

Meet our Agricultural Team



Heather Souter
Senior Associate - Family

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As a family lawyer, I advise on all aspects of divorce and separation, including pre-nuptial agreements. I have specific expertise and experience of agricultural and farming cases, and my knowledge in this sector has been independently recognised by The Legal 500. Using this experience, I provide informed advice on how farming cases are treated, often coming up with practical and creative solutions to minimise the impact of a separation on farming families, both now and for future generations. As a collaboratively trained lawyer, I recognise the value of alternative ways to reach a solution rather than court proceedings, ensuring that my clients receive the most appropriate and constructive solution for their individual circumstances.



Janet May
Partner - Head Of Planning

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I lead the planning legal and consultancy team and have over 25 years of experience advising on all aspects of planning legal matters. I work alongside our in-house planning consultancy team advising on developing or diversification of land and operations for our landowner clients. I practice in all aspects of planning law, strategic planning advice, certificates of lawfulness, nitrate credit allocation agreements, drafting section 106/278 agreements, public and statutory consultations.



Elinor Davis
Senior Associate - Agricultural Land & Estates

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My extensive experience in agricultural property work includes without limitation farm sales and purchases, Farm Business Tenancies, re financing, landlord and tenant work for rural businesses. I have particular expertise in the bloodstock industry, natural capital landscapes, and renewable energy infrastructure agreements. I strive to provide efficient, stress-free property transactions for my clients. As a member of the CLA, I aim to build long-term relationships and work holistically with accountants and other professionals to ensure the best deal for each client's business and farming enterprise.



Jane Rarok
Associate Planner - Planning

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As a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, I have 20 years of experience in rural planning with expertise in housing, agricultural development, tourism, equestrian and viticulture development. I bring a wealth of experience and knowledge, specialising in planning in National Parks and historic environments. My successful track record includes securing planning consents for charities, mixed use schemes, and affordable housing. Let me help you achieve your planning goals.



Joanne Spittles
Partner - Property & Development



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As an experienced property lawyer, I am well-versed in all aspects of land transactions and development. My diverse client portfolio spans property developers, rural landowners, and housing associations, among others. I specialise in complex development matters, including option agreements, promotion agreements, and other sales, and have a keen eye for detail. As company secretary of the New Forest Enterprise Centre, I am committed to supporting local businesses and driving growth in the agricultural industry.



Lisa Busby
Partner - Commercial Property



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I am a Legal 500 recognised property lawyer specialising in telecommunications code agreements and leases, pension fund investments, and wayleaves and utilities alongside property portfolio and management matters. I work with all manner of clients from rural landowners to global companies providing clear concise advice in an efficient manner.



Jennifer Packer
Senior Associate - Corporate



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With over a decade of experience in corporate law, I specialise in acquisitions, MBOs, equity investments, and transactional insolvency. As a Legal 500-recognised lawyer, I provide targeted advice and support to private companies, owner-managed businesses, and individuals, including advising on farming partnership agreements.



Jane Biddlecombe
Senior Associate - Employment & Immigration



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With over 20 years' experience in employment law and as head of the immigration team at Paris Smith, I have an in-depth understanding of all employment and immigration matters. I have a particular expertise in helping farms and wineries/vineyards apply for a sponsor licence to employ skilled overseas workers and advising on the seasonal worker visa system for employing temporary workers from overseas. I also advise my clients on all aspects of employment law from employment contracts and policies to handling redundancies, sickness absence, performance, disciplinary and grievance issues as well as Employment Tribunal claims and settlement agreements. I have an excellent reputation in partnering with my clients to achieve practical and commercial solutions, tailoring my support to the needs of the business and providing clear and concise advice in the ever changing world of employment and immigration law.





Helen Brown
Partner - Commercial Disputes



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I am a highly experienced commercial disputes lawyer specialising in unfair prejudice claims, derivative claims, and partnership disputes. I also handle contract disputes, negligence claims against advisors, and machinery disputes for farms and estates. As a member of the Professional Negligence Lawyers Association, I am dedicated to achieving the best possible outcome for my clients.



Cliff Morris
Partner - Business Regulations & Compliance



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I bring extensive regulatory expertise to the table. I specialise in advising on business-related criminal law matters and working with regulatory agencies such as the Health & Safety Executive, Environment Agency and local authorities. I also have experience in handling road traffic offences.



Jason Oliver
Partner - Personal Disputes & Commercial Disputes



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With my extensive experience in contentious matters, I have a wealth of knowledge and expertise that is helpful to agricultural clients. I specialise in resolving disputes relating to trusts, estates and contentious probate, including proprietary estoppel and Inheritance Act claims. I also advise on disputes relating to boundaries, easements, and restrictive covenants. I have acted in many construction and insurance disputes. My wide-ranging knowledge of the law and awareness of the issues that often arise in the agricultural context makes me particularly well-suited to provide legal assistance to clients in that sector.



Neil Davies
Consultant - Family



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As an experienced divorce lawyer, accredited mediator and collaborative lawyer, I have helped many agricultural clients who have faced marriage breakdown. I now focus on providing agricultural clients with an alternative to lengthy, damaging and costly court proceedings. Agricultural clients are much better served by working cooperatively, given the damage that can otherwise be caused to businesses which have often been in the family for generations. I have successfully mediated farming divorces to ensure that future generations benefit and minimum damage is caused to the business and to the family. Awarded a 3-star rating in City Wealth Leaders List and recognised in Best Lawyers UK for Family Law since 2009. Winner of the 2023 Lawyer Monthly ADR Award for Mediation in the UK.



Anthony Nixon
Consultant - Tax & Estate Planning



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With over 40 years of experience in inheritance tax and trusts, I am recognised as a leading expert in my field. As a Chartered Tax Adviser and Professional Trustee, I have helped clients from Scilly Isles to North Yorkshire and East Anglia to South Wales, to maximise inheritance tax reliefs and streamline complex family ownership structures. I am honoured to have been shortlisted for Trusted Adviser of the Year in STEP's private client awards, and I look forward to working with agricultural clients to plan for the next generation.



William Hadley
Partner - Wills, Trusts & Estates, Succession Planning



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I specialise in advising agricultural and landed clients on complex family circumstances, tax planning, and protecting family assets. With expertise in inheritance and capital gains tax planning, trust management, and estate administration, I work closely with accountants and land agents to provide clear and efficient advice. I am a Chartered Tax Adviser and member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP), and have been recognised as a notable practitioner in the Chambers UK High Net Worth Legal Directory 2022.



Patrick Brennan
Senior Associate - Wills, Trusts & Estates,
Succession Planning



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I specialise in advising agricultural clients, landowners and their families on estate and succession planning, with a strong focus on inheritance tax and capital gains tax mitigation. With my experience and expertise, I offer tailored advice to ensure a smooth transition to the next generation. As a member of STEP and SFE, I am committed to providing clear and precise recommendations to meet clients' needs and aspirations.



“Trusted legal advisors for your unique needs”



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