

thrivelaw
where people matter



IN ASSOCIATION WITH SOVEREIGN HEALTH CARE
THRIVE PEOPLE SUMMIT
THE FUTURE OF WORK

Join the conversation: [ThrivePeopleSummit](#)



Welcome

I'm so excited to welcome you to this year's Thrive People Summit in association with Sovereign Health Care. Today, we gather under the theme of "The Future of Work"—a concept that grows more dynamic and inspiring as our workplaces evolve.

This Summit is an opportunity to come together, share insights, and focus on people-first strategies that drive positive and lasting change in the workplace.

At Thrive Law, we believe in fostering inclusive environments where everyone can show up as their true selves and in turn can thrive!

Today's agenda reflects our dedication to this mission, from discussions on supporting modern parenting and diverse beliefs in the workplace to exploring psychological safety, supporting all of our people's needs in an inclusive manner, and examining the role of AI in team dynamics. Through each session, we'll engage with the pressing topics that shape the future of work, from inclusivity and well-being to authenticity and legal insights.

This event wouldn't have been possible without our sponsors. We would like to extend a huge thanks to our incredible sponsors: Sovereign Health Care, Sarah McKenna HR, and Enriched Leadership. Their support has been invaluable in bringing this event to life.

We wanted this event to be as accessible as possible, and this wouldn't be possible without the sponsorship, this means we can donate 100% of the ticket sales from today's People Summit, to Smart Works, Leeds. Your contributions will help empower women to return to employment with confidence, providing them with professional attire, coaching, and support to make a meaningful change in their lives and in term meaning more women get back to work making our workplaces much more inclusive. So - thank you!

Our hope is that today inspires new ideas, meaningful connections, and a deeper commitment to creating workplaces where people can truly thrive.

Thank you for joining us on this journey, and I encourage you to make the most of the day—participate fully, get tagging on social media, embrace the knowledge shared, and enjoy the chance to connect with others who share our vision.

Have a fabulous day everyone.

Jodie Hill
Managing Partner, Thrive Law

thrive law
where people matter

Agenda

09:15 AM: Arrivals

09:30 AM: Welcome and Introductions.

Jodie Hill, *Founder and Managing Partner at Thrive Law*, **Councillor, Abigail Marshall Katung**, *Lord Mayor of Leeds* and **Andy Dodman**, *Assistant Chief Executive and Chief People Officer at Leeds City Council*.

09:40 AM: An Introduction to Smart Works.

Learn more about the work of our charity partner Smart Works Leeds and what the employment landscape looks like for women in West Yorkshire. **Tracy Fletcher**, *Chair, Smart Works Leeds*.

09:45 AM: Benefits of Better Ergonomics in the Workplace.

Explore the benefits of better workplace ergonomics, including HSE DSE compliance, occupational health assessments for diverse needs and sensory rooms.

Karim Samani, *Managing Director, WellbeingandErgonomics*.

10:00 AM: Psychological Safety & Wellbeing.

Exploring how to foster a mentally healthy workplace environment.

James Sullivan, *Account Executive* and **Vicky Fytche**, *Wellbeing Lead, Champion Health*.

10:30 AM: Connected Teams: Transforming Performance through People and AI.

Explore how we can harness the power of human connection to build thriving teams and organisations. You'll learn about people-centred strategies to boost engagement, enhance performance, and ultimately create inclusive workplaces where both individuals and businesses can flourish.

Luke McKeever, *CEO, Thomas International*.

11:00 AM: Break.

11:15 AM: Panel Discussion: Supporting Modern Parenting in the Workplace.

Emma Menzies, *Fertility at Work Coach and Consultant, Ready Steady Coach*, **Michelle Rawlings**, *Head of Agency, One Adoption West Yorkshire*, **Charlotte Speak**, *Founder Power of the Parent* and **Tom Stenner-Evans**, *Partner, Thrive Law*.

12:30 PM: Lunch.

01:30 PM: Experience AI in Action: Unlocking Team Connection and Collaboration.

An exciting exploration of how Thom AI is reshaping the way we understand people and enhance team dynamics. In this interactive session, you'll experience Thomas' innovative Connection platform, designed to provide deeper insights into individual and team strengths to enhance inclusion, engagement, and collaboration. Gillian and Luke will showcase a real-world example, followed by a hands-on opportunity to experience the tool for yourself, and see how it can help you enhance connection, respect and understanding in the workplace.

Gillian Ward, *CPO* and **Luke McKeever**, *CEO of Thomas International*.

02:00 PM: Beliefs in the Workplace: Can You Really Say What You Think in the Workplace?

Insights into navigating gender identity, religious and political beliefs in the workplace and its legal implications.

Oscar Davies, *Barrister, Garden Court Chambers*.

02:30 PM: Authenticity: From Corporate to Cool via Burnout.

Hear a personal journey of self-discovery, learn how to connect with your authentic self, an interactive session designed to boost your confidence by 46%.

Michelle Hartley, *Founder, People Sorted*.

02:45 PM: Break.

03:00 PM: Employment Law Updates You Need to be Aware of.

Insights into the latest employment law updates and what they mean for your business.

Alicia Collinson, *Senior Associate* and **Ashmina Vekaria**, *Associate Solicitor, Thrive Law*.

03:15 PM: Roundtable Discussions: Hot Topics In HR.

Interactive roundtables on issues such as intergenerational working, hybrid models, and neurodiversity.

04:30 PM: Networking & After Party.

Unwind and continue conversations in a relaxed setting at Dirty Martini



Jodie Hill
Founder and Managing Partner, Thrive Law

Jodie Hill is a neurodivergent solicitor, ED&I consultant, training provider, author, and campaigner, who is passionate about employment law, mental health and wellbeing, equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) and neurodiversity. Jodie qualified as a barrister and was called to the bar in 2010 and later cross-qualified to become a solicitor in 2013. Following her mental breakdown in 2017, which she now calls her “mental breakthrough,” Jodie founded Thrive Law in 2018, the first UK law firm with wellbeing and mental health at its core.



Today, Thrive Law, based in Leeds with teams in London and the Southwest, offers employment law support, HR services, training, coaching and consultancy, both nationally and internationally with an aim to creating neuroinclusive environments where everyone can be their truest selves.

