

## A career at Cartmell Shepherd

At Cartmell Shepherd we aim to offer you a career that is fulfilling, rewarding and challenging, no matter what your role, where you are embedded within our culture and our teams, offices and departments.

Our career structure offers you opportunity and progression at all levels where your ambition, skill-set, commitment and dedication are recognised and rewarded. This document outlines our career structure including the expectations and behaviours at each stage of your career, with each role underpinned by a job description that details the responsibilities and expectations within that particular role.

A career at Cartmell Shepherd is based around 6 values: ambition, collaboration, commitment, fairness, quality and respect. They underpin everything that we do. We place clients at the heart of our business and meet their requirements through the dedication and hard work of our talented people.

Our people are critical to our success. Our reputation is built upon the combined contributions and endeavours of everyone at the firm, in all offices and across all departments.

We realise that it is important for people to understand what the firm expects of them and what they can expect in return. Following discussions and feedback from across the business we have developed pledges based on the following questions:

- What do we want from you?
- What do we offer in return?

## What do we want from you?



**Commitment:**

- Work to the best of your ability at all times
- Work hard to ensure that we all get the job done within the deadlines set
- Strive to surpass others' expectations.

**Quality work**

- Produce high-quality work and deliver a consistent, excellent level of service
- Work towards success, enhancing your reputation, that of the firm and that of your clients

**Engagement**

- Get involved with the life of the firm, immerse yourself in its spirit and culture
- Take a positive attitude towards your work to ensure you fulfil your potential

**Respect for others**

- Respect your colleagues and teammates and the contributions they make
- Challenge poor behaviour and client care when it doesn't meet a consistent, excellent level of service

**Continuous improvement**

- Review your working practices and implement improvements
- Identify and act on areas in which you can improve your own skills and that of your team, through Continuous Professional Development
- Leave things better than when you found them

**Team-working and collaboration**

- Work together to share your experience and skills to achieve the best in everything you do
- Help make work a positive experience, a place where social interaction through team-working and collaboration inspires you and your colleagues to achieve success

## What do we offer in return?



### **Quality of work:**

- You will have the chance to involve yourself with good quality, challenging work within your skill-set and experience

### **Flexibility:**

- We aim to be as flexible as we can with you, allowing you to work the way you want to within reason and the aims of the business

### **Opportunity:**

- We aim to provide you with opportunities to challenge and develop your skills and technical expertise and to build your professional network and reputation
- Access to career development courses will allow you to focus on specific areas for career and professional development through both internal and external activities, in addition to close mentoring and supervision from experienced colleagues within your teams

### **A good working environment**

- We will provide you with a good working environment that is professional, friendly and sociable and equipped with modern technology and the resources you need to carry out your role

### **Respect and responsibility**

- We will treat you with respect at all times, regardless of your role or position within the business. You will be respected for the person that you are and for the contribution you make where we will trust you to get on with your work and all that your role entails

- You will have the opportunity to take responsibility for your own work and actions, and where your role permits, for those around you in your teams, helping develop your leadership and management capabilities as you progress throughout your career

### **Reward and recognition**

- So that you know your hard work and effort is being recognised, we will ensure that your pay and benefits are competitive and directly linked to your contribution to the business

## Career development and structure

The firm's career structure is split into three distinct categories:

- Solicitor career pathway
- Non-solicitor career pathway (covering Paralegals, Conveyancers, Probate Executives etc.)
- Support staff career pathway

Where you sit in each pathway depends on your experience, your performance in role and your ambition and willingness to accept the responsibilities each stage of your career pathway offers you. What you want to achieve is based on you; your ambition and drive within your career. Our career structure provides a pathway for you to achieve your desired career outcomes – it is all about what you want to achieve and we aim to support you in every step of your chosen career path.

It is important for all to make a full contribution to the life of the firm. The more senior you become, the higher the level of expectation becomes in terms of your contribution and expectations. Examples of this are taking on the responsibility for the leadership and management of an office or a department, being strategic lead for a particular area or developing and enhancing key external relationships.

