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# A careful return to Price Street for Myers & Co Solicitors

Following a detailed risk assessment, and the Government's guidelines, our offices in Price Street have reopened for clients who would like a meeting with their solicitor.

**T**he wellbeing of our staff and our clients is our utmost priority,' says Managing Director Stephen Myers. 'While remote working has been working well for many, it does not suit every client and so we have been keen to accommodate those clients who do want a face-to-face meeting.'

Each client's circumstances are unique, and we will do everything practical to accommodate each person's needs, if we can.

## Remote meetings

Where possible, we encourage clients to communicate by telephone or any of the online communication channels (Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp etc).

## Face-to-face meetings by appointment

For those clients who would like to come into the office to discuss matters face-to-face we have put a protocol in place

to keep you and our team safe. When we confirm a meeting, we will send you the detailed protocol.

Sadly, you will no longer be able to enjoy coffee and the newspaper in our comfortable waiting room – or the sweets which we know many visitors used to enjoy.

## Home visits

For clients who are shielding at home, if we need to see you for a signature then we can come to you and are experienced at managing the documents safely.

## For more information

Please speak to your usual solicitor and explain your circumstances, and we will do everything practical to accommodate you.



Employment



Business



Litigation



Commercial Property



Residential Property



Wills & Probate



Wealth

# Why use a legal expert for probate and estate administration?

While online services provide an option for executors and administrators to deal with an estate, there are good reasons for instructing a professional. Not least that, if you distribute an estate incorrectly, you could find yourself subject to a claim for breach of your duty.



**Stephen Myers**, director of wills and probate, offers his top tips when dealing with an estate

An estate may seem simple enough, especially if you knew the person well. However, only a small percentage of estates are truly straightforward and there are many apparently ordinary circumstances which should be considered in more depth, and which may call for the knowledge and expertise of a practised professional.

For example:

## Beneficiaries

With rising house prices, more people become liable to pay tax each year. With careful forward planning and sound legal advice, you can ensure that your loved ones receive everything you want them to, without having to sacrifice more than necessary in taxation.

## Property

If a house was owned jointly with someone who is still alive, that house may or may not pass in accordance with the terms of the will, as this will depend upon exactly how the house was legally held.

## Large estates or unusual assets

Shareholdings attract complicated valuation and tax rules, including whether any tax is the liability of the estate or the beneficiaries. Overseas assets will also need to be handled carefully.



## Inheritance, income and capital gains taxes

Tax is a complex legal area and a professional can help you to ensure that all tax is accounted for and that no tax is paid needlessly, ultimately saving you and the estate money.

Some assets will be subject to special tax exemptions or reliefs, such as for a business or agricultural property. Assets passing to certain people or organisations (such as a spouse or civil partner, or a charitable organisation) will be exempt from inheritance tax altogether.

There are also some other more nuanced rules concerning tax, such as a reduced tax rate where a certain percentage of the estate is left to charity.

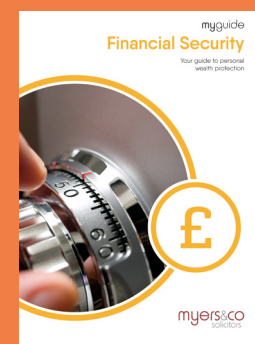
## Claims from family members

If you anticipate a family dispute or a claim from a beneficiary, it would be wise to instruct a legal professional to administer the estate from the outset. Introducing a neutral person can prevent the further deterioration of family relationships and ensures that any claim can be dealt with effectively.

## How we can help

Our legal experts are familiar with the rules of estate administration and can ensure they are correctly adhered to on your behalf.

Taking a step back from the administrative duties can allow you proper time to grieve and entrusting a legal expert with the more practical aspects of estate administration means that you are in safe and experienced hands.



## Request our free guide to protecting your personal wealth

An essential guide with advice for the safeguarding of your financial security

For further information, please contact Stephen Myers in the wills and probate team on 01782 525007 or email [stephen.myers@myerssolicitors.co.uk](mailto:stephen.myers@myerssolicitors.co.uk).

