

INSIDETRACK

Latimer Hinks new-look Farms & Estates Team for rural affairs



Latimer Hinks new look agricultural team - Neil Stevenson, Rosanne Tweddle, Martin Williamson, Nicola Neilson, Adam Wood, Elizabeth Armstrong & Anne Elliot

Latimer Hinks has launched the Farms & Estates Team to meet the growing demand for its services.

The Farms & Estates Team is led by Latimer Hinks' Chief Executive, Anne Elliott, who is supported by a cohort of specialists in private and agricultural law. Neil Stevenson, Nicola Neilson, Adam Wood, Martin Williamson, Rosanne Tweddle and Tim Haggie, all provide a bespoke service aimed at property work relevant to farmers and landowners, whilst Anne Elliott and Elizabeth Armstrong cover the private/tax elements of the relevant work areas.

The new-look team will offer a dedicated service dealing with legal issues facing the ever-evolving rural business community, including land use and business diversification, and the use of renewable and alternative energy, standing alongside traditional services including tenancy work, sales and purchases, succession planning, partnership agreements and wills, trusts and tax.

Anne Elliott, Chief Executive at Latimer Hinks, said: "We have launched the specialist

Farms & Estates Team in response to the changing needs of our rurally-based clients. The aim is to provide clients with a full and extensive service, tailored to the needs of the farming community and landowners. By bringing together expertise from a range of law specialisms, which all relate to rural affairs, we are able to offer a holistic approach to any legal issues that may arise."

Each member of the Farms & Estates Team is an expert within his/her field and several are members of recognised professional organisations, including the Country Land and Business Association, the Agricultural Law Association, the Tenant Farmers Association and the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, which means they are able to provide clients with a level of expertise usually associated with a much larger firm.

Latimer Hinks has welcomed the return of agricultural law specialist, Rosanne Tweddle, with whom many clients have already worked during her previous tenure at the law firm.

Rosanne, who is a regional committee member of the Agricultural Law Association, said: "It's fantastic to return to my roots at such

an exciting time for Latimer Hinks. I'm looking forward to catching up with my former clients and getting to meet and know new ones.

"I come from a farming background and I'm very much still involved in the community. I am a farmer's daughter and my husband is an organic dairy farmer, so I know all too well the everyday workings of farming life and the changing and challenging issues facing the agricultural industry."

For further details call 01325 341500.

Latimer Hinks Property team short-listed



The Latimer Hinks Commercial Property Team was delighted to have been shortlisted for the inaugural Insider Property Awards North East.

The awards took place on 4th May 2017 and Latimer Hinks was one of only six commercial property law firms from the North East to make the shortlist.



Latimer Hinks
S O L I C I T O R S

Latimer Hinks and Age UK Darlington aim to raise awareness of scheme to support vulnerable people

Latimer Hinks has teamed up with Age UK Darlington to raise awareness of the Herbert Protocol, an initiative to identify and protect vulnerable adults at risk of going missing, either from their home or a care setting.

Administered locally by Durham Constabulary, the Herbert Protocol encourages carers, families and friends, particularly of those suffering from dementia, to collate relevant



Natalie Palmer, Director & Solicitor
Contact: 01325 341500.
Email: nsp@latimerhinks.co.uk

information, which can be used to help coordinate a swift and effective response should they go missing.

The premise is that a document, prepared in advance and regularly reviewed, with as much relevant information as possible allows the authorities to begin an effective and informed search in a much timelier manner than previously.

The form, available from Age UK Darlington and the Durham Constabulary website, covers simple information, including contact details of friends and family, medical conditions, and details of regular habits and routines, which may aid those conducting the search. In addition, the Protocol can support vulnerable adults living in their own homes to remain independent for longer, providing a safeguard if they go missing and access to extra assistance, where necessary.

Natalie Palmer, a director at the Darlington-based law firm, is a Dementia Champion, regional co-ordinator for Solicitors for the Elderly and a Trustee for Age UK Darlington. She said: "The Herbert Protocol is a valuable and important development, which has the potential to deliver support to some of the most vulnerable people when they are most in need."

"At Latimer Hinks, we are actively encouraging our clients, their family, friends and carers to consider completing the form on behalf of their loved ones. We are also signposting people to Age UK Darlington to receive support and further information."

Gillian Peel, Chief Executive of Age UK Darlington, added: "Ideally it would be a neighbour/someone living very near to the person who keeps hold of the form so that if there was an emergency, the Police will have a register and know exactly who to contact."

