

## Thank You

Thank you for your response to the first issue of 'The Newsletter'

**Y**ou will understand, I am sure, that when planning a Client Newsletter, it is hard to judge how it will be received. The response, however, has been very positive, both from clients and other professionals, so encouraging that we are already planning Issue Three.

Unlike some Newsletters of this type, ours is not centrally produced by an outside agency and then



Dan Mahony

distributed with our name over-printed. We write it ourselves, specifically for you, our clients.

The main purpose of the Newsletter is to keep you informed about matters we hope will be of

interest to you. This may include an introduction to the services offered by Parker Arrenberg, that as yet you have not needed to use – or perhaps a new way of delivering that service.



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For example, you will find in this Issue details of the Client Registration Scheme that we announced in the last Newsletter. We also introduce some of the services for the smaller business and provide some 'thoughts on probate'.

On this very page you will find some suggestions related to 'Planning Ahead for a More Comfortable Life', a subject that we will re-visit in forthcoming Newsletters. There are also articles on Inheritance Tax, and the growing number of services provided that we are able to offer our clients.

We are most anxious that 'The Newsletter' does not become a form of 'junk mail', which irritates rather than pleases. It is important to us that this Newsletter is of value to you and for that reason we would welcome your comments and any suggestions you may have regarding content, balance and format, or even topics for future articles.

We want to be of service to you and hope to prove that 'real solicitor's – acting on your behalf, is more than just a slogan. ■

**Dan Mahony** Partner

## Planning Ahead for a Comfortable Later Life

Of course, we are all getting older but the demographic bulge created, at least in part, by the 'baby boom years' has already led to significant changes in both legislation and expectations from State and privately funded pensions.

**T**he many other changes in society mean that, perhaps for the first time, there is a need for all of us to give careful and considered thought to our future and what it holds.

The term 'middle age' is a very loose one, covering a broad band of ages, depending partly upon your interpretation of the phrase. We at Parker Arrenberg have a considerable

number of 'middle aged' clients and have therefore developed a package of services that have proved to be of real value to these clients.

Even if you have 'taken care of matters' it is always worth re-visiting your decisions and perhaps discussing them.

It is worth considering that in the United

Kingdom, people are living longer and the elderly proportion of the population is growing rapidly. The UK has a population of over 60 million, of which 15.7% are aged over 65. The Royal Commission on Long Term Care projects



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that by 2041 the UK population will increase to 66 million people and that 24.5% of us will be aged 65 and over.

It is clear that changes in the population, together with evolving patterns of marriage, family structure and employment trends, have serious implications for State provision of care for the elderly. In the future, there is likely

to be a situation where taxes paid by a relatively small part of the population are required to support the needs of a relatively large number of people in care. We believe that this alone makes consideration of your own future imperative and a discussion with experts advisable.

We are always happy to discuss matters with you and you may perhaps like to know more about an Advance Directive, Lasting Powers of Attorney, management of your financial affairs, family homes and asset preservation, making a Will, Inheritance taxation, the Court of Protection or Probate and Administering Estates.

Perhaps a friend or relative needs this information; maybe you are the carer of an elderly person or, of course, such a person yourself. Whatever your situation, it is never too early to speak to us. ■

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# Inheritance Tax, Care Costs and You



Whilst many of us have seen the value of our 'wealth' drop over recent years the fact is that for those of us who own or are buying our homes (or even second homes) or who have private pensions, life assurance policies and savings there is the worry that these may be eaten up by having to pay care costs in our later lives or inheritance tax on our death.

The facts are that

- Inheritance Tax thresholds have not risen in recent years and the Government has confirmed that they will not rise in the near future; and
- Whilst all political parties have indicated that they would like to put caps on care costs the economic reality is that this is not going to happen in the near future

This does mean that we cannot ignore the opportunities available through judicious planning.

Careful planning and Will writing (including the consideration of various Trust schemes) are an important part of Inheritance Tax and Care Cost planning that are designed specifically to ensure that your wishes are fully carried out and that the government takes no more from your Estate than they are entitled to. ■

# Services for the Business Client

We have been providing tried and trusted advice to local businesses for over 100 years. Whilst times change and the law has become ever more complicated, some things never do.

**T**he cornerstone to our success in business has always been that every client is important to us and deserves a personal, value for money, quality service.

Our staff have up to date knowledge of the law and the experience to advise on most business matters.

We are experienced in drafting all forms of commercial agreements, including franchise, agency and shareholders agreements. We can advise and

assist with terms of business. We are experienced and specialists in business acquisitions and disposals, partnership formation and dissolution, company

**Our staff have up to date knowledge of the law and the experience to advise on most business matters**

formation and re-structuring and licensing matters. In addition, the firm undertakes all aspects of

commercial property transactions for a wide variety of clients.

Our litigation department is able to handle all forms of business disputes by applying the appropriate approach, be it negotiation, alternative dispute resolution, arbitration, mediation or at the last resort the courts.

