

Terms and Conditions of Business (February 2024 Edition)

Agreement Date: means the date you sign our Client Declaration

Cancellation Period Ends: 14 days from the Agreement Date (if applicable)

1. Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited

- 1.1 We aim to offer our clients quality legal advice with a personal service at a fair cost and these terms and conditions set out the basis on which we will provide our professional services.
- 1.2 Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited, trading as Eccles Heddon Solicitors is constituted as a Limited Company:
 - (a) Registered in England and Wales with number 15190676
 - (b) Registered office; 5 Westgate, Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 2AT;
 - (c) Phone Number:
 - Ripon: 01765 601717;
 - Bedale: 01677422422;
 - Thirsk: 01845 522324;
 - (d) Fax Number: 01765 602920;
 - (e) Email: ripon@eccles-heddon.com;
 - (f) Web Site: www.eccles-heddon.co.uk;
 - (g) Value Added Tax ('VAT') number 453 9970 049;
 - (h) Authorised and Regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, with SRA number 8006247.
- 1.3 In these Terms of Business all first-person terms such as 'we', 'us' and 'our' refer to Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited and not to any Director, Partner, Consultant or Employee personally or to any combination of Directors, Partners, Consultants or Employees collectively. By entering into this Agreement, you are entering into a contract with Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited and not with any Director, Partner, Consultant or Employee personally or with any combination of Directors, Partners, Consultants or Employees collectively.
- 1.4 We are bound by various professional rules of conduct as set out in the SRA Standards and Regulations which can be viewed at <https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/> or by writing to 'Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN' or calling the Solicitors Regulation Authority's contact centre on 0870 606 2555 (inside the UK), 08:00 to 18:00, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday or 09:30 to 18:00 on Tuesday.
- 1.5 A list of Directors is available for inspection at our Registered Office, together with a list of those non-Directors who are referred to as Partners. We use the word "Partner" to refer to a Director of the Limited Company or an Employee or Consultant of Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited with equivalent standing and qualifications.
- 1.6 The SRA Indemnity Insurance Rules, in force from time to time, require us to take out and maintain professional indemnity insurance with participating insurers. Information about the compulsory layer of professional indemnity insurance we carry, including the contact details of our insurers and the

territorial coverage of our insurance, are available in hard copy at our Registered Office.

2. Terms of Business

- 2.1 These Terms of Business may not be varied unless agreed in writing and signed by a Director. They should be read in conjunction with our Engagement Letter which sets out the basis on which we act for you and any documents referred to in that letter. Together these form the 'Agreement' between us relating to each matter on which we advise you.
- 2.2 These terms, including the limits on our liability, shall apply to all work done by us for you (and any work to be done in the future) unless we otherwise notify you in writing.
- 2.3 If any term of this agreement is inconsistent with our legal obligations under the relevant laws, then the relevant laws shall apply instead of those terms.

3. Excluded Advice

- 3.1 We do not advise on the laws and regulations of jurisdictions other than England & Wales.
- 3.2 Whilst we have a degree of understanding of taxation relevant to an individual or corporate entity and are able give legal advice to individuals in relation to Inheritance Tax and estate planning, we are not qualified to give taxation advice in any form and you should take the professional advice of a taxation accountant or your own accountant. If you authorise us to proceed with the transaction, we will proceed on the basis you have sought appropriate professional advice. If you require our assistance in appointing an appropriate accountant, please ask.
- 3.3 We do not provide financial advice generally, or comment upon the commercial viability of any transactions upon which we advise.

4. Your Duty to Retain and Preserve Documents

- 4.1 If now, or at any time in the future, any matter on which we act for you is the subject of formally contested proceedings, whether in the courts or other tribunals, you will almost certainly have to disclose documents, including electronic documents, relevant to the matter. You should ensure that you do not destroy or allow to be destroyed any documents that relate to such matter in any way (however slight you believe the connection may be), as your position in such proceedings could be seriously compromised if you do so.

5. Copyright

- 5.1 Unless we agree otherwise, all copyright which exists in the documents and other materials that

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we create whilst carrying out work for you will remain our property. You have the right to use such documents and materials for the purposes for which they are created, but not otherwise.

- 5.2 If you use such documents for any purpose other than that for which they were created we are not responsible to you for any losses that you may suffer as a result.
- 5.3 Unless otherwise required by law or court order, you agree not to make our work, documents or materials available to third parties without our prior written permission. Our work is undertaken for your benefit alone and we are not responsible to third parties for any aspect of our professional services or work that you make available to them.

6. Client Satisfaction

- 6.1 We operate strict client care and quality policies and always aim to provide you with the highest level of legal expertise and to be available, approachable, understandable, prompt and courteous. We will keep you informed about all important developments in your case and we will respond to your letters, e-mails and telephone calls promptly and efficiently.
- 6.2 The majority of our clients are very happy with the service we provide, but in the event that you have any cause for concern, including about a bill, then please contact the lawyer with day-to-day conduct of your file in the first instance. If the cause of your concern remains unresolved, please be aware that you are entitled to make a complaint, and that you can do so by contacting one of our designated complaints handlers, Nick White (nick.white@eccles-heddon.com) or David Shackleton (david.shackleton@eccles-heddon.com), both of whom are Directors of this firm (01765 601717). We take all feedback from clients seriously and operate a Complaints Handling Procedure, a copy of which is available upon request.
- 6.3 We are usually able to deal with any concerns you have promptly and to your satisfaction, but if this is not the case, you will be able to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman provided you do so within six months of the end of our internal complaints procedure if you are still not satisfied with the outcome.
- 6.4 In addition, there are time limits for bringing a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, linked to the date of the act or omission giving rise to a complaint or the date on which you should reasonably have known there were grounds for a complaint. The relevant time limits are set out in the version of the Legal Ombudsman's Scheme Rules in force from time to time and may only be extended by the Legal Ombudsman in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to bring a complaint to him, you should refer to the version which is in force at the time of your complaint. The Rules can be accessed at:

<https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/information-centre/corporate-publications/scheme-rules/>

