

BOWLES & CO

S o l i c i t o r s

50 Years of Bowles & Co

Bowles & Co was established by Humphrey Bowles 50 years ago.

As part of the continuing evolution, we are delighted to announce that David Read became Senior Partner in October 2006. David joined Bowles & Co in 1985 initially as a litigation specialist. He has expanded his client base and now deals primarily with property and corporate based matters, but also retains an expertise in employment matters.

The other Partners, Sarah Lambert, Adrian Jones and Stephanie Williams offer a wide range of legal services to our clients. Associate Solicitor, Jeremy Cuff, supplements our Wills and Probate team and Bruce Caporn continues to offer support as our Consultant.

The firm has moved on from the two rooms that it initially occupied in Epsom's High Street. Bruce Caporn joined Humphrey Bowles shortly after he set up the firm and Nicholas Cutting completed the team in 1960. The firm rapidly expanded and established a reputation as a litigation practice. As other staff joined larger premises were required and the firm purchased its existing listed building in 1966.

After renovation of a then derelict property, the partnership continued to



thrive in its' new premises. Humphrey Bowles subsequently moved on, leaving Bruce Caporn and Nicholas Cutting to take the firm forward. Although Bruce and Nicholas have subsequently retired, Bruce continues to play an active role in the practice. Having retired in 1996, Nicholas drops in from time to time to keep a watchful eye on his former clients.

The firm will continue to evolve for many years to come. With the advent of numerous changes in the law and its practice the present partners intend to expand and develop our existing expertise and client base to provide an even more efficient and comprehensive service to our clients.

Volume 1, Issue 1

Autumn 2006

Welcome to the first Issue of our Newsletter

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New Partner

We are pleased to announce that Stephanie Williams has become a Partner at Bowles & Co. Stephanie who heads our Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning Department joined Bowles & Co in 2003.

Stephanie has a wide range of experience in all aspects of private client work and when she is not at Bowles & Co she is busy playing cricket and hockey.

Stephanie is a member of the MCC and Chair of Cheam Hockey Club.

If you wish to discuss any aspects of your wills, trusts, tax planning or estate administration please contact Stephanie.

Stephanie can be contacted on 01372 725241 or at stephaniew@bowlesco.co.uk

Are you HIP to the changes? Conveyancing update

In what may well be the most fundamental change in conveyancing for 80 years, the Government will be introducing the new Home Information Pack (or HIP) from 1 June 2007.



From that date, any seller intending to sell a property must put together a

HIP before a property can be marketed. A copy of the HIP must be provided to anyone who asks for it. While the contents of the HIP are still being decided, it is clear that a seller will need to obtain searches and copy title documents. HIPs for leasehold properties must contain a copy of the lease, insurance and service charge information. In all cases, an Energy Performance Certificate will need to be provided, which will give a buyer information about the energy efficiency of the property they are intending to purchase.

HIPs were going to include a Home Condition Report (a kind of survey), but the Government has withdrawn this requirement.

The aim of the HIP is to make the conveyancing procedure simpler and quicker. Whether or not it will achieve this remains to be seen. What is clear, is that any person hoping to sell a property will need a HIP, and Bowles & Co can help.

HIPs will affect the way we work, but also the way that you, as a seller, act. We know your properties, the local area and are getting ready for the HIPs revolution, by changing our software and hardware to enable us to quickly and economically provide HIPs for you – online or in hard copy. So remember - when you want to sell, call Bowles & Co first.

Is Inheritance Tax saving still possible?

Despite the much-publicised changes to the Inheritance Tax system introduced recently by the Chancellor, it remains open to married couples and civil partners to seek to make use of the tax free limit (the Inheritance “nil rate band”) available at the time of the first death (which is frequently wasted by having “standard form” Wills leaving everything to the survivor) as well as the “nil rate band” available on the second death.

