From Trainee to Managing Partner, an Interview with Matthew Barrow

Matthew Barrow began his career at Lester Aldridge in 1999 as a trainee solicitor. Having qualified into real estate, he became a partner in 2007 and head of the real estate group in 2011. On the retirement of Michael Giddins, he became the managing partner of the firm on 1 May 2018. He was reconfirmed for another 4-year term in May 2022.

We talk to Matthew to find out about his journey from trainee solicitor to managing partner at Lester Aldridge.

What attracted you to a career in law?

I was interested in a challenging and rewarding career and wanted a job where there is always something new to learn.

Which departments did you train in?

Litigation, banking and asset finance, real estate, and planning.

When did you know you wanted to work in Real Estate?

Towards the end of my training contract. It was a difficult decision between real estate and banking and finance work. With the benefit of hindsight, real estate was definitely the right call!

What have your biggest challenges been across the different stages of your career and how did Lester Aldridge help you overcome these challenges?

Every new stage has been a real learning curve and like starting an entirely new job. At each point, I have felt fully supported to develop into each new role.

Tel: 0344 967 0793 | Email: info@LA-Law.com | www.lesteraldridge.com

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What is your biggest achievement to date?

Since becoming head of the real estate group in 2011, we have doubled the group's turnover and improved consistently year on year the quality of the work and developed the team. That has been achieved by a lot of hard work by everyone across the group, working together in a collegiate and collaborative way.

What would your advice be to any of our current trainee solicitors?

Whatever seat you find yourself in, make the most of the opportunity. Real Estate was my last choice of seat. I had no idea how interesting and challenging the work could be and haven't looked back.

What do you feel are the benefits of doing a trainee contract at Lester Aldridge?

As a trainee at LA, you really do get out what you put in. Trainees have the opportunity from an early stage to get involved in a wide variety of work, have contact with clients and be an integral part of the teams where they spend their seats. LA is not a hierarchical organisation and is very unstuffy.

What has kept you at Lester Aldridge instead of looking elsewhere?

There have always been new challenges to keep the roles interesting and varied.

I felt lucky and privileged to be offered the chance to work at LA 25 years ago and still do. I am proud of working in a meritocratic environment and enjoy coming to work. The firm's culture is very important. This is also an exciting time for the firm with lots of investment planned and an ambitious strategy.

Graduate opportunities at Lester Aldridge

We're interested in attracting the legal talent of the future, and that's why we offer great opportunities for graduates who we feel have the ability to shine.

The window for applying for training contracts starting in 2026 is open until 17th May 2024. Find out more about training contracts at Lester Aldridge here, including how to apply.

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