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# Champion Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## SANDRA WALLACE



### Who is Sandra Wallace and what is DLA Piper?

Sandra is the joint MD of Europe and the UK at the global law firm DLA Piper. She sits on the Executive Committee of the firm's International business, supporting strategic growth and direction. She is a practising employment lawyer and has been with DLA Piper since 2001. DLA Piper is a global business with lawyers located in more than 40 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific.

In 2018, Sandra joined the Social Mobility Commission and was appointed as Interim Co-Chair in July 2020.

### Why did Sandra enter the Awards?

When Sandra started to speak with her team about the Awards, she was at first reticent to enter. However, she had a change of heart. Sandra said: "I thought, if I go for this and the worst-case scenario is raising the profile of Social Mobility then what's not to like? I didn't for one minute expect to win!" The Social Mobility team at DLA Piper sprang into action, (before she had chance to change her mind!) and went on to nominate her.

Sandra thinks her success in the Awards may be due to the fact that her own personal journey is a Social Mobility success story. Neither of her parents went to university and she was the first of their six children to study for a degree. She says: "My parents expected me to finish

school and get a job like my brothers did before me. And I did get a job before I went to university, because my parents were so freaked out about the idea of me going there."

Sandra went on to read Law at Wolverhampton Polytechnic because she says, "it sounded at the time like it would be a degree where you'd get a good job, it wasn't because I was watching TV legal programmes where I thought I could be some big shot lawyer!"

She goes on to say: "The reality is when people ask me about this, and I'm sorry to be blunt, but the point is that my family had no money, I had no money, and I didn't want that to have that be my life."

"That was my motivation. My family didn't have a car so getting anywhere is tiresome and hard, so we didn't go anywhere. You don't have any world experiences, so it was things like this that made me think I want a different life."

She goes on to explain that after getting her degree, the difficulty was 'fitting in' as her background was not typical for a lawyer at that time.

Sandra says: "You start to feel exposed. I hadn't been to Oxford, I hadn't been to Cambridge and my family took pride in their jobs, but we were very working class. Going up for the role of Partner, you are competing with people that you think are born to these positions and you feel a bit of a fraud."

## Champion Of The Year 2020 - Winner - Sandra Wallace

She says that as she started to tell her story, the reaction from others was very positive and she was receiving feedback from people who found it inspiring. "I said to myself 'Sandra you've got to do more than this. You've got a responsibility to make sure that you're not the only one in the room with my kind of background'." For her, the legal world is only one small part of the journey and she decided to join the Social Mobility Commission which has a broader remit, including education, higher education, and child poverty. This gave her, "the ability to influence in a more rounded way."

### Why did she win?

She believes that there have been several contributing factors to her success at the Awards, including driving the agenda as a Social Mobility Commissioner, along with the development of DLA Piper's Head Start programme. The scheme is designed to ease the path for people from underrepresented groups into the legal profession and help them overcome barriers that might prevent them progressing into law. DLA Piper works with each student for three years, providing financial assistance and a tailored course of mentoring, training and internships. This approach develops the participant's skills, confidence, and networks. After completion, students are linked to the firm's global graduate recruitment programme or are encouraged to pursue the right opportunities for them. She says: "The students have their own microsite, and we provide them with reading materials and opportunities to network. We tell them about insight programmes that employers do, we share stories, we give them outreach opportunities. We find out what their personal needs are, and we provide financial support for university where it is needed. The main thing for us is that it is personalised, and we try to stop barriers coming up so that the students don't fall away because of these."

DLA Piper also signed up to Justine Greening's Social Mobility Pledge and set some stringent goals around those activities that supported the agenda. Some of these are at formative stages, others are very well developed. She says: "For me, apart from my legal world, this is my world. Everything I do is to support this agenda and it takes up a lot of time. I speak to clients about it and I want it to be in the nation's consciousness, so everyone is thinking about it. It touches so many areas, intersectionality, disadvantage, the list goes on. And most of it has a lower socio-economic basis."

### How does she measure her success?

Sandra says that data is key and mentions the Social Mobility Commission's launch of a Social Mobility Toolkit, which DLA Piper was heavily involved with as a truly collaborative endeavour. Launched on the 10th of December, it has had a huge take up. "Lots of employers don't know how to go about how to advance social mobility in their world. The toolkit is a practical guide on how to measure social mobility, the questions employers should ask, and training that should be considered. The toolkit also addresses how diversity should be tracked and how companies can work with this toolkit to help," she says.

As Sandra still practices law, DLA Piper allows her the additional time away from her day-to-day work to also get involved in organising and participating in events. "For example, next year," she explains, "we've got an event scheduled based on a series of roundtable discussions that we undertook in each of the places where we have offices. We asked educational establishments, employers, charities and the like to come together and talk about social mobility and talk about what it means, as a lot of people still don't seem to understand it". She explains that they gathered feedback from the roundtables to create a report, and then they will have further round tables next year that pull it all together with some prolific speakers involved. She says: "Some people question what that has got to do with a law firm but the number of attendees we get is amazing. I also speak to a lot of other law firms, and we've got someone on the Board of PRIME. It's just something that's in our DNA." DLA Piper is a founding member of the PRIME Commitment, an alliance of over 70 UK law firms committed to improving access to the legal profession through quality work experience for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

This isn't the end for Sandra. It has recently been announced that the Social Mobility Commission is to be brought more closely into the centre of Whitehall to help inform and advise on the new, changing agenda in the light of the Pandemic and the exit from the European Union. The Commission, which will continue as an independent arms-length body, is to join the Cabinet Office to advise Liz Truss, the Minister for Women and Equalities.

# Mentor Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## JOANNA HUGHES



### Who are Joanna Hughes and Allen and Overy?

At the time of her award Joanna was a Senior Professional Support Lawyer and Alumni Manager at Allen and Overy (A&O). She now dedicates most of her time to social mobility projects in A&O and has a role within the A&O Working Social Mobility Group. As well as personally mentoring she helps to curate the A&O Mentoring Programme open to all members of the A&O Alumni Network which has been running for several years.

Allen & Overy is an international legal practice with approximately 5,550 people, including some 550 partners, working in over 40 offices worldwide.

### Why did she enter the Awards?

Joanna didn't enter the Awards herself but was nominated by her Community Investment Manager colleague Emma Turnbull, who is one of the Social Mobility leads at Allen and Overy.

She believes that there are three reasons why she was put forward:

Firstly, she says "I am committed, and I never let people down. I dedicate most of my free time to mentoring and trying to promote Social Mobility. Secondly, I care deeply, and when I see the effects of the work we do on young people that's what motivates me to keep doing

it. Finally, it's important to me as someone a bit more experienced in the industry that I don't just mentor but that I try to amplify it and talk about it on social media and in meetings with senior colleagues. I try to spread the word about what a big impact mentoring can have".

Joanna came from East Anglia which was later identified as a social Mobility Cold Spot. She says, "I was not only the first person to go to university, but I am the only person to have gone to university within my family". She recalls that not many people went to University from her Comprehensive Sixth Form, but she ended up getting a First Class Law degree. She says that "I didn't even think I was good enough to apply to University, I didn't think it was for people like me and I suppose I realised if I didn't have the advantage of social capital and a wealthy background, I just needed to work hard and then harder, so that's what I did. It doesn't surprise me that studies in which A&O has participated demonstrate that trainee solicitors from lower socio-economic backgrounds are statistically more likely to be in the top decile of performers."

### What did she do?

Joanna's passion for mentoring is evident as she talks about A&O's Smart Start Experience which is a programme where state-school students who meet certain criteria, including being in receipt of free school meals or the first generation in their family to attend university, are offered a week of work experience. The Smart Start week of work experience is to give young people who wouldn't normally have access to work

## Mentor Of The Year 2020 - Winner - Joanna Hughes

experience in the City a chance to experience what it's like to work in a large City law firm. This programme itself has won a Queens Award for Enterprise in the Promoting Opportunity through Social Mobility category.

The work experience is then built on by providing any students access to one-to-one mentoring. The Smarter Futures mentoring relationships normally close after 9 months, just before the students take their A-levels, but Joanna has also gone on to work as a lead mentor working with the charity Brightside to continue support with video calls also after the exam period.

Joanna has also been part of The Mosaic Mentoring programme which aims to raise the aspirations of girls aged 9 to 11, as well as empower mothers to help their daughters fulfil their potential. Joanna still reflects on a poem that a group of the girls at the last session wrote for her, and each line of it began with the letters spelling out 'Mosaic' - the last line was: 'Confident. That is what I will always be'.

She has also worked with an organisation called Future Frontiers which is an award-winning education charity that provides coaching, mentoring and access to professional role models to young people aged 13-18. She says "what is always a highlight for me is that we promise to introduce the young people to a real-life person that's currently doing their dream job. What we do is try to substitute those connections that people who are better off have, along with social capital, so even if Future Frontiers don't know a person who does that job, they will find somebody who does. It's been fantastic as I've introduced my young people to amongst other jobs to a rap producer, a graphic designer and a trader".

