

## **Private Client/Litigation** **Prices 2024**



### **Private Client (Wills and Probate etc)**

**Your instructions can be taken either in the office, in person or on the phone, or at your home at your convenience. Home visits are chargeable based on distance as follows;**

Home visit (Hunstanton) £50+VAT @20%  
Home visit (w/in 15miles of office) £75+VAT @20%  
Home visit (15-30 miles of office) £100+VAT @20%  
Home visit (+30 miles of office) call for quote

**Wills can be made either solely (single will) or with your partner (mirror wills). Wills are charged based on their complexity; i.e., the number of different elements they contain, as follows:**

Simple Single Will including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the will, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) and storage after execution - £250+VAT @20%

Mid complexity single will e.g., a will containing a life interest or trust element including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the will, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) and storage after execution - £400+VAT @20%

Complex single will e.g., a will containing a life interest and trust element including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the will, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) and storage after execution - £500+VAT @20%

Simple mirror wills Will including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the wills, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed versions) and storage after execution - £450+VAT @20%

Mid complexity mirror wills e.g., wills containing a life interest or trust element including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the wills, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed versions) and storage after execution - £750+VAT @20%

Complex mirror wills e.g., wills containing a life interest and trust element including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the will, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) and storage after execution - £950+VAT @20%

**In addition to wills, we offer the following supplementary documents;**

Letter of wishes including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the letter of wishes and storage after execution - £150+VAT @20%

Single codicil including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the codicil, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) and storage after execution - £150+VAT @20%

Dual codicil including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the codicils, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) and storage after execution - £300+VAT @20%

**Usual Disbursements in Will cases can include**

Description	Amount	VAT chargeable
Land registry title deeds to establish property ownership terms	£3	No

**We also prepare Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) as follows;**

LPA health & welfare including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the LPA, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) for the Donor, circulation to Certificate Provider and Attorneys and reserve attorneys, Notification of required people and storage after execution - £350+VAT @20%

LPA property & finance including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the LPA, provision of witnesses for execution (signing of engrossed version) for the Donor, circulation to Certificate Provider and Attorneys and reserve attorneys, Notification of required people and storage after execution - £350+VAT @20%

If dual LPAs taken £600+VAT @20% for the pair

**Usual Disbursements in LPA cases can include**

Description	Amount	VAT chargeable
OPG Registration fee per LPA	£82	No
OPG Registration fee per LPA if Donor annual income under £12,000 per annum	£41	No
Recorded delivery costs	£TBC	No

## **Probate**

**We usually deal with Estate administration following an initial estimate at £250p/h plus VAT at the usual rate with the following minimum costs;**

If IHT205 required - £1,000+VAT @20%

If IHT400 required - £2000+VAT @20% (£100+VAT @20% per schedule)

If the case is one of intestacy - £500+VAT @20%

E.g. Simple Estate

A guide fee for administration of a simple estate would be £3,000+ VAT @20% based on 12 hours of work at £250p/h (£3,600) under these example circumstances:

- valid uncontested will with 1 or 2 executors and 1 or 2 beneficiaries
- no property and 3 or fewer sole name bank accounts with all assets in the UK
- no IHT

E.g. Complex Estate

A guide fee for administration of a complex estate could be up to or over £10,000+VAT @20% based on 40 hours of work at £250p/h (£12,000) under these example circumstances:

- valid uncontested will with 1 or 2 executors and 4-10 beneficiaries
- up to 2-3 properties and 5-8 bank accounts and/or shareholdings with all assets in the UK
- IHT to pay with relevant forms to submit to HMRC

The process of administering an estate will require us to undertake the following work:-

- 1) Obtaining Probate Valuations of all the Assets together with taking all reasonable steps to ascertain the amounts of any liabilities at date of death, including a Valuation of the chattels and property, should there be one.
- 2) Dealing with any Pensions (whether that be State Pension or Occupational) and Benefits which can also include answering queries from the Department for Work & Pensions should Pension Credit have been received.
- 3) Preparing papers to apply for the Grant for Administration – either a Grant of Probate (if there is a Will) or a Grant of Letters of Administration (if there is no Will).
- 4) Obtaining signatures of the Personal Representatives in the Estate, on the Probate application forms (PA1P and IHT).
- 5) If Inheritance Tax is payable, then any Inheritance Tax that is attributable to the personalty (not realty) will have to be paid initially to obtain a receipt from the Capital Taxes Office. We will then be able to apply to the Probate Court for the Grant of Administration, at which point Court fees will become payable.

