



Sports

Walker Morris is one of the few firms in the UK that can genuinely offer the complete sports law service.

Our expertise spans the whole spectrum of sports law: from sponsorship deals, commercial partnerships, player/manager negotiations, brand protection and exploitation – through to real estate, sports disciplinary hearings, club acquisitions and corporate restructuring.

OUR PEOPLE

David Hinchliffe

Voted as Finance Monthly's UK Sports Lawyer of the Year for the past four years, David is a renowned football finance expert. He advises wealthy individuals/consortiums looking to acquire football clubs as well as current owners and boards of directors on potential sales. He also advises a number of secured chargeholders and financial institutions on their security over football clubs. He has significant litigious experience including Premier League Arbitrations and appeals to both UEFA and the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Alistair McHenry

Alistair has particular expertise in sports litigation, with notable involvement in Premier League Arbitrations, Premier League Managers' Arbitration Tribunal Proceedings, Football League Disciplinary Commissions, FA Regulatory Commission hearings and disciplinary appeals to the RFU. He advises Premier League Clubs, sports organisations, Chairmen / owners and players on all areas of contentious legal work. He has been seconded to Portsmouth FC.

Katie Reed

Katie advises sports organisations on all general matters such as commercial contracts, sponsorship agreements, and player contracts. She has substantial in house experience having previously been seconded to three premier league football clubs including one year at Manchester City FC. Katie also advises on the sale/purchase of football and rugby clubs, having advised on two Premier League club sales, two Championship club purchases and one Premiership rugby club sale in the last 12 months alone.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Project managing complex deals

Walker Morris advised Premier League football club, Crystal Palace FC, on a major deal to secure a sizeable US investment to develop first-class facilities. The Walker Morris Team acted on behalf of the Club in respect of a deal to allow US businessmen, Josh Harris and David Blitzer and the current Chairman, Steve Parish, to take control of the club in a general partnership structure. This was the only investment of this nature in a Premier League football club since 2013 and demonstrates the national and international reputation that the Walker Morris Team has established within the industry.

Value creators

Walker Morris acted for Eleonora Sport Limited on the sale of its shares in Leeds United Football Club, which completed in May 2017. The deal saw the remaining 50% shares sold to Greenfield Investment Pte Limited, owned by Italian business man Mr Andrea Radrizzani, which saw him take full control of the Club and become Chairman. This high profile transaction reinforced the Team's ability to get the deal done whilst creating a valuable financial foundation on which Leeds United FC could survive and build future success.





Achieving results

Walker Morris provides the complete sports law service for many sports organisations across the UK. One particular example is Crystal Palace FC, where achieving demonstrable results for the client off-the-field in a myriad of commercial, corporate and contractual matters, including advising on its successful High Court claim against its former manager Tony Pulis. With every day-to-day and season-by-season challenge and opportunity for the client, we have a '24/7 availability' mentality to ensure that we fully understand the client's objectives and react quickly. Indeed, Walker Morris is an integral part of the team in this results-driven business.

Supporting business goals

The Walker Morris Sports Group was instructed by NF Football Investments on its acquisition of 100% shares in Nottingham Forest Football Club. The transaction aimed to provide a new era for the Club with the introduction of the new majority shareholder, Evangelos Marinakis and Executive Management Team with the aim of bringing Nottingham FC into the Premier League. The Team were instrumental in negotiating and concluding the deal to provide a highly successful outcome for the Club and the achievement of its business goals.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Corporate Finance

- Acquisitions
- Restructuring / insolvency
- Tax

Commercial Partnerships, Sponsorship Agreements & Stadium Naming Rights Deals

- Free licensing health check

Intellectual Property & Brand Protection

- Image rights
- Merchandise deals

Rules & Regulation

- Arbitration, tribunals and mediation
- Football disciplinary commission

Real Estate

- Construction / lease arrangements
- Redevelopment and planning
- Sale and leaseback deals

Employment Contracts

- Disciplinary/grievance issues
- Immigration matters including visas and work permits
- TUPE issues

Energy

- Efficiency
- Procurement
- Generation

TOP-TIER LAW FIRM

The Walker Morris Sports Group is rated as a top-tier law firm in the 'Sports Sector' in the latest edition of the Legal 500. The Team has been voted the 'Sports Law Firm of the Year - UK' in the ACQ Global Awards 2017, 2016 & 2015. In addition David Hinchliffe has been awarded 'UK Sports Lawyer of the Year' in the ACQ Global Awards 2017, 2016 & 2015, Finance Monthly Law Awards UK 2017, 2016 & 2015 and Corporate LiveWire, Global Awards 2016 & 2015.

WALKER MORRIS

"A distinctive law firm valued by its clients for consistently delivering excellent results."

We offer a single site, full service commercial law firm focused on providing our clients, nationally and internationally, with partner-led, high quality advice. Our national centre of excellence in Leeds has significant advantages in terms of developing a strong, collaborative culture, with the inherent value and cost effectiveness that a Leeds base brings.

With a staff of over 450 including 48 partners, Walker Morris is uniquely recognised for its strong multi-disciplinary teamwork and straight forward advice. We offer our clients truly accessible partners who get the job right – providing partner-led advice based on their knowledge and understanding of working with individual clients.

CONTACT

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