



How can we help?

Unusually for a West End firm - our offices are near Selfridges - we provide services for local families and people working nearby, as well as managing the private and family affairs of our commercial clients and high net worth families.

We advise our business clients on a wide range of matters, but our primary focus is on commercial property and property related transactions. Our team is recognised and well respected for its skill and proficiency and regularly manages large and complex matters.

Most legal matters benefit from early advice, so talk to us as soon as you can.

We pride ourselves in providing open access to law and have conducted some high profile cases for publicly funded clients or those on very limited means in suitable cases against large financial or other major institutions.

Our expertise includes the following areas of law:

PROPERTY

Commercial property

Our clients include developers, investors and lenders acquiring or disposing of land and buildings, as well as businesses of all sizes looking to let premises where they can set up or expand their operations.

We have the legal expertise to negotiate, draft and produce the often complex documentation that will establish responsibilities, control costs and co-ordinate the activities of building and other professional services you may need in order to maximise the value of your property.

Whether you are the landlord or tenant of a small office or a multi-million pound property, we will advise you of your rights and obligations, look for unexpected pitfalls and safeguard your interests. We will also advise on the likely effect of new legislation on your situation as a landlord or tenant.

- * Freehold and leasehold properties
- * Acquisitions and disposals
- * Landlord/tenant
- * Lettings, leases and licences
- * Development

- * Property aspects of business deals
- * Planning matters
- * Environmental and construction matters
- * Rent reviews
- * Lease renewals
- * Service charge, dilapidations, forfeiture issues

Residential Property

Our specialist residential conveyancing team will guide you carefully and considerately through the home buying and selling experience and advise you on other related property matters as they arise.

You will have the benefit of our experience and we can introduce you to other trusted professionals who may be useful to you. Although most of the work can be done by telephone, fax, email and post, we encourage clients to visit our offices at least once to meet and talk to the people who will be handling their conveyancing.

We can help you if your property is freehold or leasehold for yourself and your family or it is an investment property. We can also help with surrendering or extending your lease or remortgaging your property.

- * Conveyancing for buyers / sellers
- * Shared ownership
- * Buying / extending a lease
- * Leasehold enfranchisement
- * Advising landlord / tenant
- * Tenancy agreements

FAMILY

We have a specialist team of lawyers who provide an excellent quality of advice and represent clients in all aspects of family law. We are also able to provide a mediation service.

We recognise that family breakdown for whatever reason is extremely stressful; consequently we will respond quickly to your requests and give you advice, support and guidance as well as offering you first class representation. We aim to provide the best possible advice and representation and access to the highest calibre legal expertise without extravagant costs. Additionally, we hold a contract with the Legal Services Commission and for eligible clients, are able to offer specialist services with the assistance of public funding.

Children

We are particularly renowned for our work in the fields of law relating to children. We have a specialist team of lawyers with expertise in all aspects whether it is international child abduction or disputes involving Social

Services. We act for people of all ages, from grandparents to young people in disputes involving residence/ contact; relocation; abduction or allegations of child abuse. We are also able to assist in financial disputes involving children.

No matter how difficult or complex your case may be we listen carefully to you before outlining what can be done. We are specialists in

Care proceedings;

Child Abduction;

International Relocation;

Wardship;

Residence/ Custody disputes (both national and international);

Contact/ Access disputes (both national and international);

Adoption;

Child Maintenance.

Our lawyers have been involved in a number of important, leading reported cases which have helped to shape the direction of English family law as it relates to children. You will find a list at the end of this section.

We have much experience in handling the media when it affects our clients, their children and their personal lives.

Our solicitors are members of the Law Society Children panel; and are accredited by the family lawyers group Resolution as specialists in International Child Abduction; Adoption and “private law-children”. The firm is on the specialist panel of solicitors referred cases by the UK Governments International Child Abduction and Contact Unit ([ICACU](#)). The department supports the work of Reunite International ([Reunite](#)).

Separation and Divorce

We can advise on all aspects of Divorce, Civil Partnership and Cohabitation disputes. When possible we assist clients to reach mediated settlements, so as to avoid the cost, stress and uncertainty of litigation. Where mediation is not effective or appropriate we take a pro-active approach to obtaining a swift and satisfactory conclusion to proceedings.