NB IHT is chargeable by HMRC and not SJP Solicitors and payable to HMRC outside of SJP fees. We will arrange payment of the IHT inside our fee structure

- 6) The Grant is normally issued within 12-16 weeks from the application to the Court.
- 7) Registration of the Grant and obtain repayment in relation to all assets, including the sale of any property involved within the Estate.

The sale of the property will be dealt with by our conveyancing department, who will be in touch in due course with a specific quote however in general terms the rough fees will be based on property value

Plus disbursements. If in due course you instruct other conveyancing solicitors the above cost will still be payable.

- 8) Discharging all outstanding liabilities, of which we become aware, together with any administrative liabilities, including any outstanding Income Tax due up to the date of death.
- 9) Complete matters with the Inland Revenue and pay any Income Tax on administrative income if received Gross.
- 10) Once the Estate is in funds, pay all Pecuniary Legacies and make interim distributions to the Residuary Beneficiaries.
- 11) Obtaining Inheritance Tax Clearance Certificate if appropriate.
- 12) Transferring assets such as property to Beneficiaries should that be applicable, and then registering with the Land Registry and paying any Land Registry Charges as required. This is done by Assent of Transfer then there will be additional fees payable for this.
- 13) Preparing the final Estate Accounts and sending to the Personal Representatives for approval.
- 14) Making the final distribution payments and clearing my professional charges from Estate Funds.

### **Potential additional costs**

- If there is no will or the estate consists of any share holdings (stocks and bonds) there is likely to be additional costs that could range significantly depending on the estate and how it is to be dealt with. We can give you a more accurate quote once we have more information.
- If a claim is made against the estate or a caveat entered this will fall outside of the usual scope of work and we will advise separately should the need arise.

### **How Long Will it Take?**

It can take up to a year for Probate matters to conclude but please appreciate that we are very much dependent on receiving information and replies from third parties, along with the length

of time the Probate Registry may take issuing the Probate and, of course, how long any property within the Estate takes to sell.

**In addition to estate administration, we offer the following supplementary documents;**

Deed of Family Arrangement including initial appointment to take instructions, drafting and preparation of the Deed of Family Arrangement, circulation to all parties, and storage after execution - £500+VAT

**Usual Disbursements in a Probate/Estate administration case include**

Description	Amount	VAT chargeable
Court Fee	£273.00	No
Court Sealed Office Copy	£1.50 per item	No

***Hourly rates***

It may be necessary to agree an hourly rate with you, if it is not possible to give you an accurate estimate of the likely costs involved with your sale.

Hourly rates are based on the qualification and experience of your legal representative.

These rates are currently:

Member: £250 +VAT @20% per hour – Mrs Meyer is a solicitor and Member who supervises all private client matters. She has been qualified since 2016 and a Member in the firm since 2019.

cILEX: £225+VAT @20% per hour – Mrs Curl is a Chartered Legal Executive and has been qualified since 2022

All professional costs, whether fixed fee or hourly rate, are subject to VAT at the usual rate @20%

## **Family Law – Prices 2024**



**Your instructions can be taken either in the office, in person or on the phone, or at your home at your convenience. Home visits are chargeable based on distance as follows;**

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Home visit (w/in 15miles of office) £75+VAT @20%  
Home visit (15-30 miles of office) £100+VAT @20%  
Home visit (+30 miles of office) call for quote

Often if just an initial chat is required, we can provide an initial consultation for £250+VAT @20% Sometimes a one-off letter to the other side in the case of minor disputes is sufficient to settle the matter. We provide such letters at a cost of £375+VAT @20% following initial consultation.

### **Divorce**

There is an initial Court fee of £550 for the application which we ask for upon instruction. To complete this with you and file at Court our initial costs are £750+VAT @20%, including dealing with decree nisi and decree absolute for you. From initial application it depends on whether the Divorce is contested or not as to what further work will be required, and we will be able to estimate this for you on a case by case basis dependant upon response.

### **Finances**

You can divorce without on paper without agreeing finances. However, if there are assets to be divided it is prudent to do so. However, the costs associated with this vary greatly depending upon the assets to be divided, and how amicable relations are between parties. As such we usually offer an initial estimate based on hourly rates. We may ask, for example, for £750+VAT @20% on account initially, and will let you know when we are reaching the limit of the payment

### **Child Arrangements**

Child Arrangements Orders can cover everything from “custody” (i.e. residency, where the child will live) to access (for the non-resident parent to see the child) Each case is unique, however all carry a £215 Court fee upon application which we ask for upon instruction. The costs involved in Child Arrangements cases vary greatly. As such we usually offer an initial estimate based on hourly rates. We may ask, for example, for £750 +VAT @20% on account initially, and will let you know when we are reaching the limit of the payment

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Hourly rates are based on the qualification and experience of your legal representative.

