

ADVERTORIAL: Dynamic approach sees Foot Anstey lead the way on inclusion, Islamic Finance and much more

Dynamic, refreshingly human and entrepreneurial... not words that ordinarily trip off the tongue when describing a profession often perceived as, perhaps, a bit stuffy and old-fashioned. But they certainly hit the mark as an apt description of one of the South West's [foremost legal firms, Foot Anstey](#).

After all, this is a thriving company that's made headlines for its award-winning Islamic Finance division, that's committed to opening up the profession to a wider talent pool and that works alongside, and for, the local community.

And all that while providing a successful, sector-led service for its clients that has seen Foot Anstey report a record annual turnover. The South West-based organisation, which has offices in Plymouth, Bristol, Exeter, London, Southampton, Taunton and Truro, saw sales rise by 8% to £53.5m in its 2021-2022 financial year – the first time it has raked in more than £50m over a 12-month period.

It's entrepreneurial drive is also why [Foot Anstey](#) is so proud to be a sponsor of the Start Up category at [BristolLive Business Awards 2022](#), as office profile partner for Foot Anstey's Bristol office, Nathan Peacey explained: "What we are about as a firm is the success of our clients and our people. We talk about powering ambition in the context of clients but that also is in the context of our people and the communities in which we live and work."



Foot Anstey's retail and consumer sector lead, Nathan Peacey
"This award is a tangible way of showing that we are supporting enterprising businesses in the city and region and we are interested and involved. There are lots of areas that are of interest and concern to Bristol and their businesses and there are areas we can really add value.

"Foot Anstey adds value to business owners by building a team around entrepreneurial clients to support their private and business issues seamlessly; for their businesses Foot Anstey uses technology to help create robust businesses that are attractive to investors and potential buyers in due course whilst niche expertise adds value to the personal finances of sophisticated clients looking to plan for succession, for example by the use of Family Investment Companies."

Nathan added: "Our values are collaboration over convention, championing aspiration and inclusion, being refreshingly human and having an entrepreneurial spirit. We talk a lot about making a difference and with the environment, our communities

and diversity and inclusion. It's a really strong theme that runs through. We like to think we are a bit different to other law firms."

Islamic Finance

About 12 years ago a lawyer came to Foot Anstey with what he believed was a great idea, to build expertise in the area of Islamic Finance. Fast forward to 2022 when Foot Anstey scooped Fintech Law Firm of the Year 2022 at the prestigious Islamic Finance News (IFN) Law Awards. The IFN Law Awards celebrate and honour the very best firms operating in the sector and represent the current strength of the Islamic finance market landscape.

Nathan said: "We seize opportunities. A lawyer came to us and said he'd had this idea (Islamic Finance) and would love to build this practice as it was going to be a growth sector. We took a punt and made him a partner – he was proved right. Whilst it is an area that is growing amongst the Muslim community, it is also becoming an interesting area of alternative source of finance for non Muslim businesses."



Wider talent pool

This forward-thinking approach extends to helping enable those from less “advantaged” backgrounds break through into the legal profession. Foot Anstey’s initiatives include collaborating with Weston College to bolster its legacy team through the hiring of five paralegals who will be trained to be specialists in the charity and legacy sector.

The company also recently welcomed 13 new trainees based across three of its locations on to its training programme - designed to help young lawyers achieve their ambitions and become the very best in their chosen field of law.

For Foot Anstey, it is a win-win for both employer and employee, as Nathan explained: “What I think is exciting is that law has a reputation of being slightly stuffy and old fashioned and conservative with a small c, and we are deliberately going and looking for talent that probably would never think of working in a law firm. It’s not part of their network of peers and influences. If we can get people over the threshold there is a whole talent pool out there that is currently untapped because there isn’t a thought of that (as a career).”

Foot Anstey is going further – working alongside others to develop an interactive card game targeting school children in the Years 6 to 8 age band from less advantaged areas. The cards will feature different jobs as a way of showing the array of roles they can aspire to,

Nathan said: “Projects like this give me a real buzz but it’s good news for us because we will widen the talent and bring in a diversity of background and thinking and enrich the whole place.”



Team effort... Foot Anstey staff with some of the laptops

In the community

Earlier this year Foot Anstey teamed up with Bristol-based charity Empire Fighting Chance to donate 70 laptops to charities across the South and South West. It follows a successful initiative last year when Foot Anstey donated a total of 50 laptops to Empire Fighting Chance and its partner organisation Plymouth Hope, as well as City Academy in Bristol and Syrian refugees in the city.

Energy and Infrastructure

Foot Anstey supports an array of interesting national energy and infrastructure projects but also love supporting and advising local energy projects such as those promoted by Bristol Energy Co-operative including the hydroelectric project at Netham Lock and the solar project at Bottleyard Studios.

It was recently announced that the firm was appointed to Tower Group (trading as Tower Green Holdings Ltd) legal advisors to support on its green hydrogen supply offering in the South West. Tower Group has been building a green hydrogen ecosystem in the South West by acquiring and operating its own renewable energy sites and assembling a diverse network of green hydrogen off-takers. The Foot Anstey team has been working with Tower Group to create documentation and advise on a range of matters commercial energy matters, including grid connections, exclusivity and supply chain.

Retailers Against Harassment Certification

Earlier this year Foot Anstey collaborated with the UK's retail industry charity, the Retail Trust to launch a new certification aimed at protecting and reassuring shop workers as they face rising levels of abuse and inappropriate behaviour.

- To find out more about Foot Anstey [CLICK HERE](#)
- [Bristol Live Business Awards 2022](#) take place on Thursday, November 24, 2022 at Ashton Gate Stadium.