We also have a department that specialises in employment law for employers. ■

## Severance Packages, Compromise Agreements and the Employee

It is an unfortunate fact of life that many people face the loss of their employment because of changes in their workplace, whether this is because of a reorganisation, reductions in staff numbers to achieve savings, takeovers or the closure of a business. Very often when this occurs an employer will offer their employees a severance package that has to be set out in a legally binding document called a Compromise Agreement.

By their nature and the circumstances in which they arise Compromise Agreements are usually presented to employees near the end of the process when an employee is told, often for the first time, that they have to find a solicitor to advise them on the agreement and 'sign it off'. Sometimes employees will be directed to a solicitor identified by their employer but usually employees are left to find their own solicitor and most feel more comfortable in going to one of their choice anyway, particularly since the cost of this is met by the employer. In response to the need for advice and assistance in relation to compromise

agreements, and the need for this advice to be provided at short notice we have introduced a priority service for employees who are told that they need to see a solicitor to sign off their severance packages and compromise agreements. This priority service includes:

- An initial no cost, no obligation, obligation telephone discussion with a lawyer experienced in dealing with these matters; and
- A priority service including an early meeting to review the draft agreement provided by the employer within the time limits imposed upon the employee; and
- A costs guarantee. We establish at the outset whether the employer is paying the legal costs for employees who sign a compromise agreement and confirm that our charges will be limited to that amount.

If you or someone you know is faced with losing their employment and is presented with a legal severance or compromise agreement please contact us for assistance - we will ensure that your interests are properly protected in the agreement you have to sign and we will do our best to make this part of the process as painless as possible. ■

## DIVORCE ?



### The Parker Arrenberg Divorce Helpline

10.00am - 5.00pm  
Monday to Friday

It's FREE, confidential and anonymous

No need to give your name

No charge to you. No obligation

Just friendly information you can trust

**TO BE LAUNCHED IN THE  
NEW YEAR**

PARKER ARRENBURG SOLICITORS  
37 RUSHEY GREEN, CATFORD, LONDON SE6 4AS  
TEL: 0208 695 2330  
www.parkerarrenberg.co.uk



## QUOTABLE QUOTES >



Thank you for your support, you have been brilliant! PM - Battersea.

You made the purchase of our first home such a smooth process. We appreciate your help. ML - Croydon.

# Becoming a Registered Client - The Parker Arrenberg Client Registration Scheme

We are very proud to introduce a scheme which we believe to be unique to Parker Arrenberg.

**W**e launch our Client Registration Scheme in the knowledge that this totally free of charge service will provide a range of genuine benefits to our registered clients.

Enclosed with this Newsletter, you will find a questionnaire. Please note, that there is no compulsion to answer all, or even any of the questions. You can become a registered client simply by providing your name and address and telling us that you wish to be registered.

That said, the more we know about our clients, the more we are able to provide them with best advice and we can consider more deeply the areas that are appropriate and important to that client. However, it is up to you.

The benefits to you of the Parker Arrenberg Client Registration Scheme are numerous.

## Quick Access to Your Lawyer

Simply quoting your name and registration number will enable us to immediately access your details and those of any matter in hand.

## Proactive Advice

Because of the information you have provided us within your Client Registration Questionnaire, we will be able to be proactive on your behalf in the advice we give and the services we offer. We try very hard to consider our clients as people, with a range of needs, rather than a matter in hand to be dealt with quickly.

## In Depth Advice

With more detailed knowledge about you, we will be much better placed to advise you fully and promptly when dealing with any matter on your behalf, or considering matters that might arise in the future.

## Safe Documentation

As a registered client of Parker Arrenberg you will benefit from knowing that all of your 'life's documentation' will be listed and held safely in our strong room. This may include Wills, Trusts, Deeds, Life Policies, Share Certificates, Living Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney etc.

## Assessment of Affairs

Of particular importance is a registered client's entitlement to a free of charge preliminary discussion on any legal matter within a wide range of services provided by Parker Arrenberg. This meeting allows you to discuss matters with one of our lawyers, in the knowledge that you will not be running up a bill, until we have established that legal assistance is needed and that we can supply it to you. At that stage, we will provide an estimate of fees, either on a fixed fee basis or an hourly rate.

A further innovation for registered clients is our free of charge 'Affairs Assessment'.

We believe this to be a great opportunity for our clients to be wide ranging in the topics they may wish to discuss, and on which we can advise.

Briefly, the affairs assessment, entitles registered clients to a free meeting, usually with a partner, lasting up to an hour, by appointment at our offices. The assessment will cover all aspects of the legal services we provide, but is intended to provide the client with a chance to talk freely with an experienced and independent professional.

We feel that this opportunity is so important that we have produced a dedicated leaflet on the subject of the 'Affairs Assessment' which will be included in your Welcome Pack when you become a registered client.



no charge will be made for the retrieval of files from the storage and we will include a free discussion of matters concerned with the file that has been retrieved, should you wish. We also make no charge for the storage of Property Deeds.

## Security and Assistance

An additional benefit of the Registration Scheme is security. Important contacts such as next of kin, doctor, bank manager, accountant, employer etc. can also be registered so that in the event of the unforeseen happening we will be able to assist those trying to help you.