- (a) You must make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:
 - Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint, and
 - No more than one year from the date of act/omission: or
 - No more than one year from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.
- 6.5 You should also be aware that, when your complaint relates to a bill, the Legal Ombudsman will not consider your complaint while your bill is being assessed by a court.
- 6.6 A complainant to the Legal Ombudsman must be one of the following:
 - (a) An individual
 - (b) A micro-enterprise as defined in European Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 (broadly, an enterprise with fewer than 10 staff and a turnover or balance sheet value not exceeding £2 million);
 - (c) A charity with an annual income less than £1 million;
 - (d) A club, association or society with an annual income less than £1 million;
 - (e) A trustee of a trust with a net asset value less than £1 million;
 - (f) A personal representative or a beneficiary of an estate.
- 6.7 If you are not, you should be aware that you can only obtain redress by using our Complaints Handling Procedure or by mediation or arbitration, or by taking action through the Courts.
- 6.8 Legal Ombudsman Contact Details
 - (a) Address: PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH
 - (b) Telephone: 0300 555 0333
 - (c) Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
 - (d) Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
- 6.9 The Firm is committed to ensuring that all Directors, Consultants and Employees give their full co-operation to the Legal Ombudsman in the event of any dispute or complaint against the Firm.

7. Fees

7.1 Fixed Fee Services

Where our Engagement Letter states that we are charging on a fixed fee basis, additional services may be provided on request and (unless otherwise agreed by us in writing) will be charged at our standard hourly rates as set out in our Engagement Letter plus expenses (if any) and VAT.

7.2 Hourly Rate Services

- (a) Where our Engagement Letter states that we are charging on an hourly basis, the hourly rate varies according to the experience and expertise of the person dealing with the matter.

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The rates which currently apply to each level of fee earner are as follows: -

Director/Partner/Consultant
Senior Associate Solicitor
or Senior Chartered Legal
Executive £300.00 per hour

Associate or Assistant Solicitor/
Chartered Legal Executive/
Licensed Conveyancer / Private Client Lawyer
or Senior Paralegal £285.00 per hour

Paralegal/Trainee Solicitor
or Legal Executive/other
fee earner £160.00 per hour

- (b) The time spent on your matter for which you will be charged includes meetings with you and others, travelling, waiting, researching and considering, writing and receiving correspondence, making and receiving telephone calls, preparing and working on documents, making file notes, preparing invoices and other administrative tasks required to enable us to comply with our regulatory obligations and protocols.
- (c) The time spent on your matter is recorded as units of one tenth of an hour (6 minutes). Therefore, this is the minimum amount of time we will charge for any piece of work undertaken on your matter.
- (d) Periodically, we review our hourly rates. We will notify you in writing of any increase.
- (e) We will add VAT to our fees at the rate that applies when the work is done.

7.3 Bank Handling Charge(s)

The firm will make a charge of £40 plus VAT for handling each bank transfer made on your behalf.

7.4 Estimates

- (a) If we have provided to you a written estimate of the total charges, it is given only as a guide to assist you in budgeting and should not be regarded as a fixed quotation unless otherwise agreed in writing. We will inform you if any unforeseen but significant additional work becomes necessary.
- (b) It is often impossible to tell at the outset what the overall cost of a matter will be. If this is the case we will provide you with as much information as possible at the start and keep you updated as the matter progresses. If a precise figure cannot be given at the outset, we shall explain the reason to you and give you the opportunity to set a ceiling figure beyond which you do not want us to act without your consent or we may agree a review

date with you on which we will try to give you more information about the likely overall cost.

7.5 All Services

- (a) All expenses which we incur in working on your matter will be payable by you in addition to our fees. Examples of these expenses include Land Registry and Companies House fees, search fees, stamp duty (and similar taxes), fees charged by experts, agents, couriers and barristers, court fees, travel expenses and subsistence, international telephone calls and use of online databases. In addition, we may also charge you for telegraphic transfer fees, credit card handling charges, photocopying and other document production. VAT is payable on certain expenses, which you will need to pay in addition.
- (b) We will usually submit bills monthly but may choose to submit bills at other intervals during the course of working on your matter. We may also submit a bill on or at any time after conclusion of the matter or at the end of this Agreement. Our bills are payable when they are submitted to you.
- (c) We may also ask you at any time to pay money in advance of any fees and expenses being incurred by us (known as 'payment on account'). If we ask you to make a payment on account, we will not be obliged to undertake any further work on your matter until you have made that payment (and if you do not make the payment we may cease acting for you).
- (d) Where we decide to extend credit to you by carrying out urgent work on your matter after the money you have paid on account has all been used, you agree to remain liable for our fees regardless of whether or not we give you advance notification that we are going to extend credit to you.
- (e) It is your responsibility to tell us when first instructing us if you have any form of insurance cover (such as legal expenses insurance) that you think will pay our fees. You must also tell us when first instructing us if there is a third party who may pay our fees. If a third party agrees to pay all or part of our bills, you will remain responsible to us for payment until those bills have been paid in full.
- (f) If we are advising more than one person (usually individuals, companies or other entities) we will, unless otherwise agreed by us in writing, act for those persons jointly and severally. If we are asked to deliver bills only to one person, those bills will nevertheless be payable in full by all other persons we act for under this agreement.
- (g) If you are instructing us jointly in relation to any matter it is your responsibility to tell us at the outset of the Agreement if you require

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more than one person to give us instructions in relation to that matter. Otherwise, we will accept instructions from any one person and will not be responsible to any other person for any losses they may suffer as a result.