Colleagues at A&O have also introduced Joanna to the Aleto Foundation and she is a mentor for them also.

Joanna is also an assessor for A&O's Lawyer of the Future framework used by the Graduate Recruitment team. In 2018 A&O became the first major firm to introduce situational judgement tests and scenario-based interviews. These use real examples to assess candidates' decision-making skills, thereby helping to remove bias by allowing all candidates to demonstrate how they think in certain scenarios – rather than focusing on CVs and past experiences, which can favour those who have had access to broader opportunities. "So it's potential and performance over polish. I'm incredibly proud of our new way of hiring."

### How does she measure her success?

Joanna says that "change is coming fast in terms of entry into the profession and importantly progression through the profession too, and mentoring is going to play a really big part in that".

She believes that better data informs better outcomes and says, "you can't change what you can't measure" and believes that the new guidance published on 24 November 2020 by the Social Mobility Commission for employers to make measuring socio-economic data easier will be so important, not least because it is very practical. She says, "our Social Mobility leads at A&O are working very hard on data collection at A&O on socio economic background; it is a key strand in our strategy, 100%."

Importantly, the data they collect also tracks progress on their mentees. In 2019 they knew from their data collection that they saw the largest increase of applications from students on A&O programmes for both pipeline programmes and permanent roles, including six students from Smart Start, being awarded solicitor Training Contracts. This increase is due to a combination of mentoring support throughout Year 13, scholarships and funded places from A&O on employability and careers support for undergraduates.

For a long time, the A&O Pro Bono and Community Investment Team has produced Impact Reports for every mentoring scheme A&O runs. This provides lots of useful data e.g., from the Future Frontiers and Allen & Overy Report 2019/20 they know that 93% of pupils agree their career coach guided them to discover an inspirational career.

In addition to the data, an important measure of success to Joanna is the qualitative data of direct feedback from those she mentors. She especially likes it when older students who are no longer officially mentees touch base from their new lives at University. A former Smarter Futures mentee sent her this message after she received her Mentor of the Year award: "Seeing this made me so emotional. If anyone deserves the UK Social Mobility Awards Mentor of the Year award, it is you Jo. Thank you so much for the work you do in social mobility. Your encouragement and advice has been pivotal in shaping me into the confident aspirational young woman I am today".

Joanna has always said that mentoring is a two-way process and she is particularly happy to be mentor to Justin Farrance, founder of GROW Mentoring and an active advocate for social mobility, diversity and inclusion

## Mentor Of The Year 2020 - Winner - Joanna Hughes

in the legal industry. Since launching GROW at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the charity has successfully paired 1500 mentees to their own individual mentor from a wide range of law firms, chambers and in-house teams across the UK and the US. Joanna says "Justin's generation has so much to teach us. He is one to watch!"

## Rising Star Award 2020 - Winner

### ESTER PINK



#### Who are Ester Pink and the Civil Service Fast Stream and Early Talent?

At the time of the nomination Ester was part of the Fast Stream and Early Talent which is the graduate scheme that the Civil Service runs. She has now gone on to become the Legislative Strategy and Delivery Lead in the Home Office. She was also one of the Co-Chairs of the Fast Stream Opportunity Network (FSON).

The Civil Service is one of the largest employers in the UK. It supports the government of the day to implement its policies. Fast Streamers work across the Civil Service, typically gaining experience of working in different government departments, as they are developed to become future leaders. The programme offers unlimited career potential to reach the very highest levels of the organisation.

#### Why did she enter the Awards?

Ester explains that she was put forward for the Awards by Holly Bathgate who was one of her Co-Chairs on the FSON and Philip Wilson who is the Head of Assessment and Diversity, Fast Stream and Early Talent.

She says that in 2016 The Bridge Group conducted a review of socio-economic Diversity in the Civil Service Fast Stream and reported that 'there are low levels of awareness of the Fast Stream amongst lower socio-economic background (SEB) students and a

view amongst many who are familiar with it is that the programme is both attractive and intimidating'. This finding around the lack of diversity within the Fast Stream inspired her to want to change this based on the premise she describes as, "you can't be what you can't see".

She points out that "FSET have made changes in response to this report, for example with the application process being blind and not based on whether you went to a prestigious university or can point to loads of unpaid internships, which made me feeling confident you could get in on merit – however, you only see that at the point of applying, and lots of people get put off earlier on in the process." She believes that sometimes the impression that young people have of the Civil Service is that it can seem "like men in suits powering down Whitehall, but there's such a breadth of opportunities and it's all about demystifying and showing that its accessible."

Ester goes on to explain that she came from an unconventional background and that she's always been interested in difference of thought, difference of opinion and diversity. She says "I grew up overseas and came to the UK to go to university where I first encountered the UK class system and how it works and the consistent policing. I felt it".



### What did she do?

Ester decided to become involved with the Fast Stream Opportunity Network (FSON). Although the Fast Stream team had successfully introduced a number of measures in response to The Bridge Group report, Ester was concerned that the focus was directed at creating internships and outreach at universities rather than addressing the longer-term pipelines. She knew, as an ex-teacher, that many young people's experiences at school and college are crucial for developing their ambitions and, more importantly, making them achievable. There was a clear gap, which could be addressed by establishing a mentoring scheme which could benefit young people, allow colleagues to develop their coaching skills, and support the Fast Stream and wider Civil Service to attract talented individuals that might have been unaware of opportunities or simply decided not to apply based on perceptions.

With the support of FSON, Ester planned the mentoring scheme, that eventually became Routes into Government. Through discussions with the central Fast Stream Team, they were able to secure approval for the scheme to be run as a pilot, with the possibility of it being continued and expanded by the Fast Stream (FSET) if it proved successful. This was an effective strategy, earning 'sponsorship' in the form of advice and support as well as being able to claim some minimal expenses.

She explains, "we needed to get funding to pilot the scheme from the Cabinet Office. This was important as there was a cost attached to obtain DBS checks for mentors. We were also championing e-mentoring using Skype or Google hangouts and this worked well as it got over the London centric thing and it was about connecting to students to busy people".

Four schools were chosen for the pilot, all state schools located in deprived areas and attended by lower SEB students, Ester coordinated this process and developed the mentor recruitment, training and matching process as well as ensuring safeguarding procedures were in place. Mentors were matched with mentees where they had similar interests and where possible came from similar backgrounds. Due to Ester's work, 24 mentors partnered with sixth form mentees from lower socio economic backgrounds in some of the most deprived parts of the country. These young people have been given invaluable connections, advice, and mentorship as well as carrying out activities such as mock job interviews. Through the scheme they have been able to

build their confidence and hear first-hand accounts of career options from young professionals with relatable backgrounds.

Despite many challenges that arose such as the lack of resources, Ester pushed on undeterred. For example, she says "we had one Head teacher in a school where he had the only computer in the school able to make external Skype calls and he gave up his office once a month so the computer could be used for the mentoring sessions. Different schools faced different challenges and there are still barriers with technology in some schools".

E-mentoring showed itself to be a valuable way of delivering quality sessions while keeping costs low. Students and schools could also be targeted where in person mentoring would not be viable, thus widening access and participation.

Further to the pilot a report went back to the Cabinet Office with lessons learnt and along with the input of other interested parties it was decided that this approach should be adopted more widely as Routes into Government. She says, "we showed that this approach was feasible, and they have now expanded as an option for all first-year fast streamers, and it has been upscaled".

### How does she measure her success?

Ester says that they used feedback forms for both the mentors and mentees and found it clearly meant a lot to them and they also surveyed the Head Teachers who commented on the value of the scheme and relationships, and particularly on how the mentees were finding the mentors relatable. She believes a lot of the success is "due to mentors coming from similar backgrounds to the young people being mentored, who could relate to them on those grounds as well as not feeling too removed from mentors mostly just starting out on their career".

Routes into Government has captured the attention of participants at a younger age than many existing schemes which focus on university students, allowing the participants to start thinking about career paths before they sit many of their exams and alerting them to work experience and internships. This all contributes to establishing pipelines of talent who will be able to use their experiences and reach their potential, learning from role models that they might not have had otherwise.

## Rising Star Award 2020 - Winner - Ester Pink

For the Civil Service, Routes into Government has challenged potential applicants' perception that the Fast Stream is only for a certain 'type' of candidate, and this contributes to building a more diverse workforce who can understand the lives of people across the country and serve them more effectively. The Fast Stream is now looking at expanding the scheme and running it with a future intake. The work that Ester has done to create Routes into Government will therefore reach hundreds of mentor-mentee pairings and continue to make an even larger contribution to Social Mobility within the Civil Service.

# Outstanding Contribution To Social Mobility Award 2020

## CHRISTINE HODGSON



### Who is Christine Hodgson CBE?

Christine recently became the Chair of Severn Trent PLC in April 2020, which supply water, waste and utility services throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, and the United States. Before that, she was the Executive Chair of Capgemini UK PLC for over 20 years as one of the world's largest technology and professional services. She was awarded the CBE whilst at Capgemini for her education outreach work and being an Ambassador for apprenticeship programmes that fostered diversity within the organisation.

