

BUSINESS



Progressive team Lockhart are delighted with the new branding



Helmsman Peter Lockhart has 40 years expertise



At the ready Kirsty and Mary are key staff

Leading Lockharts

STEPHEN HOUSTON

The modernisation of one of the oldest family law dynasties in Scotland is now complete.

But the expansion of Lockharts Law is far from over.

The famous Ayr firm is now on the search for two more top calibre lawyers backed by two additional office staff after an upsurge in private client business.

Sleek new branding has been introduced at the HQ in Beresford Terrace - but with a nod to the past.

The birth of the firm in 1876 takes pride

Law firm's brand new look

of place on the frontage. Now 143 years later, Lockharts is one of the few Ayrshire law firms making a substantial investment in the future.

Over the last three years, the firm has recruited new staff and installed the latest digital telephone and computer systems.

Partner Stephen Bradford said: "We are in a position to grow thanks to an increasing client base.

"We have got the staff right, the IT right, and now we have the premises right.

"Our goal is to offer a city quality service at town rates. We all want great service, provided locally, and law is no different.

"If you give the right advice and the cost base is right, you win. That is why we are so successful and people are now getting the message they can come to us rather than thinking they must head to Glasgow."

The four partners - Stephen, Peter Lockhart, Margo McGill and Lynsey Rowney-Craig - are backed by 11 staff.

With major business wins, they will

shortly begin recruiting for two more private client lawyers.

Peter, who heads the criminal department, said: "The firm really has gone from quill to the cloud of the internet.

"I am delighted with our modernisation and the reaction from clients and staff has been very positive."

Peter is well known throughout Scotland and is a Member of The Law Society of Scotland Criminal Law Committee as well as The Scottish Legal Aid Board Quality Assurance Committee.

The premises have been given a top-toe makeover including comfortable

couches and wood panelling.

The change gives the offices a hotel feel, miles away from some of the fusty premises of some lawyers.

Branding was designed by Peter's son Alasdair, who said: "The main aspect of the revamp was to modernise the brand but make it clear that the firm had successfully been in business since the 1800s. I think people like dealing with a progressive firm backed by a long history."

The firm's revamp was managed by talented young staff member David Brown.

Stephen Bradford has provided the legal work for major business deals in the area

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Fantastic four
Partners Lynsey Rowney-Craig, Peter Lockhart, Margo McGill and Stephen Bradford



Dealmaker Stephen Bradford's corporate advice is sought-after



Signed, sealed and delivered Lynsey Rowney-Craig, left, and Margo McGill



New look The engine room of the firm



Founding father John Lockhart

A fixture in the town since 1876

STEPHEN HOUSTON

Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull were wiping out Custer's army at Little Bighorn.

Queen Victoria was on the throne, Benjamin Disraeli ruled No.10, registered trademarks became a thing and Alexander Graham Bell invented the phone.

And Lockharts the law firm was born in Ayr.

The year was 1876 and John Lockhart opened a small office in Wellington Square.

The firm became John W & G Lockhart when his sons William and George came along.

By the 1950s, the office was in the High Street, where the Kyle Centre is now.

By this time the third generation was in charge, Allan S Lockhart heading the firm.

When Allan died suddenly in 1974, his sons George, David and Niels took over.

Peter Lockhart joined the practice with his brothers in 1979.

At that time, all five of Allan's sons – George, David, Niels, Christian and Peter – were in the firm. It had spread to branches in Kilmarnock, Cumnock, Irvine and Stranraer.

The HQ switched into the luxury of the Berkeley Hotel in Barns

Street in 1984 before moving to the present offices in Beresford Terrace in 2004.

At about the same time, the firm managed to lure Stephen Bradford into a partnership after a decade at top tier corporates in Glasgow.

The end of 2015 proved seismic in the direction of the firm with the death of the senior partner. The great Michael Scott had been there for 40 years.

In came Margo McGill for her agri-law expertise and later Lynsey Rowney-Craig, who would go on to become the fourth partner.

Lynsey, like Stephen and Margo, had gained her corporate experience with big city firms in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The partners are committed to staff training, ensuring everyone is up to date with both technology and the latest legal standards.

They were delighted to welcome the latest member of staff, Katie Eccles from Maybole, on reception.

She has been brought into the legal world under the Modern Apprenticeship scheme to help keep the Lockharts wheel turning long into the future.

into the future

and is currently providing legal advice to Ayr Rugby Club in relation to their multi-million pound move to Dam Park.

He said: "This is an exciting project which will bring first class rugby facilities to the town, a jobs boost and an increase in visitors. A good news story for Ayr."

Stephen has spent a decade at top tier corporates, perfecting his craft. His reputation has grown as a man who gets complex mergers and acquisitions done quickly. He represents successful Ayrshire businesses including Buzzworks, Windhoist, McMillan Hotels and some well-known house builders.

He said: "We have responded to changes in the market to beef-up our offering in Business Law and Agricultural Law, whilst ensuring we continue to deliver in the traditional areas of Conveyancing and Will, Trusts and Executory matters."

Lockharts took the decision to improve the experience for their clients after working with Buzzworks, who offer top-end premises for their customers.

Chairman Colin Blair said: "It's great to see Lockharts investing in modern, cutting edge branding and ensuring their clients get quality premises to

match the quality advice they offer."

Partner Margo McGill is Ayrshire's only accredited specialist in agricultural law and farmers are flocking to her.

And as the wife of a farmer and daughter of one, she speaks their language.

She was the only non-city solicitor to make the final of Scotland's Lawyer of the Year awards 2018.

Margo has spent time at MacLay, Murray and Spens in Glasgow as well as farming specialist Howat's.

Lynsey Rowney-Craig is the newest partner and has been with Lockharts for

five years after serving with corporate firms in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

She is a member of the Society of Trust Estate Practitioners, the Institute of Leadership and Management and has a Certificate of Professional Competence in Road Haulage.

Lynsey is dual qualified – in England as well as Scotland – and specialises in wills, powers of attorney and trusts and executory.

Lockharts welcome clients old and new to enjoy their expert legal services.

As Peter Lockhart puts it: "Think Law - Think Lockharts Law."

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