- (h) If you are a company or other commercial entity it is your responsibility to tell us at the outset of the Agreement if you require more than one Director (or equivalent) to give us instructions.
- 7.6 Our bills are due for payment within 14 days. If we do not receive payment of any bill within that time, then:
- (a) We may charge you interest (on a daily basis) on the unpaid element of the bill at 4% over the Barclays Bank Plc base lending rate from the date of the bill until payment, unless it is determined that you do not have to pay that element;
- (b) We may refuse to undertake any further work for you (whether in respect of the matter to which the bill relates or any other matter on which we are acting for you) until that bill is paid and/or we may stop acting for you; and
- (c) We may retain any papers or documents belonging to you, together with our own records.
- 7.7 If you have any queries in respect of any element of a bill, you should pay all other elements of the bill within the 14-day period.
- 7.8 Where we hold money for you, whether because you have made a payment on account or we otherwise receive funds on your behalf, we may use this money toward payment of our bills. We will always advise you when this is being done. If we take any security for our fees, whether from you or any third party, this shall not affect any rights we have (or which we may have) to retain your papers.
- 7.9 If you are unhappy about one of our bills, we would ask you to contact the lawyer with conduct of your file in the first instance. If your concerns are not addressed to your satisfaction and you wish to make a more formal complaint, you may do so by using the firm's Complaints Procedure (copy available on request). You may also have a right to object to a bill by making a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman and/or applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under part III of the Solicitors Act 1974. The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman can be found in the section relating to 'Client Satisfaction'.

8. Storage of Documents and Deeds

We retain all paper and electronic documents relating to your matter (other than any documents which are in your possession or returned to you) for at least seven years from the conclusion of our involvement in the matter. At the conclusion of the matter we will advise you how long we will keep

your paper file in storage before we destroy it. We will destroy your paper and electronic documents after this time as we are not permitted to keep information that we no longer need. You agree that we may destroy these documents after that time.

We will not destroy documents you ask us to deposit in our deeds store.

We do, however, reserve the right to fillet out from deeds and old files useless documents such as old searches and other papers that in our opinion are of no value.

- 8.1 We offer a storage service for wills, deeds and other securities, for which we reserve the right to make a charge. We may also ask you to sign our conditions of storage.
- 8.2 If you ask us to retrieve documents from storage there is a charge, which is normally £50.00 plus VAT for each matter, but may be more for urgent retrieval. We will not normally charge that fee if we retrieve documents to enable us to carry out further work for you. We will charge, however, for any work necessary to comply with instructions given by you in connection with retrieved documents. Unless otherwise agreed with you in writing, those charges will be at our hourly rates applicable at the relevant time and those charges will be applied on the same basis set out in clause 7.

9. Financial Services

- 9.1 The Law Society of England and Wales is a designated professional body under Part XX of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 which means that we may carry on certain regulated activities without being regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. This means that we may be able to provide limited financial services to you where such services arise out of, or are complementary to, the provision of legal services.
- 9.2 The Law Society is the designated professional body for the purposes of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, but responsibility for regulation has been delegated to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (the independent regulatory body of the Law Society), and responsibility for handling complaints has been delegated to the Legal Ombudsman. The contact details for the Solicitors Regulation Authority can be found at clause 1.3 and the contact details for the Legal Ombudsman can be found at clause 6.8.
- 9.3 The limited regulated activities that we carry out are issuing certain insurance policies, such as after the event legal expenses insurance, defective title insurance and other property indemnity insurance (such as breach of covenant, absence of easement, lack of planning permission, unknown rights and covenants policies).
- 9.4 We are not authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority. However, we are included on the register maintained by the Financial Conduct Authority so that we can carry on insurance

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distribution activity, which is broadly the advising on, selling and administration of insurance contracts. This part of our business, including arrangements for complaints or redress if something goes wrong, is regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. The register can be accessed via the Financial Services Authority website at www.fca.org.uk/firms/financial-services-register.

- 9.5 Any insurance policy arranged by us on your behalf, shall, in our opinion, be adequate to meet your needs, but you are hereby informed that we do not recommend any policy over and above any other and that it is your responsibility to check that you are satisfied with the excess levels, exclusions, limitations and other policy terms. We do not conduct a fair analysis of the insurance market prior to arranging insurance policies. You can request details of the insurance undertakings with which we conduct business at any time.
- 9.6 You hereby agree to provide us with details of any relevant existing insurance policies you may have and you agree that we shall not be liable to you for any losses you sustain as a result of your failure to provide us with such details.

10. Limitation of Liability

- 10.1 You agree that the limitations on our liability as set out in this agreement are reasonable having regard to the nature of your instructions and the work involved and the availability and cost of professional indemnity insurance. We may be able to consider options to increase these limitations (subject to our insurer's agreement), should you so require, but this may result in an increase to our fees.
- 10.2 We will undertake the work relating to your matter with reasonable skill and care.
- 10.3 If any part of this agreement which seeks to exclude, limit or restrict liability (including provisions limiting the amount we will be required to pay or limiting the time you have to bring a claim) is found by a court to be void or ineffective for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be effective.
- 10.4 We will not be liable under this agreement or laws of negligence for any deficiencies in the work we have undertaken if and to the extent that deficiencies are due to any false, misleading or incomplete information or documentation which has been provided to us (whether by you or any third party) or due to the acts or omissions of you or any third party. However, where any failure by us to identify any such false, misleading or incomplete information (or any failure by us to inform you that we have identified such information or any failure to act on your resulting instructions) constitutes negligence then we shall, subject to the other provisions of this agreement, remain liable for such failure.
- 10.5 Despite anything else contained in this agreement, we are not under any obligation to act for you (or to continue to act for you) if to do so would breach any laws or professional rules. Therefore, we will not be responsible or liable to you for any loss which you or any other party may suffer as a result of our refusal to proceed with your matter where we would be in breach (or we reasonably believe that we would be in breach) of our legal obligations or our professional rules.
- 10.6 Except as stated in 10.3 and 10.12, the total aggregate liability of Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited to you under or in connection with this agreement (including any addition or variation to it), whether for breach of contract, negligence, breach of statutory duty, or otherwise, shall not exceed £10,000,000.00 (ten million pounds).
- 10.7 Where we are instructed jointly by more than one party, the limit on our liability applies, in total, to all of you collectively (including anyone claiming through you or on your behalf).
- 10.8 You agree that you will not bring any claims or proceedings in connection with this agreement against our Directors, Partners, Consultants or Employees personally, unless (and to the extent that) you are otherwise permitted to do so by law or our professional rules. Our employees may enforce this clause even though they are not parties to this agreement (but despite having such rights, this agreement may be varied or ended without their consent).
- 10.9 Proceedings in respect of any claim against us must be commenced within six years after you first had (or ought reasonably to have had) both the knowledge for bringing an action for damages and the knowledge that you had the right to bring such an action and in any event no later than six years after any alleged breach of contract, negligence or other cause of action. This provision expressly overrides any statutory provision which would otherwise apply; it will not increase the time within which proceedings may be commenced and may reduce it.
- 10.10 If we and any other party or parties are liable to you together in respect of the same claim, then we shall only be liable to pay you the portion which is found to be fair and reasonable having regard to the level of our default. Therefore, we shall not be liable to pay you the portion which is due to the fault of such party, even if you do not recover all or any money from such other party for any reason.
- 10.11 If we are liable to you and any other party or parties would have been found liable to you together with us in respect of the same claim if either:
- (a) You had also brought proceedings or made a claim against them; or
 - (b) We had brought proceedings or made a claim against them for a contribution towards our liability,

