

**HERITAGE LAW (NORWICH) LIMITED**  
**General Terms and Conditions**

The terms in this document as supplemented and/or amended by any relevant letter of engagement (“Terms”) apply to each matter in relation to which Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited undertakes work for you. The expressions “we”, “us”, “our”, “the company”, “Heritage” and Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited mean or refer to Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited. The expressions “you” and “your” refer to our client. The expression “matter” means a specific transaction, dispute or issue in relation to which you ask us to provide services.

Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited is a limited company registered in England and Wales with registered number 10397027 whose registered office is 13 Hellesdon Park Road, Hellesdon Park Road, Drayton High Road, Norwich, England, NR6 5DR. The company is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA Number 634269) and therefore clients are entitled to claim against the Solicitors Compensation Fund.

**(1) Our Relationship with You**

We seek to ensure that each matter on which we are instructed is dealt with by the appropriate person at the right level and with suitable expertise. This helps to ensure a cost-effective service. In practice this means that different people may be involved in the day-to-day conduct of a matter. To enable this to work well we believe that one person should have overall responsibility for managing our relationship with you. The details of the person we propose should manage our relationship with you and anyone else will be involved in your matter are set out in the letter of engagement.

**(2) Setting Ourselves Standards**

We operate a system in order to meet certain standards with regard to client care. These include:

- a. using reasonable efforts to keep you informed about the progress of your matter;
- b. where appropriate, giving you information promptly about any unexpected delays or changes in the services we are providing to you;
- c. returning your telephone calls the same day if at all possible;
- d. responding speedily to correspondence and where possible using plain English;
- e. providing you with an explanation of the legal work required, a cost estimate (when possible) and the likely timescales involved.

Please tell us if you feel we are not maintaining these standards. In return, we ask you to respond to our requests promptly and to pay our fees and expenses without delay.

**(3) Communications**

You will find our full contact details in the letter of engagement. Please tell us if you have a preferred method of communication (eg telephone, e-mail or fax) and of any confidentiality issues when contacting you. Unless we hear from you, we will use whatever mode of communication appears to be appropriate in the circumstances.

Our office opening hours are Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm. There are variable opening hours during the Christmas and New Year periods and notification of these dates will be made available to you leading up to the relevant periods.

Any e-mail message sent to us goes directly into the inbox of the person it has been addressed to. Please be aware of the following:

- a. Heritage is connected to a computer network and the exchange of e-mail messages may be subject to delays outside our control.
- b. It is not possible to monitor the safe receipt of e-mails and that messages have been read.
- c. The confidentiality of e-mail cannot be guaranteed.
- d. For the purposes of exchanging documents via the internet, our word-processing system is Microsoft Word.
- e. Password protection of documents will not be used, but will be considered if you ask us.
- f. We will not be responsible for any loss or damage arising from unauthorised interception, re-direction, copying or reading of e-mails including any attachments. We will not be responsible for the effect on any hardware or software (or any damage arising from any such effect) of any e-mails or attachments which may be transmitted by us (except where this is caused by our negligence or wilful default).

**(4) Your Instructions**

To enable us to provide services to you it is vital that you provide us with all relevant information as quickly as practicable. The information provided must be, as far as you know, accurate, complete, up to date and not misleading. You must tell us of any subsequent changes to the information provided and of any other information which may be relevant.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing, our services will not include advice concerning tax or the tax implications of any course of action.

**(5) Confidentiality and Conflicts**

We will respect the confidential nature of any information which we receive from you, subject only to our duty to disclose information to comply with our legislative and regulatory obligations. However, if, as the matter proceeds, other professional advisers become involved we shall assume, unless you have notified us otherwise, that we may disclose any such information to and discuss it with them as necessary.

We may be required to produce all or part of your file to assessors or similar, as part of an audit or quality check, and may be required to disclose confidential information to our advisers or pursuant to our professional indemnity insurance.

