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**Switalskis**  
LLP  
Solicitors

## Professional legal services





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**Whether you are planning for the future, or need urgent legal advice, having confidence in your solicitor is really important. At Switalskis, our years of experience have taught us that clients value our expert advice and efficient service.**

We also understand that, whilst good legal advice is sometimes necessary, value for money is also an essential consideration. As a firm, we are committed to making the clear, practical and straightforward advice of our specialist legal professionals affordable for everyone, so we have introduced a range of low-cost and interest free payment options to help you spread the cost of your case.

In this booklet, you will find information on the range of professional legal services we offer at Switalskis Solicitors. If you would like to find out more, or arrange for a free initial consultation with one of our experts, the friendly staff at your local branch will be happy to help.

Lorrette J. Law  
Senior Partner



## Family law

**Our Family Law Solicitors are experts in their field with many years of experience. Our team includes members of Resolution and the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Family and Children panels. They can offer you the specialist advice and support you need when facing the emotional strain of family disputes.**

### Divorce and separation

Expert legal advice can be invaluable in these situations. Our professionals can advise you on all aspects of divorce and separation proceedings, including disputes relating to children or finances. Our non-confrontational approach will help you to deal with your relationship breakdown in a positive and constructive way.

### Adoption

Adoption is legally very complicated and it is vital to have absolute confidence in your legal representation. Our experienced team can advise and support you throughout the adoption process.

Legal Aid may be available to fund some of the services offered by our Family Law team.



### Prenuptial and cohabitation agreements

Prenuptial agreements are increasingly common. If you are getting married, a prenuptial agreement could prevent expensive litigation in the future.

Good legal advice is also essential for couples planning on moving in together. Contrary to popular belief, cohabiting couples do not acquire any 'common law' status and have no legal claim on each other. Our solicitors can help you to draw up a cohabitation agreement to protect your finances should your relationship eventually end.

### Civil partnership

Since December 2005, same sex couples have been able to enter into civil partnerships. These have a similar legal status to marriage and their dissolution is not unlike a divorce.

Our family law solicitors can advise civil partners in the event of relationship breakdown; if you are entering a civil partnership, we can also help you to draw up agreements that will clarify your financial situation should the partnership break down in the future.



## Collaborative law

**Collaborative law is a relatively new legal practice which helps separating couples resolve issues in a cooperative, dignified and non-confrontational way.**

Going through the courts could prove very distressing for you, your partner and your children. In addition, court proceedings carry the risk of having a settlement imposed upon you that fails to satisfy either party completely.

By contrast, by each appointing a collaborative lawyer you and your partner can remain in control of the process: our trained collaborative lawyers are there to offer the necessary support, advice and guidance.

For separating couples who can remain open, frank and constructive, collaborative law can help provide solutions that are tailored to fit the specific needs of your family. Once you reach an agreement it can be drafted into an order that can then be approved by the court - the only point within the entire process at which the court is involved.



## Family mediation services

**Our Family Mediation service offers an alternative to the courts to resolve family disputes, and is usually far less costly and adversarial.**

A family mediator is an impartial third party who encourages both sides to engage in constructive discussions and helps them work together to find a satisfactory resolution.

Mediation works well in many different situations. You may be trying to cope with the disputes that often arise from impending divorce or separation. Alternatively, you may have been separated for some time, but now face life changes that make existing arrangements unworkable.

Whether your disagreement concerns your property, finances or children, our mediators can help you explore ways to resolve your differences peacefully.

Clearly, choosing the right mediator is very important: our highly experienced team includes members of the UK College of Family Mediators and the Family Mediators Association, professional organisations dedicated to ensuring their members provide the best possible mediation service.

Legal Aid may be available to fund some of the services offered by our Family Mediation service.





## Criminal law

**It can be extremely daunting and stressful to be investigated or prosecuted for any type of criminal offence. If you are arrested or about to be prosecuted, it is essential to have the advice and support of a specialist criminal solicitor.**

Our criminal law team specialises in all aspects of the criminal justice system. They can offer expert advice on a wide range of criminal matters including fraud and other financial or regulatory misdemeanours and all other types of criminal offence.

