

A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a blue polo shirt and khaki shorts, stands in a lush green field. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

# BENEFIT

from free specialist advice, financial support, and professional guidance  
when facing legal disputes

# ACCESS

a team of 16 reputable legal firms throughout England and Wales

# UNDERSTAND

exactly what you're signing

# IDENTIFY

concerns or legal matters that may need to be addressed on farm

## NFU LEGAL SERVICES

Providing NFU Farmer & Grower members with financial support,  
professional guidance, and direct access to the NFU Legal Panel Firms.





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## WELCOME

The NFU offers a fantastic legal service through our internal and external legal professionals working together for the benefit of our members. Our in-house legally qualified advisers are totally committed and dedicated to the work carried out on behalf of members, coupled with the specialist expertise of our carefully selected NFU Legal Panel Firms that have a good understanding of the issues facing the farming and growing community.

I am proud to be the Chairman of the NFU Legal Board offering financial support to our Legal Assistance Scheme (LAS) subscribers when facing hardships, and in making important decisions affecting their businesses and livelihoods.

**Nick Hamer | NFU Legal Board Chairman**



## NFU LEGAL POLICY

In addition to our unrivalled legal service offering, the NFU has an in-house team of lawyers who advise and support its policy teams lobbying on behalf of our members.

The Legal Affairs Team provides legal advice to NFU officeholders, directors, staff and members covering a huge range of legal topics, encompassing all of the policy areas within the NFU, and across all sectors.

The team fights NFU legal cases for the industry and produces information and guidance for members on legal issues relevant to their farming and growing businesses.

I am very proud of the NFU legal offer - providing a comprehensive, professional, and united service to members when they most need our support.

**Andrew Clark | NFU Director of Policy**



## SPECIALIST ADVICE

Our qualified team of specialist advisers form part of NFU CallFirst - a free\* telephone helpline service exclusive to NFU members. They can provide professional advice and guidance on a comprehensive range of issues, from employment law, health and safety, and planning, to more complex legal matters; the team are there to support and help you run your business effectively.

If more in depth advice is needed, your query will be referred to one of the NFU Legal Panel Firms within your region. Have your membership number ready so our team can answer your query as quickly and effectively as possible.

Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm (excluding bank holidays).

*\*Calls to 0370 numbers will be taken out of any inclusive minutes available on your mobile or landline national minutes plan. If not, it is still no more expensive than calling national rate numbers starting 01 or 02. Opening hours are subject to change.*

# NFU LEGAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

## Providing financial support for legal and professional costs.

The NFU Legal Assistance Scheme (LAS) is a unique, discretionary benefits scheme offered as an optional extra to NFU Farmer & Grower members at just £37 (+VAT) a year.

With nearly 90% of our members subscribing to it, the scheme provides you with professional guidance and financial support\* towards legal and other professional costs should you face a dispute relating to your farming and/or growing business.

## Benefits of the NFU Legal Assistance Scheme include:

- Contribution towards professional fees
- Dedicated in-house LAS team offering professional guidance and support throughout the case
- Contribution towards mediation costs in inter-member disputes (IMDs)
- £500 towards professional fees for BPS Independent Panel Reviews
- Up to £600 towards the cost of budgetary advice for rent reviews under the NFU Tenants' First Advice Service
- Up to £300 towards the costs involved in putting up site notices in fly-grazing cases
- Contribution towards the professional costs of NVZ appeals
- Confidentiality assured.

## How can I access the service?

The NFU Legal Assistance Scheme is available to you at an annual cost of £37 (+VAT) if you are an NFU Farmer & Grower member.

Should you require financial support, you must be a subscriber to the LAS at the time the dispute arises. If you are eligible, financial assistance will be considered from the date the matter is formally brought to the attention of an NFU CallFirst adviser, your local NFU group secretary, or any NFU member of staff.

*\*Each case is decided on its facts and legal merits, and awards are discretionary. It is important to note that the NFU Legal Assistance Scheme is not a legal expenses insurance policy, nor does it cover third party, your opponents' or any adverse costs; instead, it offers its subscribers exclusive beneficial services.*



Contact NFU CallFirst on **0370 845 8458** to speak to a specialist adviser for preliminary advice and to make an application for LAS funding.



If more in-depth advice is needed, your query will be referred to one of the NFU Legal Panel Firms in your area for a free initial discussion about your case.



