

Jennifer Caldwell takes the reins as Buddle Findlay's new National Chair

[Jennifer Caldwell](#)

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Known for her resilience and forward-thinking, [Jennifer Caldwell](#) is a force to be reckoned with. As a senior partner in Buddle Findlay's Auckland resource management team, Caldwell works on New Zealand's largest infrastructure projects, and is well-positioned to take the reins as Buddle Findlay's National Chair from 1 April.

Looking ahead to her new role, Caldwell believes remaining agile is key. "Whether it is the coronavirus or the rise of AI, businesses and employees need to remain agile and open to transformative ways of operating. We need to constantly check and refresh to ensure we can anticipate and respond to change."

Caldwell attributes her perspective and much of her success to her typical Kiwi upbringing. The first in her family to attend university, she is the product of a co-ed, state secondary school education and had little encouragement towards a professional career. "I've succeeded on my own terms, and that's something I'm grateful for and proud of. The value of diversity extends far further than gender and ethnicity; we need diversity of thought, perspective and experience as well."

Having worked alongside Caldwell for seven years, Buddle Findlay Chief Executive, Philip Maitland is thrilled to welcome the firm's second female chair. "Jennifer starts her new role at Buddle Findlay at an exciting time as we celebrate our 125-year anniversary and reflect on the past and future of the firm. Her diverse background working in-house and in private practice, both offshore and in New Zealand, gives her a unique perspective. We are delighted for her to approach the role with her open-minded outlook and drive."

After first making partner in 2000, Caldwell and her family moved to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, where she took on an in-house role as legal director for a government-owned property development company. It was here that Caldwell began to see her role as a lawyer in a new light. "Working in a country with a fairly new and undeveloped legal system was a real eye-opener for me. My role was centred around solving problems rather than advising on the law and it made me realise the value of common sense and clear thinking. I reflect on this experience often and it shapes the way I work and mentor others."

Caldwell specialises in resource management, environmental and local government law, with extensive experience as a strategic adviser and specialist litigator in the Environment Court, High Court and higher courts. She is a leading New Zealand lawyer advising on consent and designation projects and strategic planning processes.

Heading into her new role, Caldwell hopes to be more visible and spend more time with the people of Buddle Findlay. "I want to develop a stronger sense of shared purpose, both within Buddle Findlay and in relationships with our clients. Given our ever-changing market and the challenges law firms are facing now and in the future, we need to be working collaboratively to meet the needs of our clients and our people. That is what success looks like to me."

Continuing to shape Buddle Findlay's 125-year legacy, the Board of Management also welcomes new members [Paul Farrugia](#), [Sherridan Cook](#) and [Charlotte von Dadelszen](#). Caldwell acknowledges the large contribution that two of the firm's rotating partners, [David Thomson](#) and [David Perry](#), have made as well as the skills and energy brought to the role by former National Chair, [Paul Beverley](#). Beverley, who hands over to Caldwell after completing his three-year term, congratulates the new board. "This is a great group of experienced partners and we are fortunate to have them as our new Board of Management."

Passing on the baton to Caldwell, Beverley continues, "Jennifer has already made a significant contribution as a board member for the last four years – she will be excellent in her new role as National Chair."

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