Clearly someone with a wealth of business experience and passionate about Social Mobility, she was asked to set up the Careers and Enterprise Company (C&EC) in 2015 and is currently also their Chair. The C&EC is a Government Department for Education backed Not for Profit company that helps connect businesses and schools to help deliver world-class careers provision for young people. It was recognised that schools, colleges, and employers should work in partnership to spread outstanding careers advice, guidance, and inspiration to every young person across the country, regardless of their background or location.

Christine also sits on the board of Business in the Community, which is the Prince of Wales' business charity, created nearly 40 years ago by HRH The Prince of Wales to champion responsible business.

### Why is she so passionate about Social Mobility?

A few years back Christine went on a 'Seeing is believing' trip and witnessed deprived areas and communities first-hand, and said "it's just something that's matured over the years with me. I was very fortunate to have had a loving and safe home which I think a lot of people take for granted but you look around at the dysfunctional environments that many young people grow up in and it and it's clear that something needed to be done".

She grew up in Blackpool on a poultry farm, one of four children and acknowledges that as a child she always knew there was going to be good food on the table. She believes that from working with many privileged people, it is imperative to give something back. "It hasn't been a light bulb moment but something that developed over time for me", she says. Christine is hugely committed to the idea that companies have a responsibility to help the communities that they operate in, and that they have to think about all of the stakeholders in their communities and not just their investors.

She says, "Severn Trent has social purpose at its core and tries to do everything it can to help across the whole spectrum. For example, whether it's people who can't pay their water bills or helping with food banks, because it's a local water and waste company, it is very close to its communities, delivering an essential service".

## Outstanding Contribution To Social Mobility Award 2020 - Christine Hodgson

### Where are her successes?

Christine has many examples from her long and successful business career. At Capgemini for example, they made sure that the apprentices that they took on came from all backgrounds and not just those from privileged ones. They were the first company in the UK to introduce apprenticeships which enabled those who couldn't afford tuition fees to earn and learn. She says, "We had young people joining us and five years later they had a degree and experience, and then we gave them a job and then they were on their way, set for the rest of their life". She also recalls a massive schools outreach programme that they undertook which touched around 5,000 pupils a year. They went into schools to try and inspire the students to open their eyes to the whole raft of opportunities that were out there, and it was also supported by bringing the students into the workplace.

She says that the Digital Academy they set up at Capgemini for people who, for whatever reason, had been digitally disadvantaged, such as refugees, has been very successful. They work closely with CodeYourFuture (CYF), which is a UK based non-profit organisation that trains refugees and other disadvantaged people to become web developers and helps them to find work in the tech industry. The courses and support run on weekends and in the evenings to allow easier access. She says, "the ability to change people's lives is evident in this kind of support, where some people have been living on a wage where they are just surviving and trying to make ends meet, then going on to get a great job which is very well paid is so impactful to their lives".

Christine says "I was asked to set up the C&E Company in 2015 and worked with Justine Greening who wanted to focus on Social Mobility to bring it to fruition. We are now working with about 80% of secondary schools in England, including those in cold spots and opportunity areas".

They have encouraged businesses to get involved with their local schools and have put business volunteers in over 3,000 schools to connect with the young people, showing them what opportunities are out there. Christine says, "some may have come from generations of unemployment and have no role models showing them the relevance of education. Showing that pathways that are open to them is particularly important".

Another success for her is where Severn Trent has announced that it will now give 500 places for work experience, which is significant given its ratio to 6,000 employees. They are also encouraging other companies to do the same.

Christine has seen the impact of COVID-19 in her work with C&EC, saying that she has witnessed some fantastic examples of companies giving a week's worth of work experience completely online. She also talks about the 'democratising effect' where perhaps some of the shy children who have found work experience overwhelming have found it easier to engage online. Also, the reach has been very impactful, for example, she mentions work with the Oak Academy who was created in April 2020 as a rapid response to the Coronavirus outbreak. More than 40 teachers and colleagues from leading education organisations came together to support schools' efforts to keep children learning. "Of course, you don't just reach the kids, you reach the parents too. Although there's no substitute for that face-to-face learning, there have been other advantages, like the incredible reach that's been made possible by COVID-19, and I think going forward that there will possibly be a hybrid of the two".

She says, "I hope that one positive to come out of COVID-19 is that companies look at their Social Mobility and Corporate Social Responsibility strategies, and make working with young people a priority. Otherwise, there will be some kids that will be lost due to some serious systemic issues".

Her clear passion for her home town of Blackpool comes across through the work that she has been involved with there, and the success of having the private, public, and volunteer sectors working together which she says, "doesn't happen as matter of course". From working with Business in the Community, they have created a Pride of Place partnership which is bringing the different sectors together to ask how they can turbocharge the economy, and help tackle some of the deep-seated local issues. Blackpool's inner wards contain some of the greatest deprivation in England. She says "with Blackpool, we didn't want to put a sticking plaster over the amount of high suicides and drug use there, we wanted to rebuild the town and attract inward investment and we have lobbied government to improve the housing there. I feel a real affinity with the town, and am so thrilled that it was the first town to benefit from 39.5 million of Government money".

Christine doesn't just talk about social purpose. Last year at Severn Trent she donated 25% of her salary for three months to local charities. She says, "never has the subject been so important as it is now with the impact of COVID-19, particularly on businesses and the regeneration that will have to take place".

# Organisation Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS LLP (PwC)



### Who are PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC)?

They are a network of firms in 155 countries with over 284,000 people who are committed to delivering quality in assurance, advisory and tax services. PwC UK has been the number one UK employer in the Social Mobility Index for the last two consecutive years.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

Hollie Crompton, Social Mobility Lead at PwC UK, explained, "We've been involved with the Awards for a number of years and when we had a look at the Organisation of the Year category it really stood out to us in terms of what we've achieved and had done over the past year or so to support social mobility". PwC UK have increased their outreach, activities and even the size of their social mobility team in order to scale up efforts during the pandemic.

In 2016, they created a Social Mobility team to specifically focus on the issue. The team created and published a social mobility strategy to help guide the firm, enabling them to become focused, coordinated, and accountable on the issue of social mobility, and to design the role they could play in improving opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Hollie reflects, "defining our strategy and having a team dedicated to social mobility helped us to define what we were doing which made it easier to communicate to our people. That helped us build up engagement and support for our social mobility work from across the firm, and outside it" She explains that

social mobility is a big focus for PwC UK's Senior Partner and Chairman Kevin Ellis, as well as a personal focus and priority for PwC UK's Chief People Officer Laura Hinton, with both advocating for social mobility, encouraging discussion and helping to sponsor their activities. Hollie says that "we've also noticed from our clients and business facing staff that there's been a lot more inquiries about what we're doing to support social mobility and how can they get involved".

### What did they do?

Hollie explains that they have four main areas in their Social Mobility Strategy which fall under: Recruitment - she says "our student process has been completely overhauled to focus on potential instead of past performance. Since COVID-19 we've continued to uphold our offers for both April and September intakes, and we have onboarded all of those students virtually, quickly creating a technology-led process to allow us to do so. We switched our in-person work experience to a virtual work experience programme, which actually took away a lot of restraints and enabled us to offer it to all students who applied for the programme, which meant a much larger group benefitted".

Development and progression - this is an area where PwC UK have made a lot of progress over the past year or so. A year and a half ago, around 30 percent of their workforce had provided their personal socio-economic data. They realised that they needed to increase the overall number of people within the firm providing details on their socio-economic backgrounds, because as Hollie says, "there is a lot of external research and

evidence that points to issues with progression in lots of different industries for people that come from disadvantaged backgrounds, but you really need the data from within your own organisation to see if that's happening and where it's happening". Realising they needed more data, they instigated a firmwide campaign to educate people on why it is important to share this data. Part of this included integrating socio-economic background questions into their regulatory compliance returns as well. PwC also published a series of 'Social Mobility stories' every month profiling an employee's story about coming from a less privileged background. The intention is to encourage openness and discussion about the different backgrounds people have and the impact it can have on people's lives and choices. Hollie says "Through these efforts we've managed to increase the percentage of people who've shared their data from 30% to over 80% which means there's been a massive amount of progress and what we can do now is progress with more in-depth analysis around things like does background affect progression, retention levels and performance ratings? We are doing that now with University College London and we are going to incorporate socio-economic background measures to our Diversity and Inclusion dashboard as well". Hollie says "80% is a representative sample which allows us to carry out meaningful analysis and we now have Social Mobility data specific to the business areas and grades, meaning we can see what is happening within our organisation. We're able to analyze the findings and use the data to help inform our management board on where the data is telling us there could be barriers and therefore reinforce our suggested action plans. We can pinpoint where the issues are, allowing us to take some very targeted actions".

