



**News Release**

**2 December 2013**

## **Keep law local, says new Warrington Law Society President**

Keep law local is the message from newly elected Warrington Law Society President, Stephen Lawson, a partner at Forshaws Davies Ridgway (FDR).

Mr Lawson was elected president at the Warrington Law Society's annual meeting and he is determined to use his year in office to promote local law firms.

Echoing remarks made by the Lord Chief Justice in a speech in October, Mr Lawson urges both individuals and businesses to employ local solicitors instead of going to expensive, big city law firms.

"We have some brilliant lawyers right here in Warrington. They are experts in their fields and their charges are a fraction of the cost of the big city law firms, particularly in London," he said.

"The way to achieve more cost-effective, affordable justice is to think local. Businesses particularly often think they are getting better advice if they get it from lawyers based in large, impressive city offices. But this is usually not the case at all.

"Take FDR, we have a commercial department that has delivered complicated legal deals for a wide range of nationwide companies. The fact the firm is based in Warrington does not in any way make their professional service inferior to the big London, Manchester and Liverpool firms. It just means the client will receive a much smaller bill at the end of the project."

In his speech, the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Thomas, said he would like to see many more cases, both criminal and civil, being settled in courts outside London, which will make justice more affordable and convenient as well as being a boost to the local economy.

“The differences in costs are now huge,” he said. “London has no monopoly on skill or experience.... In the age of the internet, of tele-conferences, Skype and Facetime there is no reason why a litigant should not or could not properly instruct a lawyer from outside London to work for them at a cost significantly less than in London but with equal quality experience in most fields.”

Mr Lawson, who is head of FDR’s litigation department, hopes to use his year in office to shine a spotlight on the expertise of all 55 members of the Warrington Law Society.

Taking the chair is a familiar role to him. Three years ago he was asked to launch a new Cheshire branch of STEP (The Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners). As chairman, he has overseen the formation and expansion of the group, which is now flourishing with a membership of more than 60 professionals from across the county.

He was recently elected to represent North West solicitors, accountants, financial advisers and will-writers on the STEP worldwide council and is a former national secretary of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL).

And in September he was appointed to one of the country’s top legal advisory panels – the Law Society’s Civil Justice Committee. His own legal expertise is in personal injury claims, inheritance disputes and child maintenance issues. Several of his cases have attracted attention on the national stage including a recent Court of Appeal test case which successfully challenged Child Support Agency procedure in collecting child maintenance.

Stephen Lawson can be contacted at FDR on 01925 230000 or email [Stephen.lawson@fdrlaw.co.uk](mailto:Stephen.lawson@fdrlaw.co.uk). Follow us on Twitter: @QSFDR

## **EDITOR’S NOTES:**

### **About QualitySolicitors Forshaws Davies Ridgway**

- FDR is a full service legal practice with offices in Warrington, Stockton Heath and Frodsham, divided into Quality Solicitors Forshaws Davies Ridgway and a separate **fdr** Commercial Department at 21 Bold Street, Warrington.
- 16 Partners
- Over 100 staff
- Services include: Commercial Law, Conveyancing, Criminal, Family, Litigation, Wills & Probate.

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*On behalf of Forshaws Davies Ridgway*