

HUNTERS

INCORPORATING
MAY, MAY & MERRIMANS



Private Client Services

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Our Private Client team is the largest in the firm, reflecting our longstanding commitment to this area of work.

A testament to the high quality of advice and service, many families have been our clients for several generations. The number of individuals and families now instructing us for the first time, often through personal recommendation, reflects that continuing trust and confidence.

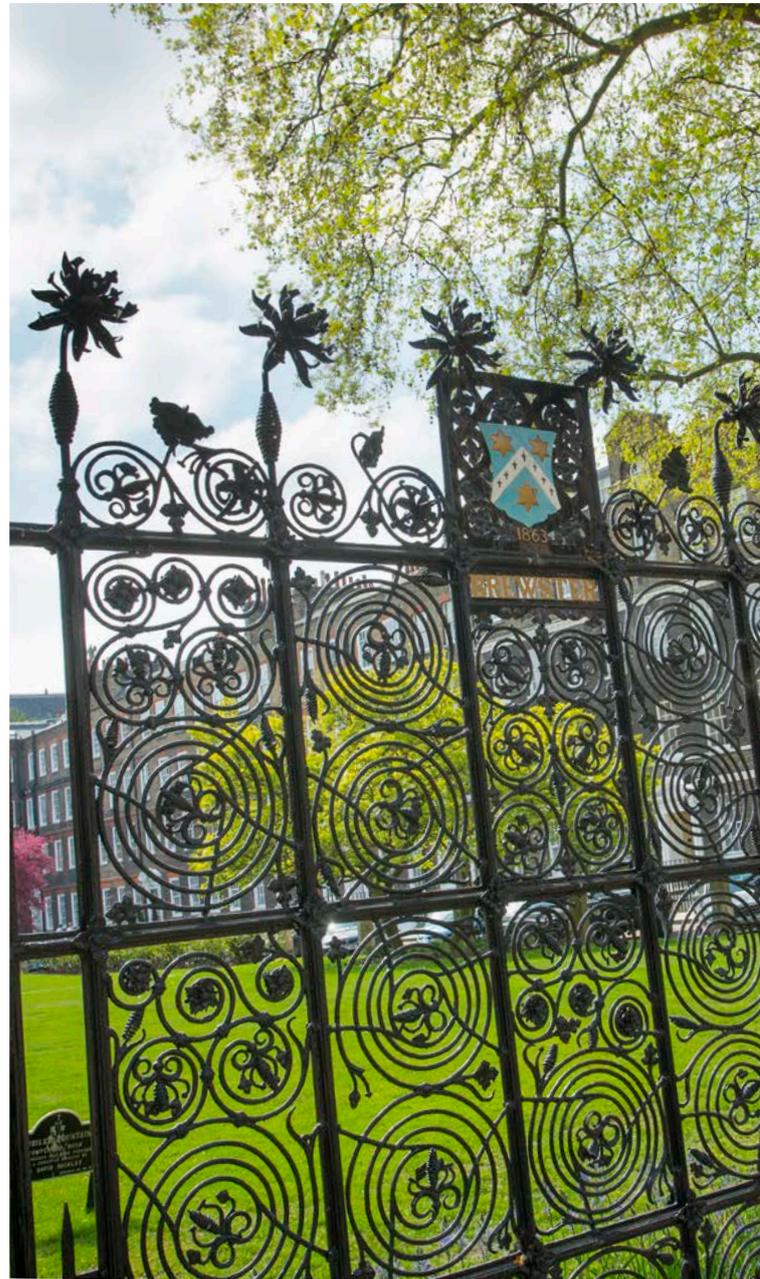
Although our reputation was made acting for UK domestic clients, we undertake a very significant amount of work with a 'cross-border' element - both for UK client with non-UK interests, and for non-domiciled/residents in the UK.

UK ESTATE, SUCCESSION AND TAX PLANNING

Much of our work involves the management of private wealth, and its controlled devolution in an effective, efficient way. In building long term relationships, we develop a detailed understanding of the individual circumstances of clients and their families, many of whom have relied on us for generations.

Planning is important: the earlier a situation is identified, the more opportunity there is to deal with it effectively and appropriately.