Recognised by the SRA, The Law Society, and ACAS, Jodie has received numerous prestigious awards for contributions to mental health, wellbeing, ED&I and social mobility in addition to the accomplishments of Thrive Law for excellence in employment law. Jodie is a frequent media contributor on platforms like Sky News and BBC, she is also a sought-after speaker at conferences on law, HR, and neurodiversity, known for her engaging style and ability to simplify complex topics.



Andy Dodman
Assistant Chief Executive and Chief People Officer, Leeds City Council

Andy Dodman is the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief People Officer at Leeds City Council, the second largest local authority in the UK. He is responsible for its large and diverse workforce, and its digital, change and business support functions. He is a board member of the Public Sector People Managers Association.



Andy moved into local government in 2019 following a successful career at The University of Sheffield. At Sheffield he was the Director of Human Resources and more recently its Chief Operating Officer.

Andy has consistently appeared in HR Magazine’s Most Influential List for the past decade and contributes to a range of national publications including People Management and HR Magazine, and recently presented at CIPD’s annual national conference. Outside of work he is an avid runner, a reluctant cyclist and a struggling swimmer.



Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung
The Lord Mayor of Leeds 2024-25

Abigail is the 130th Lord Mayor of Leeds and the first African Lord Mayor to represent the city. Born in Nigeria, she moved to the UK to study at the University of Leeds and as of January 2024 is a governor at the Leeds City College, trustee of Age UK, Caring Together and Co-Chair of the David Oluwale Memorial Association. She became a Councillor in 2019 representing the Little London and Woodhouse Ward which is one of the most culturally diverse wards in the Leeds area where over 82 languages are spoken. Abigail has chosen to support Leeds Community Foundation during her term of office to raise awareness for a fair and inclusive Leeds. In her spare time she is an avid athlete and coach, specialising in sprinting.





Tracy Fletcher
Chair, Smart Works Leeds

Tracy is the Chair of Smart Works Leeds, a women’s employability charity, helping their clients back into work. A banker by profession, Tracy spent 20 years with HSBC, undertaking a number of senior leadership roles. For the last 16 years she has headed up a successful recruitment company specialising in Financial Services.

A passionate advocate for women, Tracy also sits on the Board of the HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter, a voluntary organisation supporting Financial Services companies to achieve their targets for female representation at Board level.

In her spare time you will find her spending time in nature, walking her dog or reading a good murder mystery!



Karim Samani
Managing Director, WellbeingandErgonomics

Karim Samani is the managing director of the multi-award-winning business, WellbeingandErgonomics. The aim and purpose of the businesses are to improve employee’s quality of life in the workplace through ‘better ergonomics practices’ and keeping businesses aligned with the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) DSE (Display Screen Equipment) compliance and law.

Many employees working from home and in the workplace suffer from Musculoskeletal issues due to poor ergonomic practices, resulting in an increase in absenteeism, costs and reduced productivity.

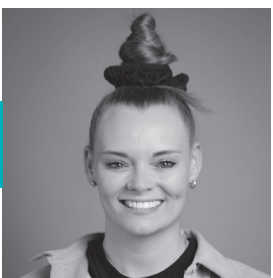
Our biggest concern is the self-diagnosis of critical conditions such as ADHD, Mental Health other medical conditions, which are impacting many workplaces today. This is where WellbeingandErgonomics products and services become important for your business. To protect your businesses, we advise you how to deal with the situation correctly from day one and what lawful reasonable adjustments to be made through Occupational Health Assessment for a safe return of employees to work. Saving your business from lengthy and costly tribunal cases.

We are the A-Z of office ergonomics, and we do it with passion, kindness and love for what we do.



James Sullivan
Account Executive, Champion Health

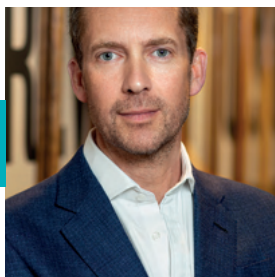
Former senior education leader turned wellness advocate, James channels years of coaching and management expertise into empowering individuals and teams on their journey to holistic health. Passionate about reducing the stigma around men’s mental health, he’s dedicated to creating lasting impact and driving positive change.



Vicky Fytche
Wellbeing Lead, Champion Health

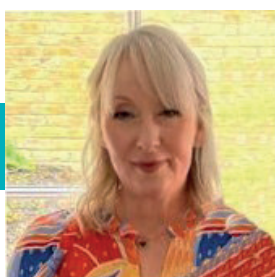
Vicky has spent 10 years working with global organisations, creating workplace wellbeing strategies driven by data and insights. Focusing on business health and employee happiness, Vicky collaborates closely with people managers to ensure they have the resources and education to support their team’s wellbeing during periods of high demand.





Luke McKeever
CEO, Thomas International

As a Psychology graduate and a passionate believer in the power of teamwork, Luke McKeever has built and grown several international AI and technology businesses, both in the private and public sectors. Currently, Luke serves as Chief Executive Officer at Thomas. Thomas empowers thousands of customers globally to harness the combined power of people science and AI to make data-driven, inclusive recruitment and development decisions. By leveraging the insights from Thomas profiles, used in over 65 countries each year, businesses are able to match individuals with the right roles and teams. This fosters meaningful connections, cultivates diverse talent, and enables people to thrive and contribute purposefully in their work.



Gillian Ward
Chief People Officer at Thomas

Gillian Ward, Chief People Officer at Thomas, joined the company in May 2020. Gillian leads the charge in reinforcing Thomas' strong company culture and delivering a people strategy that supports rapid growth. Together with her team, she oversees the full employee life cycle globally and champions the use of Thomas insights throughout Thomas' own recruitment, retention, and development processes.



With over 30 years of experience in people-related roles across a variety of sectors and industries, both public and private, Gillian has consistently focused on innovative employee engagement strategies. Her passion lies in helping organisations build cultures of trust, transparency, and autonomy. A Chartered Fellow of the CIPD, Gillian lives in Hampshire.

