

# HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS' BELFAST OFFICE CELEBRATES SEVEN YEARS OF INNOVATION

04 May 2018 | Belfast  
News

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Herbert Smith Freehills' Belfast office, the firm's first dedicated Alternative Legal Services (ALT) hub, marks the seventh anniversary of its launch, and is celebrating growing from a small team of 19 fee earners to a multidisciplinary, global team of around 350.

- Revenue generated by the Belfast office has grown five-fold since 2012
- Currently, ALT works for three-quarters of the firm's "Top 100" clients globally
- ALT became the sixth practice group of the firm on 1 May 2016
- Legal graduates in the ALT Belfast team have won 20 training contracts, since the bespoke scheme was launched in 2012
- Members of the ALT Belfast team have completed over 80 intra-office and client secondments since the Belfast office was launched, travelling to London, Australia and the Middle East

The [Belfast](#) office was established in April 2011 and was the first near-shore operation to be launched by an international law firm. The team initially focused principally on reviewing and analysing the large volumes of documents often found in major contentious work, notably in litigation, arbitration and regulatory investigations. The office has since evolved to provide a full range of innovative products and services across Disputes, Corporate, Finance and Real Estate.

The firm has globalised the approach underpinning the Belfast office into an international operation with lawyers, legal analysts and technologists spread across the network in eight global hubs: Belfast, London, Johannesburg, Shanghai, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. ALT continues to focus on technology enabled, process driven disaggregation of legal services. The ALT Belfast team works closely with ALT colleagues and clients around the firm's network.

In the seven years since Herbert Smith Freehills opened its doors in Belfast, the firm has built up close relationships with a number of local organisations including fostering successful partnerships with Queen's University Belfast, the National Trust, the Prince's Trust, Arts & Business Northern Ireland and Invest NI.

[Lisa McLaughlin](#), Director - UK, US & EMEA (ALT) commented:

*"I am delighted to mark the seventh "birthday" of our Alternative Legal Services (ALT) hub in Belfast. It has been an incredible journey so far and our success is testament to the commitment and the client-centric attitude of our team, as well as the generous support we have received from colleagues in the wider firm. I couldn't be prouder of the way our team members continue to develop, with a relentless focus on innovation and our clients. We look forward to the continuing evolution of our Belfast office over the next seven years and beyond."*

**Brian Dolaghan**, Invest Northern Ireland's Director of Technology & Services said:

*"Warmest congratulations to all at Herbert Smith Freehills on the seventh birthday of their Belfast office. The scale and scope of the operation has evolved beyond expectation thanks to the vision, innovation and professionalism of its Belfast team. Herbert Smith Freehills Belfast has been a catalyst for the growth of Northern Ireland's thriving legal services sector and the firm's experience here has helped inform its global alternative legal services offering. We are proud to be a trusted business partner for such a pioneering firm and wish the Belfast team continued success."*

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## **About ALT in Belfast**

The Belfast office has been able to offer many exciting opportunities to law graduates and qualified lawyers/barristers in Northern Ireland, including international secondments, exposure to high-profile matters and the opportunity to secure a uniquely tailored England & Wales training contract.

In July 2016, Herbert Smith Freehills announced a five-year partnership with Queen's University Belfast. This ground breaking agreement sees the firm sponsoring the Student Hub in Queen's new state of the art School of Law and developing an innovative student engagement and development programme.

The team in Belfast also actively contributes to Herbert Smith Freehills' broad programme of volunteering activities and charitable giving aimed at making an impact on both local and global communities. This has included partnering with local schools to run a Literacy Project, sponsoring the Young Leaders NI conference each year since its inception 7 years ago, fostering collaborative partnerships with local chapters of the National Trust and Prince's Trust, winning two Allianz Arts & Business Northern Ireland Awards and working with colleagues around the firm's global network on an international pro bono project for the charity HelpAge.

## **About Herbert Smith Freehills**

Operating from 27 offices across Asia Pacific, EMEA and North America, Herbert Smith Freehills is at the heart of the new global business landscape providing premium quality, full-service legal advice. The firm provides many of the world's most important organisations with access to market-leading dispute resolution, projects and transactional legal advice, combined with expertise in a number of global industry sectors, including Banks, Consumer products, Energy, Financial buyers, Infrastructure & Transport, Mining, Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare, Real estate, TMT and Manufacturing & Industrials.

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