We have procedures designed to prevent our acting for one client in a matter where there is, or could be, a conflict with the interests of another client for whom we are acting. If a conflict does arise then it will be up to us to decide whether we can continue to act for both parties, for one, or for neither.

If our client consists of more than one person, organisation or other entity then the liability of those persons, organisations or other entities will be joint and several and they will be treated as a joint client. Each such person, organisation or entity by instructing us permits us to disclose to the other joint clients any information which we would otherwise be prohibited from disclosing under our duty of confidentiality. If any joint client does not want us to make those disclosures and ends that permission or if any conflict of interest arises between joint clients then we may suspend our work or cease acting for any or all of the joint clients.

If at any time you become aware of an actual or potential conflict of interest, please raise it with us immediately. Where our professional rules allow, you agree that we may act or continue to act for another client in circumstances where we hold information which is confidential to you and material to the engagement with that client. We will not, however, disclose your confidential information to that other client.

We may use personal information we receive from you for administration and compliance purposes and for marketing other services of the company in which you may be interested. Please let us know if you do not wish to receive such information.

**(6) Duty of Care and Other Professional Advisers**

The services provided by us are for your benefit alone and solely for the purposes of the matter to which they relate. They may not be used or relied upon for any other purpose or by third parties. Our duty of care is to you as our client and does not extend to any third party. No third party shall have any right under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any of the Terms.

We will, on your behalf, instruct, liaise with or coordinate advice from other professional advisers, including foreign lawyers. We will not be responsible for the accuracy or appropriateness of the advice given or work undertaken by those other advisers or for payment of their fees and expenses. We do not provide services relating to the laws of any jurisdiction outside England and Wales and cannot be responsible for the accuracy or appropriateness of the advice given or the work undertaken by foreign lawyers.

**(7) Exclusions and Limitations of Liability**

Your agreement is with Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited and it is Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited that will provide the services to you. You agree that you will not bring any claim whether in contract, tort, negligence or otherwise against any member, consultant, employee or agent of Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited. No member, consultant, employee or agent of Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited accepts or assumes any personal liability for the provision of services and shall be entitled to rely on the Terms to the extent they limit or exclude liability.

We comply with the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 by displaying the required details of our professional indemnity insurance in each of our offices. The insurance is limited to the UK.

The total liability of Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited in connection with or arising, directly or indirectly, from any matter in relation to which you have asked us to provide services will be limited to the sum specified in the Key Information or any letter of engagement or, if no sum is specified, to an aggregate amount not exceeding £3 million.

This limit will cover all claims of any sort whatsoever whether arising in contract, tort, negligence or otherwise and all losses, damages, costs and expenses (including interest).

We shall not be liable for any failure to provide services on any issue which falls outside the scope of our engagement and we will have no responsibility to notify you of any change (or any consequence of such change) in the law or any event which occurs after we have provided our services to you.

We shall not be liable for any indirect loss or damage or any loss of profit, income or production arising in any circumstances whatsoever, whether in contract, tort, negligence or otherwise and howsoever caused.

Nothing in these Terms shall exclude or restrict our liability to you for your death or personal injury resulting from our negligence or for fraudulent misrepresentation or in any other circumstances where liability may not be so limited or excluded under any applicable law or regulation.

Subject always to the limit on our liability set out in these terms, our liability to you shall be limited to such sum as it would be just and equitable for us to pay having regard to the extent of our responsibility for the loss or damage and the responsibilities of all other persons. You agree that our liability shall not be increased by:

- any limitation, exclusion or restriction of liability you have agreed with any other person, or any joint insurance or coinsurance provision between you and any other person;
- your inability to recover from any other person, or your decision not to recover from any other person.