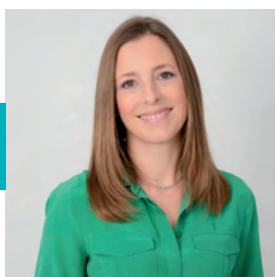


Tom Stenner-Evans
Partner, Thrive Law

Tom's job title is 'Dad'. He is an expert in voicing characters from Bluey and Paddington, and he has over 5 years' experience of building dens out of duvets and dining room chairs. He is known in the industry for the quality of his marble runs.



Around those key responsibilities, he finds time to work with clients to help improve their HR offering and People Culture. In particular, he enjoys working with those organisations who are furthering a worthwhile cause and who are committed to establishing an inspiring and inclusive workplace culture. Tom is a vocal advocate of gender equality at work and speaks regularly about the vital role men need to play in lifting women up in the workplace. He doesn't like formal dress codes, 'working lunches' or fake wellbeing initiatives, and would like to see more women in leadership positions.



Emma Menzies
Fertility at Work Coach and Consultant, Ready Steady Coach

Emma Menzies is a Fertility at Work Coach and Consultant. Through a combination of coaching, speaking, and policy and strategy guidance, she helps individuals manage the impact of fertility challenges on their career, and organisations manage fertility in their workplace.



Previously, Emma was an Employment Lawyer. She worked for Eversheds Sutherland LLP, then Marks and Spencer plc, and spent over 13 years advising HR professionals and business leaders on career and workplace issues. Meanwhile, Emma struggled with the impact of fertility challenges on her own career. She utilised the power of coaching to manage this, which inspired her to qualify as a coach herself, and set up her business, Ready Steady Coach.

Emma now combines her personal and professional experience to help others receive the support with fertility at work issues which, for her, had been lacking. After an 11 year fertility journey, she is also a mum to her daughter.



Michelle Rawlings
Head of Agency, One Adoption West Yorkshire

Michelle has a degree in Applied Social Sciences and Diploma in Social Work obtained in 2003. Post qualification she worked as a children’s social worker within a Local Authority before moving to work in a local authority adoption team in 2007. Michelle holds the Post Qualifying Award in Social Work and a CMI Level 5 Certificate in Leadership & Management. In 2010 Michelle spent 12 months as a part-time lecturer for a social work degree course. Michelle became an adoption manager in 2012. Michelle became Head of One Adoption West Yorkshire in 2021.



Charlotte Speak
Founder, Power of the Parent

Charlotte Speak is a mum of two, change maker and coach for parents in the workplace, and avid theme park explorer. Charlotte set up Power of the Parent® in 2018 after her own dodgy experiences of becoming a parent in the workplace. Those experiences changed her for life and left her feeling hell bent on changing the world of work for parents and carers.

We don’t stop developing if we have a family, it’s not ‘special’ treatment to support parents in the workplace and line managers can play such a pivotal role for their teams, they deserve some help too. With wildly different family set ups and different routes to parenthood, it’s never been more important to have cracking policies that meet people in their lived experiences.

You’ll now find her leading a small but wonderful team to collaborate with businesses who want to attract, retain and develop their utterly brilliant team members who happen to be parents or carers. Charlotte is a creator of transformational parent and carer support strategies with a practical edge - leaving organisations and valued team members empowered and being able to feel psychologically safe in the workplace.

To explore more insights on the Power of the Parent, tune into their podcast, listen on all major podcast platforms: Power of the Parent Podcast.



Oscar Davies
Barrister, Garden Court Chambers

Oscar Davies is an award winning barrister at Garden Court Chambers and a leading figure in employment and human rights law. Oscar is ranked as a Tier 1 ‘Rising Star’ for employment in the Legal 500 and frequently advocates for clients in the employment tribunal, employment appeal tribunal and Court of Appeal.

Oscar is recognised as the first publicly acknowledged non-binary barrister in the UK and has been a trailblazer in representing trans and non-binary clients across various civil and public law sectors. Oscar’s work as a barrister is a gateway to their activism in trans issues and climate related strategic litigation.

Their impressive accolades include winning ‘LGBTQ+: Champion of the Year’ at the Legal 500 ESG Awards 2024 and being nominated for ‘DE&I: Rising Star of the Year’ at the same awards.

Oscar was also nominated as one of the ‘Top 10 Outstanding Contributions to LGBT+ Life’ by the British LGBT Awards 2022 and was a finalist in this year’s Advocate’s awards category Young Pro Bono Barrister of the Year’. Oscar was recently featured by Evening Standard Magazine guest edited by Donatella Versace as one of the Unsung Heroes of the LGBTQ+ community.





Michelle Hartley
Founder of Awesome/Chief Geek Officer, People Sorted

Michelle has a unique and authentic style, and is often called a breath of fresh air in the HR world!

When she speaks at events, Michelle takes a positive, engaging and energetic approach and likes to really get the audience energised with her talks to fire them back up!

Michelle regularly speaks about her lived experience with burnout, mental health, women in the workplace and is a passionate advocate for her 'micro' concepts in both inclusion and self care.

She works with organisations on a wide range of topics including Equity, Diversity, Belonging and Inclusion, Insights Discovery, HR and Team Building.

Michelle is best known for her wry and real take on HR in organisations and she can often be found bringing sarcasm, laughter and a good dose of reality on LinkedIn.



Alicia Collinson
Senior Associate, Thrive Law

Alicia Collinson is a Senior Associate at Thrive Law. Alicia also volunteers for the Maternity Action helpline and leads Thrive's partnership with Pregnant Then Screwed in supporting new mothers in their discrimination issues. She also regularly delivers training sessions as part of the Agora Publications Mental Health Adviser Workshops and appeared on stage alongside ACAS at the MAD World Summit 2023, discussing Mental Health and Reasonable Adjustments.



Her training style is personal and relatable, and she very much believes that there is no such thing as a stupid question. As such, Alicia is easy to talk to and explains complicated issues and matters in a straightforward way.



Ashmina Vekaria
Associate Solicitor, Thrive Law

Ashmina, who is better known as "Ash", is a London-based Solicitor with a keen interest in discrimination, particularly disability discrimination, supporting both employers and employees through complex disability discrimination issues. It was a natural choice for Ash to join Thrive given the firm's values and ethos align with her passion for mental health advocacy and creating inclusive workplaces.