The firm will provide an initial report and further updates to the LAS team to consider funding towards your legal and other professional costs.

"The standout service for me is the Legal Assistance Scheme. For the past 25 years we've been a member of the scheme and wondered why, and never imagined that we would use the service. However, our wind turbine has been the cause of two judicial reviews and the LAS has supported us significantly for almost the past six years, and has awarded us more than our entire NFU membership costs since I became a member in 1989. That, to me, is incredible."

**John Charles-Jones | Nottinghamshire**

## Legal representation that gives you peace of mind.


The NFU Legal Panel comprises of 16 legal firms located throughout England and Wales offering NFU Farmer & Grower members local support and 12.5% discount off hourly rates directly relating to their farming or growing business.

The firms have been specifically selected by the NFU for their experience and expertise in agricultural and horticultural matters; complying with Solicitors Regulation Authority requirements. The firms can also assist in non-farming areas of law and their advice is completely impartial.

Our directory of NFU Legal Panel Firms can be found on pages 13-15 of this brochure.

## Why might you need a solicitor?

- You have received a contract to sign
- You have been asked to attend an interview under caution
- You have a legal dispute
- You have received a solicitor's letter
- You are thinking of diversifying
- You have received a letter or notice from a government department or agency.





"We'd never faced litigation before, and suddenly when you're in that territory you need a friendly hand – we found that through our local NFU panel solicitors who gave us the support we so desperately needed, they were brilliant."


## The panel offers the following benefits to members:

- 12.5% discount on hourly rates
- Fixed fees for specified services
- Act as a one-stop shop for NFU members
- Free initial report to support your LAS funding application where appropriate
- Great accessibility with at least two firms in your region
- Comprehensive advice whatever your problem – business, property or family-related
- Deliver the NFU Contract Checking Service - helping you to understand exactly what you're signing
- Deliver the NFU Legal Health Check Service - helping to identify concerns or legal matters that may need to be addressed on your farm.

## What to do if you have a legal query.

- **1. Stage 1: NFU CallFirst**

As part of your NFU membership you already have access to a team of legal experts at NFU CallFirst by calling **0370 845 8458**. They will offer you free initial advice and try to resolve your query.
- **2. Stage 2: Referral**

If the NFU specialist adviser is unable to resolve your query, they will refer you to one of our 16 expert NFU Legal Panel Firms local to you.
- **3. Stage 3: NFU Legal Panel Firm**

Your local firm will work closely with you to support your query and to assist with your application to the NFU Legal Assistance Scheme if your case is eligible for financial support.

## Helping you understand exactly what you're signing.

In today's world, we all know contracts can be complex and can often be written in language that can puzzle and confuse us. You may occasionally be asked to enter into a contract that you are not entirely sure about.

Seeking early advice before signing on the dotted line can protect you from potentially costly, lengthy and stressful legal disputes in the future. That's why the NFU in conjunction with its Legal Panel Firms is delighted to offer a Contract Checking Service to NFU Farmer & Grower members. The Legal Panel Firms can undertake the work on your behalf by offering their independent professional advice to ensure you understand your rights and obligations, and are satisfied that your aims and objectives are met before you sign the contract.

## When can the service be used?

- When you receive a contract from another party you are planning to trade with or buy from
- When you wish to issue a new contract yourself for a business transaction you are about to enter into with another party
- When either you or the other party propose changes to any of the terms and conditions of an existing contract.

### Special Offer!

NFU member who subscribe to the NFU Legal Assistance Scheme\* can apply for financial assistance of up to a maximum of £1,000 towards the costs of having four contracts checked or drafted by the NFU Legal Panel Firms at £250 each.

*\*Normal LAS rules apply*

## How is the service accessed?

1.



Contact NFU CallFirst by calling **0370 845 8458**. The NFU specialist adviser will have a free initial discussion with you and can then make a referral to one of the NFU Legal Panel Firms. You will be referred to the relevant firm in your area, who will contact you within 48 hours to discuss your contract.

2.



The Legal Panel Firm will contact you to discuss your requirements and objectives, as well as review the documentation you send to them.

They will review the contract and contact you with a fixed quote for the service based on its complexity, value and in some cases, its length. If agreed, the firm will then produce a simple report to reflect your objectives and help you to understand the contract.

**The NFU has negotiated exclusive preferential rates for NFU Farmer & Grower members that start from as little as £275.00 (+ VAT) for the report at stage 2 (depending on the complexity and value of the contract). When you balance that cost against what the contract is going to be worth to your business, it is likely to be money well spent.**

3.