Inspector Rachel Stockdale is co-ordinating the project on behalf of Durham Constabulary. She said "The Herbert Protocol is a big step towards protecting some of the most vulnerable adults in County Durham and Darlington, who are at risk of going missing. It is important we have a joined up approach to prevent vulnerable people from going missing in the first place, and to ensure that if people do go missing the procedures are robust and effective."

To find out more about the Protocol, visit www.durham.police.uk/news-and-events/Pages/Contact-us-about-the-Herbert-Prpt.aspx or call the non-emergency police contact number, 101. Alternatively, contact Age UK Darlington on 01325 362832 or visit <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/darlington>

Landmark Will ruling welcomed

Latimer Hinks Solicitors has welcomed a landmark Supreme Court ruling, which it says will bring clarity to future inheritance disputes.

The Supreme Court made a unanimous ruling to overturn a Court of Appeal decision to award a woman approximately £160,000 from her mother's will, despite her being disinherited.

The firm, recent winners of the Northern Law Awards (Private Client Team of the Year) says that the Supreme Court's decision in the milestone case should provide reassurance to those making a will that their decisions will be respected and their testamentary freedom, the fundamental right to choose how you dispose of your own property, is protected.

When Heather Illott's mother, Melita Jackson, died in 2004, she left most of her £500,000 estate to animal charities, making a conscious decision to disinherit her daughter. Shortly afterwards, Ms Illott contested the will under the Inheritance (Provision for Family

and Dependents) Act 1975, subsequently winning £50,000 from her mother's estate in the High Court.

This was later increased to £140,000 by the Court of Appeal, in order to enable her to buy her housing association property, with a further £20,000 payment to be structured to allow her to keep her state benefits.

The objection to the Court of Appeal's decision was brought by the charities to whom Ms Illott's mother left her estate.

Jennifer Quayle, senior solicitor at Latimer Hinks, said: "This ruling reaffirms what most people believe; that we have the right to choose who will benefit when we pass away. Mrs Jackson made a conscious decision when she was fully compos mentis, so her decision ought to be respected.

This is the first case of its kind to reach the Supreme Court and will set a precedent for other similar cases, so I'm pleased to see the law come down on the side of common sense.



Jennifer Quayle
Contact: 01325 341539
Email: jq@latimerhinks.co.uk

"There were concerns that the UK was beginning to slide towards a European-style forced heirship system, but this ruling is validation that our age-old common law principle of testamentary freedom, which gives individual the power to choose how they dispose of their property, is still paramount."



L to R: Latimer Hinks' Hel's Angels, Toni-Ann Galvin, Laura Richardson & Nikita Noël.

Darlington law firm's Hel's Angels raise money for hospice in 10k run

A team of staff from Latimer Hinks Solicitors has raised £575 for St Teresa's Hospice in memory of a colleague who passed away from cancer.

Toni-Ann Galvin, Nikita Noel and Laura Richardson, who call themselves Hel's Angels ran to honour the memory of their colleague Helen Thomas, who passed away last July after her battle with cancer. The team raised the impressive sum for the hospice after completing the Run Durham Hamsterley 10k race.

The Run Durham event is the latest fundraising event for St Teresa's Hospice by the team at Latimer Hinks. The Hel's Angels previously took part in an It's a Knockout-style challenge, raising more than £1,000. Their year of fundraising will culminate with a charity ball at Wynyard Hall on November 10th.

Toni-Ann Galvin, Solicitor at Latimer Hinks, said: "It was a great honour to run in Helen's memory and we are so grateful to everyone who donated and who came down to support us on the day. Helen was compassionate and generous, and it is wonderful to see that spirit

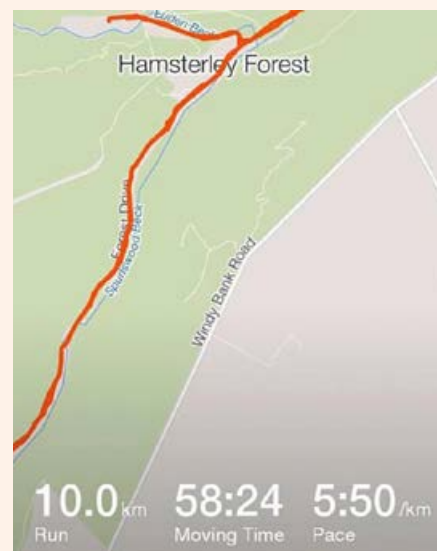
live on in the people who have supported us throughout our fundraising."

Natalie Palmer, Director at Latimer Hinks said "We're incredibly proud of our three volunteers and, once again, we are impressed and humbled by the amount of money raised for St Teresa's Hospice.