Ash encourages employees to be true to themselves while inspiring employers to adopt forward-thinking approaches for a better workplace culture.

Outside the legal world, Ash can be found hunching or embracing new cultures by jet-setting to new destinations.

Thank You to our Sponsors

We are **grateful to our sponsors** who make this event possible. Their commitment to **workplace excellence** aligns with the values of the Thrive People Summit.

Get to know a bit more about each of them here:



Sovereign Health Care Headline Sponsor

Bradford-based Sovereign Health Care is one of the UK's leading health care cash plan providers. They work with hundreds of businesses, from SMEs to some of the largest employers in the region, to help support their employees' health and wellbeing. Sovereign's range of cash plans are designed to pay out towards everyday health costs such as dental treatment, glasses/contact lenses, physiotherapy and much more, and support emotional wellbeing through confidential counselling services. Other perks of Sovereign membership include access to a 24/7 GP service and online and high street discounts. Companies also have access to free health and wellbeing resources to use within their business.

Sovereign Health Care believes better health is for everyone — regardless of where you live or work, the job you do, age or any existing health conditions. They also make a real difference to people's lives through their Community Programme and, in the last 10 years, have donated over £7.7 million to health and wellbeing good causes, including £2.3 million to Yorkshire NHS Trusts.



SARAH McKENNA
HR RECRUITMENT

Sarah McKenna HR Supporting Sponsor

We're thrilled to be sponsoring Thrive Law's People Summit: The Future of Work! At Sarah McKenna HR, people are at the heart of everything we do, and it's our mission to help organisations find the best HR talent to support their growth. We specialise in recruiting HR professionals at all levels, from graduates to directors, across every industry.

Our approach is simple but effective: we partner with businesses to understand your culture, values and goals to identify and attract the best HR talent for your team. It's about connecting the right people to the right roles in the right organisations for long-term success.

We're dedicated to building lasting, trusted relationships with both clients and candidates, ensuring every step of the recruitment process feels seamless and personalised.

Partnering with Thrive Law feels like a natural fit for us, as we both share a passion for people and creating meaningful connections. We're excited to support this event and continue building a community that champions talent, development, and success in HR!

Join the conversation: [ThrivePeopleSummit](#)





Enriched Leadership Leadership Sponsor

Enriched Leadership operates at the forefront of today's leadership evolution, putting humans at the heart of leading organisations.

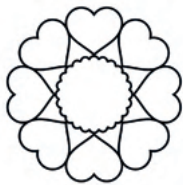
We provide a comprehensive suite of leadership services for leaders dedicated to:

- Achieving their leadership potential
- Building collective leadership capacity
- Developing collaborative, resilient, high-performing teams
- Prioritising the health and wellbeing of their people
- Making a positive difference

We are passionate about empowering individuals and teams to realise their potential, overcome key challenges, and achieve fulfilling success. We seamlessly integrate expert knowledge and experience from across the fields of leadership, strategy, operations, innovation, communication, and design thinking to develop successful leaders. We also provide expert leadership key note presentations for conferences, retreats, and offsites. We are known for delivering practical and actionable insights in an informative and engaging way.

We put health and wellbeing at the heart of every leadership engagement. We are proud to be a member of the Mindful Business Charter and are committed to: addressing the avoidable stresses in working practices, promoting healthier and more effective ways of working, and working across the business community to re-humanise the workplace.

Are you ready to transform your leadership and achieve your full potential?



The Biskery

THE BISKERY®

The Biskery is an online bakery specialising in personalised and branded biscuits.

Founders Saskia & Lisa and team of women make gifting impressive, spread kindness, and make the world a bit sweeter, one biscuit at a time.

They pride themselves in using the best ingredients and eco-friendly packaging. Their signature personalised jam sandwich biscuits are unique, nostalgic and have won a Great Taste award!

Up until this day, every biscuit is made by hand by their in-house team of women.

Lisa and Saskia started The Biskery as a little project in 2016, whilst caring for their young children full time. They initially set out to sell treats from their home countries (Germany & The Netherlands) at local farmers markets. Their digital marketing background quickly opened new doors and opportunities for them, and allowed them to grow and shape the business into what it is today: A profitable, values-led business creating bespoke biscuits for the likes of Meta, The BBC, and Fendi, as well as consumers of all backgrounds and ages!

Rated Excellent on

 Trustpilot



Have you budgeted for employee health & wellbeing in 2025?

Supporting employee health and wellbeing is essential for a productive workplace, but it's not easy when budgets are limited.

From £1.08 per employee, per week, Sovereign Health Care cash plans cost-effectively support physical and mental health, and have a positive business impact too as they:

- ✓ Can help to reduce absence by supporting faster diagnosis and treatment. They also include access to a 24-hour GP service.
- ✓ Help to meet duty of care requirements through a confidential counselling service.
- ✓ Enhance employee benefits packages to help support retention and recruitment.

We work with hundreds of businesses across Yorkshire and would love to work with yours too. Contact us today!



01274 841127



sovereignhealthcare.co.uk/business



SARAH McKENNA
HR RECRUITMENT

CONNECTING HR TALENT WITH GROWING
BUSINESSES FOR A PERFECT MATCH
OF **SKILLS, VALUES & CULTURE.**



At **Sarah McKenna HR Recruitment**, we specialise in finding exceptional HR talent for businesses across all industries – from Graduate to HR Director level. We believe people are at the heart of every successful organisation, and our role is to introduce impactful HR professionals to your team, who will add real value to your business.



With a strong reputation for connecting businesses with the right people, we make the recruitment process seamless and effective. Think of us as your extended HR team, dedicated to understanding your needs, strengthening your workforce, and driving your business success. We leverage an extensive network of HR professionals and our personalised approach will ensure a perfect fit for your business.