Community - PwC has really expanded the programme over the last two years, with a new team being recruited, allowing them to carry out more outreach and upskill more young people. Last summer, during COVID-19, they worked with a number of partner organisations like The Sutton Trust, Speakers for Schools, the National Literacy Trust, and the SM Foundation to engage with young people virtually. Hollie says, "when it became evident that we weren't going to get back to face-to-face in time, we designed a whole new programme for the 2020/21 academic year, which is a fully virtual programme and includes our back-to-school visits and a six-week employability programme called 'New world, New skills'. We've been able to reach a much wider geographic area virtually where students wouldn't have been able to get to a PwC office so that has been really positive".

Advocacy – With PwC UK having been ranked as the number one employer in the Social Mobility Index for two years in a row, they're often asked to share their story and talk about their journey. Hollie says "we're now working much more closely with the Social Mobility Commission including on measurement and with their employer toolkit. We do acknowledge that we are further ahead with that journey than some other organisations and we're happy to share our experiences, hints and tips and how we've gone about approaching it and that's been really successful and well received by lots of other organisations. We know improving social mobility in the UK will take collaboration and effort from all businesses and sectors, so it makes sense to share learnings and support one another. Awards like these are a great way to get the information out there". Hollie reports that they are telling more and more social mobility stories both internally, at events and on their social media platforms. "These have proved really popular and help to promote role models from lower socio-economic backgrounds within the business."

### How do they measure their success?

Hollie says, "The increase of our level of data from 30% to over 80% is fantastic and we're really lucky to have an impact team who support us in collecting and measuring data".

In 2019, 80% of the students who took part in our employability skills training said that they would be able to use the skills they learned after the activity and 84% said they had learned a lot more about business. Hollie says, "there has been over 80,000 hours of volunteering, more than 20,000 students supported with skills development and also volunteers are more engaged with the business, the design, delivery and facilitation of the programmes."

Another of their success stories is where they have been running an outreach programme with refugees, working with the Refugee Council. Hollie says this came about because "we wanted to give our staff more of a choice about how they can support disadvantaged communities and we do have a large group of over 2,400 volunteers who are part of our Social Mobility Network. A large proportion of those people are also interested in and passionate about supporting refugees with the challenges they face".

Hollie says, "looking ahead we have more we want to achieve. Our aim is to lead by example and be recognised as an inclusive organisation where people from all backgrounds are able to work, develop and succeed. The work we do, alongside the work we do in collaboration with other organisations, is aimed at removing barriers and providing greater opportunities

## Organisation Of The Year 2020 - Winner - PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC)

to make sure people are succeeding based on their potential, and not on their background. We are committed to doubling down on our social mobility commitments, including through our paid work experience placements for people from less privileged backgrounds and helping disadvantaged young people and people in social mobility cold spots develop workplace skills.”

# Leadership Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## GREENE KING



# GREENE KING

## BURY ST EDMUNDS

### Who is Greene King?

- Greene King was founded in 1799 and is headquartered in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk
- It currently employs around 40,000 people across its main trading businesses; Pub Company, Pub Partners and Brewing & Brands
- It operates c.2,750 pubs, restaurants and hotels across England, Wales and Scotland, of which c.1,600 are retail pubs, restaurants and hotels, and c.1,050 are tenanted, leased and franchised pubs
- Its leading retail brands and formats include Hungry Horse, Farmhouse Inns, Chef & Brewer and the Greene King Local Pubs estate
- Greene King also brews quality ale brands from its Bury St. Edmunds and Dunbar breweries. Its industry leading portfolio includes Greene King IPA, Old Speckled Hen, Abbot Ale and Belhaven Best

### Why did Greene King enter the Awards?

We spoke to Graham Briggs, Head of Apprenticeships and Employability Programmes, to ask him why Greene King entered the awards.

"This year has been very different for many employers", says Graham. "In 2019, we won the SOMO's Recruitment Programme of the Year award and so when we looked at the detail of the Leadership of the Year category, we thought not only did we have a great story to tell, but it was a brilliant way to recognise the contribution that everybody in Greene King had been making

towards social mobility, from looking after employees in the business and the much wider work in and around communities". He explains the business has done much that was worth shouting about and refers to the CEO Nick Mackenzie, Chief People Office, Andrew Bush and the Exec Board who he says have been a real credit leading by example from the top. "The way the leaders and business adapted, supported employees and wider communities really enhanced everything we stand for and mirrored our values."

"That's the reason for entering the Awards. You feel like you've got 38,000 people on the same journey together", he added. "Hopefully this will raise awareness of Greene King as a great employer and why people should consider us for a career".

### Apprenticeships

Greene King has developed a number of programmes that fall into the social mobility category for several years now, with the longest around apprenticeships.

Graham says, "We know that not everybody comes out of school or college with qualifications, but our programmes demonstrate how people can keep learning and developing by moving through the levels from level 2 which is equivalent to five GCSE's up to level 7 which is our MBA programme". Greene King recruits apprentices all year round and have worked hard to promote its offer and make people aware of the apprenticeships and pathways that are available.



## Leadership Of The Year 2020 - Winner - Greene King

The programme has grown over the years and now there are over 30 different apprenticeships available across the business, ranging from hospitality and management to brewing, finance, and surveying.

Greene King has now supported over 13,000 apprentices which has been possible due to the business wide support and value they see in the programme. During 2020, 1000 employees continued to learn through apprenticeships whilst on furlough.

### The Prince's Trust

With the success of the apprenticeship programme, in 2016, Greene King launched a new partnership with The Prince's Trust.

Now in its fifth year and having just signed up for another five years, Greene King deliver two programmes 'Get into Hospitality' and 'Ready to Work', alongside The Prince's Trust working with disadvantaged groups aged 16 -30-year-olds, supporting them into the workplace.

Having already supported hundreds of young people over the years, Greene King has committed to providing 1,000 young people with job opportunities over the next 5 years through the partnership.

### Ex-Offenders

In 2019, Greene King released its 'Stepping Up' report to promote social mobility and the newest programme at the time was the ex-offender programme, Releasing Potential.

The purpose of the programme is to support people as they leave prison back into work with a tailored programme for success. Graham explains that they might have a pub that is in close proximity to an open prison where somebody can come out on day release and work for there while finishing their sentence. Greene King try and be flexible and support the individual's needs, particularly if, when released from prison, the individual doesn't necessarily settle locally to the prison. Greene King will work with Ministry of Justice and its partners to facilitate relocation for the individual to other parts of the UK whilst they complete their sentence, which allows them to continue with their employment with Greene King, albeit at a different pub.

Despite the challenges faced due to Covid, two years on, Greene King is now working with over 25 prisons, with plans to expand its offer further across more of the UK.

Graham's absolute enthusiasm and passion for his work is infectious. He gives the example of one exoffender Greene King recruited, who was released from prison when it was just coming into the period of COVID-19 and was also homeless. He says, "We were able to work with our charity partner Only a Pavement Away to help find a solution. We offered a letter of employment, that was then used as a guarantee of pay. This meant the individual was able to find accommodation with the support of the charity, so in a very short space of time somebody came from being unemployed and homeless to being employed as a team member with accommodation."

### How did Greene King achieve this?

Greene King work with a wide array of partners and charities, including eleven for Apprenticeship Programmes alone. Greene King has worked with its lead partner Lifetime Training for seven years. Graham says, "You need a partner alongside you that understands your values and culture."

"We've got three main partners for our ex offender programme and have been exploring others to support our existing offer and allow Greene King to expand further."

The partners on apprenticeships and all its social mobility programmes are key to Greene King as it can't do it all alone, but by bringing different partners in and sharing best practice this allows them to get on and make improvements. Graham says, "We want to keep on improving and supporting more people and communities where possible".

### How did Greene King cope with Covid-19?

When the pandemic struck Greene King set out three priorities for the business, one of which was to protect its employees and partners as best it could.

The CEO and board members led by example and put consistent communications at the heart of the strategy so that employees felt connected and informed every step of the way. The CEO took a 50% pay cut whilst other members of the Executive Board took a 30% pay cut, which funded a new Greene King Team Member Support Fund, to help those that needed extra financial support.

Greene King hosted live broadcasts to update team members, questions could be posed to the CEO and the board members. Even before arrangements for furlough were announced by the government, Greene

## Leadership Of The Year 2020 - Winner - Greene King

King reassured its employees that their salaries would be paid and pledged to protect jobs. Graham explains, "We have prioritised looking after people's wellbeing and give support to combat loneliness, as it is so important. We also created a virtual pub, offering quizzes and volunteer opportunities to support our charity partner, Macmillan Cancer Support. Many employees came up with their own initiatives to support their local communities with food donations and volunteering to food banks.

### **How do they measure their success?**

Graham describes Greene King as a business that is always trying to do more and find new opportunities to really support the communities across the UK.

It measures itself against all its programmes. Graham says, "By setting KPIs and evaluating progress it shows us areas to improve and where we can look to recruit from. Whilst Greene King works towards its long-term strategy to support diversity and inclusion in the business, providing forums to allow employees a voice is important, which is why we have several employee led groups including LGBT+ group, Village Greene, Team 47 for women and race forum, Unity.