Moving between pathways, such as a legal secretary becoming a conveyancer or a paralegal becoming a solicitor, has always been possible and that remains the case. However, we recognise that may not be the route to progression for many staff, and it is important that each pathway provides opportunity in its own right.

### **Client work and supervision**

Your involvement with client work and the complexity of the matters you undertake will vary depending on your experience and skill-set. We believe you should take as much responsibility as possible for the work of your clients; in some cases you will have sole responsibility for your matters and the day to day running of them. In other cases, the matter may be complex and will involve you working as part of a team in order to achieve your clients' goals. As a result, the ability to work as a team is an essential element of your working life at Cartmell Shepherd.

On all matters, no matter what the size or complexity, you are ultimately responsible to your supervisor. Depending on your department and location, your supervisor will either be a Director or a Senior Associate, but will most certainly be someone with the appropriate experience and knowledge to supervise you effectively. This applies to everyone within Cartmell Shepherd, regardless of your role within the firm.

### **Targets and benchmarks**

The building blocks of the business side of running a law firm are based on you and your team achieving the various targets set by the firm. Setting fair and realistic targets is the basis on which our budget is formed; it is important that you understand why we set these targets and the part you play across each stage of your career and an expectation of life in a modern, progressive law firm.

Your targets are set individually by your Head of Department with input from the Managing Director, and are based on your role, the type of work you carry out, your experience and skill-set, location and your potential.

Consideration is always made to any additional responsibilities you hold. For example, the utilisation target for someone who has management responsibilities may be different to

someone who doesn't. Your targets are set so that they are challenging, but achievable. Our targets are measured on a daily, weekly and monthly basis through the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are relevant to your role and position within the firm.

### **Time recording**

Where you are in a fee-earning role it is essential that you record all of your time fully and accurately. Recording your time and how you utilise your working day in respect to the work you carry out for our clients and how you therefore charge for your time is the most essential building block and the very basis of the firm's income. We expect you to:

- Fully record your time in accordance with our policies, both matter and non-matter related
- Achieve your individual utilisation target
- Ensure that work in progress on a matter is supervised appropriately, billed at the correct interval and that those bills are paid promptly
- Raise any concerns that you may have with the progress of your matter with your supervisor

## Career structure model and role descriptions

### Solicitor career path and roles



**Solicitor career structure model**

The model above illustrates the career path available to solicitors at Cartmell Shepherd. Whether you trained with us as a trainee solicitor or joined at a later stage in your career, your appointment to these roles is based on:

- Your performance in your current role
- Your commitment to Cartmell Shepherd
- Your ambition and career choices

#### **Trainee Solicitor**

As a Trainee Solicitor your role involves you building on the theoretical knowledge you have gained prior to joining the firm, or in the case of a Solicitor Apprentice, that gained through your time spent learning at your learning provider, and providing you with the practical knowledge via live matters working alongside experienced solicitors, to prepare you for qualification. At the end of your period as a trainee you should be ready for qualification and admittance to the Roll of Solicitors of England and Wales and appointment as a Solicitor in one of our departments.

The firm's role is to ensure you are exposed to work that allows you to develop the technical legal skills and people skills required to be ready for, and achieve, qualification. We will support you through that training period, ensuring you have appropriate supervision and the opportunity to develop your skills and knowledge through challenging work set at the right level. During your period of training, we will work hard to help you develop your personal skills and attributes including building confidence, communication skills and team-working, all in a supportive environment.

As a trainee, it is also vital that you start to build your professional network and reputation. We expect you to fully immerse yourself into the life and culture of the firm from the outset, examples of which are taking part in business development activities, team-working and charity events. You are expected to work hard, challenge yourself and prove that you are capable of admission to the roll at the end of your period of recognised training. You have worked hard to get here, but it is here that the real hard work begins. Rise to it and drive forwards to qualification.

