

muckle^{LLP}

“Dedicated to helping the communities
where we live and work”



Corporate Social
Responsibility Activities
2015



Foreword

I am delighted to introduce our 2015 report. The operation of our charitable fund and our other CSR activities have evolved and developed over the last 15 years. Clearly, there's always more that we can do, and we do have a couple of exciting new initiatives for 2016/17, but I hope we can take a little pride and satisfaction from what we have already achieved.

Our firm has an unashamed vision to be the No.1 law firm for business in the North East. However, we are very clear that that vision cannot be achieved in isolation from the broader community where we all live and work. We have a duty to invest in that community and we will continue to do so to the best of our ability.

I hope that you enjoy reading the report. Comments, questions and criticisms are all welcome!



Hugh Welch
Senior Partner
Muckle LLP

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“

I must say I am very impressed with the work you are doing in the community. There are not many businesses who have a social conscience in the North East – you certainly lead the way. Please pass on my congratulations to everyone in your firm involved.

”

Sir John Hall, Wynyard Hall

Charitable fund

Originally set up in 2000 and managed for us by the Community Foundation, our charitable fund is one of the cornerstones of our work. Each year we donate a sum equal to 1% of our annual profits to that fund. In 2015 that equated to a contribution of £15,765. Since the creation of the fund we have donated in excess of £350,000 and we now operate an endowment, revenue and grass roots fund with the Foundation.

In the early years of our fund we simply made grants to the causes that the Community Foundation recommended. While this policy led to us making some great grants, it became clear that there was some dissonance between where these funds were going and the causes for which our people had deep, and often personal, feelings. The realisation of this caused us to change our focus and we now primarily support local charities or projects for which our people and their families have genuine affections. This means that the firm can truly support charities with the energy that stems from an engaged team.



Jason Wainwright and Hugh Welch with Rob Williamson of the Community Foundation

“ Muckle LLP has had a long association with the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland and has developed innovative and thoughtful approaches to giving through funds established with us. These have connected the firm to its local area and engaged people at all levels. A great example of the firm’s recent support is the grant for £3,000 which went to Windy Nook Methodist Church for renovations to its hall.

The church hosts a variety of activities including the Girls Brigade, a youth club, a ladies’ circle, Gateshead Festival Chorus, meetings of the nature park, local fundraising events and the local councillor’s surgeries. Around 150 people use the building each week. The grant will ensure it continues to benefit people in the area for years to come. In addition to its funds, Muckle LLP has been a stalwart supporter of the Foundation’s wider effort to grow philanthropy to benefit Tyne & Wear and Northumberland through in-kind help provided by partners and associates and through support for all our events.

Rob Williamson, Chief Executive at Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland





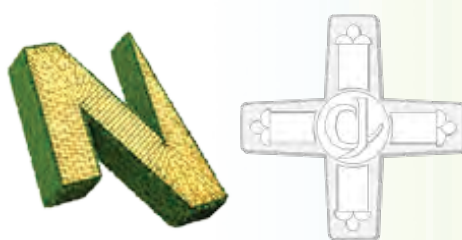
During the last 12 months we have made grants totalling £25,349 to the following organisations – all of which were recommended by people within Muckle as being a cause or community activity with which they have some link or involvement. We have also supported every request from our people for match funding. A total of £3,635 has been made to Muckle team members to support their individual fundraising efforts.



Newcastle Fencing & Sports Trust



Leading the fight against dementia



Friends of St Bede's



We also helped:

- Blakelaw Ward Community Partnership
- CAST Young Carers
- FACT
- Joe's Place

- Morpeth Amateur Swimming Club
- North East Maritime Trust
- Streetwise Opera
- Usworth Miners

Environment

Back in 2007, there was a growing demand amongst our people to look at our business and see how we could incorporate some greener practices. This desire directly led to the formation of our Let's Think Green Team (LTGT) in the same year. Their philosophy has continued ever since and now forms a key part of our CSR commitments. We constantly encourage, motivate, challenge and enthuse the Muckle team to reduce our impact on the environment.

The team has progressed a long way since its inception and now, after a number of fun awareness-raising activities, the firm recycles everything possible, such as waste paper, electrical items, printer toners and mobile phones. However, we certainly haven't stopped there and 2015 has shown that despite our successes we can always think greener!