"As a business, we try to find new programmes that can really add value to our offer and continuously improve them based on feedback from everyone involved. One of the exciting developments this year has been how we all have adapted to working remotely and online and this has allowed us to keep on delivering some of our programmes".

One of the new programmes that was due for launch in 2020 but had to be delayed due to Covid was supported internships. Working with a specialist college, Greene King planned to provide 16-24 year olds with learning difficulties and disabilities the opportunity to develop employment and life skills as they enter the hospitality industry. This is the latest addition to its social mobility offer and will be launched in 2021 instead.

At the time of speaking to Graham, Greene King had just been named 9th in the top100 National Apprenticeship Employers.

# Recruitment Programme Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## ASHURST LLP

The Ashurst logo is displayed in a large, dark blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are bold and closely spaced, with a modern, clean aesthetic. The logo is centered within a white rectangular frame.

### Who are Ashurst LLP?

Ashurst is a leading global law firm with a history spanning almost 200 years, and clear strategy for their future growth. Their in-depth understanding of their clients and commitment to providing exceptional standards of service have seen them become a trusted adviser to local and global corporates, financial institutions and governments in all areas of commercial law.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

Ashurst has always strived to be a fair and open firm. As a founding member of PRIME they have sought to provide quality work experience to students from disadvantaged backgrounds since 2011. However, that was primarily seen as a charitable exercise, separate from how the firm recruited talent onto the graduate programme. In more recent years it is apparent that this was a missed opportunity, they knew that their lawyers were not representative of the broadest talent pools and that they were losing out on individuals from marginalised communities. Lloyd says, "what was interesting for us was to compete against other sectors too, we already knew that we were doing well against the other law firms and we felt it would be of use to our sector to share this experience through the UK Social Mobility Awards".

### What did they do?

Lloyd says that Ashurst is "just a nice place to work" and over the last eight years it had already established a number of programmes giving access to the organisation via work experience and mentoring. When he arrived four years ago that was happening in a separate bubble in CSR and what he has been able to do is to re-engineer how they recruit for themselves and the CSR work has become an important pipeline for the firm. Lloyd says "it's always good to give people a glimpse of what they could have, but then if you put in a lot of hard work why would you let that good talent go elsewhere? For us it's an end-to-end process where we are identifying them, supporting them, giving them the opportunity and mentoring them and then once they're here making sure the support mechanisms are in place to make sure they don't bounce in and bounce out".

He explains what happened after he dug into their recruitment process and found that they had a scoring mechanism which particularly favoured people from higher Social Mobility backgrounds. There was a huge emphasis placed upon the Partner interview where social capital was probably the biggest determinant whether a job was offered or not. Also, there was no data to show which kind of candidate stayed in the firm. They had to re-engineer the recruitment process where they were looking at people's emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills and what started off as a pilot became the way that we started to recruit. Lloyd says "we can demonstrate now from all our junior talent that those people who score on those criteria perform better and

## Recruitment Programme Of The Year 2020 - Winner - Ashurst LLP

stay longer within the firm and then by linking our CSR work we were then accessing more people from lower socio-economic backgrounds in a more targeted way”.

Lloyd explains the way they approached this. In 2017, the Early Careers team piloted “gamified” assessments using logic, values and emotional intelligence tests to screen candidates. Research suggests that measures of general cognitive ability are a better predictor of job performance, particularly when combined with behavioural assessments and structured interviews. The ability to predict a candidate’s job performance increases to 58% when these more structural methods are used (there is nothing shown to deliver 100% predictive validity!). He says “we saw efficiency savings in time, an increased quality of candidate, but also an increase of 25% in candidates from outside our target universities, from low socio-economic groups or who were of non-white ethnicity. We also saw a 20% increase in candidates with a STEM background and after our candidates completed the graduate programme, we saw increases in performance from 2016/17.” In 2018 they established reverse mentoring for BAME and social mobility candidates to provide support, coaching and advocacy. It also saw the first intake of legal apprenticeships, recruited directly from school. This was a cultural shift for the firm, to consider taking such a long-term view of talent and it also meant a business unit could shape and develop its own talent pool over time. This also provided the firm with an opportunity to market directly to talent at schools using Vantage, a database of social mobility and BAME students, to position both their apprenticeship and graduate schemes. In 2019 they saw an opportunity to review, supercharge and align their PRIME and outreach programmes to become a direct recruitment channel for the business. 2020 marked the dropping of academic requirements for their early career programmes and the start of a new sponsorship initiative aimed to support greater Social Mobility for the 20/21 academic year. In addition, Ashurst has established the Social Mobility and Inclusion Network, “by having champions who view our processes through a Social Mobility lens we can ensure we focus on the potential of high performing talent, not the benefits afforded by social privilege and capital”.

To bring us up to date this year due to COVID-19 they piloted virtual work experience and internships and that’s been really helpful for candidates who can’t get to London to their offices which they are going to keep as a

permanent feature. They plan to explore and extend this approach.

### How do they measure their success?

Lloyd says that in their last recruitment drive they received 145 applications from over 100 schools. 25 places were accepted of which 100% met PRIME criteria and 68% were ethnically diverse. For the 2019/2020 graduate intake their cohort almost doubled from one third to almost two thirds state school while we increased the percentage of those who had been the first in their families to go to university from 20% to 33% and free school meal beneficiaries from 25% to 33%. They also record performance, retention and D&I data on their lawyers.

He says “for me the measure of success is performance in role, are the people that we are recruiting through this new way performing better compared to the old method? And the answer to that is, yes. Are they staying for longer? It’s actually too early to say as we’ve only had a couple of years with people going through the whole process. But what’s interesting because we have a much more ethnically and social mobility diverse cohort of people coming into the firm, so our clients expect us to field a team that reflects wider society whereas historically we have fielded people from a very narrow part of society in the UK”.

Lloyd sees what they are doing is making a difference and says “I can give you an example, one of the first apprentices we hired was a single mum and she had to defer completing her A levels to give birth then went back to school and finished her A levels. At this stage now in her life she’s having to balance being a mum in what is not an easy profession, but we support her and she is successful. She will now have significantly more life chances than she would have had otherwise and there has been learning on both sides to make it work. She got into the law by the pathways that we had put in place”.

# Progression Programme Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## HMRC



### Who is HMRC?

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax, payments and customs authority, and has a vital purpose: collecting the money that pays for the UK's public services and helping families and individuals with targeted financial support. This is done by being impartial and increasingly effective and efficient in its administration. HMRC employs 65,000 staff throughout the UK and serves every single business and individual, from the smallest local shops to the largest multinationals.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

HMRC's Social Mobility Programme Lead, Cliff Sale said "Having won the SOMO Progression Award last year too it was in our calendar of things that we want to do and be involved in. For this year we looked at the different categories and Stride, our Social Mobility Mentoring Scheme seemed an obvious nomination for the Progression Award". He says that they've developed it hugely over the last year and thought the SOMO Awards was a good way to get it out there and showcase what they've done. He says it's a great way to acknowledge all of the people who've been involved and especially all of the mentees and mentors. He says, "Stride has grown so much, when we talked about it this time last year, we'd only launched it in the October, and it's become a massive success story within those 12 months".

### What did they do?

The original idea was to launch a mentoring scheme for people who identified themselves as coming from lower Socio-Economic Background's (SEB's) and link them up with senior leaders within HMRC. Rebeckah says "We ask them when they apply if they would consider themselves as coming from a lower SEB and how they identify themselves by giving a few examples, but we leave it up to them as we would always rather accidentally include someone than leave them out. Generally, if you think the scheme might be for you then it is".

Cliff says, "I think where Stride has really developed over the last 12 months is that we've really gone beyond that single one-to-one mentoring arrangement and developed a community side to it as well." They set up Teams channels for mentees and mentors and started encouraging group discussions so they could share issues, problems and successes. From those discussions they started picking up trends such as what people were talking about and what was going on in those one-to-one conversations and they took those away and started running development sessions around those themes. With the second cohort they've gone on to deliver monthly sessions on different subjects, have brought in speakers and have provided Executive Coaching too if anybody wants to build on their strengths, so it's become a personal development programme as well. Cliff says, "That's why it's taken off, people have a fantastic senior leader as a mentor, they also have access to all this bespoke learning and the community as well for discussions".

Rebeckah was responsible for designing and leading the mentoring scheme and after much discussion about whether it was the right time to launch it with Brexit and other pressures such as the response to COVID that was ongoing, Barry Chadwick, Deputy Director, agreed to sponsor it and he was instrumental in getting the agreement to take it forward.

Cliff says "One of the things that we are conscious of is, because we are a very big department, you probably don't know what goes on elsewhere which limits you in terms of your opportunities to progress, so it's just a good opportunity to meet with other mentees and mentors and spend 15 minutes having a chat with them about their role and where they work, what's needed in that area, what the priorities are, where they are based etc.". Cliff explains that they have got great examples of where people have been talking to each other, for example about work in communications, where someone has come upon the mentoring community who works in communications and said to the person interested, do you want to come and work shadow me or do you want to come into one of my meetings?