#### **Solicitor**

The Solicitor grade runs from the moment you qualify and are admitted to the Roll, up to your appointment as an Associate, normally as a minimum not before 3 years' PQE.

At this stage in your career the firm expects you to build your legal technical knowledge and skills through the provision of legal advice to our clients under the supervision arrangements of your head of department – this is your main focus at this stage and the reason why solicitors may have higher benchmarks in terms of targets to meet, as progress to a more senior role may require some management responsibility where more time is spent carrying out those management responsibilities, and less therefore earning fees. You are also expected to meet all of the targets set by your head of department; as previously mentioned

these targets are the very basic building blocks and expectations of life as a lawyer in a modern, progressive law firm.

As a solicitor, you should concentrate on building your legal technical skills and expertise as well as acting as a role model for our trainee solicitors and your more junior colleagues. We'd also expect you to have started to build your professional network and to be involved in the wider business development activities of the firm, developing strong links within your teams, offices and departments across the firm. You must always strive to achieve a balance of providing a consistent, excellent level of service to our clients, achieving all of your expectations in terms of targets whilst developing your own professional persona and reputation amongst both your colleagues and your professional network.

Continuous professional development (CPD) is at the heart of this role, and opportunities will be available for to expand your knowledge and skills through CPD activities both in-house and externally.

### **Associate**

Promotion to Associate would not normally take place until after a minimum of 3 years' PQE as a Solicitor. New recruits with at least 3 years' PQE may be recruited as an Associate.

At this stage of your career you will be expected to deliver a consistently high level of service to your clients through application of your legal knowledge and the experience you have gained to date. You will work as part of team, encouraging and developing those less experienced in addition to acting as someone others in your team can approach for guidance and assistance and acting as a role model within your team and department, where approachability and communication are critical within this role.

You will consistently be achieving all of your targets, both personally and within your team, if not exceeding them. Associates are expected to demonstrate effective time and financial management, as well as working collaboratively. You'll have developed strong communication skills and will be expected to contribute to the development of the business with an increasing emphasis on helping to develop others whilst continuing to enhance your network of contacts internally and externally.

As an Associate you will be given the opportunity to undertake leadership and management training, and may take on some responsibility to aid in the supervision and development of the junior members of your team. The Associate role requires you to align yourself with the strategy of the firm, contributing to its development within your team and department and setting the standard in terms of your conduct. As an Associate you will be expected to actively contribute to the day to day management of your team/office.

Promotion to Associates takes place once a year usually in the month of April with the Board retaining the right to flexibility on this timeframe. You should discuss Associateship with your Head of Department if it's a role you feel you are ready for and wish to progress to, bearing in mind the mind-set and behaviour expected of you at this level. It should not be an automatic assumption that, once you reach the minimum level of PQE, you are considered for appointment to Associate; career ambition can be different for each individual this is your career and you must drive your career.

Your HoD will propose Associateship for each individual to the Board of Directors prior to the 1 April each year.

### **Senior Associate**

The appointment of Senior Associate will not normally take place until you have achieved at least 3 years' PQE as an Associate, or 6 years from qualification as a Solicitor following successful completion of your training. As with the role of Associate, the firm can recruit



people directly into the business within that role, as long as they meet the criteria matched to the role of Senior Associate.

By this stage of your career, you will be carrying out complex and challenging legal work and increased levels of responsibility, preparing you for the route to Directorship. Senior Associates may take on the responsibility for running an office or a department within the firm and become involved in the strategic management of the business where you show particular strengths within your skill set, including your personal skills, business awareness and technical legal skills.

The role of Senior Associate is the stepping stone to Directorship. You are therefore, expected to be performing to the highest level in all aspects, with that willingness to accept the additional leadership and management responsibilities that come with the role. You must be approachable, and maintain effective channels of communication throughout the firm. Should you assume the responsibilities of running a department you will ensure the effective leadership and management of that department in line with the firm's policies and procedures, ensuring targets are met, and that you act as an effective role model for your team.