The firm is a member of the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA) which is an inclusive movement of law firms and organisations committed to working collaboratively to take action on climate change by reducing their carbon footprint and adopting environmentally sustainable practices. Membership of the LSA commits us to seven key principles, one of which is to annually calculate our carbon footprint. The LSA has its own calculation tool, provided through Greenstone Carbon Management.

We have calculated and published our carbon footprint since 2009 and have recorded significant drops each year across the numerous areas that contribute towards our carbon footprint. Of course, these calculations demonstrate our continuing collective efforts and show that the implementation of various policies and initiatives are really making a difference and, importantly, guard against complacency by giving us clear targets to beat each year. We will continue our hard work to drive the emissions down further.

Although we aren't required to offset our carbon emissions the partners have chosen to do so. We have collaborated with LEAF (Local Environment Action Fund which is the environmental branch of The Community Foundation) to set up a scheme where businesses like ourselves can choose to offset their emissions through local schemes. This fits perfectly with our desire to make a difference to our local community.

LEAF propose to us a selection of projects which fit with their criteria; we then circulate those projects around the Muckle team to vote on and the scheme which earns the most votes receives our donation.

During 2015 we provided the Tyne Rivers Trust with a £5,000 grant to help offset the firm's carbon footprint by funding a project to offset our emissions. Tyne Rivers Trust has used the grant to establish a new project that has been instrumental in kick starting a tree planting programme across Northumberland, also encouraging more organisations and volunteers to get involved. The project will have significant environmental benefits in our region over many years.



Electric pool car

Another achievement was replacing our petrol-chugging company pool car with a Nissan LEAF electric vehicle. Our firm has embraced this clean, green machine with zero CO2 emissions. To facilitate this change we paid for the installation of an electric vehicle charging point within our building so that it is available to all tenants of the building in the future and not just us, broadening the reach of our green thinking and encouraging others to join the electric future.

This is exactly what happened. One of our partners, Andrew Cawkwell, has since replaced his petrol car with a Nissan LEAF which he now uses for work and charges it alongside the firm's LEAF.



Tyne Rivers Trust



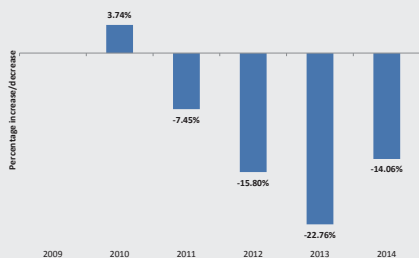
“ Thanks to Muckle LLP, we have planted 21.5 hectares of woodland with the help of contractors and volunteers. We planted 6,050 trees with stakes and guards and knocked in 7,700 willow pegs in more flood prone and eroding riverbank areas in Stewartshields, Broomhope and Brownchesters. Not only will the trees help to offset Muckle LLP’s carbon emissions, but they also benefit river habitat by reducing sediment loads to the river bed and helping residents such as the very rare and endangered Freshwater pearl mussel. The team at Muckle LLP approached us and initiated this project and we are delighted with the results. ”

Susan Mackirdy, Trust Director at Tyne Rivers Trust,

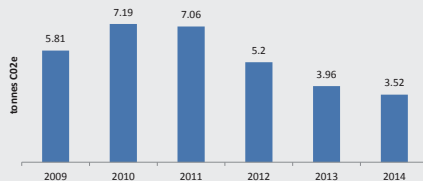


Richard Nixon, Andrea Gibson, Andrew Davison and Debbie McCormack

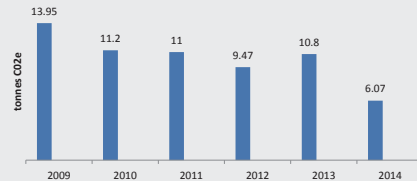
Total Emissions
year on year % comparisons as against 2009



Pool cars year on year



Business mileage year on year



Environment

Recycled legal books

We have enjoyed getting involved in quirky and unusual initiatives too. In December 2014 we worked with the creative team from House of Objects to create a recycled book Christmas Tree made from over 500 old law books, standing over six feet tall. Made entirely from unwanted books donated by our people and House of Objects, the tree served a festive purpose that didn't go to waste.