With the effects of the pandemic virtually everything is online now which has lent itself to the Teams channel activity with people going online to chat to one another more informally about their work. It has also widened opportunities because, for example, where shadowing was mentioned before, now more people can take part and get involved which is very exciting.

### **How do they measure their success?**

Rebeckah says "For us success looks like our mentees saying that they have benefited from Stride and at the end of each programme we send out a questionnaire to our mentees and that is their opportunity to tell us about their experience and what they've got out of it".

They also ask a lot of questions in terms of the evaluation of Stride and they are very keen that it isn't just seen as something to use to get promoted. Promotion is very important and is a key thing to improve people in terms of Social Mobility, but they didn't want it to be just an advancement programme. So they asked people about whether it had helped them evaluate their goals and ambitions because Cliff says "We quite often hear about mentees who joined the scheme thinking that they've got access to a senior leader and they'll be able to help them with their application process and so they'll get promoted as a result of it, but we've heard now of a number of incidences where the mentees' have said that's how I started but after my first couple of meetings I actually stood back and evaluated it and thought about

it and said to myself is that the approach that I should be taking?" Something like three quarters of the last intake said it helped them to evaluate their goals and ambitions and about half the people that have been on Stride have reported how their confidence has increased. Cliff explains it's not just the mentees and mentors that benefit and says, "An interesting statistic too, from a business point of view, is that around a quarter of the mentees who joined Stride reported back that they had actually taken on extra responsibilities so they could build on their CV, so from a business point of view we can demonstrate that there has been an immediate benefit to the business from it".

They are just about to evaluate the second cohort and say that something like 97% people reported back from the first one that they would recommend it. They went from something like 170 applicants in the first cohort to about 435 in the second, which is a clear demonstration that Stride is a Winner.

# Community Programme Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## KPMG



### Who are KPMG?

KPMG LLP, a UK limited liability partnership, operates from 21 offices across the UK with approximately 16,000 partners and staff.

KPMG is a global organization of independent professional services firms providing Audit, Legal, Tax and Advisory services. It operates in 147 countries and territories and has more than 219,000 people working in member firms around the world.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

Ben says, "where we've got a good story to tell we're always keen to amplify what we're doing within the wider responsible business community". He describes the support they are providing their communities as 'practical' and hopefully something that other businesses can learn from as well.

They are always keen to share best practice and draw on inspiration from the winners at the SOMO Awards year on year. He goes on to say "the SOMOs have a very good profile and reviewing the categories this year we thought our strongest contribution was around our targeted approach to Community Engagement and that it was a good time to be sharing that".

### What did they do?

KPMG's Corporate Responsibility (CR) strategy is rooted in social mobility and is based on the simple idea that it's mutually beneficial for everyone, especially in a company like KPMG where they value diversity of thought and background. Ben says "it makes us more able to support our clients. It's not just a moral imperative, it's important for our business and it is important for our sector. It's also crucial for the wider UK economy."

As part of their Community strategy, they acknowledge that numeracy, literacy and lifelong learning are the building blocks for social mobility, helping lay the foundations for a healthy, inclusive economy. They have developed flagship initiatives to help tackle these issues, such as National Numeracy Day, where over the last three years they have focused on elevating numeracy as an issue. Ben says, "in the past if you look at literacy, there has been huge engagement in recent years in terms of businesses driving action – and World Book Day is a great example of how to enthuse and engage people differently around reading. The challenge for us was how do you do that with numeracy, which is equally as important but perhaps more challenging to get your hands around."

They went on to set up National Numeracy Day with the charity National Numeracy, to try and drive a different discussion about numbers. To engage with not just young people but adults as well on how numbers have an impact on their day-to-day life. They promote the campaign nationally but - as with all their programmes -

## Community Programme Of The Year 2020 - Winner - KPMG

target specific social mobility cold spots and Opportunity Areas where numeracy levels may be lower. They help deliver positive messages about the importance of numeracy skills and promote the National Numeracy Challenge to provide practical support for communities across the UK.

Ben says "we're very proud of National Numeracy Day and we're seeing the campaign grow year on year. Clearly 2020 was very different and National Numeracy necessarily ran the campaign as a digital festival with a range of inspiring and practical content. We had our best year yet for engagement, which I think illustrates how while COVID-19 has of course presented huge challenges, it has helped us think innovatively about how to deliver positive impact as well."

They have a much longer history around Literacy. For example, in 2014 they launched the Vision for Literacy Business Pledge with the National Literacy Trust. More recently, in acknowledgement of the impact of COVID-19 on learning, they worked with the National Literacy Trust to create pop-up libraries in 150 schools across the UK to help mark the firm's 150th year. Ben says, "In those communities where it was needed most, we wanted to make sure there was access to physical books to help increase students' enjoyment of reading, which we know leads to better literacy attainment".

Their flagship employability programme 'WorkReady' has already supported around 13,000 students since 2013, using the 'Skills Builder' framework which they have been a long-standing supporter of. Ben says "the reason Skills Builder is important for us is because it focuses on impact and it gives us a framework to measure what we're doing. The framework sets out 8 essential skills and 15 steps to master them - students and teachers can use it to integrate into the curriculum and businesses can use it to in their outreach work. It's been a real game-changer for us and we've also added the programme into our learning and development offer for KPMG apprentices."

### How do they measure their success?

Ben says "if we are able to evidence that we are having a positive impact in our communities then that helps to drive the business case for Corporate Responsibility. Evaluation of our programmes is key - schools have got so many challenges at the moment what they need to understand is that you are delivering quality which is going to be beneficial to their young people, so impact data is critical in them trusting us as an organisation. We also look at the impact on our own people to make

sure our programmes are sustainable, surveying our volunteers around key areas like wellbeing, professional development and sense of pride in the firm."

They closely monitor and evaluate all their programmes to establish 'what works' and which initiatives deliver the greatest impact possible. In 2019, the vast majority of over 2,000 WorkReady participants - all from Social Mobility cold spots - noted improvements across their essential skills due to the programmes. National Numeracy Day has helped over 100,000 people start their journey towards improved numeracy in the past three years.

Ben says "We make sure that everything we do is rooted in who we are as a business and we are always looking towards the future. We talk to colleagues who are in the innovation space and they share insight around how technology is shaping the future of work through an emerging tech radar which we translate into concepts and activities that enhance our work with young people. We're committed to continuing to share the best thinking and skills in our business to support young people access the best opportunities, regardless of background."



# School/College Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## TILE CROSS ACADEMY



### Who are Tile Cross Academy?

Tile Cross Academy is a small and caring 11-16 mixed comprehensive school that was created in 2017 and is part of Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust in Birmingham. With the wide range of backgrounds and cultures represented in their school population they celebrate Diversity and difference.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

Neil explains that the school is situated very close to Birmingham Airport in an area of the City called Tile Cross. It had previously been put into special measures in 2014 and he says, "it's now in a happy place due to the team and work that has been put in and we've been rebranded and become an Academy". Previously due to its poor reputation and subsequent under subscription of places many newly arrived migrant families began to come to the school which changed their demographic. They currently have a large number of Romanian gypsy and Somali families, for example, who Neil says, "don't know how things work so they can't take a lot of the opportunities or even know about them so there's lots of barriers to Social Mobility". Also, there's the indigenous population whose families may be from long term generations of unemployment, with social challenge as well. The postcode of the school places it in the top 3% for deprivation according to the 2019 (IMD) Index of Multiple Deprivation for England. Of the year 11 pupils from last academic year's cohort, 40% had not been to primary school in the UK.

He says, "I've always been passionate about ex-curricular activities which my own children took for granted and what struck me last year was that everything I was doing in the school was about Social Mobility, so I decided to enter the Awards".

### What did they do?

Neil says "what this school is about is teaching young people to be good citizens and to make the most of their opportunities. If you don't know about the possibilities that are out there, what you need to do academically to fulfil those opportunities and if you haven't got the soft skills, then you're going to be limited. So that is why we are very keen to create as many opportunities as we can in our school to develop those students and show them the wider opportunities that are out there in life".

He says they work to create opportunities and experiences with a number of other organisations such as Charities, Corporates and other Education establishments. For example, he organised a trip for girls who were interested in the Law that was hosted at The University of Law in Birmingham by a large law firm. He says, "So they're going into a HE setting and they're doing workshops run by legal professionals so that through osmosis things trickle in and things happen". Another time he took students to the headquarters of HBSC in Birmingham and what they saw was not just the world of the top bankers but all the other different jobs like IT and HR and all the different jobs and opportunities out there, and he believes that all of these kinds of activities develop confidence.

He goes on to describe “also lot of these activities involve collaboration and maybe staying away from home overnight, for example, we got invited down to the launch of the Americas Cup night and we took more students from our school than anybody else. We were put up in accommodation and a lot of these kids had never stayed in a hotel before and we were taken for a meal in a very smart restaurant and the kids had to choose their courses in advance, a lot of them had never seen a menu like that before and had never sat down in a restaurant where food was bought to them”. A lot of these activities would normally be provided by a family, but they don’t have this. They also provide more ambitious activities such as going to Europe and America.