By doing so it is, on present figures, possible to protect estate assets of

up to £570,000 (2x £285,000) from being charged to Inheritance Tax at 40%, rather than only protecting £285,000 worth of assets. This represents a saving for your beneficiaries of £114,000 (£285,000 at 40%).

The way to achieve this saving is to include appropriate wording in your Wills plus adjusting asset ownership between you (for example, changing ownership of your home from a “joint tenancy” to a “tenancy in common”). Including a discretionary trust can

mean a tax saving can be achieved even if your only major asset is your home.

If you would like us to review your Wills, to see if incorporating Inheritance Tax saving provisions may help in your case, please contact a member of our Private Client Team, Stephanie Williams or Jeremy Cuff.

New Web Site

Please visit our updated web site at bowles-solicitors.co.uk

Clients frequently comment on our somewhat unusual and original style of photographs so they have been retained.

We like to think of ourselves not only as good lawyers but as approachable and personable. Perhaps a slightly light hearted approach helps this process.

We welcome any constructive comments or suggestions that you may have or indeed aspects that you would like us to cover on either the website or in further newsletters.

COLLABORATIVE FAMILY LAW

Is there such a thing as a “good divorce”? Sadly relationship break down is a reality for many families. No one can underestimate the emotional strain the existing court based process places on a couple and more importantly, their children.

Sarah Lambert is one of a growing number of lawyers pioneering a revolutionary approach currently helping divorcing couples and their children reduce the emotional cost when families split.

Instead of dealing through solicitors, the new approach, called collaborative law, involves couples working with their solicitors, together in the same room, to reach agreement without the

need for costly and stressful court battles. All parties agree at the outset that they will not involve the court.

It sounds straightforward but it needs the right people, with the right approach to make it work. Everyone agrees to work together honestly, in good faith to find a solution to all the issues. This can sometimes involve the use of other professionals such as accountants and IFA's. Client's set the agenda and the pace, which enables them to prioritise their needs rather than being driven by a court process. You still benefit from having your own independent legal advice but you are in control without the threat of court hanging over you.



To find out more about Collaborative Family Law or other options available to separating couples please contact Sarah on 01372 725241 or sarahl@bowlesco.co.uk

EMPLOYMENT LAW

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 came into force on 1st October.

The regulations:

- ban age discrimination in relation to recruitment, promotion and training.
- ban unjustified retirement below 65.
- remove the current age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights.

The regulations also introduce a right for employees to ask to work beyond retirement age and for employers to

consider that request and a new need for employers to give at least six months notice to employees about their intended retirement date to assist better retirement planning.

The Regulations allow pay and non-pay benefits to continue which depend on length of service or which recognise/reward loyalty/experience and motivate staff. They remove the age limits for Statutory Sick Pay, Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Paternity Pay.

The lower and upper age limits in the statutory redundancy scheme are removed.

Please contact David Read on davidr@bowlesco.co.uk to discuss any employment issues.

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

FUNDRAISING

On 2nd July Kylie Gavin (receptionist) and Janice Joseph (secretary) joined many others to run 5K round a very hot Epsom Downs. Joining in the nationwide Run for Life they both raised funds for Cancer Research.

On 3rd September, Sarah Lambert took part in the Hydro Active Women's Challenge in Hyde Park. Sarah is no marathon runner, perhaps

this is why she managed to raise over £1,000 for the Leukemia Research Foundation.

For one week in July, Bowles & Co, in conjunction with St Raphael's Hospice in North Cheam, conducted a Wills Promotion Week. Jeremy Cuff prepared wills free of charge, with a donation being made to the hospice. The Promotion proved to be a great

success with over £700.00 being raised for the Hospice.



At Bowles & Co we pride ourselves on providing a professional, efficient and supportive service to all our clients whether large corporations, small businesses or individuals.

Our aim is to help clients achieve their objectives.

Our location means that we are able to provide comprehensive legal services to clients based both locally and further afield.

Please contact us to find out how we can help you.

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