

Newsletter

Welcome to our new quarterly newsletter. Inside each edition you will find “my legal journey” which will follow a client from their first encounter with a solicitor through to various different scenarios in their life where advice from a solicitor is needed. We will also include updates relating to staff, charity and events.

My Legal Journey

Buying my first house

I am 25 years old and buying my first house with my partner. Prior to this, neither of us have rented or owned our own properties.

Joint Ownership

The first point to consider when a property is being purchased in joint names is whether the parties will hold the legal estate as joint tenants or tenants in common.

Joint tenants share equal ownership of the property and have equal rights to keep or sell the property at a later date. When one party dies, the property automatically passes to the surviving joint owner. Whereas **tenants in common** can hold equal or unequal shares in the property and they each own their share separately. On the death of one owner the property would not automatically pass to the surviving joint owner. The simplest way to record if the parties intend to own equal or unequal shares of the property is to make an express declaration to that effect using a Land Registry form or a separate trust document.

When purchasing a property together, this is a factor you should consider and take legal advice on the appropriate method of ownership.



What to do?

Buying a house is a big investment for anyone, no matter what stage of life you are in; therefore, it is important to be prepared. Firstly, we would suggest getting your finances in order, and we have set out below a number of points you should consider:

1. **Have a healthy savings account:** By regularly putting money aside for your deposit and mortgage payments, lenders will see you are a consistent saver by not living paylip to paylip. Having savings set aside for your new home can also help by contributing to maintenance of the home at a later date.
2. **Help to Buy ISA:** If you don't already have savings set aside this is a great way to kick start the savings process.

A Help to Buy ISA is a savings scheme for first-time buyers. If you are saving to buy your first property, the government can contribute to your savings by 35% (up to £3000). In order to benefit from the government bonus, the home you buy must:

- Have a purchase price of up to £250,000 (or £450,000 within London).
- Be the only home you own
- Be where you intend to live

An initial payment into your ISA can be up to £1,200; following this you, can pay up to £200 into the ISA each month. When you buy the property, your solicitor or conveyancer will apply for the additional 25%.

3. **What can you afford?** Figure out **what you can afford**, concentrate on a budget and ensure the purchase is the right decision long-term.
4. **Credit Score;** Boost your **credit score**, the higher the credit score the better. Ensure you do not get penalised for small mistakes when applying for a mortgage. For example, having active accounts registered to an old/incorrect address can affect this score, so ensure this is checked.



How to find a solicitor:

In order to buy a house you will need to be represented by a solicitor. Here are a number of ways we recommend finding the best solicitor:

- Google reviews; reading reviews is important because it can give you an insight into the type of solicitors and experience you will be paying for. Then make enquiries with those who have the best reviews.
- Client recommendation/word of mouth; ask family and friends who have been through the same process. They can give you honest advice and recommend a solicitor.
- Checking social media; social media is a helpful tool for finding any business. Once you have found some names of solicitors, you can search their social media to see how active they are, as well as finding out their involvement within the community.

Charity Corner

Since the beginning of the financial year, we have been very busy raising money for the Ark Cancer Centre Charity. Off the back of three successful years of fundraising, we made the decision to continue our fundraising efforts for the very worthy Ark Cancer Centre.

The Ark Cancer Centre is raising funds to help build a much needed cancer treatment centre here in Basingstoke. Currently, patients in Hampshire can have chemotherapy treatment in Basingstoke and Winchester and, while radiotherapy is also available in Basingstoke, most patients have to travel to Southampton or Guildford for their treatment. This can mean a journey every day for up to six weeks when patients are unwell and vulnerable. The Ark has a goal of raising £5million to contribute to this much needed treatment centre and for that reason we have made it our mission to help them raise as much as they can. Having raised £55,000 since 2015, this year we want to add £15,000 to our total. With this goal in mind, the entire Clarke and Son team has been supporting our fundraising.

Declaration of Trust

Take advice on whether you will need a Declaration of Trust. A Declaration of Trust is a legal document that records how much money each person has contributed towards a property purchase and what should happen to this money in the future. It is particularly important for unmarried couples and we would recommend it for a number of reasons. It details:

- How much money each person has contributed towards the property purchase and other costs, such as maintenance and mortgage repayments.
- How and when each person will get their money back.
- What will happen to each person's financial contribution if the current relationship breaks down.

If a Declaration of Trust is not in place, there will not be a legal record of the contribution each person has made.



Charity Corner

Events

On Wednesday 11th July, on what could be described as the perfect weather for our annual golf day, 64 golfers took on Dummer Golf Course with the aim to win the top prize. We witnessed some great golf, using the 14th hole for our 'nearest the pin challenge', which was no problem for Adam Davies who hit a tee shot to three feet to win the prize. The longest drive was on the 1st hole and, despite playing into the wind, Adam Davies also claimed this prize. Our very own Chris Lockley won the straightest drive and the winning team with a score of 95pts was a Clarke and Son team made up of Tertius Alberts, Nick Hoadley, James Clifton and Nick Butt. The reigning champions, The Champion Group, put up an admirable defence of their title, finishing second on 94pts, whilst third place went to LFM.

Our golf day is seen as a big part of our fundraising and we are pleased to have raised over £4000 on the day. Thank you to everyone one that took part or donated prizes to help us achieve this amount. Our fourth golf day will be held on Wednesday 10th July 2019 at Dummer Golf Club.



