



Q&A with Emma-Louise Green

Emma-Louise Green joined Meridian five years ago and is a senior associate with over 10 years' experience of litigation and dispute resolution within the private client sector.

What's your technical area of specialism?

I specialise in contentious trusts and probate; so, all disputes arising out of a deceased's estate ranging from challenges to the validity of a Will to claims for reasonable financial provision.

What are the biggest changes you've seen in the sector in recent years?

When I first started to specialise in contentious probate work, it was a fairly niche area of law. Now, more and more firms offer this type of professional advice. I see this as being in response to many things, most notably an ageing population and the changing shape of families. Individuals are living longer, but with reduced capacity, and family relationships and structures are different, with remarriage, cohabitation and stepfamilies more evident.

Younger people especially have struggled for many years to access the housing market and the rising cost of living has exacerbated this further. Consequently, more and more people are reliant on inheritance for financial support.

What key challenges do you see on the horizon?

Generally, the cost-of-living crisis is significantly affecting some people in their ability to pursue claims but at the same time we are seeing more people wishing to look at their options than they may have done if they were otherwise living in more financially stable times.

Historically, it would often be the case that a testator would have a solicitor that they always used in the preparation of their Will. On death, that solicitor would know the entire will-making history of the testator.

This is now less common as alternative options to a traditional face to face meeting with a solicitor are readily available, such as purchasing a DIY Will kit or online package. We see challenges arising where it proves difficult to obtain information about the circumstances surrounding the creation of a Will, the chronology of events, how a Will was executed or even that a particular Will was the last Will executed by the deceased.

I anticipate future complexities with technology and accessing digital documentation, particularly around passwords and data privacy.

Arguably, the law has not yet caught up with the reality of new, alternative family structures making the process of applying outdated legislation to modern day living increasingly difficult. Reform may assist with some of these challenges.

How do you 'switch off' from the day job?

I have two daughters under 4. Once I am with them, I have no choice but to switch off from the day job!

If you could choose anyone, who would be your mentor(s)?

My husband. He inspires and challenges me daily.

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