

QA
AND

VSH LAW

Established legal team...



Laura Carter



Janette Houghton



Louise Davies



Sophie Brooks

Laura Carter is Partner in Vincent Sykes and Higham LLP (VSH Law) in Thrapston. Laura, who joined the firm in 2015, has always worked locally. She is part of the four-strong Private Client team at VSH Law. Between them, the members of the Private Client team have countless years of experience in helping people with Wills, Powers of Attorney and Probate-related matters.

When was VSH law established?

VSH Law has a very long and rich history which can be traced back to John Archbold, who started a legal practice in Thrapston in 1831. Apart from a few years at the turn of the last century, solicitors have always occupied Montague House, with VSH Law being the most recent firm to do so.

Tell us more... Montague House also has a rich history; the house was built in the mid-17th century for Sir John Washington (a great, great, great uncle of George Washington, the

first president of the USA). The Washington family coat of arms was once at Montague House and is now in Thrapston parish church. Subsequently, the property was owned by a surgeon (Charles Washington Montague, who gave it its current name) and then used as solicitors' offices continually from 1831, interrupted only briefly while used as a day school for young ladies at the turn of the last century.

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What is the best thing about your job? It is a pleasure to have the opportunity of working in such a historic and lovely building. The décor is very tasteful too, our waiting room has a cosy feel to it. I also get the opportunity to meet so many interesting people and really enjoy helping them with important legal issues.

How have seen your work change during the pandemic? I have met many people and heard their stories about coping in these challenging times, often in very sad circumstances. I

have definitely seen an increase in people wanting to sort their Wills out. Meeting with people to sign their Will, particularly at the beginning of the pandemic, was challenging and unknown territory. We had to quickly learn and adapt to being more flexible in how and where we work. For instance, it is a basic requirement to physically watch Wills and many other documents being signed so that we can legally sign as witnesses. When we were told that we couldn't meet with people this obviously presented a big problem so we switched to holding virtual meetings. When we absolutely had to see clients, being a local firm, our solution was simply to have Will signing meetings outside or to pass documents through a window and witness through the window. This was lovely in summer but not so great in bad weather.

How many people work out of the Thrapston office? There are currently 18 people, we are not always there together though, so that we can

maintain social-distancing. At the moment we have a rota system with people working from home or in the office as needed.

What is the best thing about being in Thrapston? I really enjoy working in a small town, it's so easy to go to the shops at lunch and the market on Tuesdays.

Proudest moment? From a professional view, it was when I was invited to attend the opening of the legal year at Westminster Abbey in 2018. Although it was a few years ago now, it was a real privilege to be there and be part of it.

Dinner out or at home? At home. I love cooking, mainly savoury dishes because I have lost count of my failed cakes and puddings!

...and a favourite tittle to go with it? I am more of a foodie than a drinker, but I do like the combination of a cool lager with a spicy curry.

Jaffa cake or Hobnob? Jaffa cake. Although I don't have a sweet tooth, I do have a weakness for the combination of chocolate and orange.

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