



WATSON ESAM Solicitors

**PRESS
RELEASE**

CHARITABLE LAWYERS IN PARADISE



Many Sheffields, and certainly readers of Albert Jackson's recently published book 'Looking through the windows of Paradise Square Sheffield' will know that the square has been associated with charitable and voluntary organisations for many years. A place of preaching for John Wesley and a house of help

for friendless girls and young women are amongst its accolades. No 18 was originally the Masonic Lodge and has housed long established solicitors practice Watson Esam since 2001 – no. 16 being home to the practice for around 20 years before that. "Paradise square is a lovely place to work and is somewhat more fashionable now, with Albert Jackson's book and Tony Christie making it famous with a song called Paradise Square in his new Made in Sheffield album" says Jay Bhayani, Senior Partner.

Fewer people will know that Watson Esam's life in Paradise Square and around Sheffield has been equally influenced by a long tradition of working with local charitable and voluntary organisations. The firm has specialist knowledge of charity law and offers a range of services including charity incorporation and formation, trading arms, social enterprise, employment law, property and trustee training and is recognised for this work in the Legal 500.

Partners through the years have been keen to encourage their staff to do whatever they can to contribute to the region's voluntary and charitable organisations, and 2008 is no different. Many of the firm's staff are involved in the community, some contributing their time and expertise by joining boards of directors as trustees, and the partners and staff have also given up their time this year to help raise a substantial amount of money for local charity by entering teams in the It's a Knockout competition in aid of St Lukes Hospice, taking part in a netball tournament in aid of the Cutlers Challenge, eating lots of cakes for Macmillan's coffee morning,

and much more. The wills department has taken part in a scheme giving its time and expertise free of charge and has drafted in excess of 50 wills during November's Will Aid scheme, which sees the cost of drafting the will donated directly to some of the country's best known charities.

20 years ago, the firm took over the tradition of running the annual carol concert in the square when Radio Sheffield's broadcast of it came to an end. Proceeds from the carol concert are always donated to a local charity. In 2008 the partners and staff were joined by members of Sheffield Cathedral Choir, who along with the live band – made up of colleagues in the city – entertained a large gathering, helping to raise over £200 which was donated to NOMAD Homeless Advice and Support.

Further information:

Watson Esam is one of the oldest established legal firms in Sheffield practising from its offices in Paradise Square. A medium sized firm with 3 partners and approximately 40 staff, it is well known for delivering first class services to businesses in South Yorkshire.

The employment, family and charity departments are recognised in The Legal 500. The family department won the Yorkshire Lawyer Private Client Award in 2007 and in 2005 the firm won the Law Society's Race Equality Award in the category of Best Employer (25 partners or fewer).

Jay Bhayani, senior partner and head of the firm's employment department is a former winner of Yorkshire Lawyer Employment Lawyer award (2005) and was short listed for the Yorkshire and Humberside Institute of Directors Adviser of the Year Award 2007. Jay sits on Sheffield's Local Economy Board.

The firm is active in the community with partners sitting on Sheffield and Rotherham Chambers of Commerce Representation Councils and various members of staff who are trustees and directors of charities and voluntary organisations in the city.

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