Partner with us for recruitment built on partnership, honesty, support, encouragement, and authenticity.

www.sarahmckennahr.co.uk



ENRICHED LEADERSHIP

Bespoke Leadership Services

Enriched Leadership elevates the performance of leaders committed to leading *resilient* and *high-performing* organisations in a *sustainable* way



richard@enriched-leadership.co.uk

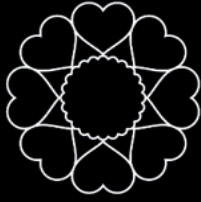
Our Services

- ◆ Performance Power-Up
- ◆ Board Excellence Programme
- ◆ Leadership Team Effectiveness
- ◆ Dynamic Team Workshops
- ◆ Development Programmes
- ◆ Individual Leadership 360
- ◆ Collective Leadership 360
- ◆ Middle-Manager Refresh
- ◆ Decision-Making Accelerator
- ◆ Key Note Presentations

“Enriched Leadership is at the forefront of today’s leadership evolution, putting humans at the heart of leading organisations”



WEBSITE



THE BISKERY®
BESPOKE BISCUITS

High quality
hand-crafted biscuits
for all occasions.
Sustainably made
and packaged.

www.thebiskery.com



**SAVE
THE
DATE**



**Thrive's
7th
Birthday**

Thursday 6th March 2025
Full details to be announced shortly

thrivelaw
where people matter

Unlock the full potential of your people with Thomas



At Thomas, we provide HR and L&D leaders with powerful tools to understand, connect, and empower their teams. Make informed hiring decisions, empower your high performers and better connect your workforce using scientifically robust and inclusive insights.

thomas
assess

Improve hiring accuracy
Onboarding
Leadership development
Talent mobility

thomas
connect

Conflict resolution
Unlock team potential
Team interactions and connection
Team and manager development

We're Thomas. We love people, and we want your people to love working with you. Come chat to us or book a demo so we can show you how it all works.



Tel: 01628 470980

Email: connect@thomas.co

We believe that everyone should be enabled to 'Thrive' in the workplace.

We will work with you to understand your business so that we can offer the best support on your employment law, mental health and wellbeing challenges.



HR

"I can't recommend Jodie and the staff at Thrive Law enough! The best service, I have always used Thrive Law for my business, super easy to get hold of and very professional! I have passed my recommendations on to others and they have all been very impressed with how great Thrive Law is!"

Employment Law

"Jodie and her team are extremely passionate about employment law. Their values and beliefs set them apart from many of the top leading firms. It doesn't matter who you speak to at Thrive you know their values are aligned. Thrives clients aren't just another bill, they really care about each individual client."



Training

"Fantastic company to work with, we had all the company managers on the course for the day with Jodie and can't thank you enough, great service, great value and great results."

0113 869 8101
enquiries@thrivelaw.co.uk
www.thrivelaw.co.uk



@thrive_law

Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: What Employers Need to Know

On 26 October, significant legal changes came into effect in the form of the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023. This sets new standards and expectations around sexual harassment in the workplace. As dedicated advocates for businesses, Thrive Law is here to help you to be proactive in navigating these crucial updates.

What are your obligations?

- ✓ **Proactive prevention.**
- ✓ **Risk assessment.**
- ✓ **Staff training.**
- ✓ **Stricter monitoring and review of procedures.**

The Act imposes a mandatory legal duty on employers to proactively prevent sexual harassment and introduces a new duty for employers to take “reasonable steps” to prevent sexual harassment of employees in the course of their employment. This will be an objective test.

Why is it important?

- **Financial consequences.**
- **Reputational damage.**
- **Extended liability for third party harassment.**
- **Affects recruitment and retention.**

The new legislation and accompanying guidance will impact various aspects of workplace management, including policy updates, mandatory training, reporting mechanisms and employer liability; in addition to building a more comprehensive framework to address workplace misconduct.

Failure to get it right could lead to financial consequences for a business via an uplift in compensation of up to 25% where a claim for sexual harassment is upheld and the Employment Tribunal finds that an employer has not complied with this duty.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (“EHRC”) will also have enforcement powers to investigate potential contraventions, issue unlawful act notices and unlimited fines.

This is an important moment for employers to assess and update internal procedures, aligning with best practices to ensure compliance and cultivate a safer, more inclusive work environment.

Things to consider:

- Do you have an up to date anti bullying and harassment policy?
- Do you have an adequate reporting procedure?
- Do your employees interact with members of the public/suppliers/customers as part of their role?
- Are your managers sufficiently equipped to deal with any reports of sexual harassment?
- Do your current risk assessments need updating?
- How does this link with your current policies practises and training in the business?

Here’s how we are helping clients and businesses:

By addressing these changes proactively, you not only reduce legal risks, but also reaffirm your commitment to workplace integrity and inclusivity. At Thrive Law we have developed a programme of support for Employers to ensure compliance with this new obligation, which can be tailored to the needs of your business.

- 1. Practical Workshop** — working with your HR/ Leadership team to review your existing policies and procedures in line with your business culture.
- 2. Risk assessment** (including report and recommendations);
- 3. Bespoke Manager Training** — building manager confidence and understanding of how to deal with any reports of sexual harassment in line with your business culture and policies;
- 4. All staff training** — ensuring all employees understand their rights and the relevant procedures to be followed.

Find out more

To learn more about the Worker Protection Act you can read our recent blog: <https://www.thrivelaw.co.uk/2024/10/24/the-new-sexual-harassment-provisions-what-employers-need-to-know/>
You can also explore our FAQ guide on key employer obligations under the Worker Protection Act 2023 for a safer workplace: Check it out here: <https://www.thrivelaw.co.uk/understanding-the-worker-protection-act-2023-key-questions-answered/>

Contact Us

These proactive steps can help ensure compliance, support employee rights, and reduce risks under new legislation. Thrive Law is available to assist at every stage—contact us on enquiries@thrivelaw.co.uk for a **no-obligation discussion** on the best ways to protect and prepare your business.

The Employment Rights Bill What's Happening



What can Thrive Law help with?

- Review your Sickness Absence Policies.
- Planning a robust probation period.
- Keep you informed as changes are formalised.
- And everything else below...

What's Changing?

With the exception of the changes to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) which are expected to come in next year, the majority of this legislation is not expected to take effect until 2026. However, when the time comes there will be quite a bit for employers to take in so it is advisable to take advice now and make a start on the appropriate changes to your internal policies and procedures and ensure that staff are sufficiently trained and informed.

This is where Thrive Law can help.