If you want them to, the Legal Panel Firm will consider the contract in more detail and assist in renegotiating specific terms with the other party and/or advise in further detail what the contract means for your business.

**The charge at stage 3 will either be at the firm's standard hourly rates (with a 12.5% NFU discount applied), or if possible, at a fixed fee that can be agreed directly with the firm before any work is done.**

## Identify concerns or legal matters that may need to be addressed on farm.

The NFU in conjunction with its Legal Panel Firms is pleased to offer NFU Farmer & Grower members an entirely free initial Legal Health Check in relation to their farming or growing businesses. This service aims to help identify and highlight any potential issues, legal gaps or other matters members might want to address to help secure their farming, growing or diversification businesses.

The Legal Health Check can also significantly help underpin business resilience. During the current unprecedented changing times with the future implementation of the Agricultural Transition Plan, Environmental Land Management Scheme, Lump Sum Payments to name a few, this Legal Health Check could assist in many ways - including, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Property matters (includes ownership, tenancies, land registration)
- Estate planning (includes Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney, Trust Deeds etc.)
- Business structures
- Share farming
- Contract farming
- Rights of Way (including Section 31(6) applications)
- Succession planning
- Employment
- Diversification




## What does the service include?

- The service will include an initial free discussion with members either on farm or virtually as agreed with the NFU Legal Panel Firm (the process may start with the completion of an online questionnaire to help understand the nature of the business and identify the likely issues to be considered) followed by the creation of a simple report with any initial observations and/or recommendations.
- Members who then wish to take forward any recommendations identified at the report stage can then agree the scope and cost of any work to be carried out directly with the NFU Legal Panel Firm concerned.
- The terms and conditions for the Legal Health Check will be under the firm's usual T&Cs.

## How much does it cost?

The initial NFU Legal Health Check Service is free and is designed to provide members with a report that highlights any concerns or legal matters that need to be addressed. Should any work be identified and subsequently commissioned, then that piece of work will be carried out at the firm's standard hourly rates (with a 12.5% NFU discount applied). Alternatively, it may be possible to agree a fixed fee directly with the firm before any work is done.