**(8) Papers and Documents**

After completing the work we are entitled to keep all of your papers and documents while there is money owing to us for our charges and expenses. In addition, we will keep your file in storage for not less than 1 year. After that, storage is on the clear understanding that we have the right to destroy it after such period as we consider reasonable or to make a charge for storage if we ask you to collect your papers and you fail to do so. We will not, of course, destroy any documents such as wills, deeds or documents which you ask us to hold in secure storage. No charge will be made to you for such storage unless prior notice in writing is given to you of a charge to be made from a future date which may be specified in that notice.

If we retrieve papers or documents from storage in relation to continuing or new instructions to act in connection with your affairs, we will not normally charge for such retrieval. However, we may make a charge based on time spent reading correspondence or other work necessary to comply with your instructions or for copying your file and any documents on it where we consider it necessary to retain copies for our own records.

**(9) Fees and Expenses**

We will, where possible, agree a fixed fee with you based upon the complexity, value and urgency of the matter. In the event that this is not possible, our fees will be calculated by reference to the amount of time we spend on the matter, taking into account the factors mentioned above. We will confirm our hourly rates to you if this is the method of charging, but do reserve the right to agree an uplift to our hourly rates to take into account any other factors. Please note that our charging rates are reviewed annually and you will be notified in writing of any change in these rates.

Time spent on the matter will include meetings with you and perhaps others; considering, preparing and working on papers; correspondence (including e-mails); legal research; preparing attendance notes; any time spent travelling; attending court; and making and receiving telephone calls. We record time in six minute units. More detail on our hourly rates will be set out in your letter of engagement and VAT will be added where applicable.

There are expenses incurred during a matter, other than our own, that are paid by us on your behalf (these are sometimes called disbursements). These expenses may include the fees of counsel and other experts, court fees, search fees and stamp duty. These items are charged at cost and payment on account of these expenses will usually be required. By instructing us you are authorising us to incur such expenses as we consider necessary. However, we will consult you before incurring any significant expenses.

We reserve the right to charge for telegraphic transfers, travelling expenses, photocopying, incoming and outgoing faxes and anti-money laundering search fees. VAT will be added where applicable and these amounts are shown in the bill as profit costs.

**(10) Client Money and Interest**

Where we receive money from you which is to be applied on your behalf, it will be held in a separate client bank account which will be subject to the provisions of the Solicitors' Accounts Rules. Deposit interest paid to UK residents by us will be paid without deduction of tax. It is your responsibility to declare sums so received for tax purposes. As required by the Solicitors' Accounts Rules, money held by us will be taken in payment or part payment of our invoices within 14 days of the date of the invoice, unless that money is held for any other purpose.

Where we make payment of money to you or to another person on your behalf, it will usually be by cheque sent in the ordinary post or an electronic funds transfer (eg via CHAPS). We reserve the right to make a charge for our services in the case of any payments other than by cheque. Whichever payment method is used, we do not accept any responsibility or liability for any losses arising in respect of any interception, appropriation, misuse or delay in receipt. Subject always to the Solicitors Accounts Rules, we are not responsible for any loss arising from the insolvency of any bank where client funds are held.

In accordance with the Solicitors Accounts Rules 2011 it is our policy to account to its clients on a fair and reasonable basis for both the client and the company.

The following rules apply to client money held on account:

- a. Client monies will normally be held in a general client bank account.

- b. Subject to the provisions of this policy, we will account to our clients in respect of interest earned on money held in the general client bank account.
- c. In determining the period over which interest is to be calculated, we will look at the following: the period between the date when the relevant funds received clear the client account and, if we send the funds electronically, the date when the funds are sent or, if we send the funds by cheque, six days after a cheque is raised.
- d. The Interest rate applied is based on a calculation of 2.5% below the base rate as set by the Bank of England (subject to a net minimum rate of 0%).
- e. Interest received on the aggregate of all client money held in the general client account, and subject to any interest paid to clients, is for the benefit of the company.
- f. The company will not account for any interest in the following situations:
  - i. If the amount calculated is £20 or less;
  - ii. On money held for the payment of a professional disbursement if the person to whom the money is owed has requested a delay in settlement;
  - iii. On money held for the Legal Aid Agency;
  - iv. On an advance from the company into the general client account to fund a payment on the client's behalf in excess of funds already held for the client in that account;
  - v. If there is an agreement to contract out of the provisions of this policy;
  - vi. Where the money held is less than the amounts detailed below for a time not exceeding the period indicated:
 