Promotion to Senior Associate will take place on the 1 April each year, with appointments decided by the Board of Directors. As with the role of Associate, if you feel you are ready to take on the role, you must discuss this with your Head of Department.

In addition to taking on other responsibilities within the business, Senior Associates are expected to be consistently achieving all of their targets and supporting their Head of Department with the running of the department and achievement of their collective targets. Senior Associates may also be considered to the appointment of a head of department role; you should consider this responsibility before you approach your head of department to discuss promotion into this role.

### **Senior Associate Career Progression**

The role of Senior Associate is a critical role within the firm and one where you will be responsible for the supervision and development of junior members of your team. The role is a route to becoming a Director should you wish to progress to that appointment. You will be invited to undertake further leadership and management training in order to aid your progression to Directorship and to enhance your leadership and management skills.

Promotion to Director is by appointment where agreed by the Board/Shareholders. Appointments normally takes place on the 1 April each year. You should discuss Directorship with the Managing Director, should it be the career progression you wish to make. Alternatively, you may be approached directly by the Managing Director.

### **Director**

Three key criteria lie at the heart of promotion and appointment to Director; your personal qualities, your technical legal expertise and what you are able to contribute to the business.

Before consideration, you must have proven your leadership, management and business development skills within your role as a Senior Associate. It is unlikely that you would be appointed as a Director without achieving success in your role as a Senior Associate for at least 2 – 3 years.

You will be expected to take on senior leadership roles within the firm to ensure its continued and future success and stability, as well as making a financial contribution to the firm. As a Director you will be expected to assume leadership and management of our teams, offices and departments as well as the potential for additional responsibilities e.g. compliance, finance, staffing, marketing or IT. You therefore must be willing to accept these responsibilities.

As with the role of Senior Associate, you will be invited to continue to develop your business skills through appropriate training, and of course experience.

If you feel a Director's role is one you are ready for, you should speak in the first instance to the Director leading your department, or directly to the Managing Director.

## Non-solicitor career path and roles



**Non-solicitor career structure model**

This career path is relevant to those of you who are in a current paralegal role. The term 'paralegal' covers the following roles within the firm:

- Conveyancer
- Probate clerk
- Private Client Executive
- Debt Recovery Specialist

The firm may recruit paralegals directly into a role, depending on their experience and/or qualifications.

Career progression is very much down to your individual drive and ambition. Appointment to either Associate or Senior Associate is very much along the same lines as that of the solicitor career structure, and you would be expected to meet the criteria and expectations for those appointments in exactly the same way as a solicitor would in addition to being given the opportunity to continue to develop your personal, legal and business skill-set through Continuous Professional Development.

Promotion to Associates takes place once a year usually in the month of April with the Board retaining the right to flexibility on this timeframe. You should discuss Associateship with your Head of Department if it's a role you feel you are ready for and wish to progress to, bearing in mind the mind-set and behaviour expected of you at this level. It should not be an automatic assumption that, once you reach the minimum level of experience, you are considered for appointment to Associate.

Your HoD will propose Associateship for each individual to the Board of Directors prior to the 1 April each year.

Due to the current structure of the business i.e. we are a Limited Company and not an Alternative Business Structure, the role of Director is not open to non-lawyers at this stage. The SRA requires that those at management level in the business are qualified solicitors.

## **Support staff career path and roles**

The firm is supported by a team of staff in many different roles that fall under the collective umbrella of 'Support Staff.' Our team of support staff occupy many roles within the firm including:

- Practice, IT and Marketing Managers
- Head Cashier
- Legal Cashier
- Legal Secretaries
- Administration Assistants
- Receptionists

As with the fee-earning roles, we normally recruit directly into these roles where we have a requirement.