## How is the service accessed?

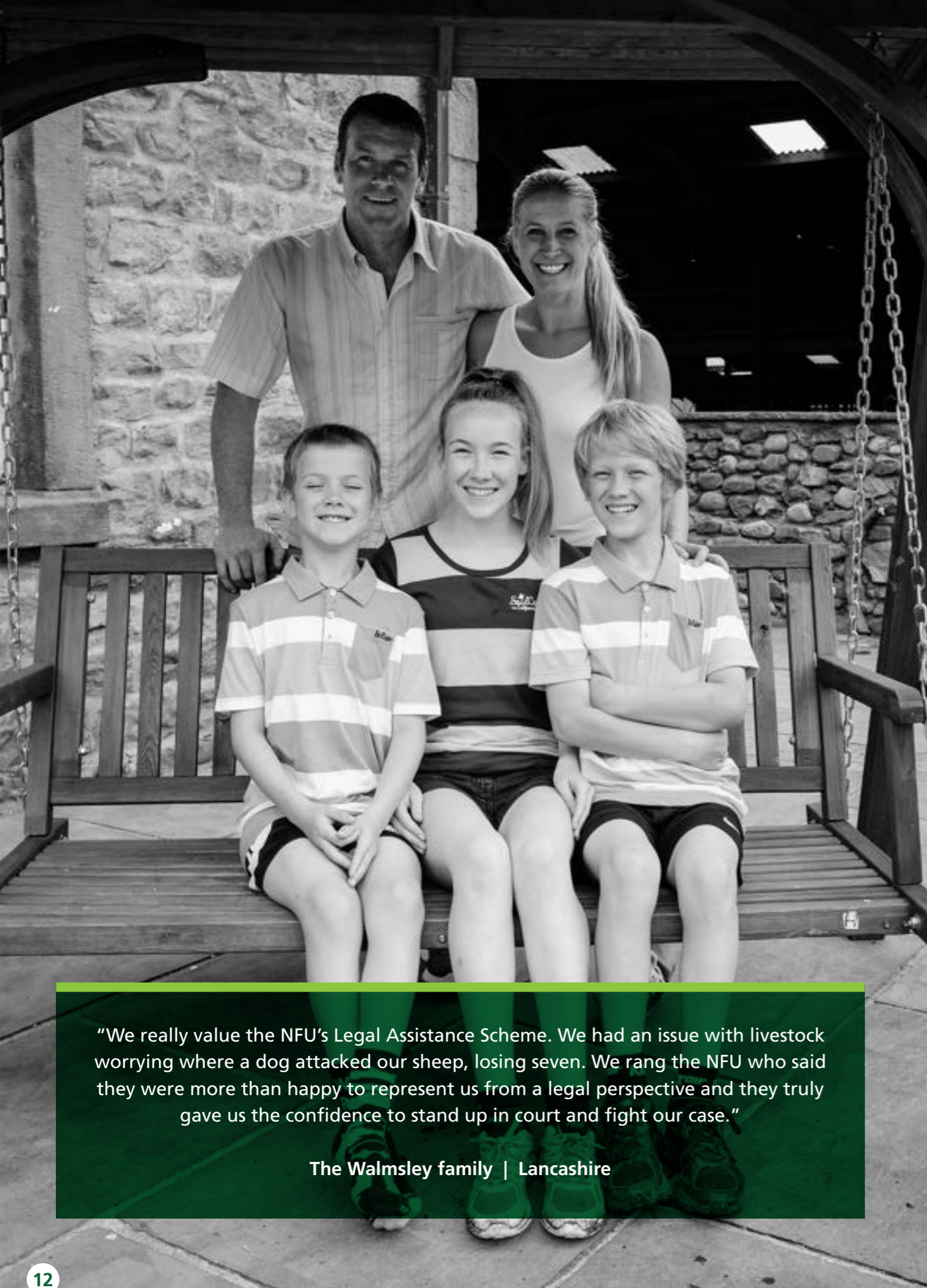
-  1. Members should call NFU CallFirst on **0370 845 8458** for a free initial discussion with an NFU specialist adviser who will then refer you to the appropriate Legal Panel Firm in your area.
-  2. The NFU Legal Panel Firm will get in touch with you to have a free initial discussion. In some cases, you may also receive an online questionnaire from the firm to start the process. The questions are to assist in highlighting the areas within your business you might want to raise with them ahead of the discussion or meeting.
-  3. The NFU Legal Panel Firm will arrange a visit or a virtual discussion as appropriate and agreed with you. This will result in a brief outline report being produced to agree the areas identified that require some work to be carried out to put things right within the business.

### Special Offer!

NFU member who subscribe to the NFU Legal Assistance Scheme\* can apply for financial assistance of up to a maximum of £1,000 for four sets of instructions (at £250 each) generated by the Legal Health Check.

*\*Normal LAS rules apply*





"We really value the NFU's Legal Assistance Scheme. We had an issue with livestock worrying where a dog attacked our sheep, losing seven. We rang the NFU who said they were more than happy to represent us from a legal perspective and they truly gave us the confidence to stand up in court and fight our case."

The Walmsley family | Lancashire

# NFU LEGAL PANEL DIRECTORY

## EAST ANGLIA

Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk

### HCR HEWITSONS

50-60 Station Road, Cambridge CB1 2JH  
Contact: Denise Wilkinson  
E: [dwilkinson@hcrlaw.com](mailto:dwilkinson@hcrlaw.com)  
T: 01223 532 743  
[www.hcrlaw.com](http://www.hcrlaw.com)



Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk

### TEES

Tees House, 95 London Road, Bishop's Stortford,  
Hertfordshire CM23 3GW  
Contact: Caroline Metcalf  
E: [caroline.metcalf@teeslaw.com](mailto:caroline.metcalf@teeslaw.com)  
T: 01279 710 615  
[www.teeslaw.com](http://www.teeslaw.com)



## SOUTH EAST

Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, West Sussex, Berks, Bucks and Oxon

### THRINGS SOLICITORS

Stuart Court, Salisbury Road, Romsey SO51 6DJ  
Contact: Russell Reeves  
E: [rreeves@thrings.com](mailto:rreeves@thrings.com)  
T: 01794 310 300  
[www.thrings.com](http://www.thrings.com)



Kent and East Sussex

### WARNERS SOLICITORS

Bank House, Bank Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1BL  
Contact: Michael McNally  
E: [m.mcnally@warners.law](mailto:m.mcnally@warners.law)  
T: 01732 375 396  
[www.warners-solicitors.co.uk](http://www.warners-solicitors.co.uk)