Our team is expert in dealing with road traffic law matters and could make the difference between you keeping your licence and losing it!

Many of our experienced solicitors have Higher Rights of Audience. This gives them the ability to appear before any Court. As a result, we can offer a complete Criminal Law service from initial advice at the police station, to preparing your defence, right through to representing you in Court.

Legal Aid may be available to fund some of the services offered by our Criminal Law team.

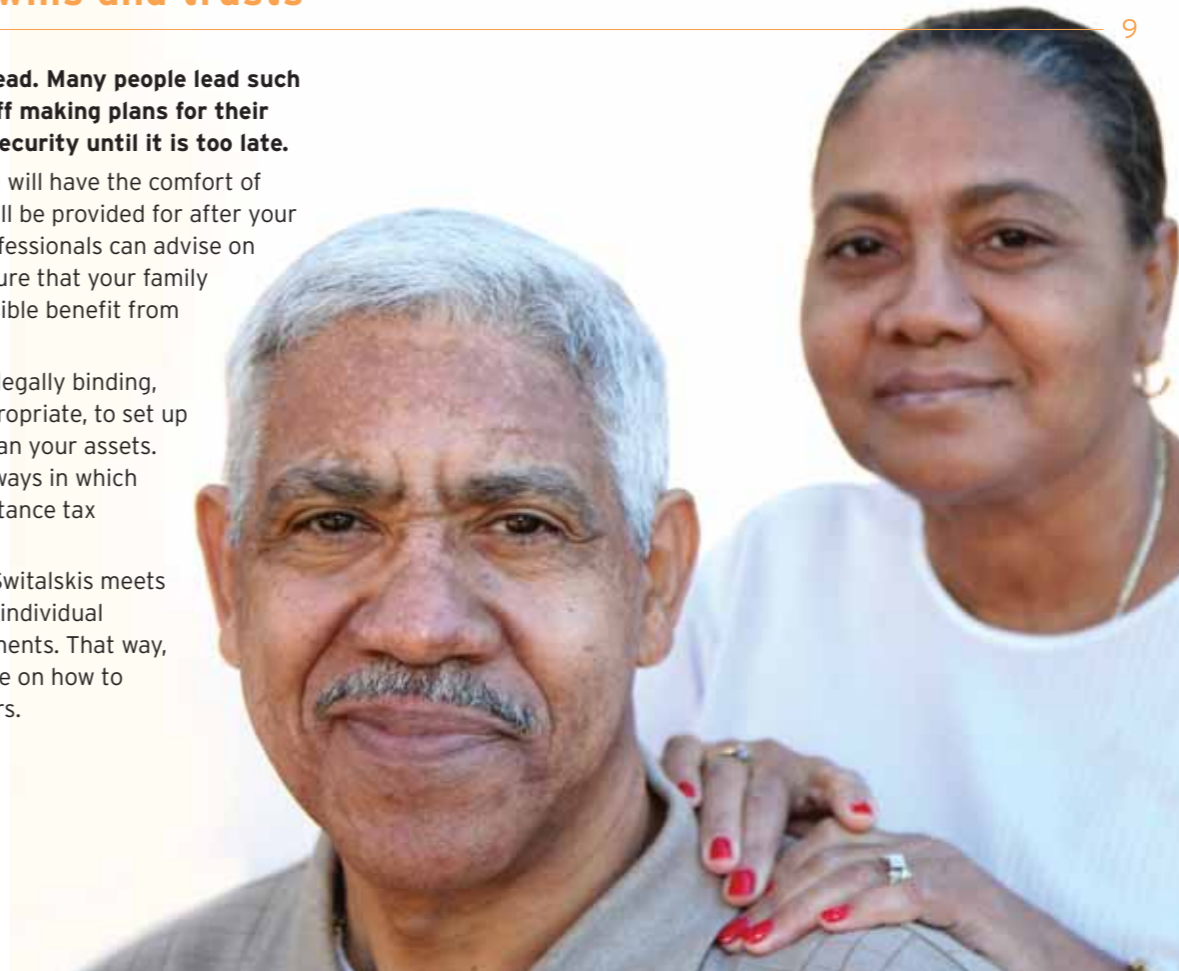
## Inheritance tax, wills and trusts

**It makes sense to plan ahead. Many people lead such busy lives that they put off making plans for their families' future financial security until it is too late.**

However, by acting now you will have the comfort of knowing that your family will be provided for after your death. Our experienced professionals can advise on a range of measures to ensure that your family receives the maximum possible benefit from your estate.