These rates are currently:

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All professional costs, whether fixed fee or hourly rate, are subject to VAT at the usual rate @20%

## **Civil Litigation - Prices 2024**



Civil Litigation can cover everything from boundary disputes to estate claims and debts. We also act for both employers and employees in unfair and constructive dismissal cases, contracts, as well as dealing with redundancies and settlement agreements relating to all areas of employment law

**Your instructions can be taken either in the office, in person or on the phone, or at your home at your convenience. Home visits are chargeable based on distance as follows;**

Home visit (Hunstanton) £50+VAT @20%  
Home visit (w/in 15miles of office) £75+VAT @20%  
Home visit (15-30 miles of office) £100+VAT @20%  
Home visit (+30 miles of office) call for quote

Often if just an initial chat is required, we can provide an initial consultation for £250+VAT @20% Sometimes a one-off letter to the other side in the case of minor disputes is sufficient to settle the matter. We provide such letters at a cost of £375+VAT @20% following initial consultation.

### **Civil Litigation Example - Landlord and Tenant - Possession**

For a landlord seeking to recover possession of a property from a tenant, the first step is to serve Notice. There are 2 main options, a “section 21” or “section 8” notice. These can be served by your solicitor, or by your letting agent, or you can serve yourself. Once the Notice period has expired, you can apply for possession, which carries a £355 Court fee upon application which we ask for upon instruction. For a standard straightforward possession case we estimate our costs to be £1500+VAT @20% however we are mindful of complications which can arise, and resultant additional costs and would advise you straight away if there was an occurrence which may affect your costs.

### **Civil Litigation Example - Employment**

#### **When Representing an Employee**

Our pricing for bringing and defending claims for unfair or wrongful dismissal

There is usually a £250+VAT @20% initial meeting, which is a stand-alone cost, unless the matter proceeds to instructions. Usually there is an initial pre-action letter which is charged at £375+VAT @20% but the initial meeting cost is deducted therefrom.



If the employer responds positively to the initial letter, then settlement agreement can be provided by them and advised upon by us. The employer usually meets any costs in relation to this. If the employer does not engage with the initial letter, then ACAS are contacted and the Early Conciliation process is entered. If no agreement is reached by the end of the period, then we can issue proceedings with the employment tribunal. The charges are £750+VAT @20% to file initial proceedings at court.

We charge based on an hourly rate of £250+VAT @20% so there is no way to fix costs but some example/guides can be found below

Simple case: where the matter is settled at/shortly after 1<sup>st</sup> letter £1,000+VAT @20% based on 4 hours work at £250p/h (£1,200)

Medium complexity case: where proceedings are issued but then settled before conclusion/final hearing £5,000+VAT @20% based on 20 hours work at £250p/h (£6,000.00)

High complexity case: where a large value is claimed and the matter proceeds all the way through the tribunal process with additional complex elements £10,000+VAT @20% based on 40 hours work at £250p/h (£12,000.00)

Factors that could make a case more complex:

- If it is necessary to make or defend applications to amend claims or to provide further information about an existing claim
- Defending claims that are brought by litigants in person
- Making or defending a costs application
- Complex preliminary issues such as whether the claimant is disabled (if this is not agreed by the parties)
- The number of witnesses and documents
- If it is an automatic unfair dismissal claim e.g. if you are dismissed after blowing the whistle on your employer
- Allegations of discrimination which are linked to the dismissal

There will be an additional charge for attending a Tribunal Hearing per day (excluding VAT, charged at 20%). Generally, we would allow several days depending on the complexity of your case.