### **Career progression**

Each role is very specific to the firm. Due to the nature of each role, they do not attract appointment to Associate or Senior Associate. However, many of our support staff have progressed into fee-earning roles, and have the opportunity within those roles to progress to Senior Associate level in accordance with that career structure. Any member of our support staff teams who wishes to progress to a fee-earner role must speak with their HoD in the first instance. Where appropriate, fee-earning work may be carried out allied to a support role as potential progression to a dedicated fee-earner role.

Our support staff roles are critical to ensure the smooth operation of the firm on a day to day basis. Each member of our support staff teams are expected to carry out their roles with professionalism and commitment, ensuring effective team-working and communication across your departments, offices and the wider firm.

Pay for support staff who are not in a management position is based on 4 levels, covered later in this document. Progression to each level is based on your performance in role and your experience. Progression to the next level is in your hands; where you feel you should be at the next level, you should speak to your Head of Department to discuss this in the first instance.

Additionally, you should also speak to your Head of Department where you feel you wish to take on additional responsibilities which may then lead to an enhancement in pay with an added element of responsibility pay. Additional responsibilities can involve taking on leadership and management activities within your team, office or department.

Where relevant to your role you will be given the opportunity to develop your skill-set through training and Continuous Professional development.

Appointment to managerial roles is very much dependent on you, your ambition, and any opportunities that may be open to you within the firm. Managerial roles come with additional responsibilities and expectation, covered in each role within that role's job description.

## Our reward – remuneration and staff benefits

Fairness and responsibility underpins the way we remunerate everyone who is part of the Cartmell Shepherd team, no matter what your role.

The legal marketplace in our region is highly competitive, and we must ensure our reward to you is one that is attractive and flexible. Attracting and retaining talented people who can deliver the consistent, excellent levels of service we expect our clients to receive is crucial to the success of the firm.

### Salary and pay

#### Secretarial and support staff

Pay for secretarial and support staff is generally paid on an hourly rate. These hourly rates are split into three categories:

- Lower rate
- Middle rate
- Senior rate
- Supplementary rate

Pay rates for individual secretarial and administrative staff are determined by the following criteria:

- Role
- Experience
- Performance in post

Some members of the secretarial and support teams may be salaried; this is very much dependent on each specific role and will be set on an individual basis.

#### Additional pay and awards

Secretarial and supporting roles also attract additional pay and awards. These are detailed below:

Overtime – paid when authorised by each departmental head, when a member of the support team works outside of their normal contracted hours.

#### Service pay

A service pay award is paid to members of the support team who are not salaried. Service pay awards are set when an individual reaches a specific length of service within the firm. Service pay awards are paid as a monthly payment when an individual reaches:

- 3 years' service
- 5 years' service
- 10 years' service
- 15+ years' service

Service pay is only authorised by the Board of Directors.

#### Responsibility pay

Responsibility pay is an additional award for those members of the support team who accept additional responsibilities above and beyond that of their terms and conditions of employment.

This pay award, like the service pay award, is paid as a monthly payment in addition to that person's hourly rate. As with service pay, this award must be authorised by the Board of Directors.

## **Managers**

The firm's managers are salaried employees. Their salary is determined by their role and the responsibilities within that role. The Board of Directors sets the salary for each manager. Managers' salaries are reviewed generally in April of each year, although the Board of Directors maintains the right to waiver or adjust that review, depending on circumstances.

Managers are not paid overtime, nor are they awarded service pay or responsibility pay.

## **Solicitors, Executives and Paralegals**

Solicitors, Executives and Paralegals are salaried employees. Their salary is determined on an individual basis by the Board of Directors considering the following criteria:

- In role experience
- Role
- Market rate
- Consideration of any additional responsibilities
- Performance in role – this includes consideration of your individual Key Performance Indicators

Salaries are generally reviewed each October, with the exception of Associates and Senior Associates, whose salary review takes place alongside that of the Managers in April each year.

As with managers, these roles are generally not paid overtime, however, overtime and time off in lieu of extra time worked, however, can be authorised on an individual basis by each departmental head.

