

# The Fineprint\*

## A note from the editors

As we move into the second half of 2026, welcome to the third edition of The Fineprint, our newsletter for founders and owner-managed businesses navigating growth in a more complex and fast-moving environment.

At Lawrence Stephens, we continue to see a consistent theme: growth is rarely limited by ambition, but shaped by how well the fundamentals are put in place early. This edition brings that into focus, with practical insight and founder perspective centred on building with intent.

A key thread running through this edition is the evolving employment landscape. With the Employment Rights Act now firmly underway, risk is arriving earlier and with greater impact. From hiring your first employee to managing performance and navigating unfair dismissal, the margin for error is narrowing. Several of our articles explore what this means in practice and how founders can adapt their approach to stay ahead.

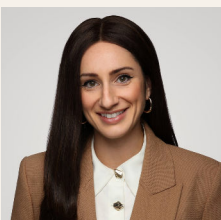
Alongside this, we look at the points where informality gives way to structure. Whether that is introducing governance, thinking about when to build a C-suite (with contribution from Anthony O'Brien), or protecting your name when it is your brand, these are all signs of a businesses becoming more deliberate in how they grow.

We balance this with founder insight, from Nic Taylor on building something that lasts to lessons in scaling with purpose from Joe Roberts-Walker and insights from a 24-year study on what really drives fast growth.

This edition also marks an important step for us. Our partnership with The Ideas Community reflects a shared belief that founders do not grow in isolation, and we look forward to continuing that collaboration, including at Ideas Fest.

As always, our aim is simple: to provide clarity and practical perspective as you grow.

Warm wishes,  
Charlotte and Alanah



Charlotte Hamilton,  
Senior Associate,  
Corporate and  
Commercial

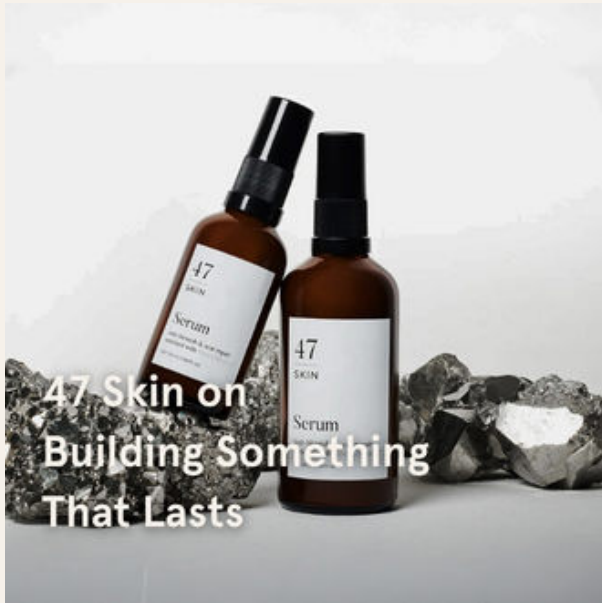
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Alanah Lenten,  
Business Development  
Manager

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## What 47 Skin's Journey Tells Us About Building Something That Lasts

From early product validation to building a long-term brand, the story of 47 Skin highlights how founder priorities shift as a business grows. We explore what it took Nic Taylor, founder of 47 Skin to move from proving a concept to building something durable, trusted and scalable.

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## Building Better Businesses Together: Our partnership with The Ideas Community

Lawrence Stephens has partnered with The Ideas Community to support founders through connection, collaboration and practical insight. This article explains what the partnership means in practice, from events and legal clinics to long-term support for growing businesses.

This year we will be at Ideas Fest and have an exclusive discount code on tickets for friends of Lawrence Stephens.

[Access discounted tickets here](#)



Alanah Lenten,  
Business Development  
Manager

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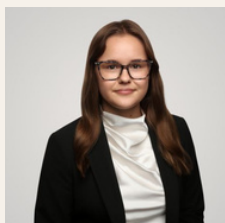


## Doing Business for Good: Lessons from Joe Roberts-Walker

### Doing Business for Good: Lessons from Joe Roberts-Walker, Founder of Mejuicer

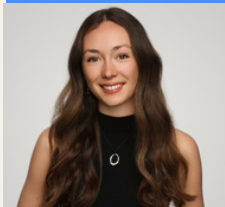
From starting in his family kitchen to scaling a purpose-driven brand, Joe Roberts-Walker shares honest insights on growth, mistakes and building a values-led business. We explore the key lessons founders can take, from the power of community to adapting under pressure.

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Tilly Kelly,  
Trainee Solicitor

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Ella Darnell  
BD and Marketing  
Assistant

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## What Actually Drives Fast Growth? Findings From a 24-Year Study

### What Actually Drives Fast Growth? Findings from a 24-year Study

Insights from a 24-year study of high-growth UK businesses reveal a consistent set of factors behind sustained growth. We explore the findings from the study by Professor Dylan Jones-Evans OBE on what matters most, from people and customer relationships to cash discipline and founder mindset.