Statutory Sick Pay

- Will be paid for first day of sickness.
- Lower earnings limit (currently £123) will be removed.
- Secretary of State will set SSP as a percentage of pay.
- Expected to come in quite quickly.



Day One Rights

PLAN:

Day one rights for all workers, which will include protection against unfair dismissal, entitlement to parental leave and paternity leave.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS:

- ✓ Potential increase in employment tribunal claims.
- ✓ Higher administrative burden on the employer to ensure compliance from day one.
- ✓ Need for robust onboarding processes and probationary periods.

HOW THRIVE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Review and update onboarding and HR policies and contractual documentation.
- ✓ Implement clear documentation practices from the start of an individual's employment.
- ✓ Train HR and management on the new legal framework.

Zero Hours Contracts

PROPOSAL:

To ban zero hours contracts and replace them with contracts that offer minimum hours.

PLAN:

To introduce laws that ensure workers get reasonable notice of the shifts they are required to work.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS:

- ✓ Need to restructure existing contracts.
- ✓ Potential increase in costs.
- ✓ Reduced flexibility in workforce management.

HOW THRIVE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Review use of any current zero hours contracts and explore alternative contract arrangements if needed.
- ✓ Engage in workforce planning to anticipate future needs and busy periods.
- ✓ Support with people strategy.

Fire and Rehire

PLAN:

Prohibition or restriction of fire and re-hire practices, where employees are dismissed and re-engaged on less favourable terms.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS:

- ✓ Increased risk of litigation.
- ✓ Requirement to scrutinise why changes are being proposed.
- ✓ Limited flexibility to restructure workforce or modify terms of employment.

HOW THRIVE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Evaluate current employment contracts.
- ✓ Consider long-term workforce planning and employee engagement strategies.
- ✓ Seek professional advice before initiating any changes to employment terms.

Flexible Working

PLAN:

Aiming to make this the default option for all workers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS:

- ✓ Necessity to accommodate a range of flexible working arrangements.
- ✓ Increased administrative work to manage flexible schedules.
- ✓ Potential challenges in maintaining productivity and communication.

HOW THRIVE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Review and update flexible working policies.
- ✓ Establish clear guidelines and expectations for remote work and out-of-hours communication.
- ✓ Train managers on the current process for statutory flexible working requests.

Enhanced Maternity Protection

PLAN:

To make it unlawful to dismiss a woman who has had a baby for six months after her return to work, except in specific circumstances.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS:

- ✓ Need for enhanced training and awareness programs.
- ✓ Stricter requirements for policies and reporting mechanisms.
- ✓ Potential for increased claims if workplace culture does not align with legal standards.

HOW THRIVE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Update and enforce anti-discrimination and harassment policies.
- ✓ Provide comprehensive training to all staff.
- ✓ Ensure that reporting procedures are clear, confidential, and accessible.



The Future

Looking into the future of further changes that might come about as there some things which the Labour Party included in their manifesto, but are missing from the Bill are as follows:

- A 'right to switch off', preventing employees from being contacted out of hours, except in exceptional circumstances.
- A requirement for large employers to report their ethnicity and disability pay gap.
- A move towards a single status of worker and transition towards a simpler two-part framework for employment status.
- Shorter time frames to bring claims.
- A comprehensive and strategic review of the parents and carers leave system.

This is all going to be significant – so it's worth having advisers in place!

Preparing Your Business for Upcoming Employment Law Changes

A PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

- Review Staff Handbook and Policies:** Update key policies, including sickness, maternity, and flexible working.

- Implement Day-One Rights Compliance:** Ensure onboarding supports day-one rights for all employees.

- Review Contracts:** Assess any zero-hours contracts, necessary updates, and probationary periods.

- Training:** Train staff on protections for returning mothers, anti-discrimination, and updated policies.

- Prepare for Future Policy Trends:** Stay informed on potential changes, like "right to switch off" and pay gap reporting.

-

-

-

-

These proactive steps can help ensure compliance, support employee rights, and reduce risks under new legislation. Thrive Law is available to assist at every stage—contact us at enquiries@thrive law.co.uk for a no-obligation discussion on the best ways to protect and prepare your business.

Neurodiversity in the Workplace

What is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity refers to the understanding and embracing of individual differences in brain function and behavioural traits as a natural variation within the human population. Research indicates that around 15 to 20 percent of the population are neurodivergent. "Neurodiverse" refers to a community of people whose members are neurodivergent.

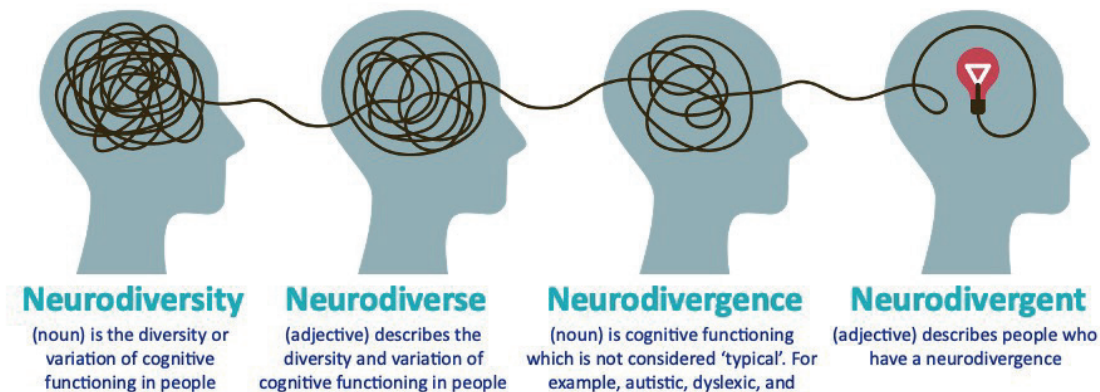
Neurodiversity is an approach to education and ability that supports the fact that various neurological differences are the effect of normal changes and variations in the human genome.

The term encompasses a range of neurological variations, including autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, and other cognitive differences.

By recognising these variations, a workplace can harness the unique strengths and talents that neurodivergent individuals contribute. Building an inclusive culture leads to innovation and neurodiverse teams bring varying perspectives that can catalyse creativity and problem-solving.

