



●●● **ESG ACCORD** Spotlight Interview

Andy Burton
TFA Trusted Financial Advice

When we interviewed Andy it quickly became clear that he has been into all things 'sustainable' for many years, this includes becoming a vegan in 2013.

Andy joined TFA in 2020 due to their client focused approach, providing him the necessary support, tools and flexibility to be truly client centric, whilst enabling him to focus on ESG and sustainable investing. TFA's flexibility has afforded Andy the opportunity to influence and expand their ESG and sustainable offering. As a result, around three quarters of his clients today now do some investing in this sector. Andy make the point **"that a pension pot is often the largest investment that a client will have, so it is important to invest this wisely and in line with their values"**.

We asked Andy what changes to the market he had noticed in recent years. He highlights three important changes; **"First that clients are more aware of the issues and many want to do something about it. Second, there are more and more investment options built around sustainability coming to market. Finally, the processes of investment managers are getting deeper and better to ensure that it is not just greenwashing!"**

Andy talked about the challenges he faces in offering ESG & Sustainable funds; "the terminology can be very confusing, it needs clarifying. Also too many advisers are nervous of this sector, largely through a lack of understanding."

When it came to talking about ESG Accord, Andy said; **"We were looking to produce a guide on ESG and Sustainability anyway, but then met ESG Accord at a presentation organised by the CII. It became apparent very quickly that they knew far more than we did on the subject and what they said was pretty hard hitting. It made total sense to then sign up for their services, so that we could draw on their material and guidance, to give the best advice to our clients."**

Andy also added that; **"having such a good sustainable proposition has both encouraged existing clients to change how they are investing and has also brought new clients to our door. Some of them seem really relieved to have found someone who offers this service."**

About the changes Andy would like to see in the industry? **"First on his wish list was for better reporting from fund managers on what they were investing in, and with what results. And he felt that there was room for the costs to come down."**

To close we asked what advice he would give to an adviser new to this sector? **"Simple. You must be open about the pros and cons of this investing approach and give clarity on what is and isn't included, right up front. You need to understand where your clients sit on the ESG spectrum to avoid any misunderstandings later on."**

Thank you Andy for sharing your views and experience.

For more info on TFA:
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