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then any sum due from us to you shall be reduced by the proportion for which such other party or parties would have been found liable had those proceedings been brought or those claims been made.

- 10.12 Nothing in this agreement excludes or limits the liability of Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited for:
- (a) Death or personal injury caused by negligence;
 - (b) Fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation; or
 - (c) Any liability if and to the extent that it is not permissible in law for such liability to be limited or excluded.

11. Client Money

- 11.1 Subject to the conditions set out in Rule 7 of the SRA Accounts Rules, a fair sum of interest must be accounted to clients on client money.
- 11.2 Our policy seeks to provide for a fair and reasonable outcome for both our clients and the Firm.
- 11.3 Our policy on interest shall be kept under review. The policy may change if the Bank of England base rate increases or decreases.
- 11.4 The rate of interest available on client accounts is significantly lower than the rate of interest which can be obtained on other bank or building society accounts. This reflects the fact that immediate access is required to client accounts in order to comply with the accounts rules and to facilitate the smooth completion of transactions. It is therefore unlikely that the funds will attract as much interest as if you had invested those funds yourself.
- 11.5 All interest arising from cleared funds held on behalf of a trust will be credited to the trust whether those funds are held in a general client account or a separate designated client account (formerly known as a Designated Deposit Account).
- 11.6 For cleared funds paid into general client accounts, the Firm shall account for interest unless one of the following circumstances applies:
- (a) the amount of interest calculated on the balance held is £50 or less; or
 - (b) the money we held for you was held in cleared funds in our client account for less than 10 working days or less, irrespective of the amount; or
 - (c) interest has only accrued because you failed to present a cheque issued to you by us (without good reason).
 - (d) where there are specific circumstances which lead the client to contract out of the right to receive interest payments (for example where the client agrees the Firm may keep interest payments to remunerate the Firm for acting as stakeholder in the transaction or where the client's religious beliefs prohibit the receipt of interest).

Otherwise we shall account to you for any interest earned if it is fair and reasonable for us to do so and subject to any other written agreement between us.

As from the date of these Terms of Business the interest rate that will be applied under this clause is 1.42%.

- 11.7 In certain circumstances a separate designated client account will be opened on behalf of clients. All interest arising from funds held in separate designated client accounts will be credited to the client.
- 11.8 Where sums of money are held in relation to separate matters for the same client, the money relating to the different matters shall be treated separately unless it is fair and reasonable in the circumstances to consider the sums together.
- 11.9 Interest will not accrue on any advances from the Firm to fund a payment on behalf of a client or trust in excess of funds held for that client or trust.
- 11.10 Where a client fails to present a cheque to his or her bank for payment we will not recalculate any amount due to the client unless it is fair and reasonable to do so, for example if the cheque has been sent to an incorrect address.
- 11.11 We will usually account to you for interest arising under our policy at the conclusion of your matter, but might, in some cases, consider it appropriate to account to you at intervals throughout.
- 11.12 Unless otherwise agreed by us in writing, if we receive any sums to hold on your behalf (whether received directly from you or from a third party) then we may deposit such money into an account or accounts with any bank or financial institution (a "deposit provider" which expression shall include bank, financial institution or clearing house through which transfers are made) of our choosing. We confirm that we comply with any applicable laws and any applicable rules of a regulatory authority in respect of the making of any such deposits.
- 11.13 We shall not be liable for any loss which you or any third party may suffer in connection with an Insolvency Event occurring in relation to any deposit provider with whom we have deposited funds or through whom transfers are made, save if and to the extent that any such loss was caused by or contributed to by any breach by us of clause 11.13.
- 11.14 In clause 11 an 'Insolvency Event' means:
- (a) Any deposit provider is unable or admits inability to pay its debts as they fall due (or is deemed to be or declared to be unable to pay its debts under applicable law), suspends or threatens to suspend making payments on any of its debts or, by reason of actual or anticipated financial difficulties or commences negotiations with one or more of its creditors with a view to rescheduling any of its indebtedness;
 - (b) The value of the assets of any deposit provider is less than its liabilities (taking into account contingent or prospective liabilities);
 - (c) A moratorium is declared in respect of any indebtedness of any deposit provider;