On 11th August Marie Pym, Residential Conveyancer, took to the skies and completed a Wing Walk. This was a special event for her as she completed it in memory of her brother Adie, who sadly passed away from Cholangiocarcinoma- an incurable cancer of the bile duct. Having already completed a sky dive in 2015, Marie's fear of heights did not stop her from once again facing and conquering her fear - she even managed a few waves during the 15-minute flight. Marie went above and beyond her target of £1000 and raised £1500.



Charity Corner

Following hot on the heels of Marie's success, seven brave Clarke and Son colleagues took on a 100m abseil down the Spinnaker Tower. Whilst some felt nervous, the adrenaline junkies of the group were very excited. Each member of the team was cheered on by friends and family during their challenge and once finished, helped them celebrate their achievement. The team of seven added around £1600 to this year's running total.

Our feet stayed firmly on the ground for the next challenge...on Saturday 29th September, the 19-strong Clarke and Son team were back at it again, this time completing a 20km walk around London. The walk trailed the Thames, crossing 14 of London's iconic bridges. The team got to see the sights, enjoy the weather and finished with a well-deserved drink! This team achieved a total of £1500 in sponsorship, which means our fundraising total is nearing the £10,000 mark.

After saying "never again" last year, our Marketing Manager, Darren Lovegrove, has just completed his second Basingstoke half marathon. Shedding 9 minutes off his personal best, Darren completed the famously challenging course in 2 hours 7 minutes!



Monthly fundraising

We also provide much easier ways of fundraising for the Ark. Each week, staff can take part in a bonus ball lottery - numbers are bought and the winner will get 50% of the total raised, whilst the other 50% goes to the Ark. So far this year we have raised over £400 from the lottery.

As well as the weekly lottery, we take part in dress down Friday. On the last Friday of every month, staff can dress casually by donating £1 or more to the Ark. We have also had pick-and-mix sweet bags on offer in our reception for our clients and staff to enjoy, with the request of a small donation.

Lastly, we would like to say a big thank you to our supporters for coming to events to cheer us on and an even bigger thank you to everyone who has sponsored or donated to help us achieve the fundraising milestones - we couldn't have done it without you! With several months left to reach our target, we will be ramping up the fundraising to ensure we meet £15,000.

Spread the Warmth

Following the success of our Spread the Warmth campaign in 2017, we have decided to continue the campaign this winter. Last year we made the pledge to help tackle loneliness in our community by making biscuit boxes. The idea is to take these biscuits and share them with an elderly neighbour or relative and enjoy them with a hot drink. The winter can be a particularly lonely time of year and vulnerable people are being left to suffer chronic loneliness with little or no support from local authorities. Please take a box from our reception and join us in helping raise awareness. Last year we gave away over 200 boxes; this year we would like to beat this and make more of a difference. We would love to hear about your experience - take a selfie and share it via our social media accounts with the hashtag #SpreadtheWarmth. You can also email your pictures to our Marketing Manager, Darren Lovegrove, dlovegrove@clarkeandson.co.uk.



Welcome to the Team

We would like to welcome a number of new faces to our team at Clarke and Son. We have had new staff members join our Commercial Real Estate, Corporate Commercial and Litigation Departments. All of these departments have grown within the last year and we are looking forward to seeing them thrive even more with the new additions to the team.



Jack Armitage
Commercial Real Estate
Executive



Rupert Wright
Corporate Commercial
Solicitor



Toni Bearne
Litigation
Legal Secretary

Events Calendar

Events

We have a number of exciting events coming up in the next few months:

Friday 23rd November 10am - 1pm - Charity Coffee & Crafts Morning

Our staff will be putting their aprons on and making some delicious home-baked cakes for you to buy. We also have a selection of Christmas arts and crafts for sale. All proceeds will be donated to charity.

Thursday 29th November 6pm - 9pm - Clarke & Son Christmas Drinks

Our annual Christmas Drinks Party with a twist. We have amazing mixologists, great food and fantastic live music. To book your place email dlovegrove@clarkeandson.co.uk.

Sunday 9th December 1pm - 5pm- Ladies Team Sponsors Rugby Day at Basingstoke Rugby Club

We are proud sponsors of BRFC Ladies team. Bring the family down to meet us, have a drink and some food and then enjoy watching the ladies play at 3pm. This is a great team to be involved with and we would love to see you all there.

Saturday 26th January 12:15pm - 6pm - Basingstoke Rugby Club Sponsors Lunch

As sponsors we will be hosting, with our friends at Beaufort Financial, a Burns Lunch before going out to cheer on the BRFC First Team to victory.

If you would like some more information about any of our events or if you would like to come along please email: dlovegrove@clarkeandson.co.uk

DO YOU HAVE A WILL IN PLACE?



A Will is quite possibly one of the most important documents you will ever sign.

Call now to book a free Will healthcheck or to start the process of making your Will.

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Contact us

Christmas closure

During the Christmas period we will be closing our office doors to allow staff to spend the festive period with their families. We will be closed from:

**Friday 21st December, 5pm
until
Wednesday 2nd January, 9am**

Following this closure we will return to our regular working hours in the New Year. We hope you all have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year!



We want to hear from you:

If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and would like to receive it by email, please visit our website. We welcome any feedback regarding this newsletter and if you have an idea for the next edition, please let us know. If you would like to make an enquiry please contact using the information below:

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