Correct Terminology:

Using the correct language



How Thrive Law can help:

At Thrive Law, we are devoted to championing neurodiversity as a crucial means of achieving workplace inclusion.

Training:

We deliver training that educates c-suite executives, managers and teams on the importance of neurodiversity and strategies for support and integration.

Advice and Strategy:

We consult on strategy, adjustment, recruitment, policies and neuro-inclusion so that you can fully integrate neurodiversity **into your ED&I programme**

Neuroinclusion:

We partner with organisations to develop resources to further support neuro-inclusion.

Find out more on Embracing neurodiversity in the workplace by visiting our page: <https://www.thrivelaw.co.uk/neurodiversity-in-the-workplace-training/>

Contact Us

Join us in nurturing an environment where every employee can be their best and truest selves.

Contact us at enquiries@thrivelaw.co.uk to learn more about our commitment to neurodiversity in the workplace and for our reasonable adjustments menu to start your journey towards a more inclusive and innovative future.

70%

struggle with their mental health



30%

increased productivity with diverse teams



15 to 20%

of workers are neurodivergent



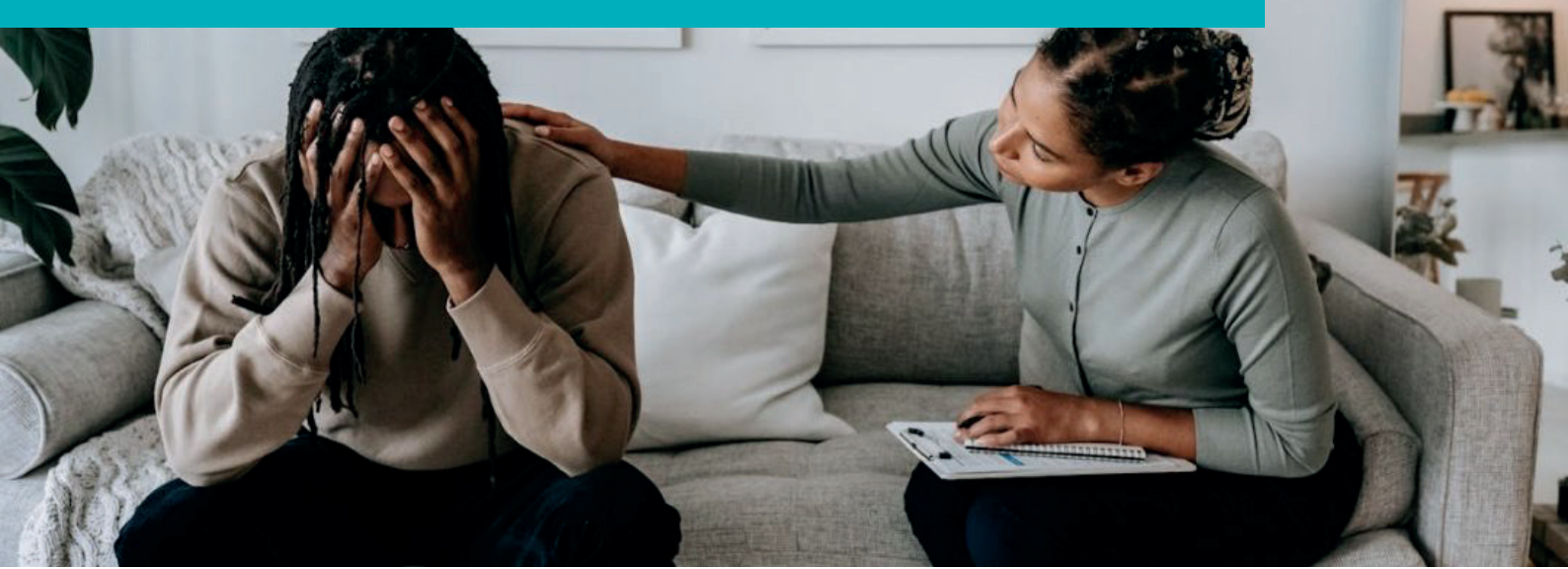
80%

of autistic people may go through burnout



How to Support Employees Experiencing Fertility Challenges

by Emma Menzies | Apr 24, 2024



There's currently no legal obligation to proactively support employees experiencing fertility challenges. But that doesn't mean *it doesn't make good moral and commercial sense to do it. Doing so can positively impact the quality of life of those who are struggling, and the productivity and profitability of the organisation.*

So how do you do it? Here are five steps I recommend you take:

1. Acknowledge that fertility is a workplace issue.

The starting point is to acknowledge that fertility is a workplace issue, including in your workplace.

If you haven't been hearing stories of your employees struggling to manage fertility challenges alongside their work, it doesn't mean it hasn't been happening.

If your workforce is predominantly male, it doesn't mean you're exempt.

We know that 1 in 7 heterosexual couples in the UK experience fertility challenges and the LGBTQ+ community and those who aren't in a relationship need support to create the families they desire too.

We also know that 50% of fertility problems within a heterosexual couple are due wholly or partly to the man. The physical procedures involved in treating infertility may disproportionately affect women, but the mental, emotional, social, and financial toll is often shared by men.

And of course, those trying to create a family tend to be of working age. Apply these stats to your workforce and it will give you a good indication of just how prevalent an issue fertility is in your workplace.

And remember, it isn't a new issue. It's been there for many years, shrouded in silence and stigma. But you can break the silence and break down the stigma, by following the recommendations below.

2. Educate your managers, HR teams and wider workforce.

Once you've acknowledged that fertility is a workplace issue for your workplace, it's a good idea to learn more about it. Inviting *experts to deliver awareness raising sessions to your managers, HR teams and workforce at large, is an engaging and effective way to do this.*

Ideally you want your people to understand who could struggle with fertility challenges, what fertility challenges and treatments can entail, the impact they can have personally and professionally, and crucially, how to talk about these matters and be considerate *towards those affected. Armed with this knowledge, they will have the confidence they need to engage with their colleagues compassionately and effectively.*

3. Offer fertility benefits and support.

Understanding more about fertility challenges and treatments, what they entail, who could be impacted and how they could be *impacted, will also make it easier for you to take the next step of deciding what benefits and support you will offer.*

Your offering may vary depending on whether your employees are engaged in fertility investigations, preservations, or treatments, and whether they're engaged directly or as a supporting partner or intended parent, but you will typically find that the following are most sought after:

- The ability to flex hours, working patterns, work locations, (e.g. allowing working from home), and/or duties, to attend appointments, take medication and manage well-being.
- Time off, paid where possible, to attend fertility related appointments and heal, whether that's physically, mentally, or emotionally.
- Workplace adjustments, such as somewhere to take sensitive calls, store medication which requires refrigeration, and administer injections.
- Access to mental and emotional support, for example coaches and counsellors, especially those with expertise in fertility issues and their intersection with working life.