Where personal protection is required or where there are concerns about forced marriages we are able to work swiftly and sensitively to assist in the most appropriate fashion. We recognise that family breakdown for whatever reason is extremely stressful consequently we will listen to you and help guide you through this difficult time.

We are able to deal with

Divorce

Financial matters ancillary to divorce

Personal protection injunctions

Forced Marriage

Cohabitation disputes

Financial settlement for children

Civil Partnership

Much of our casework is privately funded (at competitive rates) and we remain committed to undertaking publicly funded family work.

Mediation

We are able to offer a mediation service both in relation to children matters and divorce. Given our specialism in international matters relating to children our Resolution trained lawyer mediator is particularly well placed to assist with international disputes involving children.

Recent reported cases involving our department

1. F v J [2010] EWHC 2909 (Fam) (Abduction: Child's Objections and Article 13(b) defence)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed71615>

2. M (A Child) [2010] EWCA Civ 1295

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed72207>

3. Re A (Children) [2010] EWCA Civ 1490

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed75244>

4. Re A (Abduction: Interim Directions: Accommodation by Local Authority) [2010] EWCA Civ 586 (Court of Appeal; Thorpe and Etherton LJ; 27 May 2010; [2011] 1 FLR)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed66861>

5. De L v H (Abduction: Child's Objections) [2009] EWHC 3074 (Fam)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed46728>

6. W v W [2009] EWHC 3288 (Fam) (Family Division; Baker J; 10 December 2009; [2010] 2 FLR) (Abduction – joinder of Siblings)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed47659>

7. Re S (Habitual Residence) [2009] EWCA Civ 1021 (Court of Appeal; Thorpe, Wall and Moore-Bick LJJ; 30 July 2009)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed41558>

8. Re C (Representation of children) Separate Representation of Children [2008] EWHC 517 (Fam) (Family Division; Ryder J; 14 March 2008)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed1210>

9. B (Children) [2005] EWCA Civ 1380

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed1431>

10. S v B (Abduction: Human Rights) [2005] EWHC 733 (Fam) (Family Division; Sir Mark Potter P; 4 May 2005)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed207>

11. E (children) (Abduction Article 13b defence)

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed83163>

12. Yorkshire Bank plc v Tinsley [2004] EWCA Civ 816 (Court of Appeal; Peter Gibson, Rix and Longmore LJJ; 25 June 2004)

<http://www.bailii.org/cgi-bin/markup.cgi?doc=/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2004/816.html&query=Tinsley&method=all>

IMMIGRATION

Many people aspire to live and work in the UK and, eventually, to acquire UK citizenship. Whatever your motivation might be, we can offer our wide experience in dealing with many aspects of immigration and nationality law for individuals and companies.

We offer a service to those seeking to apply for a work permit, student / study visas, marriage / unmarried partner's concessions and investor / retirement applications, as well as asylum cases.

Public funding may be available for matters related to asylum / refugees, appeals, applications to remain, judicial reviews and emergency matters. We can advise you from your initial application, through to court representation and post-grant assistance. We are experienced in dealing with the following matters:

- * Study / student / professional qualifications
- * Work permit applications / skilled migrant worker
- * Investment / right to live in UK/retirement
- * Family reunion (including betrothed / unmarried partners)
- * Applications for travel documents / entry clearance
- * Naturalisation
- * Asylum claims and appeals / refugees
- * Extensions / variations of leave

Freemans is a Community Legal Service provider on immigration matters. We will tell you if you are eligible for financial support.

CRIME

If you are questioned by the Police or arrested, we will provide immediate advice and representation at the Police station at any time without charge.

Becoming the subject of a criminal investigation or prosecution, no matter what the character of the alleged offence, is always a demanding and stressful experience. We will ensure you understand the court procedures and are always consulted about and involved in the decisions affecting your case.

Our criminal team has considerable experience across a wide range of criminal offences and offers specialist Litigation and Advocacy services in all cases before Magistrates, Crown Court and Criminal Appeal courts.