They also work with Birmingham Airport as they have got a CSR project and another fantastic resource called Arconic Manufacturing which is a factory close by who manufacture aluminium which is used to make planes, satellites and military vehicles etc. He says “they have been brilliant at providing us with work experience and have won an award linked to that, so the school got \$10,000 as part of that. There’s also an Arconic Foundation which has just given us \$50,000 to create a new science lab, one of its big targets is STEM and social disadvantage so Social Mobility is important to them”.

Something that’s come in to fruition very recently is their work with a Charity called ‘Royal Springboard’ whose mission is to get disadvantaged children places at boarding school. The children they work with are in care, children on the edge of care and very disadvantaged children. Neil says, “I’ve got three boys who are being interviewed and they are down to the last 32, for 12 places at Eton in the sixth form which would attract 110% bursary and even if they don’t get into Eton, they will match them to another boarding school that is suitable for them with full funding”. He says that some of the parents of these kids don’t take any interest or can’t support them, so he has to be loco parentis in terms of doing all the application forms with them. He says “If you think of the Romanian gypsy families the parents probably didn’t go to school and would have been discriminated against in the education system in Romania anyway and they work in the cash economy. Two of the boy’s parents being put forward to Eton parents don’t speak English so can you imagine when they are filling in forms that are about 8 pages long where they are asked about their salary, P60’s, tax self-assessment etc, how difficult this is? “He says he has heard that when these young people have come back from this kind of education the whole community is

so proud of them and the ripple effect this can have is massive.

What they have achieved which is different from other schools, not counting Independent schools, is the range and scope of the activities that they offer for the type of school they are, at a fraction of the real cost. Neil says, “we offer all these extraordinary activities and its all totally inclusive”.

### **How do they measure their success?**

Neil says, “in terms of how we know we’re doing the right thing I guess that comes down to professional judgement because we can see the change in these students that have these opportunities and you can compare them with the children who don’t take them”. Building on their success they are planning to become more of a Community School, and he is going to be carrying out a change project which it is all about getting the parents to become involved in the school. Obviously, they can’t do this so much at the moment because the students can’t come into the school and most of them are working from home. To start this, Neil has been getting the school office to send out a text to the parents every day which normally includes a little video about the overseas trips and what they have done and are planning. The first one he sent out was about the SOMO Award and now he’s getting 120 hits each day for each video he sends out. He is clearly proud of what he had achieved at the school and says “we did a video about the liberation of the Bergen Belsen concentration camp, and we framed it around the Roma Sinti Genocide and the introduction to the video features one of our Romanian boys speaking in Romani and we had a celebration event of the project in school. When the kids started speaking Romani you could hear the school hall sound quieten and we felt the recognition that we had made to use their language and to connect with their community directly, it was incredible”.

# University Of The Year 2020 - Winner

## UNIVERSITY OF DERBY



### What is the University of Derby?

Situated in the heart of the city the University traces its history back to the establishment of the Derby Diocesan Institution for the Training of Schoolmistresses in 1851 and gained university status in 1992. The University provides short courses, foundation degrees, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees covering most academic disciplines and sub-disciplines. Currently the University is home to around 34,000 students in all areas of study. The University is an anchor institution for the local community and is a committed member of the Civic University Network.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

Krishna Bainham, Head of Widening Access explains, "I've been at the University for over 20 years and the majority of time I've worked in Widening Participation type roles. As an institution we've moved away from the idea of specific individuals taking responsibility for Widening Participation and Social Mobility and we are embedding it in all parts of the University, an approach that I thought this was extraordinary, something worth celebrating". She says the University has got an interesting story to tell and that what they are doing is taking them a further step towards the advancement of upward social mobility. She says "taking the time to bring in everything that we are doing across the University, writing it up, submitting it, taking the time to pause and reflect on our work was such a worthwhile exercise and then to win the award was the cherry on top of the cake. For a lot of people who work in this area you're trying to make a long-term impact on people's lives and you don't often stop and

look how far you've come and celebrate that moment because you know there's still so far to go".

### What did they do?

The University's geographical location is characterised by a deep level of social immobility. Half of the Local Authorities (LAs) in the East Midlands are identified as social mobility 'cold spots' and Derby city, is ranked 316th out of 324 LAs in terms of social immobility.

Krishna adds "Our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kathryn Mitchell, came to us from an Institution in London and she had a very clear vision of where we could make an impact. I think the difference between Social Mobility and Widening Access is the move towards making an impact on an individual by giving them the opportunities to achieve their ambitions. It's not just about bringing people into the University who happen to fit the Widening Participation criteria. This is something that we needed to address as we have many students that come from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds with over 50% meeting at least one criteria of disadvantage". She believes that the University should be making an impact at all stages, from early years right up to their own graduates who go on to have further impact themselves after they graduate. So, it's not just about how they can have an effect on Social Mobility in the University, it goes wider to the City, County and beyond.

The University has developed a Strategic Framework which places Social Mobility at the centre of its priorities; as a detailed blueprint, it provides the institution with

the foundations and direction on which to plan, perform and succeed in a changing and globally dynamic environment. It frames the University's activity and ambition around three Pillars - Game Changers; Positive Impact; Opening Doors.

Game Changers – is about the work staff are doing with their student body to enable students to go into the world of work and back into their own communities to make a difference. They developed a Student Experience Framework which indicated to their students that this is what you can expect from your University experience beyond the academic side of things. They have found with many of their students that they hadn't had experiences or opportunities that the more advantaged groups had had, such as work experience or internships. Also, many of their students hadn't travelled so they wanted to build those opportunities where they could develop confidence and leadership skills. Krisha explains, "we see students as partners, and have created opportunities for them, such as co-chairing University committees, to build their social, cultural and personal capital and become game changers themselves as they move beyond university and carve out their careers". Also, another important area of their work has been the Student Attainment Policy which is about unexplained gaps, for example, why is there an unexplained difference between the attainment levels of black students and white students. They have developed a Policy that is bold in terms of it being anti-discriminatory and anti-racist. Krisha says, "this has led to the University having to look inwards and we are still in the process of having those uncomfortable conversations, what is it about our structure and culture that is creating these gaps and how can we address them to ensure that our students are as equally successful? Social Mobility is a real driver for us in this work and it's been brought into sharp focus through Black Lives Matter conversations and the challenging times people have been experiencing.

Positive Impact – The University's programmes highlight the positive impact of partnership working to promote Social Mobility within the professions. For example, a partnership with Nottinghamshire Police has led to the first UK Police Constable Apprenticeship Degree. A targeted engagement campaign was undertaken to increase black, Asian and ethnic minorities to participate in the programme. As a result, 21.8% of the applications were from the BAME community compared to 10% for previous recruitment campaigns. Another example is where a Nursing Associate Foundation Degree was developed to provide a progression route to graduate level nursing for non-traditional applicants. The University had the largest pilot group in the country and in 2018/19 enrolled 162 apprentices, the majority

of whom were mature and from low participation neighbourhoods.

The University has also just won an award for 'This is Derby', a social and community impact programme where 3,000 young people were engaged over 9 different hubs and had a choice of free activities including DJ workshops. It was a very successful and a unique collaboration where 95.2% of young people said it had increased their confidence. The programme has also contributed to building civic pride.

Opening Doors - work here includes a key framework called 'Progress to Success' which involves a progressive programme of activities for year 7 to year 11's around widening access into HE. It targets local Social Mobility cold spots and particularly targets acutely underrepresented groups such as looked-after children and white working-class boys. The University also leads the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Outreach Programme (DANCOP) with the aim to inspire and inform local underrepresented young people. A new and exciting project is the 'Derby Scholars' programme which is a collaboration with Corpus Christi College, Oxford to address the low numbers of disadvantaged young people from Derby going to Oxbridge. There are also many other strands of work too numerous to mention.

### How do they measure their success?

Krisha says "You have to make sure that your data and evaluation is robust with a range of methodologies, for example our activities include reflection where young people use diaries to record their experiences. There is a wide range of measurement where we evaluate quantitatively and qualitatively and then act on what that evaluation is telling us, it's not just data for data's sake it's there to be used." She goes on to explain how she had spoken to someone who came from a disadvantaged background and had wanted to study maths but had been discouraged by his teacher. He had gone onto study through one of their programmes at the University and was now a maths teacher.

She says "We are currently seeing, as a result of COVID-19, that many things are moving online, such as the Derby Scholars programme. We use a lot of digital resources in our work which means it can be delivered virtually and flexibly. We have a large bank of digital resources and teachers have been engaging with this along with parents and students, and we are seeing that there's been a very positive impact where we've opened our resources up to a wide audience".

## University Of The Year 2020 - Winner - University of Derby

Universities are now being held to account for the work they carry out to address the inequality of access and participation in higher education. There is a real step change, and it is something which the University, an institution committed to Social Mobility and improving life chances, wholeheartedly welcomes.

