

East Anglia's legal eagles soar past Covid to reach fresh heights

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, the cream of East Anglia's law firms have managed to boost revenues, bolster their top teams and help legions of clients build their businesses in the last 12 months.

The full splendour of their remarkable achievements is handsomely portrayed in the latest edition of [The Legal 500 Guide](#) published by Legalease today.

While much of the glory reflected in its reviews can be attributed to law firms acting for clients in the Science & Technology arenas – especially in the world-class Cambridge Cluster – The Legal 500 demonstrates more than ever that the expertise of our best lawyers stretches across practically every segment of business.

Corporate & Commercial work has always been a strong suit, as has Real Estate. But we are now witnessing an impressive spread of expertise across practically every element of the law.

Dispute resolution, education sector specialism, employment, finance, insurance, AgriTech, transport, personal injury, family problems and sustainability issues are just a few of the other areas of law in which our best practitioners now excel. If there is an angle in terms of legal advice for companies and individuals then our cohort has it covered!

Birketts and Mills & Reeve – named alphabetically here and in The Legal 500 – stand toe to toe across most of the legal specialisms affecting East Anglian clients.

Growth stats on all our leading practices are not readily available; firms are often reluctant to release figures. But, as an example, Birketts has grown revenues by 19 per cent and welcomed 108 new colleagues during the last 12 months.

Business Weekly newspaper's annual Law Lords supplement – based on The Legal 500 Guide's findings – will appear in print and online on October 7. But different sectors, including Biotech, IP and TMT, Patent and TM attorneys, barristers, commercial property & construction, and heavyweight corporate action will be picked apart and showcased on our website on a consistent basis between now and then.

The Legal 500 editors are generally pretty conservative in their deliberations – preferring to let law firms' clients do the talking. The Guide's overview for East Anglia this year is short and sweet and typically non-confrontational.

It reads: "East Anglia is home to a number of major business centres, including Cambridge, Norwich, Peterborough and Ipswich, with the most prominent firms across the region including Birketts, Mills & Reeve, Greenwoods GRM, Gotelee Solicitors and Buckles Solicitors.

"Cambridge's status as a key hub for life sciences, biotechnology and innovation continues to attract business from far and wide, with US firm Goodwin recently launching in the city."

The guide takes months of diligence to compile so some references will inevitably be somewhat dated: For example, Goodwin was rated in the upper echelons in last year's guide but remains a relatively new kid on the block.

Again alphabetically, Birketts, Goodwin and Mills & Reeve are top ranked for Corporate and Commercial work in Cambridge, with Taylor Vinters making the top tier just below them. BDB Pitmans, HCR Hewitsons, Howes Percival Taylor Wessing and Withers LLP make Tier 2. Greenwoods GRM and Penningtons

Manches Cooper are joint third.

Mills & Reeve has three of the five lawyers in the Hall of Fame – Claire Clarke, Anthony McGurk and Tom Pickthorn.

Birketts, Eversheds and Mills & Reeve are joint top for Commercial Property work in Cambridge; Steven Beach of Howes Percival stands alone in the Hall of Fame here.

For Biotechnology, a clear Cambridge stronghold, two firms stand in the No.1 position – Goodwin and Taylor Wessing, from whom – ironically – they hired some of their best lawyers. Mills & Reeve and Penningtons Manches Cooper are joint second.

For Intellectual Property work – more crucial than ever as the local tech and life sciences clusters become increasingly international – Goodwin, Mills & Reeve and Stobbs IP, along with Taylor Vinters and Taylor Wessing share No.1 allocations. Birketts, Marks & Clerk and Penningtons are rated joint second.

Mills & Reeve is stand-alone top for IT and Telecoms work with Birketts and Taylor Vinters bracketed in second. Ashtons Legal, Greenwoods GRM and HCR Hewitsons share third tier rankings.

- In the coming days Business Weekly will feature more insight on the Legal 500 guide. The October 7 print edition of Business Weekly has a dedicated supplement with more in-depth coverage of the leading firms and individual solicitors in in the East Anglia region. Email news [at] businessweekly.co.uk to ensure you get a copy of edition if not already a subscriber.