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- (d) Any corporate or government action, legal proceedings or other procedure or steps taken in relation to:
- (i) The suspension of payments, a moratorium of any indebtedness, winding-up, dissolution, administration or reorganisation (by way of voluntary arrangement, scheme of arrangement or otherwise) of any deposit provider;
 - (ii) A composition, compromise, assignment or arrangement with any creditor of any deposit provider;
 - (iii) The appointment of a liquidator, receiver, administrator, administrative receiver, compulsory manager or other similar officer in respect of any deposit provider or any of its assets; or
 - (iv) Enforcement of any security interest (however so described) over any assets of any deposit provider; or
 - (v) The prevention or restriction (whether by way of freezing order or otherwise) of a deposit provider's ability to dispose of, deal with or diminish the value of its assets or any of them;
- (e) Any event analogous to those set out in clause 11.14(d) occurs in any jurisdiction in respect of any deposit provider.
- 11.15 If an Insolvency Event occurs in relation to any deposit provider which holds money that we have deposited on your behalf, we will, where applicable, need to disclose to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme ("FSCS") all relevant details in our possession about you and the money that we hold on your behalf with such a deposit provider in order to make a claim for compensation on your behalf. We will contact you to gain your consent if we need to make this disclosure. Please note that by withholding consent to our disclosure of your details to the FSCS in such circumstances, you may forfeit any right you may have to receive compensation from the FSCS where an Insolvency Event occurs in relation to a deposit provider holding money which we have deposited on your behalf.
- 11.16 We use the following deposit taking institution - Handelsbanken plc. Compensation from the FCSC for deposits is limited to £85,000 for any individual's total deposit with a service provider, including any personal finances. Please be aware that some deposit taking institutions have several brands where the same institution is trading under different names. The FSCS has a protection limit of £1million for temporary high balances, therefore if our client account holds more than £1million at the time of the insolvency, only the first £1million is protected by the FSCS.
- 11.17 Further information regarding the FSCS can be found at www.fscs.org.uk telephone number 020 7892 7300

12. Confidentiality, Privacy & Data Protection

- 12.1 The Firm is the 'Controller' for data protection purposes. This means that the Firm collects and holds your information and decides what it will be used for. The Firm is subject to the requirements of data protection legislation applicable to the UK and must use your personal data in accordance with the law. The Firm is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), with registration number Z3042199 The Firm's contact details are set out in clause 1 of this Contract.
- 12.2 Under data protection law, we can only use your personal data if we have a legal basis for doing so. Generally, we process your personal data on the basis of one or more of the following reasons:
- (a) To comply with our legal and regulatory obligations.
 - (b) For the performance of our contract with you i.e. to provide our services to you.
 - (c) For our legitimate interests or those of a third party.
 - (d) Because you have consented to us doing so.
- 12.3 We use your information primarily to provide legal services to you. We also use your information for: accounting and billing purposes; to comply with our legal and regulatory obligations, and to manage our business effectively. With your authority, we may also send you information about our services or events that we think may be of interest to you. Please confirm your preferences on the enclosed Client Declaration.
- 12.4 Where there is another party(ies) to your matter (i.e. opponent in litigation, buyer/seller to a property transaction etc.), we will liaise with their legal representative (or the third party directly if they are not represented) in order to progress your matter. This may involve us disclosing relevant information about you, to this party(ies) in order for us to provide our legal services to you (perform this Contract). Please contact us if you have any queries about this.
- 12.5 We may, on your authority, work with other professionals to progress your matter, and may need to disclose relevant information about you to them. Examples include: barristers/ counsel, experts, costs specialists, other lawyers etc. Please contact us if you have any queries about this.
- 12.6 Sometimes we outsource part of our work to other people or companies to improve efficiency and your client experience. We will always carry out due diligence and obtain confidentiality agreements from such outsourced providers. If you would like more information about our outsourcing arrangements, please contact us.
- 12.7 We may in some cases consult credit reference agencies in order to assess your creditworthiness. If you are an individual, we require your consent before we do this. We will contact you to gain your consent if we need to make this check. Please note that if you withhold your consent, this may

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limit the payment options that will be available to you. For example, we may not complete work for you unless you have made a payment on account. Details of the credit agency we use are available on request.

12.8 The Firm may become subject to periodic checks by Law Society approved Consultants and/or Assessors and compliance specialists that we engage the support of. This could mean that your file is selected for checking. All such checks are conducted by individuals who have provided the Firm with a Confidentiality Agreement. Please let us know if you would not want your file to be reviewed by a third party, your refusal will not affect the way your case is handled in any way.

12.9 We may correspond with you by email if you provide us with an email address, unless you advise us in writing that you do not wish us to do so. You acknowledge that email may not be secure. Email will be treated as written correspondence and we are entitled to assume that the purported sender of an email is the actual sender and that any express or implied approval or authority referred to in an email has been validly given. Please be aware that the Firm may monitor and read any email correspondence travelling between you and any mail recipient at the Firm as part of its monitoring activities to ensure compliance with its Information Management & Security Policy.

12.10 We will aim to communicate with you by such method as you request.

12.11 Where you provide us with fax or email addresses for sending material to, you are responsible for ensuring that your arrangements are sufficiently secure and confidential to protect your interests. You must tell us if this method of communication is not secure so that can use an alternative method.

12.12 The Internet is not secure and there are risks if you send sensitive information in this manner or you ask us to do so. Please be aware that the data we send by email is not routinely encrypted.

12.13 We will take reasonable steps to protect the integrity of our computer systems by screening for viruses on email sent or received. We expect you to do the same for your computer systems.

12.14 It is very unlikely that we will change our bank account details during the course of your matter. In any event, we will never contact you by email to tell you that our details have changed. If you receive any communications purporting to be from this firm, that you deem suspicious or have any concerns about (however slight), please contact our office by telephone straightaway.

12.15 During the progress of your matter, we may hold your information both electronically and in paper format. We will use all reasonable measures to ensure that your information remains confidential and will advise you immediately if we believe that any of your information has been

released. We have procedures in place with our staff members to ensure that your information is only seen by members of staff who have a legitimate reason for accessing your file, such as fee earners and support staff working on your file and senior members of the firm for the purposes of supervision, checking your file for quality purposes or to deal with any complaints.

12.16 Once your matter has concluded, we will hold your files in our archive storage (paper files) or on our file management systems (electronic files) for at least 7 years from the date that the matter is closed in line with our retention periods. After that period has elapsed, we will destroy your paper file securely. We will retain your electronic file indefinitely unless and until you ask us in writing to delete it. Once destruction and deletion has happened, your file will no longer be available.

12.17 We may transfer your personal data outside of the UK where our backup systems are hosted outside of the UK. However, we ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place obliging our system and storage providers to process your personal data to the standards expected in the UK. Our providers are bound by the same data protection laws as us, meaning that they have the same obligations to keep your data safe.

