

New STEP Cheshire chapter launch

A new Cheshire organisation for professionals involved in will-writing or estate planning has been launched.

Solicitors, accountants, financial advisers and will-writers from across the county have come together to form a new branch of the international professional body, The Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP).

And at their second session on November 25, they elected an inaugural committee with representatives from different disciplines across the county to take the group forward. Leading the new STEP Cheshire chapter as chairman is Stephen Lawson, a specialist in contentious probate and a partner in the law firm Forshaws Davies Ridgway LLP, based in Frodsham.

Supporting him as secretary is solicitor Louise Eccleston, a partner at Walker Smith Way in Chester and treasurer, Northwich accountant Chris Smith, of Howard Worth. The founding committee is completed by Macclesfield solicitor Helen Kelly, from SAS Daniels, as event coordinator, and Kevin Blyth, a banker in the estates department of NatWest Bank in Chester.

Stephen Lawson said: "We are delighted this new Cheshire STEP chapter has generated such an enormous amount of interest. The inaugural meeting in September was so popular, we had to move to a larger venue just to accommodate all the interested delegates.

"There is definitely a need for accreditation of professional people providing a service in wills and trusts to the public. The problem of disreputable will-writers has been highlighted in the media recently, and the public need to know who they can trust.



Pictured here at the STEP Cheshire meeting are the newly elected inaugural committee (left to right) Kevin Blyth, Louise Eccleston, Stephen Lawson, Helen Kelly and Chris Smith.

“As well as accreditation and education, STEP Cheshire will also offer cross-profession networking, support and development opportunities and set high standards of professional service.

“For anyone wanting to protect their family and affairs after they have died, selecting a professional with STEP membership will help to provide that vital quality guarantee.”

For more information about STEP, including their recently launched Certificate in Will Preparation, visit the website www.step.org or phone 0207 340 0500.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

For further information, please contact Stephen Lawson at Forshaws Davies Ridgway on 01928 739300 or by email at Stephen.lawson@fdrlaw.co.uk.

About Forshaws Davies Ridgway LLP (FDR)

- FDR is a full service legal practice with five offices in Cheshire and Warrington
- 18 Partners
- Over 120 staff
- Top 15 practice in NW
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- Mortgage Strategy Awards 2009 & 2010 'Best Conveyancer' Runner Up
- Services include: Commercial Law, Conveyancing, Criminal, Family, Litigation, Wills & Probate

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