

SOLICITOR OF THE  
YEAR 2021

SAM SHARP

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## What does it mean to you to win Solicitor of the Year?

- In all honesty, it was quite a surprise as I didn't know I had even been nominated until shortly before the awards but, I am absolutely delighted to have received this award.
- It's a real honour to be recognised for both my corporate transactional work and the links and commitments to the local business and legal community.

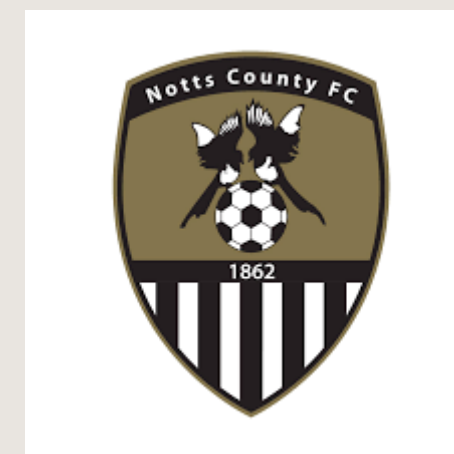
## ❖ What changes would you like to see in the profession?

- I'd like to see the profession lead on the big issues facing society - supporting and influencing change.
- For example, we should all play our part in tackling climate crisis by implementing internal changes, encouraging personal commitments from people and working toward becoming net carbon neutral.
- D&I initiatives should also be prioritized to ensure that everyone is valued and given an equal opportunity to succeed.



## Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?

- Hopefully continuing to work in a great team with some fantastic clients on interesting transactions but, most importantly with Notts County in the Champions League.



## ❖ Do you think there are unreasonable barriers to entering the profession?

- I think the legal profession has come a long way in breaking down barriers to entering into the profession in recent years and it certainly seems that firms including Browne Jacobson are starting to take important issues such as social mobility and the D&I agenda more seriously – there is obviously still work to do but it seems to be moving in the right direction.
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## ❖ What do you think about social mobility in the legal sector?

- Social mobility is a hugely important issue, not just within the legal sector, and I'm really proud to work at a firm that is so passionate about it.
- Actions speak louder than words but it was a great for Browne Jacobson to be recognised as the number one employer in the UK's Top 75 Social Mobility Employer Index 2021 (the first law firm to top the rankings) and was a real testament to the hard work of many people in the firm who have been driving the social mobility agenda over that last few years.
- Our innovative 2021 FAIRE (Fairer Access into Real Experiences) programme is a great reflection of our commitment to helping to drive change in the legal profession around social mobility.
- The programme presents multiple work experience opportunities and offers real insight to candidates from lower socio-economic backgrounds (my LinkedIn requests definitely rocket after FAIRE events).
- The programme has also changed the way trainees are recruited by removing academic barriers and anonymising applications.

## ❖ What else do you enjoy outside of the law and is it easy to have a work/life balance?

- I ran the London Marathon last year for the London Legal Support Trust although I'm not sure I would say I "enjoyed" running toward the end of the training for it (which I'd done three times by the time I actually ran the marathon after the postponements due to the pandemic.)
- I managed to get under my target time and the day itself was fantastic so worth it in the end.
- I'm also a big Notts County fan and have a season ticket so I'm a regular at Meadow Lane.
- Fingers crossed for promotion this season!
- It can be tough at times to have the perfect work/life balance, particularly when we're completing large corporate transactions, but I think it's important to make the most of the quieter times when they come.





## ❖ What goals do you have and would like to achieve in your career?

There's always more to learn and improve in this job so I would just like to continue to do that and progress rather than have any fixed goals  
- enjoying what I do is also very important.

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## ❖ What is the funniest thing you have seen working in law?

- I probably shouldn't have laughed but one of my colleagues (sorry Sian Rose) tripped over in the office while rushing round on a completion and has never been able to live it down (I'd like to point out that she was absolutely fine other than being a bit red faced).

An award certificate for Ropewalk Chambers. The certificate has a white background with a blue and gold border. At the top left is the Ropewalk Chambers logo. At the top right, a gold banner reads 'Kindly sponsoring: Solicitor of the Year Award'. The main body of the certificate is a dark blue rectangle with white text. It states: 'We give every single case the care and attention it deserves. You will receive more than just advice and representation from us; you will secure consistently excellent oral and written advocacy, delivered with the highest levels of service and integrity. 'A specialist set of barristers who put their instructing solicitors, and therefore their clients, first.' Chambers & Partners – Regional Chambers of the Year'. At the bottom right, the website 'www.ropewalk.co.uk' is listed. The certificate is decorated with small gold and blue dots and a network diagram of dots and lines on the right side.

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— CHAMBERS —

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