We can help you to make a legally binding, tax-efficient Will and, if appropriate, to set up a trust to reorganise and plan your assets. We can also advise you on ways in which you could reduce the inheritance tax payable on your estate.

The Wills & Trusts team at Switalskis meets with every client to discuss individual circumstances and requirements. That way, we can offer the right advice on how to arrange your financial affairs.



## Legal services for elderly clients

**Our years of experience have taught us that elderly people often have specific legal concerns. That's why we have built a team of sympathetic, practical and experienced professionals who can offer our elderly clients a tailored range of legal solutions.**

### Helping you plan for the future

We can help you set up a Lasting Power of Attorney to manage your finances or welfare should you lose the capacity to make decisions for yourself. An Advance Decision document will also help you to influence future medical decisions should you become incapacitated.

### Care and money matters

Our extensive experience of community care and welfare rights law can help you ensure that you receive appropriate assistance should you need residential or nursing care.

### Mental capacity and mental health issues

We can help clients affected by mental illness or diminished mental capacity to negotiate the complex areas of mental health law and the Court of Protection.

Legal Aid may be available to fund some of the services offered by our Elderly Client Services team.



## Lasting power of attorney and court of protection

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**We know that many elderly and disabled clients worry about how their affairs will be managed, or how they will be cared for, in the event that they lose the capacity to choose for themselves.**

Our specialists can help you plan for this eventuality by setting up a Lasting Power of Attorney that appoints somebody you trust to manage your financial affairs, or make decisions about your personal welfare, should you become incapacitated.

We can also help you to draw up a legally binding Advance Decision. This enables you to refuse certain forms of medical treatment if, in the future, you can no longer express your wishes yourself.

If someone is incapacitated and has no Lasting Power of Attorney, the Court of Protection can appoint a deputy to make decisions about their affairs. Our team can help with all Court of Protection matters, from offering straightforward advice through to assisting with applications to the Court.

## Probate and administration of estates

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**When somebody close to you dies, we know that dealing with all the necessary legal processes can be distressing. Good legal advice can make the world of difference.**

Our highly experienced probate team understands how difficult bereavement can be, especially if you have been appointed executor of somebody's will and find yourself having to manage their financial, legal and tax affairs.

The situation can become still more confusing when somebody dies without having made a will. Strict rules govern who will administer the estate and how the assets of the deceased must be distributed.

In situations like these, it is only sensible to ask the experts. Depending on how much you want to take on, we can either provide friendly, practical advice to help you perform your duties or we can offer a much more comprehensive service. This will take some of the weight off your shoulders and give you more time to come to terms with your loss.



## Residential conveyancing

**Moving house is said to be one of life's most stressful experiences, so it is important to have solicitors that you can rely upon. Knowing that the legal issues are completely under control will give you the reassurance you need to focus on all the other details.**

Our conveyancing team are experts in the legal aspects of property transactions. We work our hardest to cover all the legal angles and thereby minimise the strain of moving home. By offering sound, practical advice and a reliable, efficient service we help make the legal side of buying and selling property as stress-free and straightforward as possible. We can even help a simple remortgage run much more smoothly.

Our professionals can answer your questions on all aspects of the conveyancing process, from Home Information Packs, to searches and surveys, through to exchange and completion.

Switalskis Solicitors LLP is a Limited Liability Partnership registered in England and Wales (registered under OC340412) which is regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. A list of the names and professional qualifications of our Members is available for inspection at our registered office: 19 Cheapside, Wakefield, WF1 2SD