



healds

solicitors

In Focus

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Healds Solicitors

Welcome to the first edition of the Healds Solicitors newsletter, which we hope will provide some interesting information on a range of legal topics. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all of our clients for their continued support of the practice, which is greatly appreciated by all of the Partners.

We are pleased to introduce Andrea Knight, our new Employment Solicitor who began working for our firm on 18 January 2010. Andrea studied law at Manchester Metropolitan University. She completed her studies in 2007 and soon after obtained a position as a trainee solicitor.

During her training and since qualifying as a solicitor, she has specialised in all areas of employment law. She has represented clients in a variety of employment matters including complex discrimination claims and unfair dismissals.

About her new role at Healds Andrea says “I aim to maintain good employment relations between workers and employers wherever possible. I hope to do this by taking a conciliatory approach towards employment disputes and by providing sound guidance and advice. However it isn’t always possible to settle employment disputes amicably. If more formal action is needed I will take a robust approach in the representation of my clients and pursue the best possible outcome for them”.

Senior partner Barry Peet says “We are delighted that Andrea has joined Healds. She has a wealth of experience in employment law and this will significantly enhance the service we can offer to both our personal and business clients”.



Top Tips For Sellers

Selling your home in the current market is more challenging than ever. We've compiled some tips to help you make the most of your space and get the best price for your property.

1. Consider your 'Kerb appeal'

What first impression does your home make? This is a good place to spend some time and money before putting your property on the market. Simple things like making sure the garden is tidy and weed free, painting the front door and having a new mat can make a difference here.

2. Clean, Clean, Clean!

Make sure your house is cleaned throughout and once it's done make sure it's kept that way. You never know when potential buyers may call in on the 'off chance' of a viewing. The majority of cleaning is cost free, but it might be worth having your carpets professionally cleaned if they are looking past their best.

3. Exterminate Clutter

Clutter makes houses feel smaller. Get rid of the unnecessary and your rooms will feel bigger and be more attractive to viewers. If you still have too much for your home to feel spacious, consider putting some items into storage.

4. Get the basics right

Basic maintenance and simple DIY jobs must be completed. A property that looks well maintained is more likely to receive offers closer to the asking price. If potential buyers believe the house needs immediate work they will factor this into any offer they make.

5. Depersonalise & Neutralise

Professional show homes use this to seduce buyers; they never contain anything personal as this allows buyers to imagine themselves living there. This means removing family photos, children's pictures, collectable items etc.

Colours are a personal choice and you don't want this to affect your chances of a sale. Paint your walls a neutral colour as this will make your rooms look bigger, cleaner and high quality.

6. Make it obvious

Potential buyers need to know instantly what each room is for so make it clear. If you have a separate dining room, make sure it looks like a dining room, not a play room. If you have a spare bedroom it needs to look like a bedroom, not a general storage space or office!

7. What's that smell?

Whether it comes from pets, smoking or cooking, they all produce smells that can send a buyer running. It's worth asking

someone who doesn't live with you about smells in the house as you may not even be aware of them. This is quite common with pets as owners simply get used to the smell over time. It might be fine for you but very off putting to others!

When you've gone through all these tips remember to stay objective in looking at your property. View your home as a buyer would and give yourself the best chance of making that sale.

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Personal Injury – What can be claimed for?

If you have suffered an injury in an accident through no fault of your own then you may well be eligible for claiming personal injury compensation. It's no fun being injured, particularly when you know you didn't do anything to cause the injury and even a minor injury can leave you out-of-pocket or suffering with pain.

There are many types of accidents which you may be able to claim personal injury compensation for. The main types of accident claims involve:-

- Work Accidents – Accidents caused by faulty or poorly maintained machinery, poor working practices, hazards or obstacles, inadequate training or poor risk assessment.
- Industrial Disease – RSI, asbestosis, Vibration White Finger, and deafness are just a few examples of disease or conditions that can be caused by a person's job or working conditions.
- Road Traffic Accidents – Motorcycle accidents, car accidents, accidents involving cyclists or pedestrians, and accidents caused by dangerous roads or roads which have been poorly maintained.
- Criminal Injury – Injuries sustained from being a victim of a crime.
- Medical Negligence – Including misdiagnosis, birth injury, a delay in diagnosis, not receiving adequate care, illness caused by an unclean hospital, being given the wrong medication, receiving unnecessary treatment or surgery going wrong.
- Slips, Trips and Falls – These can happen in the workplace, in a supermarket or on an uneven road or pavement. They can be caused by a poorly maintained pavement or by a spillage or wet floor not having a "wet floor" sign.
- Public Liability – This includes accidents in shops, supermarkets, business premises and public areas.
- Sports Injury – Injuries sustained playing sport or being a spectator.
- Whiplash – This is a common car accident injury and can cause long-term pain and problems.

You may be put off claiming for your accident, thinking that too many people claim, that we live in a "compensation culture" or fear making trouble, but if the accident was not your fault then you have every right to make an accident claim.

An accident injury can impact your life in many ways – you may need time off work, you may have to change jobs or give up your job, you may need costly medical treatment, you may be disabled and you may suffer financial hardship as a result of your accident. Personal injury compensation can help you take time out of your job to recover properly, pay for private medical treatment and compensate you for costs related to your accident. It can really help you get on with your life and provide for your family if you no longer can.





Why having a Will is important

Why should I make a Will?

Over half of all adults in Britain do not have a valid Will, but without one you have no control over who will inherit your assets and the state will decide how they are shared out. The rules of intestacy dictate how your assets would be divided if you do not have a Will, which may not be the way you wish. This is particularly important for unmarried couples, as without a Will the remaining partner will not inherit anything.

By making a Will you can also make specific arrangements for children if either or both parents die and ensure that you are not paying more inheritance tax than is necessary.

What does a basic Will contain?

- Details of your assets
- Who you wish to benefit from your Will – the beneficiaries.
- Who should look after children under 18
- Who will carry out your wishes as set out in the Will – the executors.

Executors will have to collect together all the assets of the estate and deal with all the administration. They will need to pay out the gifts and transfer any property to beneficiaries. It is usual to appoint two executors, in case one dies.

What makes a Will valid?

- It must be in writing
- It must be signed and witnessed
- You must be over 18
- You must have the mental capacity to make the Will

When should I update my Will?

You should review your Will at least every five years but specifically when circumstances change such as:

- Marriage or divorce
- Birth of children
- Moving home
- Major financial changes

How do I cancel my Will?

By destroying it or by making another Will cancelling all previous Wills.

Contact details.

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Services

- Conveyancing
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- Personal Injury
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- Wills
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- Powers of Attorney
- Litigation

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