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David McGowan
General Insurance
Manager
Woodward Markwell

I am 45 Years of Age, married with 3 kids. I started work with RSA in Watford in 1991 as an Underwriter before moving to The Independent and Ace Insurance. I moved to the 'dark side' 15 years ago and started my new working life as an Insurance Broker, which I love. I am a Chartered Insurance Broker after getting my ACII accreditation 3 years ago. Recently I've been involved in a staff buyout of Woodward Markwell and I am one of 4 directors who will run the company. My interesting fact is that I was a TV extra on Grangehill (which celebrates its 40th Anniversary this year).



Craig Younger
Commercial Exec
Castle Insurance

I am 29 years old and that is the same time period as my insurance career. I was born into the insurance world through my parent's business and even my grandparents before them were involved in insurance broking. So as seems to be the familiar pattern, the insurance profession chose me although I did attempt to forge an alternative route with a university degree in business management and stints with the local authority in various functions. After fulfilling a number of roles at Castle Insurance since 2012, from the very basic office junior work right up to today in the Commercial Executive and sales role I have a good understanding of the inner workings of the brokerage and I am working towards improving my technical knowledge with my CII exams.

My interesting fact is that I won the Insurance Age's Broker Apprentice competition in 2016 sponsored by LV with Mike Crane as our version of Alan Sugar.



Colin Mullan
Managing Director
Find Insurance (NI)

Find Insurance (NI) is a family owned business based in N. Ireland. We have one branch and currently employ 38 staff. Our business is experiencing strong organic growth over the last couple of years. My background is actually in IT, having done a degree in Computer Science and worked as an IT engineer for 8 years before joining this business 7 years ago. Coming from a non-insurance background has definitely been a benefit to me and given me a different outlook on how to run the business.

I am married with three children, all girls, aged six, four and one. I'm into all sports although the most exertion I have nowadays is golf.

My interesting fact is in 2017 Find became only the 3rd brokerage in the UK to offer an exclusive Commercial Drone Insurance policy

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Andy Payne
National Business Development Manager
Northcott Beaton

I joined Northcott Beaton in 2010 from a customer service background, I have progressed through the ranks from Account Executive on the Commercial team to heading up the legal indemnities & niche products team. I work closely with the sales and product development teams to ensure the products that Northcott Beaton provide have a market. I'm tasked with creating new business relationships and specialize in niche property and solicitor related products

Keiron Northcott, Commercial Director at Northcott Beaton, is my father in law and with my wife, Clare also in the business, the succession plan is in place. In my spare time I can be found on the badminton court.

My interesting fact is I'm an avid rugby fan supporting Exeter Chiefs



Samantha Todd
Head of Private Clients
Saffron Insurance

I started within the industry in 1991, working for Provincial Insurance as a Sales co-ordinator. Taking a change of direction I entered into broking in 1997 via The Davis Group before moving to Saffron Insurance Brokers in 2012. My current role is Head of Private Clients and support of our branch network. Saffron are an East Anglian based broker, currently with 11 offices.

I am married with a daughter and my interesting fact is my hobby singing 4-part harmony Acapella. I sing in both a quartet and for a large chorus. The chorus have previously competed in Hawaii and at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, with a 3rd trip to St Louis this coming October.



Warren Baldwin
Associate Director
Berns Brett

Like most people I fell into insurance. Having been away for the week I returned home to a number of letters giving me dates for interviews, which confused me a little as I had not applied for any jobs. It appears my mum had taken it upon herself to send my CV out to potential employers. One of those companies was Royal Insurance and the rest is history. Still to this day, I am not sure if I should thank her or disown her...

For the past 20 years I have worked for Berns Brett (BBi), who are a 50 year old top 100 provincial broker. BBi have a number of offices in the UK, UAE and India. I am responsible for the UK commercial income, along with the H&S side of the business. We are a generalist and our clients range from a single tradesman to a property owner with over 100,000 properties.

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Alec Cole
Director
Venture Insurance

I started my career 22 years ago at NatWest Insurance Services and then subsequently John Lampier & Son in 2001, an independent broker in Bristol. Lampiers eventually sold the business to the Jelf Group in 2007. 4 of my Lampier colleagues left the group in 2011 to set up Venture Insurance Brokers and I joined them a year later. There is now 24 of us, which includes an acquisition we made in 2017.

The most enjoyable part of the job has always been working closely with my clients and developing long terms relationships, but being the youngest of 5 directors, the intention is for me to have more day to day involvement within the business, as times goes on.



Tracey Mercer
Director & Account Exec
Smith Robinson Ltd

I joined the Firm in 1996 straight from school as the Office Junior. I did my insurance apprenticeship and have obtained my Cert CII qualifications. I am currently on with my Diploma in insurance. I can honestly say I love my job and the people I work with. My co Directors have always been supportive of me and my ambitions and have helped and encouraged me to be the Broker I am, they have provided me with the assistance, support and guidance to be where I am today a Director and Shareholder. I am a wife to Craig who I have also been with since 1996, we have one Son called Elliott and dog called Merlin.

My interesting fact is I used to be a Girl Scout! Yes Scout not Girl Guide! In fact, I was one of the 1st Girl Scouts in Yorkshire.



Matt Smith
Account Exec
T L Dallas

For my sins, I have worked in the insurance industry for over 16 years fulfilling a number of roles – claims handler, account handler, broking manager and account executive as well as being heavily involved in managing insurer relations. I've worked for TL Dallas for approaching seven years having spent almost a decade with another reasonably sized independent broker before it was purchased by a consolidator. Having been through an acquisition by one of the big brokers, I see the increased consolidation activity in the broking arena as a real opportunity, personally and for the remaining independent brokers, and I'm excited about how we can take advantage of this.

