



Stephen Thompson

Partner

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Stephen is a partner and also head of the firm's Corporate and Commercial teams.

He undertakes a wide range of transactional corporate work including acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures, investments and group restructures. Sectors of particular expertise include life sciences, nursing homes, manufacturing, veterinary practices and also hospitality.

Stephen also advises on a wide range of commercial issues including franchising and intellectual property.

In addition, Stephen has nearly 30 years' experience advising businesses and individuals in relation to insolvency related legal issues.

Stephen's extensive and lengthy legal career means that he can bring to bear on his legal work a wealth of commercial knowledge and expertise. His commercial experience enables him to deliver legal advice and assistance to his clients that is tailor made to their particular business needs.

Stephen is known for his calm, friendly manner and also a highly pragmatic approach to legal problems and issues. He is always able to get straight to the nub of issues for his clients, enabling them to quickly move on with running their businesses and not get bogged down with unnecessary legal niceties.

In addition to providing regular support to established businesses, Stephen regularly works with start-ups and growth businesses across a variety of sectors. His wide-ranging legal experience across a variety of business sectors enables him to provide invaluable support to businesses that are in an early stage of their development and growth.

On the franchising side, Stephen leads the team with 25 years' experience in the sector. He has a widely known expertise in the franchising industry and is the Chair of the South West and Wales branch of Encouraging Women into Franchising (EWIF). The firm is also an affiliate member of the British Franchise Association.

Stephen also works extensively in the Housing Association and charitable sector advising on a range of corporate and also governance issues.

Stephen is a regular speaking and writer in relation to a wide range of legal topics including radio and television appearances.

"Wall Colmonoy has worked very closely with Stephen Thompson at Darwin Gray for several years. Stephen has taken the time to gain a good understanding of our business and its commercial legal needs. Stephen is very responsive to any request for legal advice or council and has always proven to be a reliable and dependable business partner. Stephen has worked closely with the senior management team at Wall Colmonoy to develop robust commercial agreements and contracts which have helped us reinforce the professional standards and commercial strength at Wall Colmonoy" – Wall Colmonoy Ltd

Recent work

- Advising a housing association in relation to a variety of corporate governance issues
- Advising a housing association in relation to the formation of a commercial subsidiary
- Advising a variety of franchisors in relation to dealing with franchisee disputes
- Advising on and drafting a commission agreement for a property broking company
- Advising on and forming a group company structure for a business advisory company
- Conducting IP audit for a networking franchise
- Drafting and update franchise agreements for a variety of franchisor companies
- Investment into a Welsh company producing computer systems and real-time graphics for quiz and light entertainment programmes
- MBO of a local renowned fine foods company
- Purchase of a local estate agency from administrators

- Purchase of an engineering business from administrators
- Regular commercial support to inhouse counsel for an IT company
- Regular reviews of master service agreement for a life sciences company
- Sale of a large nursing home based in South Wales
- Sale of a leading clean air solutions company for £2.5m
- Sale of a local engineering company
- Sale of a national freight business by the administrators
- Sale of an insurance brokerage for £0.5m
- Significant early funding round for a Welsh cutting-edge AI risk management company

Expertise

Corporate

- Agency and distribution agreements
- Consultancy agreements
- Corporate governance and directors' duties
- Debt and equity investment
- Group company restructures
- Joint venture agreements
- Lending and security documents
- LLP and partnership agreements
- MBOs
- Pre-packs
- Share and asset sales
- Shareholders' agreements

Commercial

- Assignment and licensing of IP
- Commercial contract reviews
- Competition
- Framework agreements
- Franchise agreements
- Freedom of Information
- GDPR and data protection
- IP Audits
- IT agreements
- Non-disclosure agreements
- Procurement
- Training
- Trust deeds

Career

Experience

- Partner, Darwin Gray - 2004 - present
- Associate then Partner, Gimblett Williams, 1999 - 2004
- Solicitor, Pinsent Curtis, 1997 - 1998
- Solicitor, Morgan Bruce, 1993 - 1996
- Trainee Solicitor, Morgan Bruce, 1991 - 1993

Education

- Hutton Grammar School
- University of West England

Membership

- Member of the Data Protection Society

- Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Affiliate of the British Franchise Association
- Regional Chair of EWIF South West and Wales Branch