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Time</u>
£1,000	8 weeks
£2,000	4 weeks
£10,000	2 weeks
£20,000	1 week
- g. If the company holds sums of money intermittently on the client's behalf in the company's general client account during the course of acting, and the sum in lieu of interest calculated for any single period is £20 or less, the company will only account to the client if the total interest exceeds £20.
- h. Interest paid in respect on general client money is normally calculated and applied at the conclusion of the matter, but in some cases it may be more appropriate to account to the client at intervals throughout the matter if so, the calculation and application will be made on agreed dates.
- i. Sums paid in respect of interest will be paid before the deduction of tax. It will be the recipient's responsibility to declare interest received to HMRC.
- j. If agreed between the client and the company that client monies should be held in a separate designated client account, the company will account to the client for all the interest earned on that account.
- k. Trust money will be held in either the general client account or in a designated deposit account and is subject to the same interest policy on those accounts as set out in this document.
- l. All client money, whether general client funds or designated deposit funds, will be held on instant access terms unless otherwise instructed, as instant access accounts help to facilitate transactions. As a result, the client may not receive as much interest as might have been obtained had they invested the money themselves.
- m. The company will not be liable to the client or any third party for any loss or damage suffered as a result of any act, omission, fraud, delay, negligence, insolvency or default of any bank, financial institution, clearing or payments system nor that of the directors, officers, employees, agents or representatives of any of the foregoing.
- n. If the bank in which the company holds funds should fail the company reserves the right to disclose to the FSCS the names and other details of clients whose money is held there in order for those clients to claim compensation up to the applicable limit, currently £75,000.
- o. Unpresented cheques - if a client fails to present a cheque at their bank for payment, interest will generally not be paid on this money.
- p. Joint accounts - if Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited holds money jointly with a client, interest earned on the account will be for the benefit of the client unless otherwise agreed. If money is held jointly with another practice, the allocation of interest earned will depend on the agreement reached between the parties.
- q. This policy does not apply when the company acts as liquidator, trustee in bankruptcy, Court of Protection deputy or the trustee of occupational pension scheme. The company will comply with the appropriate statutory rules and any other relevant provisions of the SRA Accounts Rules 2011 regarding payment of interest.
- r. The company will notify clients of the company's interest on client monies policy as part of the company's terms and conditions.
- s. This policy will be reviewed from time to time.

## (11) Billing and Payment Terms

Unless otherwise agreed in your letter of engagement, we are entitled to bill monthly or on another interim basis and on completion of each matter. We may ask for an initial deposit on account of general costs and expenses. The deposit will be used to settle our bills when they are rendered after the work has been done. As and when that sum becomes exhausted we may apply to you for further sums on account. We will if requested try to give an indication of anticipated future expenditure. This is, however, sometimes difficult and any figures given can only be estimates. We require you to make a payment within 28 days of a request for further monies, failing which we reserve the right to cease doing any further work on your matter.

Our bills are due for payment on receipt without any deduction, set-off or counterclaim. We reserve the right to suspend or terminate provision of further services until payment is received. If you do not pay our bill when it is due, we reserve the right to charge interest on it at 4% above National Westminster Bank plc base rate ('the Overdue Rate') (from time to time on a daily basis from the date on which payment of our bill is due) and not to carry out any further work on the matter until our bill and any interest has been paid. We will also be entitled to retain property belonging to you, together with our own papers relating to the matter, until all sums outstanding to us are paid.

