

# ADDLESHAW GODDARD



## **The business need**

Analysis of our business hours and peaks and troughs in demand highlighted the need for a more agile word processing (WP) resource. The WP team, as it is now structured, is a more flexible, nimble resource that delivers an effective service to all AG's UK and international offices.

## **The approach**

Previously, WP duties were part of the legal secretarial role. In a move to transition secretaries into PA roles and to improve the quality and efficiency of our document production services, a decision was taken to invest further in our in-house capability through the creation of a "Centre of Excellence" for WP in our Manchester office, with some more limited localised support in our Leeds and London offices. Three years ago, office-based roles were relocated to the north and over a third of the team were based permanently at home.

Team members work a combination of full-time and part-time arrangements, home working, flexible capacity working and split shifts to ensure the correct level of cover at all times. When demand is high, those who work from home may log on outside their contracted hours to support the wider team - for which they are paid or given time off in lieu.

The flexible design and set up of the team has proven to have benefits from both a service delivery and employee engagement perspective.

## **The results**

### **• Better alignment to client demand**

The variety of working patterns and shifts accommodated within the team has meant that we are able to provide support across all our offices in the UK and internationally, including during evenings and weekends. It means that we are able to direct resource to the days and times when we are most likely to be busy.

In addition, our ability to serve our clients internationally is becoming increasingly important as our firm expands. The WP team support this requirement with their ability to respond to requests at any time, ensuring the AG service is seamless across the globe and different time zones.



### **• Increased productivity of team and commercial benefits**

It is also estimated that the productivity of the home working team has increased by 15-20% - we believe this is because there are fewer distractions for employees based at home and work is channelled through a centralised system, resulting in fewer phone calls for individuals to deal with.

Home workers tend to be more able, and willing, to work additional hours to cover spikes in demand or work required over the weekend or during anti-social hours. Moving office-based employees to working from home has also meant a reduction in overheads and a corresponding increase in office space.

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- **Attracting talent and employee engagement**

Recruiting employees who work from home has meant that we have been able to source workers from across the UK, and not only within the locality of our offices - as a result, we are able to recruit from a much wider talent pool.

Levels of engagement and motivation amongst our home workers tend to be high as they have a working pattern which allows them to combine their work and family commitments more easily. Since we restructured the team to have a higher proportion of home workers, the rate of absence amongst this group is one of the lowest across the firm. On average, those in the team who work from home have an absence rate which is around 50% lower than those in the team who work in the office.

- **Up-skilling employees**

To support a disperse team and ensure the working agreements are suitable for all, we have up-skilled our managers in remote management techniques. We have also found ways to involve home workers and bring them into the office from time to time to help build a strong team and prevent a feeling of isolation amongst colleagues working remotely.

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**Business benefits realised:**

Better alignment to client demand;  
increased productivity and efficiency  
of team; increased motivation and  
reduced absenteeism amongst  
colleagues

**Business metrics demonstrating  
value:**

15-20% increase in team's  
productivity  
50% reduction in absenteeism  
amongst home workers