12.18 If you are an individual, you have the following rights under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR):

- (a) Right to access personal data – you can request details from us of the personal data that we hold about you;
- (b) Right to object to processing – you can tell us that you want us to stop processing your personal data;
- (c) Right to rectification – you can ask us to correct personal data that we hold because you believe it is inaccurate;
- (d) Right to erasure – you can ask us to delete the personal data that we hold about you;
- (e) Right to restrict processing – you can tell us that you only want us to use the personal data for a specific reason.

12.19 Please note that the rights described in clause 12.18, are not absolute rights (they are not rights that will be automatically granted), as we have to consider whether there are any reasons why we cannot meet your request. For example, we will not be able to delete data that we are legally obliged to keep. We will let you know if we are not able to meet your request and the reason why (where it is appropriate to disclose this information to you).

12.20 You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if you are not happy with the way that we handle your personal data. You can contact the ICO at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or by calling the ICO's helpline on 0303 123 1113.

12.21 Please note that where you provide consent to us using your personal data, you are entitled to withdraw that consent at any time. You can do this

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by informing your file handler or contacting our designated Data Protection Officer.

12.22 We have appointed Nick White as our Data Protection Officer and you can contact him to discuss any data protection related issues or queries on 01765 601717 or at n.white@eccles-heddon.com.

12.23 **Disclosing Information in Property Transactions**

12.24 Where we act for you and your lender we have a duty to fully reveal to your lender or HM Revenue and Customs all relevant facts about your purchase, your mortgage and what makes up the purchase price. This includes any difference between your mortgage application and information you or we receive during the transaction including any cash back payments or discount schemes or other incentives that the seller is providing or allowing or giving to you.

12.25 You must disclose all information which may affect your liability for stamp duty land tax or other stamp duty (duty) as we can then ensure you pay the correct duty. If you fail to disclose all information (and if in doubt, please disclose it as it can be discounted if it is not relevant) you must accept full liability for any penalties or action or other proceedings that any authority may take against you for failing to disclose information which resulted in a duty or greater liability to pay such duty.

13. Referrals to Third Parties

13.1 If we recommend that you use a firm, agency or business, we shall do so in good faith and because we believe it to be in your best interests. If we recommend that you use a particular firm, agency or business that can only offer products from one source, we shall notify you in writing of this limitation. We will pay to you any commission that we receive from any particular firm, agency or business that we recommend you use.

13.2 If we recommend that you use a particular firm, agency or business, we shall not be liable to you for any advice you may be given by that firm, agency or business and you are advised that if that firm, agency or business is not another firm of solicitors you will not be afforded the regulatory protection of the Solicitors Regulation Authority or of the SRA Code of Conduct and SRA Indemnity Insurance Rules, nor shall you be entitled to the benefit of the SRA Compensation Fund.

14. Hours of Business

14.1 All three of our offices are open between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday, excepting bank holidays. We do not provide an out of office or emergency service to clients. The person responsible for your matter may, at his or her absolute discretion, provide you with a mobile telephone number, and may endeavour to take your telephone calls outside of office hours, but nothing he or she says should be interpreted as an

agreement to routinely deal with your matter or to take your telephone calls outside of office hours.

15. Other Parties' Charges & Expenses: Litigation/Contested Matters Only

15.1 We will discuss with you whether your charges and expenses might be paid by another person. Even if you are successful, the other party is very unlikely to be ordered to pay all your costs and expenses, usually it will be only a proportion and you will have to pay the balance of our charges and expenses. In "small claims" cases you will not recover more than a nominal amount and in any claim where your opponent has public funding, you may recover nothing at all.

15.2 In Employment Tribunal cases, the normal rule is that each side has to pay their own costs. It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Employment Tribunal awards costs to the winner.

15.3 If you are successful and the court orders the other party to pay some or all of our charges and expenses, interest may be claimed on them from the other party from the date of the court order. We will account to you for such interest to the extent that you have paid our charges or expenses account, but we are entitled to the rest of that interest.

15.4 You will also be responsible for payment of the charges and expenses of seeking to recover any charges and expenses the court orders the other party to pay.

15.5 In some circumstances, the court may order you to pay the other party's legal charges and expenses; for example if you lose the case or lose on certain issues. In addition, the court has the power to assess costs and make orders for immediate payment during the course of a case. Such summary assessment may take place following any hearing, and will usually be made against the losing party at that hearing.

15.6 Any money so ordered or assessed by the court to be paid will in these circumstances be a liability payable by you in addition to our charges and expenses and in the case of summary assessment costs, within 14 days of making of the order. We will discuss with you whether our charges and expenses and your liability for another party's charges and expenses may be covered by insurance, and, if not, whether it would be advisable for you to have insurance to meet the other party's charges and expenses.

15.7 You remain liable to pay our bills in full to the extent that they have not been paid by any third party.

16. Funding Options – Litigation/Contested Matters Only

16.1 Our Policy

(a) Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited recognises the need for flexibility in funding litigation, and at the outset we will investigate with you the best way of

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paying for your legal representation. The purpose of this clause is to set out the details of the various options, though not all may be available for your particular case. Those that are will be discussed with you.

16.2 You can explore the following ways to fund your case:

- (a) Paying privately;
- (b) Legal expenses insurance;
- (c) Conditional fee agreement;
- (d) Contingency fee agreement;
- (e) Legal Aid

16.3 Paying privately

(a) If you pay privately you are responsible for paying our fees, including expenses. A consequence of your funding litigation is that you may also be responsible for paying the costs of your opponent. That liability can arise in the following situations:

- (i) during the course of the case there may be 'interim' hearings and matters which you could win or lose. If you lose one of these, then you can be ordered to pay the costs associated with that interim/matter hearing (regardless of the outcome of the case as a whole), in which case the costs will be payable within 14 days of the date of the order; and
- (ii) at the end of the case, if you lose at trial or agree to pay your opponent's costs as part of the settlement.

