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LATEST NEWS

Law Society launches consumer campaign calling for regulation of will writers

“New chapter” in home buying

Press Release**“New chapter” in home buying as first UK law firms secure quality mark**

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The first legal practices in England & Wales to secure membership to the Law Society's Conveyancing Quality Scheme practice standard have been announced today.

Martin Elliott & Co Solicitors (Colchester), Boys & Maughan (Kent), Hamers Solicitors LLP (Hull) and PCM Solicitors LLP (London) have become the first ever practices to obtain CQS status since the scheme opened for applications in January.

The practices underwent rigorous assessment by the Law Society in order to secure CQS status.

Congratulating the first ever legal practices to secure CQS, Law Society President Linda Lee said the CQS award was recognition for their high standards in residential conveyancing.

“These first practices are the flag bearers of the CQS and this recognition of the quality of their service begins a new chapter in the home buying process. In what is already a crowded conveyancing market, CQS accredited legal practices will be clearly visible to any one looking to buy a home.

“For what is the most expensive purchase of anyone's lifetime, it is vital that they can rely on the quality service provision of CQS.”

Jim Wyatt, Partner at Hamers Solicitors LLP says: “As the legal services market place opens up yet further in October customers will have a greater choice of legal providers. We want to be able to compete in this new market place by offering customers, old and new, a cost effective quality conveyancing service. This accreditation will help us do so.’

Martin Elliott of Martin Elliott & Co Solicitors adds: “The CQS emphasis on client care and the Client Charter will help us to continue to improve the conveyancing service that we provide.

“CQS will encourage the drive to e-Conveyancing and will encourage the standardisation of documents and procedures by use of the New Conveyancing Protocol – these will help us improve efficiency and speed of service without compromising professional standards. This can only be good for the consumer.”

‘The CQS will give homebuyers an instantly recognisable quality mark highlighting a firm's professional excellence and their commitment to providing a high quality service,’ says Peter Rodd, Head of Conveyancing at Boys & Maughan.

‘The traditional values and legal skill of solicitors coupled with their professional integrity and ability to embrace change means solicitors play a crucial role in bringing improvements to the home buying process. The new CQS scheme will drive up the quality of conveyancing and the level of service which solicitors give to their clients. We are delighted to be at the forefront of the new scheme.’

Paul Critchley, Senior Partner at PCM Solicitors LLP said: “We are delighted PCM Solicitors LLP is one of the first practices to achieve accreditation under the new Conveyancing Quality Scheme. We wholeheartedly welcome the launch of CQS and subscribe entirely to its core principles.

“CQS accreditation provides greater assurance for our existing clients, both individuals and financial institutions, that in PCM Solicitors LLP they have solicitors of the highest quality and competence. Prospective clients seeing the CQS logo can instruct us in the certain knowledge that their transaction will be professionally, competently and faultlessly completed.”

Practices applying to join the scheme undergo a robust assessment and will be required to renew their membership of the scheme each year. The aim of the scheme is to reinforce consistency of standards throughout the conveyancing process, reduce the risk of fraud and give consumers peace of mind when it comes to home buying.

Land Registry has welcomed the scheme as a step in the right direction to recognising high standards in conveyancing.

Marco Pierleoni, Chief Land Registrar and Chief Executive of Land Registry said: 'Land Registry is committed to combating registration fraud and in September 2010 as part of our counter-measures we collaborated with the Law Society in producing a joint practice note to assist in identifying and preventing registration fraud.

“We continue to work with a wide variety of organisations in this area and welcome the introduction of the Conveyancing Quality Scheme as a further step in improving the conveyancing process.’

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Notes to editors:

For more information on the Law Society's Conveyancing Quality Scheme visit www.lawsociety.org.uk/cqs

Or contact the CQS Unit on 020 7316 5550 or CQS@lawsociety.org.uk

Find out more about the Law Society and Land Registry joint practice note at <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/practicenotes/propertyfraud.page>

Contact: Steve Rudaini, The Law Society

+44 (0)20 7316 5624

www.lawsociety.org.uk/mediacentre