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Alanah Lenten,  
Business Development  
Manager

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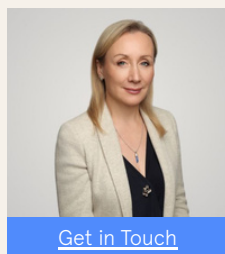
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## Keeping It in the Family: How FICs Are Reshaping Long-Term Wealth Strategy

Family Investment Companies are becoming an increasingly popular tool for founders thinking about succession and long-term wealth planning. This article explains how FICs work, why they are gaining traction and when they might be the right fit.

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Amanda Nelson,  
Partner,  
Private Wealth and  
Succession Planning

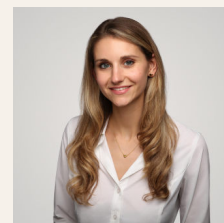
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## When Old Leases Meet Modern Retail

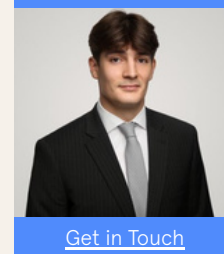
A High Court dispute between John Lewis and its landlords highlights a growing tension between legacy lease agreements and modern omnichannel retail. Sophie Levitt and Alex King explore how click-and-collect is reshaping turnover rent and what businesses should be considering when reviewing older leases.

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Sophie Levitt,  
Solicitor,  
Commercial Real Estate

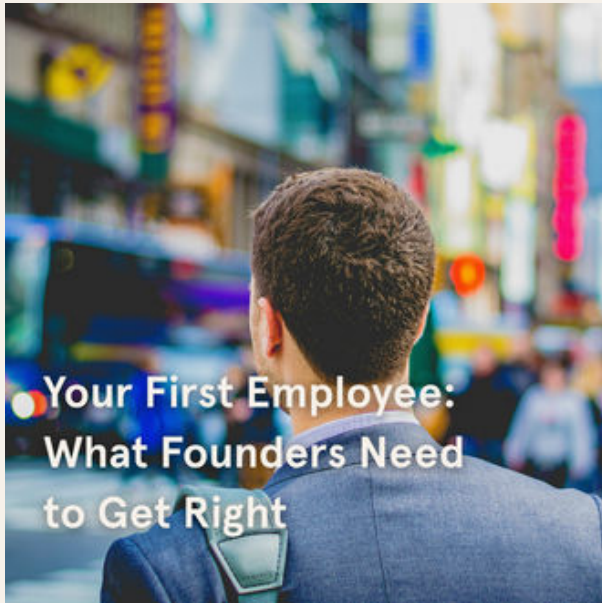
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Alex King,  
Trainee Solicitor

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## Hiring Your First Employee: What Founders Need to Get Right

Hiring your first employee is a major milestone, but it comes with important legal and practical responsibilities. This article sets out what founders need to have in place from day one, including a clear checklist to help you get it right from the outset.

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Robert Turner  
Senior Associate,  
Employment

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## Do you qualify for Flourish: Legal Advice for Start-Ups?

We know the early years of a business can be the most challenging and the most exciting. That's why we've launched Flourish, our tailored legal support programme exclusively for early-stage, UK businesses. Flourish offers:

- Fixed-price legal support
- Preferential rates on our standard fees for two years
- Quarterly sessions with a legal mentor
- Access to our events and community of founders, funders, and advisors

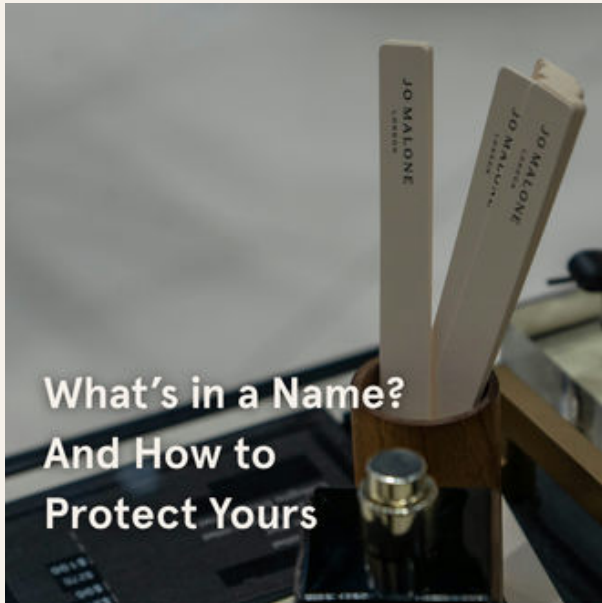
[See if you Qualify](#)



Alanah Lenten,  
Business Development  
Manager

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## What's in a Name? And How to Protect Yours

Building a business around your personal identity can be powerful, but it comes with legal risk if that business is sold or restructured as experienced by Jo Malone and Bobbi Brown. This article explores real-world disputes and what founders should consider when it comes to name rights, restrictive covenants and protecting their future freedom.

