

Chris Handford
Regulatory Project Manager
Legal Services Board
Victoria House
Southampton Row
London WC1B 4AD



22 June 2012

Dear Chris

Consultation on the regulation of will-writing, probate and estate administration services

I am really pleased to be able to confine the Panel's response to your consultation to a short letter. This is because the LSB's analysis of the need for regulation, and your proposed approach, follows very closely the recommendations made by the Panel in our July 2011 report on will-writing and in our later submission on probate and estate administration services.

The LSB is proposing to issue guidance that would set a foundation of core minimum protections for consumers. The proposals fall in the right areas, but the devil will be in the detail when the regulators come to seek the LSB's approval for their proposed regulatory arrangements.

We are acutely conscious that consumers will continue to lack adequate protections until regulation is introduced so it is important that this happens speedily. I know that the LSB is aware of this and will work with colleagues at the Ministry of Justice to make progress as quickly as possible.

In the meantime, we encourage you to continue to seek improvements from the existing regulators and trade associations operating in this sector. Our jointly commissioned research found that solicitors and unregulated will-writers were equally culpable for producing sub-standard wills. However, while we are heartened by trade association initiatives to correct problems, we are unaware of any action to date by the SRA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elisabeth Davies".

Elisabeth Davies
Chair