

VIEW FROM THE TOP

ELEVATION IS GOING UP IN THE WORLD AS NEXT GEN TAKE THE BATON



'We have so many young people thriving in the business. I'm excited about the direction we are heading in,' says Tony Smith, managing director of Elevation Investment Management. The firm, established in Birmingham in 2011, is reaping the rewards of hiring young employees.

'We have expanded to the East Midlands where Adam Cuthbert, who started as an associate, is now a director,' explains Smith. Financial adviser Matt Black, who started at the business as a graduate in 2012, now runs the firm's London office.

Since 2011, Elevation's expansion has been driven by acquisitions. 'The idea was

always to build through a mix of acquisitions and organic development,' says Smith. The firm has acquired seven businesses, many of which involved IFAs who were 'jumping ship' because of the retail distribution review.

INTEGRATE AND ADJUST

How does Elevation manage the acquisition process? 'At retirement it can be difficult for the person taking over to pick up the map and read it. The challenge is retaining the qualities that built the business while integrating systems that will make the business sustainable into the next generation. It takes a lot of work to consolidate, but it is worth it.'

The best way forward is having a strong vision, and building a business where people want to come work with you every day

Tony Smith, Elevation

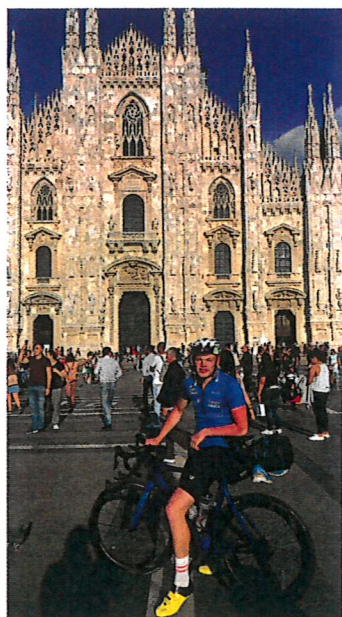
IFA CYCLES FROM PARIS TO MILAN TO COMBAT HUNGER

Ollly Niven-Smith, from Perth-based Johnston Carmichael Wealth, cycled from Paris to Milan at the start of September. The 900km challenge was in aid of Mary's Meals, which provides school meals in poor communities to encourage education.

'18,000 children die every day from hunger-related illnesses yet it only costs £13.90 to feed a child for a whole year,' explains Niven-Smith. With over £2,000 raised, 150 kids can now be fed.

'The cycle was the toughest thing I have ever done, but having such fantastic support and generous donations made my mission worthwhile,' he adds. You can still donate here: bit.ly/2kpZ8sW.

ASHLEY THOMAS-WALSH



McCREA BACKS THE WARRIORS WITH SPONSORSHIP DEAL

Glasgow-based McCrea Financial Services has renewed its sponsorship of Glasgow Warriors.

'If the next two years are anything like recent times for Warriors, we can all enjoy the drama, excitement and drive that comes with a club like Glasgow,' says managing director Douglas McCrea.

'It hasn't been a difficult decision for us to commit, and we look forward to hopefully watching the club enjoy more success in the Guinness PRO14 and European competition over this season and the next.' ■ **IAN HORNE**



THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE **UK'S TOP** ADVICE FIRMS FROM OUR ON THE ROAD TEAM: **IAN HORNE, BHAVNA KOLI AND ASHLEY THOMAS-WALSH**

'There has to be a personal relationship to bridge and then build, which takes up to two years. We don't let the IFA run off; everything has to be in order.' While the majority of owners they have dealt with retire, he says, most of their staff stay.

Combining acquisitions with homegrown talent, Elevation has backed a number of graduates but argues that a degree is not essential to make a successful career in advice.

'We have run a long-term "graduate" program. I use that word loosely as we acknowledge that a degree only goes so far and does not preclude people joining from different backgrounds if they have ability, great attitude and drive,' he says.

'Matt is our best example as he has been with the firm since near the start. He is a graduate who came to us raw, and he started in administration. He progressed quickly through his examinations and gained exposure at an

early stage by attending client meetings.'

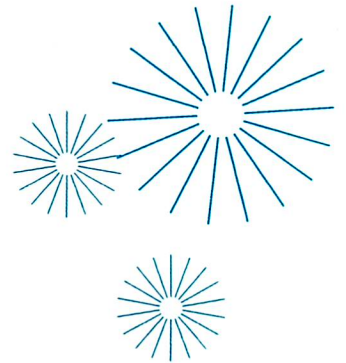
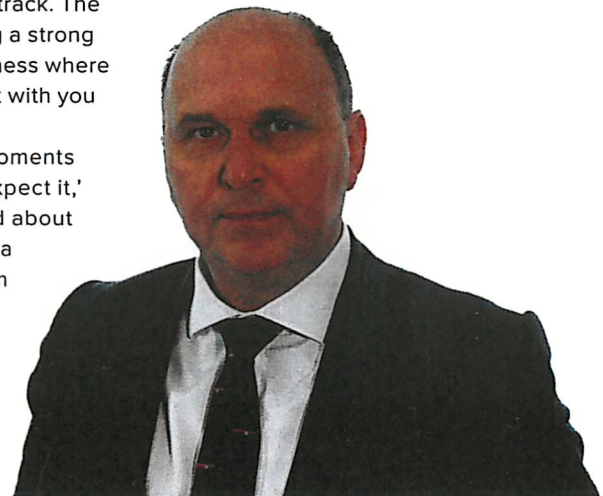
Five members of staff are now coming up through the ranks from either a graduate or apprenticeship background.

But the business's next big challenge will be acquiring in Manchester and the north of England, and it needs the right people to do that.

'Time goes by so quickly in this business. It's easy to lose track. The best way forward is having a strong vision and building a business where people want to come work with you every day,' he says.

'There will always be moments of the unexpected – so expect it,' he adds. 'I'm more excited about our opportunities: we are a young thriving firm and I'm positive about how our staff can flourish and the direction we are going in.'

■ **ASHLEY THOMAS-WALSH**



KERR AND FLETCHER BRING MCHARDY HOME



McHardy Financial has opened its sixth office in Scotland, setting down a base in Edinburgh.

Founding directors Andy Kerr and Richard Fletcher were both born in Edinburgh and felt the expansion was only a matter of time.

'It was a personal ambition for us from day one,' Kerr says. 'It's also a statement of intent: we are determined to succeed in our home city.'

The new office is across two stories in a beautiful Georgian town house in the prestigious Charlotte Square and will house 10 members of staff. ■ **BHAVNA KOLI**

HOLE IN ONE FOR ANSTEE & CO AS CHARITY EVENT CHIPS IN

Wellingborough Golf Club has welcomed 14 teams for Anstee & Co's annual charity golf day. The teams challenged themselves over 18 holes to raise money for Dementia Sings Out, a community choir based in Wellingborough inspired by the recent BBC One television program, *Our Dementia Choir*, with actor Vicky McClure. The choir meets every Thursday morning for an hour of singing followed by refreshments. It is open to anyone living with dementia.

'Although we facilitated the event as a company, it is the generosity of those attending that helped us raise £3,931.14 this year,' managing director Caroline Anstee says. ■

BHAVNA KOLI