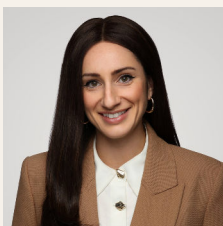
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## When Is It Time to Bring in a C-Suite?

Knowing when to step back and bring in senior leadership is a common challenge for founders. This article includes insights from Anthony O'Brien, CEO of Profici, outlining the key signs to look for and how fractional C-suite support can help businesses scale without overcommitting too early.

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Charlotte Hamilton,  
Senior Associate,  
Corporate and  
Commercial

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## **The Employment Rights Act 2025: What It Means for Growing Businesses**

The Employment Rights Act introduces significant changes that will affect how businesses hire, manage and retain employees. We break down the key milestones and what founders should be doing at each stage to stay compliant and manage risk.

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## **Are you at risk of an unfair dismissal claim?**

Changes to unfair dismissal rules will significantly increase risk for employers, with employees gaining protection much earlier in their tenure. This article outlines what is changing and the practical steps businesses should take now to protect themselves.

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Robert Turner  
Senior Associate,  
Employment

## Our Headlines

See what we've been up to around the firm this quarter. [Click on a headline to read more about the work we do.](#)

Lawrence Stephens Advises on Cross-Border Sale of IBL Lighting to Inovara Group

Lawrence Stephens Advises on Major Bridging Loan for Greymax Capital

Lawrence Stephens Advises EXALT on New Manufacturing Unit in Wood Green

Lawrence Stephens Advises Elite Sprinter Aadaejah Hodge

Lawrence Stephens Advises Reece James on New Chelsea FC Contract

Lawrence Stephens Advises Blue Shield Capital on £24.8 Million Acquisition Funding

Lawrence Stephens Completes 10 Transactions for Anzor Portfolio Companies

Lawrence Stephens Advises Videx Electronics on UK Acquisition

Lawrence Stephens Advises on the Sale of Agility Fleet to Driveway Vehicle Solutions

Lawrence Stephens Supports Howden on Launch of Web3 Risk Ecosystem

Lawrence Stephens announces the launch of LS Private for founders wanting to manage their family office after an exit event



### Lawrence Stephens Ranked Band 1 in Chambers UK 2026 SME Guide

Lawrence Stephens is proud to announce its ranking in Band 1 in Chambers UK 2026 SME-focused Firms category. This ranking illustrates our commitment to and excellence in the owner-managed business (OMB), founder-led and SME sector. You can read how we support this sector below.

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## The Fineprint\* Flash Alert

### The Employment Rights Act is taking effect

Following on from our recent articles, the Employment Rights Act 2025 is introducing changes that will significantly impact how businesses hire and manage employees.

From January 2027, employees will gain protection from unfair dismissal after just six months' service, rather than two years.

In parallel, tribunal time limits will extend from three months to six months from October 2026. Other changes are being phased in across 2026, increasing employer obligations from day one, particularly around record-keeping, policies and workplace conduct.

**Please note:** businesses will need to act earlier in the employment lifecycle, with less flexibility and greater scrutiny on hiring, onboarding and performance management.



## About

Lawrence Stephens is a full-service law firm based in London. Established more than 25 years ago, the firm is still founder-led. We provide legal services to a wide range of clients, from private individuals to SMEs and PLCs, challenger banks and financial institutions.

Our business clients are often privately or family owned, or private equity-backed and the individuals or founders who own and manage these. A unifying theme is that they are entrepreneurial, growing businesses who require practical and commercial advice from advisers who understand them.


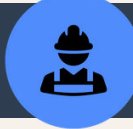





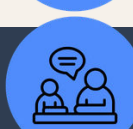




In addition to our significant business law capability, we also have a large private wealth offering. We provide a personalised and discreet service for individuals with significant wealth, including business owners, exited founders and athletes, as well as those whose needs are not so complex.

Lawrence Stephens in London is deeply involved in the SME and entrepreneurial ecosystem, advising clients in all manner of business sectors on incorporation, commercial contracts, commercial property, employment, funding rounds and M&A transactions. The firm also advises private equity firms looking to develop successful businesses in fragmented sectors with high growth potential.

- Chambers 2026



## Our Services

-  Banking
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-  Corporate and Commercial
-  Dispute Resolution
-  Employment
-  Family
-  Immigration
-  Private Wealth and Succession Planning
-  Real Estate
-  Real Estate Finance
-  Restructuring and Insolvency
-  Tax