@palmerslaw.co.uk

Lee joined Palmers as a trainee and was admitted in 1998. He became a partner in 2002.

In addition to wills and probate work, Lee advises clients on inheritance tax planning and other issues relevant to older

clients, including long-term care. He has acted for clients in disputes over the funding of residential and nursing care. Lee also specialises in contested probate matters and claims under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependents) Act 1975.





Adam Davis, Partner ADavis@palmerslaw.co.uk

Adam joined Palmers in April 2008 and became a Partner in August 2015. He is the head of the Construction and Engineering Law department and specialises in both contentious and non-contentious construction and engineering law issues such as Party Wall Act matters,

planning disputes, and warranty claims. He is a full member of the Society of Construction Law; a group of construction solicitors, barristers, surveyors, engineers, architects, and other professionals promoting the development, study and practice of construction law in the UK.



Clive Tant, Consultant CTant@palmerslaw.co.uk

Clive was admitted as a solicitor in 1980 and is a founder partner of Palmers.

Now a consultant with the firm, Clive has specialist expertise in commercial mediation and commercial litigation,

particularly in relation to share sale disputes and shareholder/partnership issues. He has acted in a number of high value commercial disputes. As a mediator, Clive is accredited with the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and has experience of a wide range of disputes which have settled at mediation.



Chris Mowat, Consultant CMowat@palmerslaw.co.uk

Admitted in 1973, Chris was a partner in the former practice of Steggles Palmer before starting the present practice with three other founding partners in 1983. He is now a consultant.

He is a member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners,

specialising in wills for business owners, the creation and management of trusts and estate administration. Chris is the chairman of the trustees to an Almshouse Charity in Romford which provides accommodation for over 70 elderly people.



Brooke Barnes, Associate Executive
BBarnes@palmerslaw.co.uk

Brooke is an Associate Executive within the residential property team at our Thurrock office. She specialises in all aspects of residential property, dealing with the selling of houses and flats, transfer of ownerships and re-mortgages for clients. Brooke is well-known for being friendly, reliable and reassuring whilst maintaining a practical approach that clients value highly.



Helen Jago, Associate Solicitor
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Helen works in the Wills, Trusts and Probate Department and specialises in estate administration, the preparation of Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney, Court of Protection work, residential care issues and Trust work. Helen is also a member of Solicitors for the Elderly; a National Body specialising in areas of law affecting elderly clients and their carers.



Jonathan Saunders, Associate Solicitor
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Basildon-based Jonathan completed his LLB Honours degree in Law and Legal Practice Course before qualifying as a solicitor in 2013. He specialises in succession planning, probate and estate administration, trust creation and administration, Powers of Attorney and Inheritance Tax planning.



Lara Murray, Associate Solicitor
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Lara is a member of the Employment Lawyers Association and has experience in a wide range of employment matters. In addition to advising employee clients in employment issues, Lara also works closely with employer clients from various industries, with a particular expertise in the construction industry.





Luke Morgan, Associate Solicitor
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Luke works in the Commercial Litigation and Dispute Resolution Department. He is experienced in a variety of contentious disputes and is capable of providing legal advice and assistance in contentious matters such as contractual disputes, professional negligence claims, and intellectual property disputes.



Nicola Tubbs, Associate Executive
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Nicola joined Palmers as an Associate Executive in the conveyancing team in February 2013, having originally qualified as a licensed conveyancer in 2008. She prides herself on being approachable to all clients and enjoys the great variety that her work brings, with no two days being the same.



Raj Bhatta, Associate Solicitor
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As a qualified Solicitor with more than 20 years' experience, Raj undertakes all aspects of residential conveyancing and development work, specialising in matters of complex residential work. Raj's wide-ranging caseload includes transactions that involve high value properties, plot sales, divisions of title and adverse possession applications.



Surjit Verdi, Associate Solicitor
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Surjit specialises in matters of divorce, civil partnership dissolution, separation, financial settlements, co-habitation and domestic violence issues. She has been accredited as a specialist member of Resolution with particular specialisms in Advanced Financial Provision and Private Law Children and is a member of the Law Society's Family Law Panel.

Services for your business:

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- Company Law
- Construction and Engineering Law
- Corporate Finance
- Courts and Dispute Resolution
- Criminal Defence Services
- Debt and Insolvency
- Education
- Employment Law and HR Services
- Family Businesses
- Health and Safety Law
- Intellectual Property
- Licensing

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