

Law firm is just that little bit different

On the 1st of May 1999, Shetland-born solicitor Brian Inkster set up his own law firm based in Glasgow. Having worked for Jeffrey Aitken for eight years prior to this, he had been able to gain not only a broad base of experience but a substantial clientele, the majority of whom were living in Shetland.

To begin with, Brian along with his secretary Fiona Bracelin rented some space in Jeffrey Aitken's offices before moving a year later to Baltic Chambers in the heart of Glasgow's financial district.

From this base Brian has been able to develop and expand his business over the past decade to one that now includes two solicitors, one trainee solicitor and three support staff, with a further trainee solicitor joining the firm later this year.

These staff are all constantly updating their skills and embracing new technology to reinforce Brian's mission statement that Inksters as a firm of solicitors is "just that little bit different".

Only one year after setting up in business Inksters obtained recognition as an Investor in People, and from the outset Brian intended that his company should stand out from the crowd, making the point that not all solicitors are the same.

Services

Inksters covers a diverse range of legal work, but Brian himself has concentrated more in recent years on conveyancing and crofting law while his colleagues deal with civil court and private client issues. Inksters is able efficiently to handle property transactions, dispute resolution and debt recovery, as well as court actions in the Sheriff Court, Land Court, the Court of Session and the House of Lords.

Brian's colleague Gus Macaulay works mainly in family law. Gus recognises that this is a highly sensitive and personal area of the law and so cases are naturally dealt with in a non-judgemental way, which allows clients to be guided



The Inksters staff (from left): Fiona Bracelin, Kathleen Simmonds, Louise King, Brian Inkster, Gus Macaulay, Margaret-Anne Colgan and Karen Hughes.

Photo: Rob McDougall

towards the best possible solution. Gus has very recently trained in collaborative family law where family disputes are resolved, if at all possible, outwith the court process. Louise King, who will be joining the firm as a trainee solicitor, has a specialist interest in family law and will be assisting Gus Macaulay in this area.

Trainee solicitor Kathleen Simmonds is currently studying for a Trust and Estate Practitioners qualification which will enhance her knowledge of and ability to deal with the law surrounding wills and estates.

Inksters are able to act for a diverse range of clients, including private individuals and businesses.

Property and crofting law

As the majority of Brian's work is derived from Shetland he has had many and varied conveyancing transactions over the years.

A conveyancing error could cause much heartache down the line, but with his vast knowledge of conveyancing you can be assured that Brian Inkster will handle your personal property dealings carefully and

efficiently. Whether you are thinking about moving home, becoming a landlord or remortgaging, Inksters solicitors are well placed to help you.

In a unique place such as Shetland, Inksters has been able to move into niche markets, where Brian can provide help and advice with issues such as crofting law.

Such is Brian's expertise in crofting law that he now regularly lectures on the subject and he was instrumental, as a committee member of the Crofting Law Group, in introducing crofting law to the property law course at Strathclyde University.

Awards

The success of Brian Inkster and his company is underpinned by the achievements of the company, and the recognition and awards it has received.

In 2006, Brian won the Solicitor of the Year award. Not only was the general excellence of his work recognised, but the judges at the awards were keen to point out the niche areas in which Brian has chosen to specialise, most notably in

the area of servitudes. Servitudes are a complex set of laws pertaining in the main to rights of way and access over land.

Brian acted for the pursuers in the case of Moncrieff v Jamieson over this very issue, a case which was to run for nearly 10 years and eventually went all the way to the House of Lords. Professor Roderick Paisley of Aberdeen University described this as being "One of the most important cases on servitudes in the last 100 years". Brian won the case and in the past year has lectured on it for Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Strathclyde Universities.

A film about Inksters was made in October 2008 by the Telegraph Business Club as a Master class for their "Secrets of Success" series. Inksters was one of 15 businesses chosen and the only Scottish business to be involved. The film was released on 16th February 2009 and can be viewed at www.inksters.com/secrets.

Technology

Brian Inkster has been quick to embrace technology and use it to the utmost advantage for his business.

Distance is immaterial when most matters can be dealt with by phone, fax or email, but Brian has taken technology several steps further with the use of text services such as keytxt whereby property details can be sent straight to your mobile phone.

Brian has developed websites for properties based on postcodes, so for example if you Google www.shetlandproperty.com it will bring up all the properties that Inksters currently has on its books in Shetland. But you can narrow the search - www.zel.com will bring up all the properties available in that postcode area.

Inksters has prided itself on being first to try many new things as regards technology. It is the first firm of solicitors in Scotland to use the social messaging network Twitter.

Inksters was also the first firm of solicitors in Scotland to use a web based digital dictation system so that if Brian is in Shetland, he can dictate correspondence which can be picked up via his laptop by his secretary in Glasgow and that same correspondence can be dealt with immediately.

Inksters has also moved into TV and radio with videos and podcasts on aspects of the firm's services being available on its websites.

OfficeLodge

In 2005 Brian, along with his sister Hazel Anderson, established OfficeLodge to provide a base in Shetland in which to meet with clients and to more effectively deal with their business while he was in Shetland. OfficeLodge is a well equipped apartment in Lerwick which serves as both office and home from home. The apartment has all amenities and when Inksters is not using OfficeLodge it is let out to other business travellers to Shetland. Those business travellers have been very impressed with OfficeLodge and many return again and again.

OfficeLodge operates as a distinct business in its own right. In 2007, OfficeLodge won the Innovation Award at the Highlands and Islands Tourism Awards.

Although the company is based in Glasgow, Brian does not see this as a hindrance to the progress of the company. In fact it has distinct advantages. Shetland clients perceive a greater sense of confidentiality along with a degree of prestige when using a firm of "city" solicitors.

Being based on the mainland but with frequent trips back to Shetland, Brian feels that this set up really does offer the best of both worlds for his clients as he is able to maintain local links while having access to the wider amenities of the mainland.

The company will continue to develop and progress, embracing new technology and anything that helps to make things that little bit easier for the client. Inksters even has an online payment system. An easy thing to set up and maintain, but it seems that many solicitors firms at least are reluctant to do this but Inksters has grasped the opportunity. Just one more thing that makes Inksters "just that little bit different".




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Just that little bit different...
Not all solicitors are the same. Of course many do **property** and **estate agency**, but not many offer a property information service by text, or promote property on three unique websites. Of course many have a wide range of services just like Inksters, but few provide videos and podcasts on aspects of those services. Fewer still enable you to pay and manage all your legal accounts online.

In fact in all of our services, from **crofting law** to **debt recovery** and from **family law** to **making wills**, the one constant is that you can rely on Inksters to provide a distinct and personal legal service.

Telephone us on **0845 4 505 505**
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And being that little bit different... you can even follow us at twitter.com/inksters