16.4 Legal Expenses Insurance (LEI)

- (a) You may find that you already have an insurance policy to cover your legal costs. This can be part of your buildings and contents insurance (for example). We would recommend that you check those policies (and any other relevant policies of your own or your spouse or partner) to see if such cover is provided. If it is, you need to get in touch with your insurer straight away to see if they will cover your claim. Some insurers have their own panel of solicitors, so you will need to check that your insurers will cover us for acting for you.
- (b) Similarly, you may be a member of a trades union or other affinity group, which may entitle you to have some or all of your legal expenses funded by a third party. We recommend that you check the terms of any such membership to see if you are so entitled.
- (c) Even if you have this type of cover or entitlement, any work which we do on your behalf prior to confirmation of cover from your insurer will be at your expense, regardless of whether cover is subsequently granted or not.
- (d) Often LEI covers not only the costs we incur acting for you, but also all or part of any costs that you are ordered to pay to the other side.

16.5 Conditional Fee Agreement (CFA)

A CFA is an agreement between a solicitor and client under which the solicitor agrees that you will not have to pay the costs if your claim is unsuccessful. You may know this as a 'no win, no

fee' arrangement. Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited does not undertake work on this basis.

16.6 Contingency Fee Agreement

A contingency fee agreement is an agreement whereby legal fees are calculated based on the financial value of the compensation recovered on your behalf or some other measurable level of success. Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited does not undertake work on this basis.

16.7 Legal Aid

- (a) In some circumstances you may be entitled to Legal Aid.
- (b) Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited does not undertake work funded on this basis. However, we will discuss with you where you can find information regarding qualification for such funding and may refer you to another local firm that could assist.
- (c) Should you not be entitled to Community Legal Funding or not wish to use such a funding method then we will be glad to conduct your matter on the most suitable funding arrangement for your case.

16.8 Summary

The options available for funding litigation are numerous. If you have any questions about funding which we have not already discussed with you, please contact us.

17. Anti- Money Laundering

17.1 Identity Checks

- (a) Unless we inform you otherwise in our Engagement Letter, you should assume that the Anti-Money Laundering Legislation applies to you.
- (b) All solicitors are obliged to carry out customer due diligence ("CDD") in accordance with the UK anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing regime. This includes us obtaining and keeping documentary evidence of the identity of clients and gaining an understanding of their financial status and normal business affairs.
- (c) In the case of individuals (including Directors, Secretaries and Shareholders of a Company or Directors of a Limited Liability Partnership), we require evidence of identity and address of each individual we are acting for. We use Credas an online electronic identification and verification service to assist us. In some circumstances we will also or alternatively need to see original documents and will discuss with you acceptable documents and methods of certification. If we utilise external agencies to assist with these checks we may charge you any expenses associated with such checks.
- (d) For all companies we will carry out a search of Companies House (or similar registry in foreign jurisdictions) and may ask for further information. We may charge you any expenses associated with such searches.

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- (e) For non-listed companies and other organisations, we will also require the evidence for individuals for one or more Directors, Company Secretaries, Shareholders, Partners or other persons authorised to represent the organisation.
- (f) For other legal entities we will inform you of the evidence required to confirm identity.

17.2 Disclosure to the Authorities etc.

- (a) We are in certain circumstance obliged under The Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017, Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 ('POCA') as amended by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 ('SOCPA') to make a report to the National Crime Agency ('NCA') where we are suspicious that any matter or transaction in which we are instructed involves the proceeds of criminal conduct. We may be prohibited by law from informing you or anyone else when such a report has been made, and it is possible that we may not be allowed to proceed with the transaction or matter concerned until NCA gives us permission to do so. We may not be permitted to tell you anything about any of these circumstances should they occur.
- (b) Where we are also acting for your proposed lender in a transaction, we have a duty to fully reveal to your lender all relevant facts about the purchase and mortgage. This includes;
 - Any differences between your mortgage application and information we receive during the transaction
 - Any cash-back payments or discount schemes that a seller is giving you.
- (c) If any term or provision of these terms of business or our engagement letter is inconsistent with complying with our legal obligations under Anti-Money Laundering Legislation, our legal obligations will override the inconsistent term which shall be deemed modified accordingly.
- (d) We will not accept any liability for any loss caused to you or any other party as a result of our refusal to proceed with a matter or transaction or otherwise complying with our legal obligations.

17.3 Cash Payments

- (a) We will not accept payments from you in cash of over £500.00 regardless of whether the payment is to settle our bill, to pay money on account, or in respect of transactions we may be acting upon (such as sales and purchases of businesses or property).
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt the £500.00 cash limit applies to each matter in which we are acting for you and not just to each transaction relating to that matter.

- (c) We shall not be liable to you for any losses you may suffer as a result of any refusal by us to accept cash payments of over £500.00.

18. Equality & Diversity

- 18.1 We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all of our dealings with clients, third parties and employees. Please contact us if you would like a copy of our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 18.2 If you have a disability and have any special requirements in relation to the way in which we handle your work, please let us know.

19. Rights of Third Parties

- 19.1 Except as stated otherwise in clause 10.8, a person who is not a party to this agreement shall not be entitled to enforce any of its terms.

20. Joint Instructions

- 20.1 Where we are instructed jointly by two or more clients in the same matter, each of them authorises the other to instruct us on behalf of all of them.
- 20.2 You authorise us to accept instructions from any one client as having been given by all clients unless we are notified to the contrary in writing.
- 20.3 If we consider there is a conflict of interest between clients, we will notify all of them.

21. Applicable Law, etc.

- 21.1 These terms and our Engagement Letter shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with English law. Any disputes or claims concerning this agreement and any matters arising from it shall be dealt with only by the courts of England and Wales.
- 21.2 If we or you do not enforce our respective rights under this agreement at any time it will not prevent either us or you from doing so later.

If any provision of this agreement is found by any court or administrative body of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect the other provisions of this agreement which shall remain in full force and effect.

22. Termination

- 22.1 You may end this agreement (and therefore, your instructions to us) at any time by writing to us by post, fax or email (see clause 1 of these terms for details). However, we may be entitled to keep all of your documents and deeds while there is money owing to us (including fees and expenses which have not yet been billed).
- 22.2 We may end this agreement (and, therefore, cease acting for you) in relation to any matter or all matters of yours but only on reasonable written notice and for good reason. Examples of a good reason include where you have not given us sufficient instructions, where you have not

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provided appropriate evidence of identification or we reasonably believe that the relationship between you and us has broken down.