This tree literally took the world by storm. We filmed a time lapse video of it being built and tweeted it @MuckleLLP. By the end of the week it had gone viral, with over 157,000 impressions from as far afield as Belgium, India and Australia. The Twitter community awarded it the "best legal profession Christmas tree of 2014."



After Christmas, all books went into our Charity of the Year book sale to raise much needed funds for TOMA fund. Furthermore, with every Christmas card we didn't write we donated the cash instead to TOMA, creating a tree bauble with a message to our fellow colleagues.

Healthy living week

Each year we actively promote our Healthy Living Week which comprises a whole host of activities to encourage people to walk, exercise more or simply use the car a lot less. By encouraging our people to think about how they get to work we hope to introduce a gradual change in travel choices and attitudes towards less environmentally-friendly transportation.

To support this, we have a car share scheme and have promoted a cycle to work scheme for the previous two years, providing more options for our people and making being green that little bit easier.



ISO14001 Environmental Management System

From an operational point of view we are one of only a handful of North East law firms who have the ISO14001 Environmental Management System certification. Although we are required to have a set of policies and procedures in place for this standard it is the activities driven by LTGT which really do underpin these policies.



Certificate No. EMS 558231



Carbon reduction

We have succeeded in implementing many other green initiatives throughout our business. A number of the more noteworthy ones include:

- we replaced our paper towel holders in each of the six bathrooms with a Dyson Airblade hand dryer. The paper towels cost over £8,000 per year and also needed to be transported away and disposed of, incurring road miles and disposal costs. When conducting a cost comparison, 1000 hand towel dries was valued at £15 as against 1000 Dyson dries at 40p in total. This change was a great environmental decision as well as a substantial cost saving to the business;
- we have introduced Skype facilities for video conferencing so, where it is convenient for clients, meetings can be undertaken without the need to travel;
- we implemented a new practice management system which resulted in considerably less paper being printed. In just one example alone, over 1000 less pages are printed every month by delivering financial information electronically to people's desktops;
- we have provided driving lessons to our highest business mileage drivers on how to drive in ways that will improve fuel efficiency and reduce carbon emissions; and
- we invited The Energy Saving Trust to deliver an awareness session to our people on how to save energy in the home.

Green awards

Finally, it's worth mentioning that in 2015, we were nominated for the Green Award at the North East Business Awards 2015. In 2014 we also became the first organisation to be awarded the Go Smarter to Work Gold award for the firm's ongoing commitment to encouraging sustainable travel.



“ To receive Gold Accreditation Muckle LLP have been fully engaged in the Go Smarter to Work project, have implemented the full programme of toolkit measures and have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to encouraging sustainable travel through their workplace travel plan. ”

Peter Henson, Go Smarter to Work Delivery Manager at Newcastle City Council

Pro bono work

It's an unfortunate fact that many smaller charities simply don't have the resources to pay for sound professional advice, often when they need it most.

Even though we are not able to assist with some deep rooted social issues, we can make a real difference to a number of charities by providing legal advice on an unpaid basis. We can

use our skills as a commercial law firm to advise them on aspects such as their governance and to help with employment, property and commercial arrangements that they might enter in to.

In the last 12 months we have provided advice that, on a chargeable basis, would have been worth just under £100,000 and over 40 charities have benefitted from our service.

Some of those that we have helped are mentioned below:



“ The trustees feel themselves to be extremely fortunate to benefit from Muckle’s commitment to the charitable sector, its pro bono work and its corporate social responsibility. This has been a tremendous help – and relief – to them at what has proved to be a very stressful and difficult time – especially over the past couple of years. May I also take this opportunity to extend my personal thanks to you for all the support and assistance you have given to me over this period. I cannot imagine how a successful conclusion to the dissolution of the charity and the disposal of its land could have been reached without your expert advice, your understanding of a difficult situation and the promptness and efficiency with which you dealt with the process. It has been beyond measure.

Melanie Hall, Community Action Northumberland, on behalf of the Trustees of West Wylam Community Centre

“ Thank you so much for hosting the Corporate Responsibility event yesterday. I really enjoyed the conference and discussions, and it was a great way to meet so many people involved in CR and in the voluntary sector in the NE. Your opening speech was perfect in terms of demonstrating the value to a business of effective CR practices and in showcasing great contributions to the community. Thank you so much for giving us such a great space to meet and talk. I really enjoyed the day.

Amanda Tincknell, Chief Executive at The Cranfield Trust



Park View School



We also helped:

Forma Arts and Media Limited;
 Friends of Chollereton Churches;
 ISIS Arts;
 League of Friends of the RVI;
 Moorside Allotments Association;
 Morpeth Amateur Swimming Club;

MEA House;
 Team Northumbria Waterpolo Club;
 The Station Masters Project;
 Voluntary teacher of traditional music;
 1st Brunton Park Brownies; and
 1st Wylam Scouts.

Pro bono work

In addition to our pro bono work, our charities team also acts for a number of the region's largest charities.

Clearly, we are unable to offer to every charity the benefit of unpaid advice because, at the end of the day, we still need to run a successful and profitable firm; not least so that we can make further investment in our community activities.

We have therefore developed a pro bono policy to clarify the criteria that we apply in deciding which charities we can support with unpaid advice. It isn't always an easy balance and we don't always get it right but we hope that that does not detract from the good work that we are doing.



Pro Bono - Law For the Public Good

We believe that our firm's success cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader community in which we live and work, and that we actually have a moral duty to use our position for the benefit of those around us. As a result, we regularly take on work for which we do not charge, but do however, get an enormous amount of personal satisfaction. In other words, pro bono work.

These are the rules

When we undertake such work we want our efforts and expertise to have the widest and most beneficial impact possible. So we use the following criteria to assess whether or not we are able to work on a pro bono basis:

- 1. **Resources and financial means** - many of our clients are larger charities, social enterprises or educational institutions undertaking important and worthwhile work. However, the main focus for our pro bono work is on individuals and smaller organisations who cannot afford to pay for specialist legal advice.*
- 2. **Area of legal specialism** - the proposed work must fall within our area of expertise. At the end of the day we are a commercial law firm with a broad range of legal specialisms, but we do not, for example, have the skills to assist with serious social issues such as homelessness or domestic violence.*
- 3. **Workloads** - sometimes we cannot accept new pro bono instructions because our lawyers are already committed to other projects, and we will only take on work if we can do it to the highest of standards and the best of our abilities.*
- 4. **Public interest** - we may be willing to take on a matter pro bono if it raises important or novel legal questions of public interest.*
- 5. **Viability** - we are more likely to be willing to give pro bono advice if we think some initial pro bono support would help an exciting or worthwhile project towards self-sufficiency.*



- 6. **Conflicts** - our professional duties require us to act in the best interests of our clients. So we cannot assist if the work would involve us in a conflict of interests with a client.
- 7. **Personal interest** - our pro bono work is undertaken by individual lawyers on a voluntary basis. If one of our lawyers has a personal interest in a particular project, it is more likely to be accepted on a pro bono basis.
- 8. **Referrals from other organisations** - we often take on cases which are referred to us by LawWorks or other third parties. Such referrals will already have been assessed and are more likely to meet our pro bono criteria.

Contact

As part of our ongoing commitment to this wonderful region of ours we do genuinely want to help as many organisations as we can. So while we do have a set of rules to follow (well, we are lawyers after all), we can always be flexible in our application of them.

If you have a project in mind and think we might be able to help, please get in touch with your usual Muckle contact, if you have one. Alternatively, Hugh Welch or Chris Hook would be more than happy to discuss things with you. Their contact details are:

Hugh Welch - 0191 211 7903 or hugh.welch@muckle-llp.com

Chris Hook - 0191 211 7929 or chris.hook@muckle-llp.com

Trustees, Governors and Volunteers

Almost every team at Muckle has charity or education clients, and we actively encourage all our people to get involved in the local community as trustees, governors, or volunteers. To enable them to do so we give everyone up to four half-days as paid leave each year which they can use for this purpose.

So, if you are looking to add to your body of trustees, governors, or volunteers, we may be able to help. To find out, please speak to your usual Muckle contact or Hugh Welch or Chris Hook whose details are above.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Giving pro bono legal advice is only one part of our wider Corporate Social Responsibility programme. If you would like more information about how Muckle LLP supports our community and the environment, please see the Being a Responsible Business page of our website in the How We Work section.

Muckle LLP is a limited liability partnership. Registered in England and Wales (registered number OC315403). Authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. Registered office: Time Central, 32 Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4BF. We use the word "partner" to refer to a member of Muckle LLP, or an employee or consultant who is a lawyer of equivalent standing and with similar qualifications. A list of the Muckle LLP members together with those non-members who are designated as partners is available at our registered office.



Volunteering

When it comes to helping charities, one of the easiest things for us to do is to provide legal advice. It's of real benefit to the charities and is, naturally, what we do best. At the same time, many of the charities that we speak to and deal with mention that they would particularly value time and support, sometimes more than anything else.

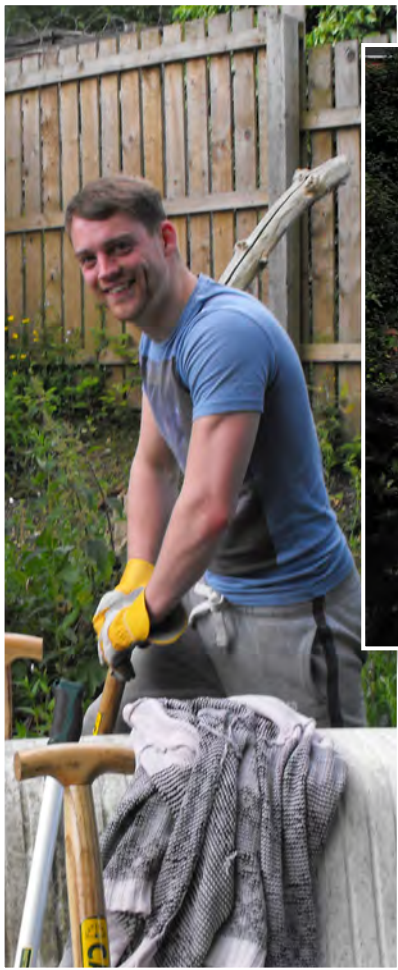
We therefore actively encourage our people to take up roles as charity trustees, management committee members and also volunteer helpers.

As a result of this encouragement, we currently have 34 members of the firm involved with 71 charities, providing over 2600 hours of support throughout the year.

To support and encourage this further, everyone in the firm is entitled to an additional two days' paid leave per annum to use in whatever way they want for community activities and a total of 43.5 days were taken by Muckle team members during 2014 to help various local projects.



Volunteering day at Bill Quay Farm



Volunteering day at Bill Quay Farm's allotments

Charity of the year

Our fundraising work has always been wide ranging and varied, tackling a number of causes throughout the years. Spreading this fundraising across multiple charities often meant that our contributions, while still appreciated, were sporadic. With this in mind, in 2011 we decided to focus our efforts on one charity for the entire year, dedicating our general and individual fundraising activities to help a specific charity achieve greater benefits and allowing us to make more of a difference.

To choose each charity of the year our people are involved in creating a shortlist which is then followed by a firm wide voting process. This has resulted in everyone across the firm supporting the following charities each year:

2011



2012



2013



2014



2015



Between 2011 – 2014 we raised over £30,000 for these four charities who are improving the lives of people from across the North East. We are currently actively involved in volunteering and raising funds for Bryson's Animal Refuge.



“

Heel & Toe were lucky enough to be appointed Muckle LLP's chosen charity of the year in 2011/12. We quickly realised how committed the fundraising committee and the team were as a whole in supporting our charity. Over the months that followed we were astounded by the amount of fundraising events the committee organised. We were delighted to receive a cheque for over £8,000, which totally exceeded our expectations. They continue to fundraise for us even now. We can't thank them enough for their hard work and commitment to our cause. This money made a huge difference and helped us continue providing free conductive education sessions to children across the whole North East with cerebral palsy or other physical disabilities.

”

Amanda Tweedy, Development & Fundraising Officer at Heel & Toe



Steve Cunningham took part in the **Italian Cycle Challenge** over 5 days in June 2015 to raise money for Heel & Toe. He cycled on road and through mountains from Florence to Tuscany, covering 200 tough miles.



Steve Cunningham on day 2 of the Italian Cycle Challenge

Inspiring Careers

The futures of both our firm and the legal profession are dependent upon attracting the best and brightest young people. However, we are concerned that the considerable cost of university education plus the difficulty of obtaining a training contract may be discouraging many able young people from considering law as a career. This situation is exacerbated if they come from schools in the less affluent areas of the region.

In direct response to this we created our Inspiring Careers programme three years ago. Working in conjunction with 8 schools operating in some of the toughest areas of the North East, we devised an annual programme for young people in years 11 and 12, giving them a taste of life in a law firm and, hopefully, showing its accessibility to all.

Many of the schools that have taken part previously, participated again. Other schools have heard about it and have approached us to involve their students too. We are building a growing reputation with this programme and it is clearly valued by the schools and students involved.

For some students, their initial week with us on the Inspiring Careers programme has developed into ongoing career support. Sarah (from 2012), Zeeshan (from 2013) and Katie (from 2012) have since come back to gain further experience at Muckle during their holidays. We have worked with a number of the students by helping them to improve their UCAS statements and they know that they can contact us at any time for further guidance, support and work experience.

Sarah has left school and is studying law at Lancaster University. She subsequently attended our week-long Student Vacation Placement in 2015

that prepares students for a career in law.

Zeeshan is now studying for a law degree at Northumbria University and came back to talk to students on a recent Inspiring Careers intake about his experiences since he attended the programme.

We remain in close contact with Inspiring Careers students who take an active interest in developing their careers in law.



Inspiring careers groups

Here's a selection of the thanks we received from students after their week with us:



I would just like to say a really big thank you for allowing me to have an amazing opportunity and for taking your own time to make sure I had a really beneficial work experience – it was truly inspiring. Thank you.

A pupil from Kenton School



Thank you for this amazing week. It's been brilliant and I'm so glad I was able to be part of it so thank you. Also thank you for being kind and helpful. Thank you to everyone at Muckle LLP for being really friendly and helpful.

A pupil from Park View School



I am writing this email to once again thank you for the opportunity and experience at Muckle. It was one of the best things I have taken part in and helped me a great deal. Reflecting on the week, I have learnt so much and have gained invaluable experience. I really appreciate the effort and time that Tracy and Claire took out to organise and help us throughout the programme. The experience has made me aware of how difficult the legal industry can be to break into as a solicitor, but has made me more determined and is a source of inspiration and motivation for me to achieve my goal to work in a professional environment in the legal field.

A pupil from Joseph Swan Academy



I participated in the Muckle Inspiring Careers programme and not only enjoyed it but found it a thoroughly valuable experience. The programme included a range of activities such as work experience in the different legal teams every day, talks with many people through the company and preparation and guidance for CV writing and interviews. Overall, I learned a considerable amount from my time at Muckle. Before the programme I was rather clueless to the different types of law, the different routes into the law profession, the amount of careers there are within a law firm and the competitiveness of a career in law. However, at the end of the week I felt as though I had gained a lot of knowledge on all of these aspects as well as gaining skills from the legal teams which will benefit me in the future.

A pupil from Churchill Community College



Improving employability

Several years ago, we decided that we wanted to try and create employment opportunities for people who might otherwise be disadvantaged in gaining employment. Rather than merely contribute to a charity or initiative, we wanted to get actively involved and so this led us to establish a relationship with Momentum Skills in 2008.

Momentum Skills
Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

Momentum Skills provides vocational rehabilitation and training services, empowering people who are otherwise excluded due to their disabilities to gain the skills they need to live independently and to gain access to employment. Since the beginning of our relationship with Momentum we have been delighted to offer 8 of their clients with a range of disabilities the opportunity of a work placement with the firm for up to 12 weeks. The placements have typically been within either our Business Lounge, Business Support or Business Development Teams with an individual nominated as coach/mentor during the placement.

The individuals on placement have had disabilities including brain injury, multiple sclerosis and cerebral palsy.

A real success story out of our relationship with Momentum came about in 2009. We offered a placement to a candidate who had suffered a stroke, having previously had a successful career in hotel management. The individual was placed within our Business Lounge Team and arrived at a time when we were reviewing our resource requirements.

The individual impressed us to the extent that even before his placement completed he was offered a permanent role within the team. We're pleased

to say that six years later he's become a highly valued member of the team.

Although we cannot promise each individual a permanent role at the end of their placement, we can ensure that each leaves us with a better understanding of the workings of a law firm and with confidence in themselves that they are employable and have a valuable contribution to make to society.



Muckle LLP has developed a relationship with locally based charity Momentum who provide both community and employment support to individuals across the North East with neurological conditions such as stroke, acquired brain injury and cerebral palsy. S..., who completed a work placement within the business support team, described the experience as "hard work but really rewarding." S... was supported by the team at Muckle to enhance her administration skills which have in turn led to S... securing employment as an administration assistant. Momentum firmly believe that S...'s success is thanks to the support and opportunity offered by Muckle. We are very grateful and proud of the relationship we have developed with Debbie McCormack and her teams. Everyone we have come into contact with at Muckle is very supportive of the work we are doing at Momentum and in turn make every effort to ensure that our service users who spend time on work placement with them are given the opportunity to develop their skills, grow in confidence and enhance their employment prospects.



David Haxon, Momentum

Record of Achievement

In an ever competitive world, it is increasingly important for young people to maximise their potential and to be identified by recruiters as standing out from the crowd. We were delighted to work with Park View School when they approached us to help them establish a new initiative in developing a Record of Achievement for all Year 11 students.

Now, each Year 11 student concludes their year with a certified Record of Achievement that summarises skills and achievements. People from Muckle help to validate each of these students' Record of Achievement at the end of their year. A number of our lawyers spend a few days at the school with the students, discussing each of their Record of Achievement as part of a formal interview. This helps to validate the Record whilst providing students with the invaluable experience of being interviewed by business people who question and assess their competencies and personalities highlighted in the document.



Park View
School

Unique business experiences

As part of the Creative Media Production BTEC Level 3 run at Park View School, the students need to plan and produce a corporate video. We worked in partnership with them throughout the 2014/15 academic year, in conjunction with their curriculum, to guide groups of students in producing short and engaging training videos on three different employment law topics. By the end of the academic year, the students had planned, designed, filmed and edited short training videos.

The approach we took was that Muckle LLP would be the students' client and the students would work to our brief. This gave the students a unique business experience whilst also meeting the requirements of their course.

The students attended a celebratory evening at Muckle's offices at the end of their year before they headed towards higher education and employment.



Creative media production teams with Tim Davies and Andrea Gibson

“ We are indebted once again this year for the support which Muckle has given to our Year 11 students. Having helped us develop a Record of Achievement, Tony McPhillips and his team have once again gone one step further, coming into school on two consecutive days to interview the students and to validate the document of each. It is an absolute testament to the firm's commitment to the community that it should be willing to release three professionals for this period of time. The students found the experience invaluable and were genuinely thrilled by the comments that they received.

Iain Veitch, Head Teacher at Park View School



Improving employability

International students

We have worked for many years with International House, a language school, in a bid to help international students improve their English skills for business.

International House seeks to match talented individuals from around the world with companies who can provide them with work placements. We provide students each year with an internship at Muckle LLP, spending up to two months at the firm each time. They come here because they want to improve their language skills within a business context.

We ensure that they are involved in meetings, help to draft documents for us to review, carrying out research and work alongside our teams. It's a very positive experience - and not just for the students. As a law firm based in a major exporting region, we hope these internships are helping to build links between us and people overseas.



CIPD Award

In 2015 we became proud winners of the CIPD North East of England HR & Development 'Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace Award.' The award recognises our contribution to the local community and schools/colleges to help enhance people's employability skills and work experience whilst helping us to attract people with a diverse set of skills, talents, experiences and backgrounds.



Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. We hope that you have enjoyed it and that our enthusiasm for contributing to this great region shone through. It is our belief that businesses have a significant role to play in strengthening our communities and we hope that Muckle LLP plays an appropriately full part.



Muckle LLP was shortlisted as **'Company of the Year'** at the North East Business Awards 2015. We were also shortlisted for the **'Green Award'** and the **'Heart of the Community Award.'**

We won the 'Heart of The Community Award' 2014 for the Tyneside and Northumberland regions at the North

East Business Awards. This was awarded in recognition of the care that all of our people have shown in helping the communities where we live and work. It is an award that is aligned closely to our belief in the importance of being a responsible business and it reflects what has been done by a huge number of people across the firm.

This was the third year in a row that we had won this award for the Northumberland and Tyneside region. We won the overall 'Heart of the Community' award in 2012 for all regions across the North East and we were also short-listed in the 'CSR and Environmental' category for the Northumberland and Tyneside region in the North East Business Awards 2013.

muckle^{LLP}



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IN PEOPLE | Gold