Tax efficiency is a core focus. Estate planning may involve simple measures like making lifetime gifts, but will often involve using tax effective wills - and trust, partnership or company structures designed to determine the destination of assets during your lifetime, and on death, to afford you some control and flexibility. We are widely regarded as specialists in this field, providing expert and reassuring advice for your personal and financial needs over the immediate to long term.



The team delivers a “personalised, high quality” service.

Legal 500

Its solicitors are “very personable and on top of their games”

Chambers



Wills

Wills are essential to the ordered devolution of your estate, to ensure your property passes to your chosen beneficiaries (which it may not do without a will), whilst minimising the amount of tax payable.

Wills not only allow you to choose who should benefit, and to what extent, but also to:-

- Choose who you want to manage the administration of your estate (your “executors”);
- Choose an age at which young beneficiaries inherit (many consider 18 to be too young);
- Appoint guardians of your children during their minority;
- Create on-going trusts to safeguard vulnerable beneficiaries;
- Minimise your estate’s inheritance tax liability;
- Reduce administration time and expense.

Clients with assets overseas may need local advice on Wills and succession planning. We frequently liaise with overseas lawyers to ensure appropriate testamentary documentation dealing with our clients’ worldwide estate is in place.

Powers of Attorney

If you lose the capacity to make decisions on your own behalf and have not granted a Power of Attorney, the only way that access can be obtained to your financial assets is for an application to be made to the Court of Protection for a Deputy to be appointed to take decisions in your place regarding your financial affairs. This is expensive and time-consuming.

To avoid this, you can grant a Lasting Power of Attorney. You can also grant a separate Power of Attorney in relation to your Health & Welfare - in which you can set out your wishes about how decisions on these matters are to be taken, in the event that you were to lose capacity.

We strongly recommend that clients put in place Lasting Powers of Attorney and that they review any existing Enduring Powers of Attorney to ensure that they still meet their needs.

Tax and Trust Administration

Trusts are important, flexible tools that enable the controlled devolution and management of wealth.

Our approach is to consider how useful they are in particular circumstances. If a trust ceases to be useful, we advise on its efficient termination. Our knowledge and experience of trust law is nationally recognised as being of the highest level.

Once trusts are operational, they must be soundly administered. We seek to ensure that this is done as effectively and efficiently as possible: we regard trust administration as an important service. Frequently, we also deal with our clients' personal tax affairs.

International Issues

Our clients' affairs often have an international dimension where we can help:-

UK resident and domiciled clients: If you own assets abroad, marry a foreign national or leave the UK temporarily or permanently, we can navigate foreign succession laws (including 'forced heirship' rules which oblige you to leave your estate to specific relatives), marital property regimes, and the interaction of UK and foreign tax systems.

Non-resident and/or non-domiciled clients: If you are moving to, or leaving, the UK, we can advise on your residence and domicile status for UK tax purposes, help you plan your move, including restructuring asset holdings, creating trusts and setting up segregated bank accounts to take full advantage of any favourable tax treatment you may be entitled to, such as the remittance basis.

Non-resident trusts: Making effective use of non-resident trusts requires ever greater knowledge and skill. Our Private Client team has considerable experience in providing co-ordinated advice on the structuring, re-structuring and administration of offshore trusts for UK and non-UK based clients, advising settlors, trustees and beneficiaries.

We can advise you as your status changes, and if you are likely to become subject to the remittance basis charge, or 'deemed domiciled'. When you wish to leave the UK, we can advise you on how to avoid remaining within the UK tax net.

Probate and Estate Administration

When someone dies it is often assumed that there is no need to involve lawyers in dealing with their estate. Whilst this can be the case, often it is not: the time involved in dealing with unfamiliar procedures should not be underestimated. We have extensive experience in managing the legal and practical aspects of administering estates of every size and complexity, and in doing so sympathetically at what will always be a difficult time for those directly affected.

We advise how best to maximise reliefs for inheritance tax, income tax, and capital gains tax during the period of administration. We are very used to cases with an overseas dimension, and to resolving the taxation and practical difficulties which tend to arise, often with the assistance of overseas lawyers, many of whom are well known to us.

Sadly, disputes frequently arise. We are always alert to this, advising on the best approach to achieve the desired outcome, whether by sensitive negotiation, formal mediation, or, where necessary, through the Courts.