- 22.3 If your matter does not conclude, or we are prevented from continuing to act because of our legal obligations or our professional rules, we will charge you for any work we have actually done. Our charges will be based on our hourly rates set out in this Agreement (and where a fixed fee has been agreed, the charges will not exceed that fixed fee).
- 22.4 If we cease acting for you, we shall (where relevant) inform the court or tribunal that we no longer act for you and shall apply to be removed from their records. We may charge you for doing so at our hourly rates applicable at the relevant time and those charges will be applied on the same basis set out in clause 7 and for any expenses which we incur on the same basis – also set out in clause 7.
- 22.5 If you are an individual consumer (and not a business entity) and we have not met with you prior to entering into this Agreement or, if we entered into this Agreement with you away from our business premises, you have the right to cancel this Agreement within 14 days of conclusion of this agreement (the 'Agreement Date' at the beginning of this Agreement). This right exists in accordance with The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013. Please refer to the 'Cancellation Notice' at clause 23 for further information about your right to cancel and the conditions attached to the same.
- 22.6 **If clause 22.5 applies, we will not start work on your file within 14 days of the Agreement Date. If you would like our service to start within 14 days of the Agreement Date, please sign the enclosed Client Declaration, mark the relevant box stating your wishes and return a copy to us.**
- 22.7 Once we have started work on your file within the cancellation period, on your instruction, you will be charged for any work done if you then cancel your instructions. You will have to pay us an amount which is proportionate to the work completed until we receive notice of cancellation from you, in comparison with the full coverage of this Agreement. These charges will be applied on the same basis as set out in clause 7 of this Agreement and where a fixed fee has been agreed, the charges will not exceed that fixed fee.

23. Cancellation Notice

- 23.1 This Notice (see next page) is applicable to you if clause 22.5 also applies to you. If you are unsure, please contact us immediately upon receipt of these Terms.

24. Older and Vulnerable Clients

- 24.1 We realise that it is especially important to treat older clients, their families and representatives, with additional consideration by being both sympathetic and sensitive to any issues they may have and ensuring that our firm and all our staff treat older clients and their families and representatives with dignity, kindness and respect at all times
- 24.2 Due to the nature of the advice that we may need to give, it is important that we see our client alone initially. However, we appreciate that some clients may prefer to have a trusted friend or relative present and we will try to accommodate this where we can. At some point throughout the process we will need to see our client alone, but we will do our utmost to make sure that the client feels at ease and understands why this is necessary
- 24.3 Where English is not the first language of our client or our client has difficulty hearing or with sight, we suggest that an appropriate independent interpreter assists, or a person that our client trusts to assist the client understand what is being discussed (but we will need to see our client alone for some time unless an appropriate independent interpreter is engaged)
- 24.4 We will keep a record of persons present at any meetings and confirm this in writing after the meeting has taken place, for elderly client matters
- 24.5 Where legal terminology has to be used, we take care to ensure that our client understands what has been said and will not proceed until we are satisfied that our client is comfortable
- 24.6 We will take steps to make ourselves aware of any potential capacity or physical limitations such as mobility, continence, hearing or visual impairment. These matters are always taken into account when meeting and communicating with older clients
- 24.7 Correspondence and documentation can be produced in large print if necessary
- 24.8 The pace and duration of each meeting we have is aligned to the needs of our client
- 24.9 Where appropriate, we will offer to visit our client's home. However, if a client visits our office we will let our client know what disabled parking facilities and access are available and ensure that toilet facilities are readily accessible
- 24.10 We are sensitive to the possibility that older clients may be discomforted if they do not have current passports or driving licences. Extra care is therefore taken not to cause our clients any embarrassment while ensuring that money laundering requirements are met
- 24.11 We ask that any person signing in the capacity as attorney for our client should also produce proof of identification for identity verification purposes

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24.12 We ensure that all relevant facts are noted in our attendance note of any meeting

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Instructions for Cancellation

Right to cancel

You have the right to cancel this contract within 14 days without giving any reason.

The cancellation period will expire after 14 days from the day of the conclusion of the contract (the 'Agreement Date' at the beginning of these terms).

To exercise the right to cancel, you must inform us, **Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited**, at our registered office **5 Westgate, Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 2AT** or at fax number **01765 602920** or at ripon@eccles-heddon.com, of your decision to cancel this contract by a clear statement (e.g. a letter sent by post, fax or e-mail). You may use the attached 'Cancellation Form', but it is not obligatory.

To meet the cancellation deadline, it is sufficient for you to send your communication concerning your exercise of the right to cancel before the cancellation period has expired.

Effects of cancellation

If you cancel this contract, we will reimburse to you all payments received from you, including the costs of delivery (except for the supplementary costs arising if you chose a type of delivery other than the least expensive type of standard delivery offered by us).

We will make the reimbursement without undue delay, and not later than –

(a) 14 days after the day on which we are informed about your decision to cancel this contract.

We will make the reimbursement using the same means of payment as you used for the initial transaction, unless you have expressly agreed otherwise; in any event, you will not incur any fees as a result of the reimbursement.

If you requested to begin the performance of services during the cancellation period, you shall pay us an amount which is in proportion to what has been performed until you have communicated us your cancellation from this contract, in comparison with the full coverage of the contract.

Cancellation Form

COMPLETE, DETACH AND RETURN THIS FORM ONLY IF YOU WISH TO CANCEL THIS CONTRACT

To Eccles Heddon Solicitors Limited, registered office at **5 Westgate, Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 2AT** or at fax number **01765 602920** or at ripon@eccles-heddon.com:

I/We hereby give notice that I/We cancel my/our contract for the supply of the following service:

Matter Number (located at the top of the client care letter/ Client Declaration)

Ordered / received on:

Name of client(s):

.....
.....

Address of client(s):

.....
.....

Signature of client(s) (only if this form is notified on paper):

.....
.....

Date: