

Legal Leaders Talk Tees Valley

Article by *Resolution*.

The Tees Valley business landscape is changing. Historically known for its high proportion of industrial land, it is evolving. With emerging technology and digital organisations transforming the business scene, the Endeavour Partnership has been able to support the range of businesses we see today.

We spoke with Partners Nigel Williams, Simon Wake, Deborah Kirtley and Nik Tunley to get their thoughts on how the Tees Valley has transformed and discuss current business trends.



Nik Tunley, Nigel Williams, Deborah Kirtley & Simon Wake

Question & Answer

There seems to be something in the air in the Tees Valley and we are seeing more and more success stories emerging; what has changed, or has it always been this way?

Nigel Over the last 10-20, years there have been several factors that have impacted the region. One is regeneration, with the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and the Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen being a driving force in attracting new business. The area has had a lot of investment and Middlesbrough's Mayor, Andy Preston has ambitious plans to regenerate the town. Between them, they have increased interest in what's going on in the region and local businesses have stepped up to the mark.

Nik When you think about the number of projects going on in Middlesbrough, speaking to Andy and his aspirations to make Middlesbrough a city is enormously positive. That commercial attitude and development behind it, linking Andy's background and personality with Ben Houchen's agenda, the two of them together create a more inward investment focus.

Simon Stockton is changing too with the Council investing its own money in the likes of the Castlegate Shopping Centre, the Hilton Hotel and the plans for the high

street, which will make a huge difference. It's very positive. Infrastructure is key and the transport links play a vital role; with the airport, a direct train from Middlesbrough to London in the pipeline, you can be in the capital in two and half hours. When you add the port and the changes to be made to Darlington Station to facilitate better access to motorways into the mix, the region seems to have it all.

Deborah It seems that Stockton will become a centre for leisure and Middlesbrough attracting big business. This combination of towns working together to create a regional offer is attractive and refreshing to see. Positive attitude along with the right environment and infrastructure is placing the region as a commercial centre. The businesses in this area have a real desire to deliver and have proved that once they put their mind to something they will deliver.

Collaborative working seems to come naturally to businesses within the region. Are you seeing examples of this with your clients?

Nik Businesses within the region are very good at identifying their strengths. Our clients show innovative characteristics and a tenacity in their approach. They want the best for their clients and will do what is required to deliver. Where that means

“The region seems to have it all.”

there is another organisation that can support the desired outputs, they aren't afraid to join forces. We have helped many businesses with the legalities of this joined up way of working to ensure everyone is protected and the operation runs smoothly.

Deborah The TVCA is promoting the area as a whole and it feels like businesses are in it together. We have the same approach with strategic partners; we align ourselves with professional service firms, banks and other organisations to create a network of preferred suppliers that we trust. We're purely a business law firm, we don't dabble in non-business law. That's where we work with our strategic partners so we can concentrate on our specialisms.

Nigel We have experience of this within our own organisation. As the region's largest commercial law firm, we stick to our area of expertise and is the reason we have hand selected strategic partners who share our values. We spend a lot of time learning about our clients' businesses and we can refer with confidence, the main point is that the client is looked after.

Whatever their requirement might be we can find the appropriate person because we've got those embedded relationships.

Simon The region is full of business that are excelling in their field, we see this with our clients and suppliers. It is exciting to see the impact of this effecting business growth within the region. We are always interested in building relationships and having conversations with other businesses in the area.

What can local businesses do to support sustained growth within the Tees Valley?

Nigel There seems to be a big push about supporting and buying local and businesses are embracing this trend, if you can source products and services from the Tessa Valley, then you should. At Endeavour we are part of both the NEPO and TVCA panels, this platform encourages organisations to place business locally and we fully support that.

Nik Businesses are investing within their teams and providing opportunities for a career in the Tees Valley. At Endeavour we have many success stories of trainees who have progressed to partner level

across all our specialist departments, this allows a continuity of service.

Simon Our trainees get a hands-on training contract and a lot of our senior lawyers are people who trained with the firm and stayed. It has been one of the most effective ways of developing and growing the business and we have a very low staff turnover rate as a result.

Deborah 25% of the Partnership were trainees, the reason why we recruit the number of trainees that we do is because we have every intention of keeping them, we invest in people from day one, with the intention of them having a career with us all the way through to Partner level.

Do you think the businesses within the region are being more commercial?

Deborah There seems to have been a shift in the way businesses are accessing finance. Grant funding seems to have died down and there are more people prepared to negotiate a small equity stake to an angel investor. Business leaders are embracing this method and aren't as put off by it as they were previously. Our team works with many organisations who

have done just that, ensuring the correct paperwork is in place and organisations are completely aware of the terms making it a viable commercial option.

Simon The region is well known for its ability to get things done. By working together and engaging professional expertise, people are more informed, and this lessens risk. That positive drive combined with a get it done attitude is seeing businesses in the region thrive.

Nigel Tees Valley organisations are dynamic, it comes naturally. We were the first in the UK to create a LEP and in the vanguard of adopting a combined authority we have seen significant results since their implementation. It is positive that other regions have adopted some of the methods that have been successful here.

Deborah The TVCA seems to be a source of support for the businesses within the region and the Mayor is active in promoting business growth. Leaders have access to an organisation where they can gain advice and support and this seems to be having a positive effect.



“The businesses within this area have a real desire to deliver.”

And finally...

Nik It is refreshing to walk around the region and see the investment in the area. There are positive attitudes and people are proud of what has been achieved. It feels like there is much more to come and the whole region seems to be coming together as one.

Simon Many of our clients have invested in development opportunities in both the business and leisure arena. We have been supportive with access to finance, securing funding, acquisition and construction property diligence. We are proud to have been involved in some of these projects including the five star Rockliffe Hall Hotel,

The Riverside Stadium at Middlesbrough Football Club, the proposed Snow Centre and The Globe Theatre amongst others.

Deborah The region is a great place to live and work, and individuals and organisations from outside of the area recognise this. Our expertise in all aspects of commercial law has seen our well-respected team work on some exciting projects recently. There is clearly more to come from the businesses within the Tees Valley and we are looking forward to working with our clients to support their ambitious growth plans.

Nigel Business is evolving, and the region is successfully integrating new and emerging industries, such as technology, alongside more traditional sectors. The joined up, innovative attitude within the Tees Valley has seen major successes locally, nationally and globally. As the world of business evolves, our team are committed to exploring and staying ahead of the curve. We are there every step of the way with our clients providing multiple layers of expertise to suit their requirement; whatever stage their business is at, whether start up, SME or large corporate.

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Stockton based Endeavour Partnership is the largest corporate law firm in the Tees Valley and their clients benefit from a respected and well-known team, specialist departments and multiple layers of expertise. The firm is aware of how important trusted and accurate support can be to allow their clients to remain focussed on running their business. As the world of business evolves, the team are committed to exploring and staying ahead of the curve. A dynamic personal approach, blended with a depth of business expertise, ensures they offer their clients a high level of insight and commercially valuable solutions.

Contact Endeavour Partnership for your commercial law requirements:

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