Away from insurance, I am married with four children – two girls and two boys – which by default makes me a part time taxi driver, football referee, rugby coach and dance cheerleader! When I do get a spare moment I'm an avid film fan, fading amateur footballer and wannabe golfer. My interesting fact is – when I was a child I was once an extra in the TV programme 'A Touch Of Frost' with David Jason - it was filmed round the corner from where I lived in Leeds!

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Sarah Giles
Director
Newstead Insurance
Brokers

My name is Sarah Giles and I'm a Director at Newstead Insurance Brokers based in Birmingham. After leaving school I took a job in brokering as a stop gap before I started nursing college and the rest is history. I have worked in the industry for over 25 years.

I am also a mom of two boys, have a husband and a dog – all of which are male so you can probably appreciate I go to work for a rest.

I am a bit of a gym fanatic attending six days a week. My interesting fact is that I am a qualified personal trainer (which I do in my spare time)



Adam Kellaway
Technical Director &
Global Account Exec
Basil Fry

Basil Fry is a specialist brokers for the Removals, Storage and Self-Storage industries based in Leatherhead, Surrey. The company was started by Basil Fry himself in 1970 and has since been subject to three MBOs, the most recent of which being completed in July 2017. I started working for the company in July 2006, aged 18, and spent my first few years in part-time/evening study obtaining a first-class undergraduate degree in Insurance and CII qualification. After almost six years at the company I left to join the Marsh Energy Practice as an Offshore Energy Client Executive. I moved into underwriting in 2014, joining the Offshore Energy team at QBE. In 2016 the opportunity arose to re-join Basil Fry, with the intention of being part of the upcoming MBO and I returned to the company in May 2016. Our headcount is currently 40, we have around 1,500 clients ranging from new start-ups to large PLCs, we place around £13m GWP annually and adjust around 4,000 claims per annum under various delegated authorities.

My interesting fact is I once passed out during a skydive freefall.



Ben Cue
Director of Operations
Comfort

I joined the family business in 1995, whilst on summer break from college awaiting the start of the university year. My parents suggested that it would be good to gain experience in an office environment (in addition to the 2-part time jobs I was doing). I came into the business on a temporary basis but enjoyed it so much I decided not to go to university. I started work as an office junior, then quickly progressed to junior sales clerk and progressed to Senior Sales Underwriter for all of the Schemes. I am in charge of all IT technology issues ensuring that we remain at the forefront of innovations of the insurance industry. The business has grown from a small 7 person operation to now having over 30 employees.

I am married with two beautiful girls aged 10 and 8 and enjoy keeping fit. The family and I partake in cycling, running and swimming and when possible.

My interesting fact is I enjoy the odd game of golf.

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Dean Bennett
Managing Director
Chubb Insurance Ltd

I am Dean Bennett of Chubb Insurance Brokers based in Bournemouth on the Sunny South Coast. Chubb Insurance Brokers are independently owned and have been arranging insurance since 1982. The business was started by Chris Chubb and remains under his direct management. We control Premiums of just over £3 Million split 75% Commercial and 25% Personal Lines. I became a director in 2013 and have been MD for just over 4 months now.

My interesting fact is my 3 Big Fears...Heights , Public Speaking and Snakes!



Jenny Hyde
Scheme Manager
Stanmore Insurance Brokers

My name's Jenny Hyde and I'm the Scheme Manager at Stanmore Insurance Brokers based in Bolton. I currently run the operational side of dot2dot which is our specialist nursery insurance scheme. I've had many job titles at Stanmore including Administrator, Account Handler, Account Exec through to my current role. As my Mum's the Boss I started out as "Chief Filer, Photocopier and Brewer-Upper" when I was 13. My favourite part of the job is staff development, I enjoy seeing people reach their potential.

Outside of work I enjoy playing volleyball – lots of volleyball. My interesting fact is my dream job (aside from insurance) is to be a Guinness World Record Adjudicator, they must see all sorts.



Martin Kent-Heath
Commercial Exec
Bentley

My name is Martin Kent-Heath of Bridge insurance brokers, based in Manchester. I am a client service executive within the FlatGuard team. We provide specialist cover for blocks of flats throughout the UK.

This is an exciting time for me and one which I know will open many doors and opportunities to aid my career development. A new role and my participation on the inaugural Aviva FLP programme means I am gaining valuable experience, support and access to people who I would not ordinarily meet.

My spare time is taken up by my family, I am married to Rebekah and we have two children, Brooke 11 and Frankie 3. We also have our Pug, Henry. I enjoy watching sport, travelling and reading. My interesting fact is that I do not like odd numbers

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Laurence O'Connor
Managing Director
Financial Affairs Ltd

I am managing director of Financial Affairs Ltd since taking over the position from my father in 2012 at the age of just 27. Working across all areas of the business, I am a familiar face to most of our clients and most likely to be peoples first point of contact at Financial Affairs. I am qualified financial planner with an in depth knowledge of commercial, corporate and personal insurance. My day-to-day focus is the smooth running of both sides of the business, with a keen eye on the future and new ways to drive the company forward. I am also currently President of the Insurance Institute of Blackburn & Burnley looking after our local CII and PFS members in the area.

My spare time is spent with my wonderful wife Jo and my two boys Rory aged three and Freddie who is one.

My interesting fact is I am a massive Burnley FC fan enjoying our time in the premier league.