### **Disbursements**

Disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to third parties, such as court fees. (Court fees do not carry VAT). We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process. Counsel's fees can be anywhere from £1500+VAT @20% for an opinion to £1,000 or more +VAT @20% per (depending on experience of the advocate) for attending a Tribunal Hearing (including preparation)

### **Key stages**

The fees set out above cover all of the work in relation to the following key stages of a claim:

- Taking your initial instructions, reviewing the papers and advising you on merits and likely compensation (this is likely to be revisited throughout the matter and subject to change)
- Entering into pre-claim conciliation where this is mandatory to explore whether a settlement can be reached;
- Preparing claim or response
- Reviewing and advising on claim or response from other party
- Exploring settlement and negotiating settlement throughout the process

- preparing or considering a schedule of loss
- Preparing for (and attending) a Preliminary Hearing
- Exchanging documents with the other party and agreeing a bundle of documents
- Taking witness statements, drafting statements and agreeing their content with witnesses
- preparing bundle of documents
- Reviewing and advising on the other party's witness statements
- agreeing a list of issues, a chronology and/or cast list
- Preparation and attendance at Final Hearing, including instructions to Counsel

The stages set out above are an indication and if some of stages above are not required, the fee will be reduced. You may wish to handle the claim yourself and only have our advice in relation to some of the stages. This can also be arranged on your individual needs.

### **How long will my matter take?**

The time that it takes from taking your initial instructions to the final resolution of your matter depends largely on the stage at which your case is resolved. If a settlement is reached during pre-claim conciliation, your case is likely to take up to 12 weeks. If your claim proceeds to a Final Hearing, your case is likely to take up to 6-12 months. This is just an estimate and we will of course be able to give you a more accurate timescale once we have more information and as the matter progresses.

We act in accordance with acas time limits which can be found here

<https://www.acas.org.uk/employment-tribunal-time-limits>

### ***Hourly rates***

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These rates are currently:

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All professional costs, whether fixed fee or hourly rate, are subject to VAT at the usual rate @20%

## **Civil Litigation Example – Debt Recovery**

### **Business to business debt that is undisputed**

#### **Court Claims**

These costs apply where your claim is in relation to an unpaid invoice which is not disputed and enforcement action is not needed. If the other party disputes your claim at any point, we will discuss any further work required and provide you with revised advice about costs if

necessary, which could be on a fixed fee (e.g. if a one off letter is required), or an hourly rate if more extensive work is needed.

There is usually a £250+VAT @20% initial meeting, which is a stand-alone cost, unless the matter proceeds to instructions. Usually there is an initial pre-action letter which is charged at £375+VAT @20% but the initial meeting cost is deducted therefrom.

If the debtor responds positively to the initial letter, then payment can be made, and the matter concluded. If payment is not forthcoming, then. The charges are £500+VAT @20% to file initial proceedings at court.

We charge based on an hourly rate of £250+VAT @20% so there is no way to fix costs but some example/guides can be found below

Simple case: where the matter is settled at/shortly after 1<sup>st</sup> letter £500+VAT @20% based on 2 hours work at £250p/h (£600)

Medium complexity case: where proceedings are issued but then settled before conclusion/final hearing £3,000+VAT @20% based on 12 hours work at £250p/h (£3,600.00)

High complexity case: where a large value is claimed and the matter proceeds all the way through the Court process with additional complex elements £6,000+VAT @20% based on 24 hours work at £250p/h (£7,200.00)

The Court Fee is a disbursement that must be paid based on the value of the claim as below

<b>Claim amount</b>	<b>Fees</b>
<b>Up to £300</b>	£35
<b>£300.01 to £500</b>	£50
<b>£500.01 to £1,000</b>	£70
<b>£1,000.01 to £1,500</b>	£80
<b>£1,500.01 to £3,000</b>	£115
<b>£3,000.01 to £5,000</b>	£205
<b>£5,000.01 to £10,000</b>	£455
<b>£10,000.01 to £200,000</b>	5% of the claim
<b>More than £200,000</b>	£10,000

<https://www.gov.uk/make-court-claim-for-money/court-fees>

Anyone wishing to proceed with a claim should note that:

- The VAT element of our fee cannot be reclaimed from your debtor.
- Interest and compensation may take the debt into a higher banding, with a higher cost.
- The costs quoted above are not for matters where enforcement action, such as the bailiff, is needed to collect your debt.

Our fee includes:

- Taking your instructions and reviewing documentation
- Undertaking appropriate searches
- Sending a letter before action
- Receiving payment and sending onto you, or if the debt is not paid, drafting and issuing claim
- Where no Acknowledgment of Service or Defence is received, applying to the court to enter Judgement in default
- When Judgement in default is received, write to the other side to request payment
- If payment is not received within the appropriate number of days, providing you with advice on next steps and likely costs

Matters usually take 6 weeks to 12 months or more from receipt of instructions from you to receipt of payment from the other side, depending on whether or not it is necessary to issue a claim. This is on the basis that the other side pays promptly on receipt of Judgement in default. If enforcement action is needed, the matter will take longer to resolve.

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