If you have the budget, then financial assistance with fertility investigations, preservations, and/or treatments, would be a significant additional bonus.

But please don't let a limited budget be an excuse for offering nothing. You're likely to already be paying a price for not supporting your employees with fertility challenges, through reduced productivity, unexpected and unexplained absences, and resignations. Managing flexible working arrangements and anticipated absence for relatively short periods of time, while also providing well-being support, has great potential to lead to a healthier bottom line.

And you won't necessarily need to start from scratch. It's possible you already have policies and other resources, such as employee assistance schemes, and well-being programmes, in place, that you can utilise with a bit of modification.

4. Introduce a Fertility Policy.

Once you know what benefits and support you will offer, it's helpful to set this out in a Fertility Policy.

To be as inclusive as possible, your policy should apply to all your employees, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, or relationship status. So far as possible, it should also cover the different treatments and processes they may be pursuing, and the different capacities in which they may be involved.

Remember, you will need to specify not just what you offer, but how your offering can be accessed.

You will also need to ensure your policy is well promoted, easily accessible, and stored in a sensitive and obvious location — not, for example, appended to a maternity policy. After all, there is no point having a policy if no-one knows about it.

There is also no point having a policy if those who are required to enforce it, don't know how to do it. Your line managers and HR teams will therefore need some guidance in how to use it.

And please remember that this isn't a static document. Keep your policy under review and update it when necessary to ensure it continues to have the desired impact.

Having a policy like this in place will give confidence to managers who are asked to provide support, and ease the sense of burden felt by those seeking support. It will help manage expectations, promote consistency of treatment, and reduce stress on all sides.

5. Create an open, inclusive, and supportive culture.

The above steps will take you a long way with supporting employees experiencing fertility challenges.

But the difference that will really make difference is an open, inclusive, and supportive culture around fertility in the workplace.

Education, benefits, and policy have a vital role in creating this culture, but on their own, they're not enough.

You need to weave positive engagement about fertility challenges into your daily operations.

There are many ways you can do this, for example:

- Appointing independent fertility officers who your employees can turn to for help.
- Establishing fertility networks and/or peer groups which enable employees to be a source of support for each other.
- Celebrating and rewarding supportive action by managers.
- Acknowledging fertility awareness days.
- Supporting fertility charities.
- Engaging with specialists in the fertility industry.

And don't forget that your best asset when it comes to transforming your culture is your people. If you open up the conversation about fertility in your workplace, for example through awareness raising sessions, and you demonstrate commitment to providing support, for example through benefits and policy, you may find you have willing volunteers to be fertility advocates within your organisation. Allow them to share stories, lead communities and provide valuable feedback about your fertility in the workplace strategy. There's no better way to ensure that the action you take to support your employees experiencing fertility challenges, works for them and your organisation.

If you've come to the end of this list and you feel overwhelmed, please remember that you don't need to do everything, all at once. Choose one action, make a start, allow momentum to build, and move forward one step at a time.

And if you would like some support, contact me at emma@readysteadycoach.com. I would be happy to help you implement any of these recommendations in your workplace.

Emma Menzies | 24 April 2024

Copyright © 2024 Emma Menzies t/a Ready Steady Coach

If you enjoyed this blog then you may also be interested in:

The "struggling to become a mother penalty": an under acknowledged blow for gender parity

Upcoming Events

The Employment Rights Bill 2024: What Every Business Needs to Know. Tuesday 19 November, 2024 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM.

The Employment Rights Bill, introduced in October 2024, marks a transformative shift in the UK's work landscape, aiming to enhance worker protections while considering business needs. Key changes include updates to zero-hour contracts and expanded day-one rights, with substantial implications for businesses, especially in terms of unfair dismissal regulations. Join our webinar for an in-depth look at the Bill's critical elements, practical compliance strategies, and how to adapt effectively to these reforms. We'll provide actionable insights to help you navigate these updates and support you in building a resilient, productive workforce.

What You Will Learn:

- Key Provisions of the Employment Rights Bill.
- Immediate Business Impacts.
- Compliance Best Practices.
- Opportunities for Businesses.
- Next Steps and How We Can Help.

By the end of this session, you'll be equipped with the knowledge to confidently adapt your business to meet these new legal standards, protect your organisation from risks, and foster a more engaged and productive workforce.

Sign Up Here: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/d574a9f5-8a47-492d-9005-47f6bc77de2d@294fa279-3e66-42f4-b6dd-20181bf59efb>

What Employers Need to Know About Finances and Diversity. Tuesday 19 November 2024 12.30 PM - 1.15PM.

Join us for the second of this three-part series on employer obligations and financial wellbeing. Carla Hoppe, Founder & CEO of Wealthbrite and Alicia Collinson, Senior Associate Solicitor of Thrive Law as we consider the intersection between financial literacy and diversity.

Be a part of the discussion about:

- How diversity and financial literacy are linked - what data exists and where are the data gaps you need to know about?
- How can you support employees who might face different challenges to you?
- What do inclusive leadership and financial support look like?

Sign up here: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/558ae2ab-6faa-414f-b5f9-6ceef1ad6810@294fa279-3e66-42f4-b6dd-20181bf59efb>

Let's stay connected



 thrive-lawleeds
jodie-hill-lawyer

 thrive_law
iamjodiehill

 thrivelawleeds

 @thrive_law
@iamjodiehill

 0113 869 8101

 enquiries@thrive-law.co.uk

 Visit our
website



Sign up to our monthly newsletter:
If you would like to have more information like what's included in this guide sent straight to your inbox.

thrive law

where people matter

