

Leading ladies of Sussex



Sussex women mean business! Here, we turn the spotlight on some of our county's most successful – and discover what it is that makes them tick



Fiona Howard Fiona Howard Ltd

Tell me about your business

I create very British wallpapers which I design entirely by hand. For over 30 years I have been designing fabrics and wallpapers for clients ranging from Sandersons to John Lewis. I now have my own collection of wallpapers based on my hand drawn, and printed lino-cut designs.

Who or what inspires you?

The British countryside, wild hedgerows and seaside villages. I am never without a sketchbook and pencil in my hand and am always collecting inspiration. At the moment I am working on a rockpool design so my desk is covered in pebbles, seaweeds and shells. I draw and redraw the design until the pattern flows seamlessly.

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What is the secret of your success?

Clients are particularly drawn to the hand-created nature of my designs. As we all now spend more time at home, people are searching for ways to personalise with wallpaper so it's wonderful to create unique designs which make us happy in our environments.

All my wallpapers are printed in England on FSC papers using environmentally friendly inks and last year we started working in conjunction with 'One Tree Planted' to plant a tree for every roll of wallpaper sold.



Zoë Lagadec Mulberry's Employment Law Solicitors

Any top tips for a successful working relationship?

My top tip would be communication. In my experience, working relationships, like all relationships succeed or fail on the quality of their communication. Creating a working environment in which everyone feels able to speak openly with tolerance and respect would, from what I see in my job as an employment lawyer, pay dividends in any workplace. In my work I try to ensure that my client's feel in control and involved every step of the way, that way they feel listened to and empowered.

What does your average day look like?

There really is no such thing. One thing I love about my work is the diversity of my client base and my workload. I advise

people from all walks of life experiencing widely diverging workplace issues. I see all of life, which helps to keep me grounded, grateful and socially engaged. The beauty of technology also means I am able to work wherever I am, so I am to weave my work alongside my life and make sure I practice what I preach about work/life balance!

How do you spend your free time?

As much as possible I am outside enjoying nature. I love nothing more than walking in the woods or along the coast with my family and our dog. I also love to travel and as often as I can I am off finding somewhere new to explore, whether it be a new city or different natural landscape.

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Mary Frances Moorcroft Equine Rehabilitation Centre

Tell us about yourself and your business

I am passionate about horses, particularly in understanding how to make them comfortable when working, keeping them sound and giving them the best life possible. Horses are especially vulnerable, mainly because we do so much with them; racing, show-jumping, dressage and so on. They are always willing to please, too forgiving and can be prone to suffering because of human error. I've spent nearly 40 years working with horses. After training in Ireland, Switzerland and in the UK, I joined Moorcroft in 2006, now one of the best equine rehabilitation centres in the UK. We help damaged and injured ex-racehorses and other breeds which need rehabilitation following surgery, ill treatment or other damage. Our facilities

in Slinfold, near Horsham, allow us to offer exceptionally high care with a resident physio and staff.

What do I look for when hiring staff?

Thankfully I'm blessed with a strong team at Moorcroft but when recruiting I look for a good work ethic, sense of humour, honesty, reliability and a real passion to learn to work the horses better.

What makes a good boss?

It's important to get to know your staff and understand their strengths and weaknesses so they can thrive. Many of us spend the majority of our waking hours at work so a good employer will prioritise personal development and creating a good work environment. A happy, positive and progressive environment will translate into success for everyone.

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