

Building on strength in depth

COMING up to the tenth anniversary of Halliwells choosing Sheffield rather than Leeds to launch its Yorkshire operations, the firm is now established as one of the leading multi-disciplinary commercial law firms in Sheffield.

Basing its growth on a national reputation for insurance defence litigation, the blossoming of Halliwells into a full-service provider of commercial legal services has been achieved for a number of reasons – adding new legal disciplines by way of a series of senior partner level lateral hires, an imaginative campaign of profile building among the business community and a string of prestigious client wins.

Among the high-calibre partners to join recently are Alastair Reid as Head of Real Estate. The recently published Legal 500 noted Alastair's appointment and wrote: "Halliwells joins (the Legal 500) listing of leading South Yorkshire commercial property advisers on the strength of its recruitment of Alastair Reid from Irwin Mitchell to set up its commercial property team."

Other high-calibre recruits include Diarmuid Deeney as Head of Employment Law from Russell and Creswick. Diarmuid specialises in contentious and non-contentious

This year, national law firm Halliwells became the largest firm in the North. Suzanne Liversidge, head of Halliwells Sheffield office, explains how recent expansion in her office has contributed to this position



employment law, including tribunal advocacy. A multi-linguist, Diarmuid also has a Diploma in International Human Rights.

The most recent to join Halliwells' expanding Sheffield office is Steven Fennell as Head of Corporate

Recovery and Insolvency. Having spent nine years with DLA Piper, Steven previously lectured in law at Sheffield University. Vastly experienced in Corporate Recovery and a fellow of The Association of Business Recovery Professionals, Steven is

described in the legal bible Chambers as 'very capable'.

Attracting the best specialist talent at partner level has had a knock-on effect in the recruitment of the brightest and best solicitors. Halliwells now has real strength in depth, with staff numbers up to 75 from 50 a year ago.

More high-profile appointments are in the offing, as Halliwells begins the next phase of its growth with a number of soon-to-be-announced business initiatives.

The firm's 'bedrock' work in insurance defence also continues to expand. As well as representing most of this region's local authorities, Halliwells advises councils in the North East and the Midlands and sits on the panels of leading national insurers and corporate clients.

The Halliwells 'brand' is undoubtedly better recognised than ever, following the huge success of the first Halliwells Cavendish Corporate Challenge.

This innovative project saw 100 local businesses coming together in friendly competition to raise funds for Sheffield's Cavendish Centre, a complementary treatment centre for cancer sufferers.

With little NHS support, the

Cavendish was struggling to fund the high demand for its free services. Halliwells gave all of the challengers £50 and carte blanche to grow this 'stake' by as much as they possibly could. The result was a staggering £150,000 raised for the charity.

The business community rose to the challenge with exceptional imagination and commitment and Halliwells was proud to be the catalyst for such a unique and worthwhile event.

As well as a move up to 37 in The Lawyer 100 league table, making it the largest law firm in the North, Halliwells received a number of other accolades from its legal peers.

It was named the leading UK law firm outside the so-called 'Magic Circle' at The Lawyer Awards, and managing partner Ian Austin was named as Management Partner of The Year at the prestigious Legal Business Awards 2006.

Haliwells' evolution into a multi-skilled commercial practice and a commitment to the delivery of progressive legal services which meet the needs of modern businesses will see it remain as one of the most highly-regarded firms in the Yorkshire legal market.

Keeping pace with local business success

2006 HAS been a period of growth for the region and RBS has been keeping pace with the appetite for business.

As part of the bank's commitment to grow the local team and complement its well-established and experienced relationship managers, the bank has invested in training as well as recruiting from outside. This has ensured a constant stream of fresh and innovative ideas for our customers and led to the relocation to St Paul's – a significant new development which forms part of the ongoing investment in the Sheffield business community.

The offices at St Paul's establishes RBS at the heart of the city centre where so many exciting developments are taking place and provides increased office space for the expanding commercial team. The move also brings together a range of key services for business customers, all under The Royal Bank of Scotland Group umbrella. These include Corporate and Commercial Banking, RBS Treasury Solutions, Lombard, RBS and NatWest Premium Banking.

The Commercial Banking team has worked closely with a number of customers this year who have grown significantly over the last 12 months. We have also witnessed an increasing number of subsidiaries of larger businesses coming into the city, in



Chris Forrest, Director for The Royal Bank of Scotland's Commercial Banking team in Sheffield, looks at the bank's commitment to the city, the growth in the lending book of its established team and its recent move to the prestigious new office complex at 1 St Paul's Place

recognition of the regeneration and establishment of Sheffield as a financial and legal centre alongside Leeds. The strength of business development and companies taking offices in the city indicates signs of a confident and healthy local economy, strengthened by growth in new business activity across the UK.

Deals completed this year with local businesses demonstrate the breadth of the Commercial team's expertise and knowledge and includes funding for Jay Cousins and Flatworld following his appearance on BBC Dragon's Den programme, Go Outdoors acquisition plans, the Yorkshire Pudding Company, Idigicon, Pawson & Sons, APS, hlv and Trafford Print.

The Bank's presence on the ground and involvement in community investment activity further

demonstrates our commitment to supporting local charities and the people of South Yorkshire. In 2006 we have organised or participated in a number of fundraising activities and a number of sponsored runs including the Sheffield half marathon. Local charities we have supported this year include Bluebell Wood, St Luke's Hospice and Boots for Africa Campaign led by Sheffield FC.

RBS recognises Sheffield and South Yorkshire as a growing region – one that is attracting greater inward investment and with an increasingly sophisticated customer base. Our objective is to create a centre of excellence that will allow us to offer innovative and flexible thinking, extensive resources and unrelenting focus on our relationships with the business community.

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