If you are not satisfied with the amount of our fee, you have the right to object to our bill and may take the following courses of action:

- a. We would encourage you to raise the issue of the fee being charged with the person dealing with your matter in the first instance.
- b. As an alternative, you may be entitled to have your charges reviewed by the court (this is called 'taxation' or 'assessment') as set out in sections 70, 71 and 72 of the Solicitors Act 1974.
- c. You are also entitled to lodge a complaint with the Legal Ombudsman (please see the guidance under paragraph 13 entitled 'Complaints').

Please however note that the following restrictions apply:

- a. We are entitled to charge interest at the Overdue Rate on the outstanding amount of the bill in accordance with article 5 of the Solicitors (Non-Contentious Business) Remuneration Order 2009.
- b. We are entitled to recover disbursements in any event. These will be indicated separately on your bill. Disbursements represent payments that we have made on your behalf to a third party and are treated separately from our own costs.
- c. If you wish to raise an objection, you must do so within one calendar month of our bill being presented (or receiving notification that the company has deducted its costs from money held on account).
- d. The Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the court for assessment of the bill.

#### **(12) Termination of Instructions**

You may terminate your instructions to us in writing at any time. We may also bring instructions to an end where we have reasonable grounds for doing so (for instance if you do not pay an interim bill or comply with our request for payment on account, or if we are no longer able to act in your best interests). If we decide to stop acting for you, we will tell you the reason and give you reasonable notice in writing. We will also explain the possible options available to you for pursuing the matter.

We are entitled to keep all your papers and documents while money is owing to us for our charges and expenses. If at any stage you do not wish us to continue doing work and/or incurring charges and expenses on your behalf, you must tell us clearly in writing. If instructions are terminated you will be liable for fees arising and payments made or committed up to the date of termination of the instructions, together with any fees or payments for services necessary in connection with the transfer of the matter to another adviser (in which case we will charge for services provided in accordance with the hourly rate prevailing at the relevant time). VAT will be charged as applicable.

#### **(13) Complaints**

If you have concerns or queries about the services that you obtain from our company (including in relation to a bill), please in the first instance contact the person responsible for your matter as detailed in your letter of engagement. We will try to resolve any problems quickly and operate an internal complaint handling procedure (which is available on request) to help us to resolve the problem between ourselves. In the event that you are unable to resolve the matter please do not hesitate to contact Stuart Burrell at this office or on 01603 894500 or [stuart.burrell@heritage-law.co.uk](mailto:stuart.burrell@heritage-law.co.uk). If for any reason we are unable to resolve the problem between us, then you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. Normally you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman's contact details are:

Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0300 555 0333  
Address: Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6806  
Wolverhampton  
WV1 9WJ  
E-mail: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

#### **(14) Governing Law**

These Terms are governed by and will be construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales. You and we irrevocably agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales over any claim or issue arising under or in connection with the Terms and you and we waive any objection to proceedings being brought in those courts on the grounds of venue or on the grounds that such proceedings have been brought in an inappropriate forum.

**(15) Investment Advice**

We are not authorised by the Financial Services Authority under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. Therefore, we may refer you to someone who is authorised to provide any necessary advice. However, we are able, in certain circumstances, to offer a limited range of investment services to clients because we are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. We can provide these investment services if they are closely linked with the professional services we have been engaged to provide.

**(16) Severability**

If any Term is found by any court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, invalid or otherwise unenforceable then that provision shall, to the extent necessary, be severed and shall be ineffective but without affecting any other Term.

**(17) Clients with Disabilities**

Arrangements can be made for our terms and conditions to be made available on request on audio tape, large text or braille.

**(18) Introductions and Referrals**

Where we have a relationship with a third party (for example a funder, fee-sharer or introducer) which relates to any instruction from you, we will disclose that relationship to you and provide details of any payments made.

Payment of these referral fees will not, however, affect our normal charges to clients and we will charge in all cases the same fees as those charged to other clients for the same or similar services.

**Heritage Law (Norwich) Limited**

Tel: 01603 894500

[www.heritage-law.co.uk](http://www.heritage-law.co.uk)

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