"This is a special cause for us here at Latimer Hinks as Helen spent her last days at the hospice and would be proud to know that we are contributing to the ongoing success of its inpatient unit."

St Teresa's Hospice is an independent charity that works to provide a number of hospice services to patients across South Durham and North Yorkshire. The hospice offers home services, day therapy and inpatient care in its new specially designed unit. Important services such as family support throughout care and bereavement support for those a patient leaves behind are also on offer for those who are affected by a loved one facing terminal illness.

If you would like to donate to the Latimer Hinks' Hel's Angels, go to the Just Giving page here: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/LatimerHinksSolicitors>



To find out why the team took on the 10k challenge take a look at their video <https://tinyurl.com/kzo7b5a>

**Solicitors for families,
businesses, farmers &
landowners**

Contacts and services

you & your family

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Private Client Team: Anne Elliott, Andrew Way, Elizabeth Armstrong, Natalie Palmer, Gillian Ibbotson, Nadine Kilvington, Kelly McLoughlin, Daniel Williams, Jennifer Quayle, Claire Conway, Julie Porter, Toni-Ann Galvin, Nikita Noël

Residential Conveyancing Team: Nicola Neilson, Martin Williamson, Jonathan Sturgeon, Laura Richardson, Jack Stainthorpe

business & commercial

Advice on commercial property law, employment and contract law, selling a business and succession planning.

Commercial Team: Nick Poole, Anne Elliott

Commercial Property Team: Neil Stevenson, Nicola Neilson, Adam Wood, Tim Haggie, Jonathan Sturgeon

farms & estates

Knowledgeable legal expertise in land sales and purchases, land option agreements, tenancy agreements, succession planning, diversification schemes and renewable energy developments.

Agricultural Team: Anne Elliott, Neil Stevenson, Nicola Neilson, Elizabeth Armstrong, Martin Williamson, Adam Wood, Tim Haggie, Rosanne Tweddle

Private Client Team: Anne Elliott, Andrew Way, Elizabeth Armstrong, Natalie Palmer, Gillian Ibbotson, Nadine Kilvington, Kelly McLoughlin, Daniel Williams, Jennifer Quayle, Claire Conway, Julie Porter, Toni-Ann Galvin, Nikita Noël

Residential Conveyancing Team: Nicola Neilson, Martin Williamson, Jonathan Sturgeon, Laura Richardson, Jack Stainthorpe

Contact details for

Latimer Hinks:

Tel: 01325 341500

lh@latimerhinks.co.uk

www.latimerhinks.co.uk



Is a new build the right move for you?

It's hard to ignore the new homes that seem to be being built left, right and centre across our region. Of course this is great news for some people. Many new housing developments come with a range of homes to suit all pockets, from the first time buyer, through to the older couple looking for a home to retire in, and in many situations you might have the opportunity to influence the design of your new home.

But for many, these new homes lack the space and character that comes with older properties; some people long for a sense of individuality. For them, one of the joys of living in an older house is finding a mark left by a former occupier, providing them with a sense of legacy and the knowledge that they are just one in a long line of people to make their lives in the property and, when they leave, they will pass on their home to someone else to love and live in.

So, which is right for you?

There are a number of factors that you should take into consideration when deciding between a new build and an older property – floor space, energy efficiency, ongoing maintenance costs, and ease of purchase all play an important role.

Unless you're buying a larger, purpose built home, you are unlikely to find a new build with the same floor space as an older property with the same number of bedrooms. This means that in all likelihood, the rooms themselves will be smaller, which is particularly important for growing families and people bringing large furniture from their last residence. You may find yourself running out of space very quickly.

However, when it comes to running costs, new builds win hands down. Even if an older property has undergone an extensive refurbishment, it will struggle to compete with the energy efficiency of contemporary

construction techniques and materials. Similarly, modern building regulations mean that each new build is constructed to a much higher specification than years gone by and come with a 10-year structural warranty, meaning it's less likely they will need the levels of maintenance usually associated with older homes.

The final point to consider is your purchasing power. New homes often come with a premium and may cost more than an older property with a comparable number of bedrooms. For first time buyers this can be offset by the fact that most developers offer the Government's Help to Buy Scheme, which only requires a 5% deposit. With older homes you usually need to find a higher deposit and potentially deal with other issues such as chains, surveys and the sellers changing their minds at the last minute.

Ultimately making the decision between buying a new or older property comes down to deciding what you want from the home, and balancing those desires against the costs, both financial and emotional.



Martin Williamson,
Director & Head of Residential Property
Contact: 01325 341500
Email: mw@latimerhinks.co.uk