

PRIVATE CLIENT DIALOGUES

In this series of interviews, the Global Elite has asked our private client community to come together amidst COVID-19. In lieu of international travel in person meetings, we have encouraged our members to interview each other across multiple jurisdictions.



**Rosie Schumm |
Forsters**

Rosie Schumm is a London-based partner in Forsters' Family team and is known for taking a creative, robust and pragmatic approach to family law to achieve the best outcome for her high net worth clients.



**Bhavesh Patel |
Travers Thorp Alberga**

Bhavesh Patel is a partner and an experienced commercial litigator with Travers Thorp Alberga in the Cayman Islands, specialising in private client, shareholder and company disputes, cross-border insolvency matters, and contentious trusts and private client work.

Rosie: Huge Congratulations on recently being made up to Partner at TTA. What are your goals for the next year ahead?

Bhavesh: Thank you – unfortunately it coincided with the COVID-19 crisis so celebrations are a bit on hold, but it should still be an exciting year ahead! My goals for the year haven't really changed as a result of the promotion but it feels good that my efforts and some big wins have been recognised. As a boutique litigation practice, we concentrate very much on highly focussed quality and grow our market share by way of client recommendation. Once we're through this crisis I expect that we will see an increase in contentious matters around liquidations and restructurings and there is likely to be a significant increase in private client enquiry coming in as people look to protect their wealth from increased taxation onshore.

Rosie: Tell us more about your practice and areas of specialism...

Bhavesh: I'm a commercial litigator by background and have expanded that to also include insolvency, restructuring, and private client matters since moving offshore. Whilst I focus primarily on the contentious side of things, I also specialise in private client structuring work such as setting up basic trusts, foundation companies, and succession planning. I am Cayman and BVI qualified having trained and qualified in England.

Rosie: What are the highlights of living in Cayman with a young family?

Bhavesh: The biggest difference between life in Cayman and the UK is time – the size of the Island means that your commute and travel time to get anywhere is considerably reduced, which means you gain a lot of time back from what would otherwise be spent sitting on the tube or on a train. When you add that to the guaranteed weather and smaller population, you have suddenly gained a lot more free time back to be able to spend with family. Being a young couple with a young daughter, that is invaluable as Asha and I are able to spend a lot more quality time with Zuri, and we can do more outdoor activities and take her to the beach. Zuri loves cooking with me which is great, and we get to spend a lot of time together as a family at weekends which is fantastic whilst she is young. We're lucky to live on an island where the

climate allows you to do lots of activities which would otherwise be limited, and all that makes Cayman a fabulous place to live with a young family.

Rosie: What makes TTA different from other firms?

Bhavesh: The firm was specifically structured to suit the post financial crisis environment. Our cost base is much lower, and we have the most experienced senior lawyers in the offshore space without the traditional pyramid. On the transactional side we have dispensed with hourly rate billing which greatly simplifies matters and dramatically improves client relations. We focus only on the more complex and high-quality matters. Our streamlined approach cuts out internal bureaucracy and each attorney will also take on marketing, business development, training, and client relationship management thereby avoiding separate departments. All of that means that we are able to operate at lower cost than most of our competitors and provide higher quality advice.

Rosie: We met at Private Client Americas when we shared a panel discussion on protecting family wealth across jurisdictions. What are the benefits to you in being part of the Global Elite?

Bhavesh: The exposure to industry leaders in the Private Client field is the biggest benefit – it is not just that you are able to interact with them, but because the gatherings are smaller and more exclusive, you get real quality time with that group and are able to build solid relationships which make working with the professionals much easier and more enjoyable. The strength of relationship created also means that you are more likely to share work amongst the Elite. The actual conferences themselves, in particular the PCFA, are really well organised and tailored to be relevant and of interest to common and civil lawyers alike, and the technical sessions are informative and relevant. They also get a great balance between social networking opportunities and formal sessions.

Rosie: What would be a Bhavesh beverage of choice?

Bhavesh: The Bhav Old Fashioned (yes, it does exist!) – basically an old fashioned with El Dorado 15 year old rum instead of the Bourbon. They do a great one at the Backroom Bar in Cayman.

Rosie: What do you do to keep fit?

Bhavesh: I've always played sports – cricket, hockey, and golf mainly, and have maintained that in Cayman, especially Golf (although on island, that involves sitting in a golf buggy and drinking so maybe not the best form of exercise). During the current COVID-19 lockdown we've been going on daily walks as a family and we purchased a Peloton bike in December on which we are now getting our money's worth!

Rosie: Who has inspired you most in your career and why?

Bhavesh: There are so many people that have influenced my career and I would love to name them all, but the three that have probably had the biggest influence on me professionally are (1) Makbool Javaid, who was a partner at DLA Piper when I did an open day and subsequent vacation scheme there whilst at university. He was the one who really opened my eyes to the world of City Law, and in particular his ability to treat everything equally regardless of their seniority was something that stuck with me. It really helps in relationship building. (2) My first seat supervisor at Herbert Smith – Chris Bushell – has always been a source of inspiration and a mentor. Chris is an excellent lawyer who is able to explain legal problems in a very simple way, and that was always something I admired and looked to emulate. (3) Anthony Travers OBE, who is our Senior Partner and a real advocate for offshore financial centres and Cayman in particular. The Firm's model is his concept and his drive and passion are remarkable.