

Celebrating 21 years in business.

In February 1993, Anne Lockwood and Andy Turner started First Choice Recruitment – a business dedicated to providing the highest standards of recruitment solutions for candidates and clients across the region. 21 years on, they serve some of the region's largest employers, providing both temporary and permanent employment opportunities for 1000's of Wakefield job seekers.



Ane Lockwood, Managing Director, believes the secret of their success lies in the regions people.

"I am Wakefield born and bred – this is where I grew up as a child and where I always wanted to make a difference. Both Andy and I had careers with international recruitment firms before deciding that we wanted to do things differently – provide a more personalised service with an unrivalled knowledge of an area that we knew had amazing potential. Over the past 21 years we have found thousands of people new opportunities working for great

employers and it has really made a huge difference to them and their families.

Wakefield's growth as a key regional employer has increased dramatically throughout the past 21 years as its excellent transport links and innovative development schemes have encouraged more and more new businesses into the area. The last few years however, have been challenging for both employers and employees alike as the full impact of the economic crisis took hold.

Andy Turner, co-owner and Commercial Director of First Choice Recruitment, believes that Wakefield is now beginning to see real signs of recovery. "The past three years have

been tough for our candidates, our clients and our business. We find people great jobs with great companies but if those companies see a fall in business, a decline in demand for their products, they certainly won't be recruiting. We have worked closely with our clients to retain as many people as possible throughout this time and thanks to the performance and flexibility of our teams, we have maintained and grown business with new and existing clients. We're finally beginning to see not just recovery but growth across all business sectors and that's great news for the people of Wakefield and the region as a whole.'

More than two decades in business inevitably gives you a unique insight into the ever changing economic and social environment of Wakefield and the wider region.

"We're not just business owners that happen to be located in Wakefield" says Andy. "We live here. Our families and our friends live here, as do the vast majority of our employees and our wider team colleagues. We're proud of where we come from and what we have achieved but it's not without its challenges as a community, as a city, as a region and its down to us all to go the extra mile and try to make a positive difference as business people and as individuals".

That commitment to making a difference beyond the bottom line of the business is one that is recognised by others championing Wakefield.

Mark Bradley, Editor - Wakefield Express, has worked closely with Andy and his team for a number of years, **"It has been a pleasure to be involved with a company that prides itself on what it can do for the city of Wakefield as much as for itself. This is a company with a heart, which puts people first."**

And it was this dedication that saw Andy and First Choice Recruitment become one of the lead sponsors of the Wakefield Works initiative, designed to offer young people the chance to meet employers across Wakefield, the opportunity of work experience and the chance to see first-hand the world of work and the career and job

opportunities on offer. "Wakefield Works demonstrated that when businesses work together we can make a positive difference to people's lives. We put aside our business ambitions for one day and focused on the needs of young people across our region and the networks we have developed as a result will continue." explained Andy.

Those business networks are key to realising Wakefield's full potential as a great place to do business and Andy and Anne encourage new and existing businesses to get involved.

Kate Hainsworth, Head of Development, Theatre Royal Wakefield, is glad to have them on her patch.

"First Choice Recruitment are one of the reasons good things happen in Wakefield: dynamic, really well connected, totally grounded in the local Wakefield area, a bright team, full of ideas, always ready to support businesses and people, and invest in worthwhile projects"

After 21 years in the recruitment business can they maintain their enthusiasm and drive for the next 21?

'Absolutely' says Anne. 'Wakefield is a great city and West Yorkshire is a great region to do business. Our commitment remains the same as it was the very first day we opened our doors for business – to focus on people, partnerships and performance and to provide the very highest level of quality recruitment solutions. **Quite simply, the way recruitment should be**'