Innovation Award 2020 - Winner

## BRIGHTON AND SUSSEX MEDICAL SCHOOL



### Who are Brighton and Sussex Medical School?

Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) is an equal partnership between the Universities of Sussex and Brighton, together with NHS organisations throughout the South East region. The arrangements for the school's governance reflect this approach and students are awarded joint BM BS degrees of both universities. BSMS was created in 2002.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

Claire Johnson, Widening Participation and Outreach Manager at BSMS, explains that they saw the Awards in a newsletter and had launched their virtual work experience programme in February 2020. She says "we knew that it was quite different, so we thought it fitted well into the Innovation category. We thought we'd put in a submission, although I don't think we really thought that we had much chance considering we were going up against big Corporates who have much more money to spend on resources. Our budgets are very tight, so when we were shortlisted we were very surprised and were even more surprised to win the category".

### What did they do?

Claire explains that the Medical School is relatively new (2002) and that Social Mobility has been on the agenda right from inception. She says "it was one of

the things that when they started the Medical School that they really wanted to focus on, so it's been inbuilt from the beginning. The Head of Admissions is very aware of Social Mobility, so when he was going through and developing the Admissions process, he wanted to integrate it as the norm". She says that their virtual work experience had been in the pipeline for a while, as they were very aware that aspiring medics, from backgrounds not typically seen in medicine tend to have less opportunities, mainly through formal and information social networks, to gain a realistic understanding of medicine.

They wanted to create a resource that was accessible regardless of geography and financial situation (although they are aware of issues that surround digital poverty). It was important for them to have something that didn't have deadlines or that required strict time commitments to allow users the flexibility of when they engaged with the platform – again to increase its accessibility.

The course was created by a BSMS Alumnus – Dr Jake Bush- who never intended the resource to replace in-person work experience, but to showcase that you can gain a realistic understanding of medicine and insight into the core values and attributes required to work in the field through other means. It is these insights, they say, that the majority of medical schools are looking for. Claire goes on to explain "we launched it in February just before the Pandemic. We never thought it would gain the traction that it has done! We've been overwhelmed it's gone global and that students from all around the world participate in it".

## Innovation Award 2020 - Winner - Brighton and Sussex Medical School

As part of the programme, users are asked to submit a reflective piece of work that's subsequently reviewed by the Outreach team. Reflective practice is key for aspiring medics in making a successful application to medical school but also an important skill that will be utilised both during medical school and beyond. Claire says "to start with the numbers of reflective pieces were manageable with the three of us who are reviewing them so that was OK, and we could keep on top of it, but then it got picked up by We are Medics, the Medical Schools Council (MSC) and Barclays Life Skills, who all started advertising it. We quickly became overwhelmed by the numbers. At one point we were getting over 100 submissions a day, it blew our minds!". She believes that it may not have received the amount of attention it has received, so quickly, if COVID-19 hadn't happened.

At BSMS, outside of the virtual work experience programme, they also run a longitudinal programme – BrightMed – which is aimed at students in Years 9-12 living in Sussex, who meet various social mobility focused eligibility criteria. Over the course of the 4-year programme, which takes place on 5 Saturdays every year, students take part in various medicine-related activities, learning everything from anatomy to clinical skills to medical ethics. As the students move through the programme, there is a shift towards focusing on the medical school admissions process in a bid to support them making a competitive application, should they wish. The programme culminates in a 4-day summer school which typically involves a 3-night stay on the University campus. BrightMedders successfully completing the required portfolio, with the necessary qualifications are offered lower entry requirements and a guaranteed interview to study medicine at BSMS.

### How do they measure their success?

The virtual work experience is evaluated through pre- and post-course surveys which allows the team to measure user attitudinal changes and learning gain. The team also collects users' postcodes to attribute responses to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD – a proxy for deprivation). Charlotte Smyrk, Claire's colleague, who has been analysing the data says "we were seeing that users from all deciles were able to access the platform and reporting significant learning gains pre- and post-course completion. In some areas – such as confidence in their insight into medicine - users from geographical areas of deprivation, were experiencing greater learning gains than those from more affluent areas"

As part of the post-course survey, users are also given the opportunity to sign up to a monthly newsletter, created by Alice Long, the final member of the BSMS Outreach team. The newsletter adds an extra element of support for aspiring medics, including features from current medical students, advice and guidance on the admissions process, as well as signposting to the team's suite of online workshops and webinars.

Claire says "I think for us going forward we could definitely keep doing our online provision alongside our in-person provision as well. Imposter syndrome is a big thing at Medical School and if you're bright enough there's no reason why you shouldn't come to Medical School. Through the virtual work experience, we're trying to highlight that it doesn't matter where you come from you can still become a doctor".

# Small Business of The Year 2020 - Winner

## JBM



### Who are JBM?

Founded in 2012, they are a values driven search firm that places executive talent and future leaders into Tech Start Ups & Scale Ups. They are a six-person team based in London.

### Why did they enter the Awards?

James says, "we're just big advocates of advancing Social Mobility and we thought even if we don't win just being involved will be a very good experience for us". They are also very excited to be the winners of this Award which was launched as a new category this year. He believes that their interest in the subject is probably down to the makeup of the team and it has been ingrained in them from their childhood. He says, "I went to a school called Christs Hospital School which has Social Mobility at its heart and anyone who goes there has it hardwired into them about giving back". All of the team at JBM mentor / support disadvantaged young people when they can, alongside other charity work. He has also observed in his day job, "if you are white, middle class, you've been to a good school and University you typically get more access to opportunity's. We've always encouraged our clients to take Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) really seriously and we also try to encourage them not to fall into traps that some of the big Corporates fall into where they recruit from a narrow elite group of people".

### What did they do?

One of their most successful and exciting approaches has been the development of their 40 Minute Mentor Podcasts and there have been nearly 40 episodes to date. They launched it because they wanted to give access to and inspire those people who don't normally have access to successful and inspirational individuals. James says "we've had some really inspiring speakers such as Amir Nooriala (CCO at Callsign and Trustee of Making the Leap), Sophie Adelman (President of the Apprentice Start Up WhiteHat), Kresse Wesling MBA (Environmental Entrepreneur and Social Mobility champion) and Alex Stephany (CEO of Beam, a crowdfunding platform for the homeless).

They also recently set up a panel chat Podcast about advancing Social Mobility and a lot of what they talk about in the Podcasts is trying to bring the topic to the fore, trying to get people talking about it and hopefully getting them to do something about it. He says "a big part for us is raising aspirations and encouraging people and we've had 70,000+ downloads so we're reaching a good audience and we've had so many messages on the back of it. People have been reaching out to me about getting involved with mentoring or offering to get involved in apprenticeships ". He also reports that people have been being inspired to go for roles they didn't think they'd be allowed to go for on the back of the Podcasts.



## Small Business of The Year 2020 - Winner - JBM

Another activity that James and the Team are hugely committed to is their mentoring. He says that they give pro bono career advice to anyone and everyone. He says "I have given talks to students at Christ's Hospital, run mock interviews for Lambeth Academy and we've given internships to people from the school over the years. We're always looking to give work experience and internships to people from less advantaged backgrounds".

They also support Charities and decided to give Beam (a homeless Charity) gift cards instead of Christmas presents last year to their clients, which resulted in the charity being able to fund a number of training courses. Another strand of their work is around the D&I agenda and they've always pushed it with their clients to think laterally and bring in more diverse people into their businesses which makes good business sense. They area also are launching a new solution that will encourage black, ethnic minorities and women to get on the boards of tech companies. James says, "we know we've already got a platform as we've already got 10,000 followers on LinkedIn and we've got the Podcasts, so whether it's D&I, mentoring or advancing Social Mobility we know that we have an opportunity to spread the word".

### How do they measure their success?

In relation to the Podcasts, it's quite clear because they see the data and with that data from their 13,500 followers on LinkedIn, they can see the demographics of the audience. Where there is a broad cross section of society they can see the different roles and all the different levels which means that they can see where they are having an impact. From a recruitment perspective they track the D&I numbers, and they can see where they need to do more work. They get anecdotal evidence with the mentoring and he says "I've seen first-hand the wonderful benefits that mentoring can have on someone's life and I also learn huge amounts from my mentee. I see those professional relationships lasting for many years and I think they will likely go on to mentor other people, so it's like a virtuous circle. I would advise people just to get out there and start mentoring someone, I think we all have impostor syndrome in us, and we sometimes think that there's nothing to talk about, but you will be amazed once you get going".

He gives an example of where he had a mentee who was struggling to find a job in the very difficult current climate and he put a message out to ask if anyone could help him, not by giving him a job but just to give him

some useful advice in that particular sector and he got a huge response back, he's now got a job on the graduate scheme of one of the top Consultancies in Europe.

James says "He's had around fifteen conversations with different people and multiple interviews. So, leveraging networks and using platforms is a very powerful way to help someone who deserves it and who otherwise would not have had those opportunities".

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