

SOLICITOR OF THE YEAR
2022

PATRICK ADIE

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

- The team I'm involved with has a fantastic reputation in house-building and we are in the early stages of looking to launch as a specialist 'sector' group.
- In 5 years' time I'd like to see us as being recognised as *the* destination firm in the UK for lawyers and clients involved in this sector, with me helping in whatever way I can to achieve that.
- I'd also really like to see our outstanding legal assistants and trainees having qualified and grown into the great lawyers that I'm sure they will be.



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

- It's a really huge honour and privilege to receive the award. I'm aware that there are many outstanding lawyers across the county, that do brilliant work in many different areas, so to be recognised at these awards was a a very proud moment.



What changes would you like to see in the profession?

- At Freeths (and many of the firms I interact with) I've seen a continually positive shift in culture since I started my training contract in 2009.
- Fairness and 'doing the right thing' are seen as inherent parts of the job. I'd really like to see this continue and for even more to be done on diversity and wider ESG issues.
- For example, women now make up the majority of the lawyers in the UK, but at Partner level numbers remain stubbornly low. There also continues to be significant under-representation in disabled lawyers (with some positive progress) and black lawyers (where recent progress has been flat, according to SRA data). There aren't any quick fixes, but there is a lot that is being done to try to address this, including making these issues to central law firms' strategies and business plans.
- The pandemic has also shifted attitudes on many things such as flexible working and reduced commuting, so there are lots of positives that we can take forward., whilst being careful to retain the best parts about working together, supervision and culture.

❖ Do you think there are barriers to entry the profession?

- As mentioned in the previous question about changes in the profession, there has been some progress, but it is still an issue. Currently half the partners in City firms are from private school, despite only 7% of the population being privately educated.
 - I think the figures for Nottinghamshire are probably quite a bit better than this and as someone with a non-legal degree from a comprehensive school background, I'm passionate about addressing this further.
- Luckily at Freeths I've been given the opportunity to be involved with many initiatives that help address this in a small way, such as 'right to read' (spending time reading with primary school children, which as a firm we've been doing for 15+ years) and several mentoring programmes.

❖ Extra-curricular charity work is very important to you, how do you manage that additional work-load alongside your day-to-day responsibilities?

- It's very difficult for all of us to juggle things, particularly being in such a demanding profession. For me the key things on the day-to-day job that I've tried to work on over the years are asking for help from others, delegating, and saying 'no' to things - although I'm still not great at any of those!
- I also have a brilliant and very understanding wife, who really should take the credit for allowing me to spend time on my career and for things like this award.

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

- The work/life balance is difficult given the pressures of managing a large team and everything that goes along with that, as well as servicing a large client base and aiming to deliver an excellent service for them, but I'm lucky to be able to do a job that I really enjoy, so it is manageable.
- Outside of work I'm a CrossFit convert, which involves everything from rope climbs to hand stands to Olympic weight-lifting so it's really fun and always varied. I use that for my personal 'downtime', although I can only fit it in by doing 6:30am classes, which I appreciate isn't for everyone!
- I also enjoy spending time with my wife Claire and little boy Alfie, who is a bundle of joy and terror at the same time!

The CrossFit logo, featuring the word "CrossFit" in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a registered trademark symbol, set against a dark background.

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

- I do have goals about where I would like my career and our team to go, but the important thing for me is being realistic and making all the small and meaningful changes.
- I'm constantly looking for ways of doing things better, whether it's promoting D&I initiatives, training for our lawyers, improving our IT systems, or generally trying to be a better leader and manager – so I'd like to make incremental steps on all these issues and to be at the forefront of driving our firm forward.
 - Hopefully the bigger 'goals' will then fall into place after that!

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

- There are quite a few moments but they are unfortunately not suitable for publication – sorry!

shhh



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