We have conducted a wide range of cases including:-

- * Serious drugs
- * Murder
- * VAT Fraud
- * Money Laundering
- * Driving cases involving death
- * Drink-Drive
- * Sexual offences
- * Investigations by the DSS and DWP
- * Representing Pharmacists and Bankers
- * Terrorism

LITIGATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Our Litigation and Dispute Resolution Department aims to assist you to avoid a dispute if possible and, where it is not, to represent your interests and ensure that your family or business needs are protected. Our lawyers will

advise you and help you to achieve the best resolution of your dispute, whether by litigation, mediation or another form of dispute resolution or negotiation.

Our aim is to assess and deliver your specific client goals or needs and to do that as commercially and economically as possible whilst explaining to you the risks and likely outcome of your dispute.

We have extensive experience in all aspects of property commercial litigation and insolvency and have conducted cases from the Court of Appeal to the County Court and Leasehold Valuation and other Tribunals. Our client base ranges from private individuals to large corporations and offshore companies.

Commercial Property Litigation

- * Rent / Service Charge Disputes
- * Breaches of Covenants
- * Lease renewals
- * Dilapidations
- * Leasehold Enfranchisement

Residential Property Litigation

- * Rent Arrears and other Breaches
- * Service of S8/S21 Notices
- * Possession Proceedings
- * Leasehold Disputes

Corporate Litigation

- * Company / Contract Disputes
- * Partnership / Shareholder Disputes
- * Insolvency
- * Debt Recovery / Enforcing Judgments
- * Employment Law Advice

General Litigation

- * Professional Negligence
- * Co-ownership / Trust of Land Claims
- * Bankruptcy
- * Nuisance and Boundary Disputes
- * Adverse Possession
- * Insurance Disputes

WILLS ESTATE PLANNING AND PROBATE

Recent surveys demonstrate that nearly 70% of the UK population have not made a will.

Research conducted on behalf of The Law Society shows that thousands of people risk leaving loved ones with nothing after their death because they don't know the contents of their own will or have not made a will.

Making a will with provision for your family is no longer the preserve of the rich. Due to the rise in property prices over the years, the inheritance tax laws are catching out increasing numbers of people.

Many of us rule out making a will because we don't believe we have anything significant to leave our loved ones. But often, when the value of property and life insurance are taken into account, the sums involved can be significant and attract the interest of the Inland Revenue.

A will is a legal document that ensures that when you die, what you leave (after paying tax and debts) is distributed in accordance with your wishes. Even though you may feel that you do not have a great deal to leave, a will ensures that your property goes to the individuals you choose. A will can also minimise tax liabilities for your estate.

Preparing a will can also ensure you address any special circumstances such as a disabled child, step-children, co-habitees and same-sex partners. Making a will means that you are in charge - and you will be able to arrange your affairs as you would like.

By making a will you avoid the 'intestacy rules' that apply when a person dies without leaving a will, and which often result in the estate being distributed in a way that a person would not have wished. This is particularly true where a spouse and children are left and the estate is of a significant size, as the intestacy rules produce a very complex and inconvenient result. Sadly, if there are children under 18 who can't consent to any rearrangement of the estate, the position is even worse as the intestacy rules may trigger an inheritance tax liability which cannot be avoided by deed of variation.

Making a will doesn't have to be costly or take up a lot of time and it will provide you and your family with real peace of mind.

We offer a caring and efficient service that can include home and hospital visits if required and sympathetic administration of the estate after a death.

We can undertake the obtaining of valuations of all the assets of the estate, calculate any inheritance tax liability, apply for the grant of probate (or letters of administration in the event that there is no will), and then deal with the gathering in of the assets of the estate, and administer the estate in accordance with the will or the intestacy rules, as the case may be.

In summary our services include:

- Making the will
- Preparing joint/individual wills
- Changing your will

- Appointing executors and guardians
- Minimising tax liability
- Powers of attorney

Probate:

- Obtaining grant of probate
- Administering an estate
- Varying the provisions of a will
- Resolving intestacy problems