## SOUTH WEST

Devon and Cornwall

### FOOT ANSTEY LLP

Senate Court, Southernhay Gardens, Exeter EX1 1NT  
Contact: Edward Venmore  
E: [edward.venmore@footansteys.com](mailto:edward.venmore@footansteys.com)  
T: 01392 685 273  
[www.footansteys.com](http://www.footansteys.com)



## SOUTH WEST

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Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire

### CLARKE WILLMOTT

Blackbrook Gate, Blackbrook Park Avenue, Taunton TA1 2PG  
Contact: Esther Woolford  
E: Esther.Woolford@clarkewillmott.com | T: 0345 209 1840  
www.clarkewillmott.com



## NORTH EAST

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Northumberland, North Riding, Durham and Tyne and Wear

### JACKSONS LAW FIRM

17 Falcon Court, Preston Farm Industrial Estate, Stockton on Tees TS18 3TU  
Contact: Nicola Neilson  
E: nneilson@jacksons-law.com | T: 01642 356 500  
www.jacksons-law.com



York East Riding, York West Riding and South Yorkshire

### CROMBIE WILKINSON SOLICITORS

Forsyth House, 3 Market Place, Malton YO17 7LP  
Contact: Amy Clarkson  
E: a.clarkson@crombiewilkinson.co.uk | T: 01653 600 070  
www.crombiewilkinson.co.uk



## NORTH WEST

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Cheshire

### BOWCOCK CUERDEN LLP

South Cheshire House, Manor Road, Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5LX  
Contact: Lesley Smith  
E: LSmith@bowcockcuerden.co.uk | T: 01270 611 106  
www.bowcockcuerden.co.uk



Lancashire, Cumbria, Merseyside and Greater Manchester

### NAPTHENS SOLICITORS

Darwen House, Walker Business Park, Blackburn BB1 2QE  
Contact: Andrew Holden  
E: andrew.holden@naphens.co.uk | T: 01254 686 216  
www.naphens.co.uk



## WALES

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North to Mid-Wales

### ALLINGTON HUGHES LAW

Bank Buildings, Llanrwst, Conwy LL26 0LS  
Contact: Mark Evans  
E: mark.evans@allingtonhughes.co.uk | T: 01492 641 222  
www.allingtonhughes.co.uk



## WALES

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South to Mid-Wales

### JCP SOLICITORS

Venture Court, Waterside Business Park, Valley Way, Enterprise Park,  
Swansea SA6 8AH  
Contact: Rory Hutchings  
E: rory.hutchings@jcpsolicitors.co.uk | T: 01792 525 402  
www.jcpsolicitors.co.uk



## WEST MIDLANDS

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Staffordshire, Shropshire and Herefordshire

### LANYON BOWDLER

Chapter House North, Abbey Lawn, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,  
Shropshire SY2 5DE  
Contact: Brian Evans  
E: brian.evans@lblaw.co.uk | T: 01743 280 287  
www.lblaw.co.uk



Warwickshire and Worcestershire

### SHAKESPEARE MARTINEAU

Bridgeway House, Bridgeway, Stratford Upon Avon CV37 6YX  
Contact: James Woolstenhulme  
E: James.Woolstenhulme@shma.co.uk | T: 01789 416 400  
www.shma.co.uk



## EAST MIDLANDS

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Derbyshire

### BOWCOCK CUERDEN LLP

South Cheshire House, Manor Road, Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5LX  
Contact: Lesley Smith  
E: LSmith@bowcockcuerden.co.uk | T: 01270 611 106  
www.bowcockcuerden.co.uk



Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland

### JOSIAH HINCKS SOLICITORS

22 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GB  
Contact: Andrew Eagle  
E: rae@josiahhincks.co.uk | T: 0116 255 1811  
www.josiahhincks.co.uk



Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire

### WILKIN CHAPMAN LLP

The Maltings, 11-15 Brayford Wharf East, Lincoln LN5 7AY  
Contact: Andrew Holt  
E: andrew.holt@wilkinchapman.co.uk | T: 01522 512 345  
www.wilkinchapman.co.uk





# NFU LEGAL SERVICES

NFU CallFirst: 0370 845 8458 | [nfuonline.com](http://nfuonline.com) | [nfu-cymru.org.uk](http://nfu-cymru.org.uk)



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