## **Directors**

Remuneration for each Director is agreed by the Board of Directors and divided into the following categories:

- Salaried Directors – salaried Directors receive an annual salary, paid in monthly instalments
- Full-share Directors – each Director receives an agreed share of the firm's profits each year

On appointment to the Board each Director is expected to make a financial contribution to the firm, as agreed by the Board of Directors prior to the appointment.

## Annual leave entitlement

Currently, the Government's statutory annual leave entitlement states that most workers who work a 5-day week must receive at least 28 days' paid annual leave a year. This is the equivalent of 5.6 weeks of holiday. This figure can include the relevant public holidays in England and Wales.

Cartmell Shepherd's holiday award exceeds that of the Government's statutory annual requirement. Additional holiday is awarded at specific length of service intervals to all of our colleagues and the UK public holidays are paid in addition to the basic entitlement, also, annual leave entitlement is not deducted for the Christmas closing period, when our offices are closed, ensuring all of our staff benefit from more than the statutory annual requirement.

Our holiday award, illustrated below, is based on full-time members of staff who work a 5 day week. Holiday entitlement is pro-rated for part-time staff members.

Length of service	Annual Leave Entitlement
<b>Starting entitlement</b>	25 days' paid holiday per annum, plus the public holidays which are also paid in addition to that basic entitlement.
<b>5 years' service</b>	26 days' paid holiday per annum, plus the public holidays which are also paid in addition to that entitlement.
<b>10 years' service</b>	27 days' paid holiday per annum, plus the public holidays which are also paid in addition to that entitlement.
<b>15 years' service</b>	30 days' paid holiday per annum, plus the public holidays which are also paid in addition to that entitlement.

Annual leave entitlement for all of our colleagues is detailed within the individual's contract of employment.

Promotion to Associate attracts additional leave entitlement, up to a maximum of 30 days per annum in addition to bank holidays. Senior Associates are awarded 33 days of leave per annum as a basic. These entitlements are based on a full-time equivalent and are pro-rated for part-time employees. Additionally, the holiday entitlement of each managerial role is based on each individual role and its responsibilities.

The Board of Directors retain the right to award additional holiday on a case by case basis, dependent on the circumstances applicable at the time.

## Bonuses

The firm does not operate a formal bonus scheme. However, the Board of Directors retain the right to award discretionary bonuses to any individual within the firm based on their performance in role, and that of your overall team. The Board retains the right to decide what form any bonus may take. It could include:

- Additional holiday entitlement
- A bonus payment (taxable)
- An additional payment into your workplace pension

It's important to note that bonuses are considered based on your overall performance, including how you are performing within your team. They are based on collaboration and teamwork, as well as outstanding individual performance. The criteria for the award of a bonus could include:

- Your work ethos and attitude to your team and the wider activities of the firm
- Your overall contribution to a consistent, excellent level of service to our clients
- If in a fee-earning role, exceeding your target KPIs including but not limited to:
  - Utilisation
  - Debtor days
  - Billing target

If, where you have leadership and management responsibilities:

- Your contribution to your team
- Your attitude in terms of leadership, approachability, supervision and encouragement of your subordinates to achieve their very best
- Exceeding your KPIs and targets, and ensuring your team achieve their KPIs and targets (this is stated in order to prevent those with leadership responsibilities 'hoarding' the best work for themselves in order to achieve or exceed your targets)

## Summary

As a firm, we want you to get the very best out of your working life and your career with us. Our career structure provides you with a clear pathway to achieving your career ambitions within a business that is committed to you and providing consistent, excellent levels of service to our clients.

Every role within the firm contributes to its reputation and continued success and to our future as a business. Communication and teamwork are critical to that success, as is ensuring the right person is in the right role.

Your Head of Department and indeed the whole management team are there for you to discuss your career and your ambitions and you should not be shy about approaching them to discuss this – it is your career; you drive it and we will manage it.



## Our Reward

Being part of our team at Cartmell Shepherd entitles you to Our Reward. The graphic below describes what you are entitled to, no matter what your role within the firm.