## Free of Charge Seminars

From time to time we hold seminars, the contents of which are of particular interest to certain of our clients. You will be told in advance of these seminars, which will be free of charge to registered clients.

The next is likely to be on the subject of Planning Ahead for a happy later life.

## Regular Newsletters

The Parker Arrenberg Newsletter is designed to provide information about current legal situations and changes in the law. It also covers aspects of both the work we undertake, and the people who are here to serve you. Registered clients automatically receive each copy free of charge.

## After Care Service

Increasingly, it has become the practice of firms to charge for the storage and retrieval of client's files and legal documents, such as Wills and Property Deeds. As a registered client of Parker Arrenberg,

## A Little Prompt

Because of the registered information we will keep about you, we are able to 'prompt you' during any meeting with you, should we believe action might be required. For example, making or updating a Will, establishing a Lasting Power of Attorney, considerations relating to Inheritance Tax Planning, issues affecting you as an employer or employee and of course any potentially litigious matters.

## Registration Card

Last, but certainly not least, each registered client is provided with a registration card, similar to a credit card. This, we would suggest, you keep in your purse or wallet at all times. It carries the message 'In the event of an accident or emergency, please contact my solicitor, quoting my client registration number', along with our telephone number. Whatever the circumstances, we are here to help you. ■

## QUOTABLE QUOTES >



Your dedication to my case was appreciated - I couldn't have coped without you! Anon.

Thanks for agreeing to help out at such short notice and helping me sort everything out. SL - Bromley.



## This is what we can do for you

Some clients are surprised at the range of services we have available, and yet even the following list is not exhaustive:

- Agency work
- Building disputes
- Business premises
- Business sale and purchase
- Childcare disputes
- Contract
- Contested probate
- Debt recovery
- Directors' responsibilities
- Discrimination
- Divorce/domestic disputes
- Domestic violence
- Employment law
- Family matters
- Freehold purchases
- Landlord and tenant disputes
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Leases and tenancy agreements
- Lease extensions
- Matrimonial
- Partnerships
- Personal injury compensation
- Probate and estate administration
- Property transactions
- Professional negligence
- Residential property sale, purchase and re-mortgage
- Trusts
- Wills.

If the service you need is not listed above, simply telephone us on 020 8695 2330 and tell us what it is you need. We will try to help wherever possible. ■

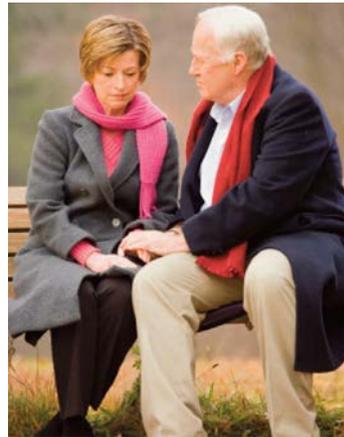
# Thoughts About Probate

Coping with the death of a loved one or a close friend imposes great strains on you and your family.

**A**t the same time, there will be legal and financial issues to be dealt with, many of which will be unfamiliar to you and/or your family.

When you are considering making a Will with Parker Arrenberg or if you may, in the near future, have to face up to the loss of a relative or friend, we would be happy to discuss with you the procedures relating to probate and the role of executors, if this would be of help to you.

At the same time we can also give you an indication of the likely costs involved in administering an estate and indeed the responsibilities of executors. Increasingly, people are encouraged, often by positively aggressive sales methods, to entrust the matter of Will making and probate to



non-solicitor providers. It would seem that sometimes the reason for not going to a solicitor is the fear of costs. This fear, more often than not, is unfounded and sometimes exaggerated by non-solicitor providers to encourage you to sign up to their services. (We were recently told by one of our

clients that they had been told by a non-solicitor probate provider that the cost of using a solicitor would be 5 or 6 times higher than our charges actually were in order to make their charges, (which were twice as high) seem attractive!

Research has shown that a solicitor practice will undertake this work on your behalf, far less expensively (once all the total charges and hidden costs are added up), than non-solicitor providers such as Will writing bureaus, banks or funeral directors.

At Parker Arrenberg we will always discuss costs, charges, disbursements and fees honestly and openly with you, up front, and let you make your own mind up. It is part of our lifelong commitment to our clients. ■

## A range of informative leaflets from Parker Arrenberg



**T**he legal world is very complex. We hope our leaflets will help you to understand it a little better.

We have recently produced a range of informative leaflets highlighting the services we offer and how they can be of help to you.

Plain English, not jargon, is the key to understanding matters such as Will making, Family affairs, home buying, divorce, personal injury compensation, employment law, services specific to the older client or the independent business person, the litigation process or even our notarial services.

If you would like a copy of any, or all of these leaflets, simply ring us on 020 8695 2330.

These leaflets and much else can also be downloaded from our website [www.parkerarrenberg.co.uk](http://www.parkerarrenberg.co.uk) Or, of course, you can simply chat to us. ■

### INSIDE THE NEXT ISSUE >

- Client Registration Scheme review
- Funding long term care
- An Advance Directive
- Caring for the Elderly
- Property Sales
- More informative leaflets from Parker Arrenberg