# Putting your house on the market during the pandemic

Alongside ambitious plans to build more homes, recent changes in government guidelines are designed to get the housing market moving again. The introduction of a stamp duty holiday has provided an added incentive for people to move before March 2021.

**Kerry Dundas** outlines the key considerations if you plan to put your house on the market.



## Stamp duty holiday – until 31 March 2021

The Government has introduced a temporary cut in stamp duty land tax for residential property, as the nil rate band in England and Northern Ireland is raised from £125,000 to £500,000. This new rule will replace the current rules for first-time buyers during this period.



## The practicalities of selling your home now

Government guidelines recommend limiting the number of people viewing your property. Good agents should screen enquiries effectively and arrange virtual viewings first, so that only serious buyers should need to visit your home in person.

The steps necessary to sell your home may take longer than before, due to the restrictions, new working practices and people having to isolate. For example, buyers may experience delays with mortgage applications and surveys, or you may struggle to find dependable tradesmen or a removal company that is operating and available.

You will still need an Energy Performance Certificate before marketing your home, and this may take longer than usual to arrange. So, where possible, plan ahead.

## Getting your property ready for sale

To reduce potential delay, concentrate on getting your home ready for sale. As well as carrying out any outstanding maintenance jobs, address any legal issues such as gaps in your documentary title, planning breaches or restrictions in your title deeds which have not been complied with.

Fortunately, most issues can be resolved relatively easily. For example, if you do not have documentary title to an area of land in your garden, your solicitor may apply to the Land Registry for a possessory title or advise you on an appropriate insurance policy.

## Talk to us first

Discuss your plans with your solicitor, ideally before putting your home on the market. We can review your title and other circumstances to make sure there are no potential issues that might derail a future sale.

## Planning for the unexpected

A willingness to be flexible helps. Conventionally, a sale contract will provide for completion to take place on a set date. If you do not complete then, you may have to pay your buyer compensation. Worse, if the delay continues, they may decide not to complete the purchase at all. In normal circumstances, most sales go through on the contractual completion date, so this is rarely an issue.

But what happens if you have to self-isolate or the Government reintroduces stricter controls so you cannot move out on completion day?

To limit this risk, your solicitor may suggest exchanging contracts and completing your sale on the same day. Not knowing the contractual completion date well in advance may make it harder to plan your move, but this gives you certainty and control over when this will be. In some circumstances, your solicitor may suggest a change to the contract to allow for the variation of the completion date.



**Request our free guide on buying or selling your home**

Practical advice for anyone wanting to move or get on the property ladder

**For further information about selling your home, contact Kerry Dundas on 01782 525016 or email [kerry.dundas@myerssolicitors.co.uk](mailto:kerry.dundas@myerssolicitors.co.uk)**



# Commercial Solicitor Joanna Convey joins the Myers & Co business law team

The Myers & Co team has grown again with the welcome addition of Joanna Convey, an experienced commercial law solicitor. Joanna joins the firm with over 10 years of legal and commercial experience in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire.



Joanna specialises in drafting and advising on a wide range of commercial agreements as well as terms and conditions of business. She also has valuable experience in protecting all forms of intellectual property rights.

Throughout her career, Joanna has advised a variety of clients across a range of sectors including leisure and entertainment, manufacturing and retail. Her breadth of experience means she can provide guidance to all our clients, from startups and sole traders to partnerships and limited companies.

With a keen eye for detail and excellent negotiating skills, Joanna can safeguard your business interests whether you are a startup, fledgling business or a worldwide corporation.

**The Myers & Co business team offer legal advice and services for all aspects of:**

- business terms and conditions;
- buying a business;
- commercial contracts and agreements;
- company documentation;
- confidentiality and data protection;
- intellectual property;
- mergers and acquisitions;
- restructuring; and
- selling a business.

**If you are looking for advice about any aspect of commercial law, contact Joanna on 01782 525029 or email [joanna.convey@myerssolicitors.co.uk](mailto:joanna.convey@myerssolicitors.co.uk).**

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