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ECONOMIC DOWNSWING ENCOURAGES MORE PEOPLE TO EARN INCOME FROM WILLWRITING

The Institute of Professional Willwriters (IPW) has witnessed a surge in enquiries from people looking to supplement their income, by acquiring professional qualifications in Willwriting.

Earning additional household income, or a second income, through Willwriting, is increasingly being viewed as a way in which to cope with the financial pressures caused by the dramatic economic downturn, says the IPW.

Topping the list of professionals wishing to make Willwriting another string to their bow are financial advisers, followed by mortgage brokers, conveyancers and estate agents.

Although enquiries about IPW membership have steadily increased over the last two years, as the IPW has become the leading authority in the Willwriting sector, a rise of 50% in new members has been witnessed so far this year, compared to last year.

IPW Chairman, Paul Sharpe, says: "Willwriting is an ideal source of supplementary income for professionals who already have a client base that trusts their services, although anyone can work towards the professional qualifications required by the IPW.

"The main hurdle that any new Willwriter has to overcome is finding potential clients who might need a Will. Established professionals usually don't experience this problem, making their entry into Willwriting much easier, but anyone who is a confident networker can make a good contribution to their income through Willwriting, if they commit to learning about the legal processes that make Willwriting such an important profession."

To assist those wishing to add Willwriting to their portfolio of services, or make Willwriting a career choice, the IPW provides a variety of training courses that teach the technical aspects underpinning the processes of advising on Wills and writing them.

Training enables professionals to acquire the knowledge that allows them to provide advice to clients and take instructions from them. The instructions can then be passed to an established IPW member, so that the Will can be drafted.

Alternatively, tuition can be provided to a higher level, so that the drafting of Wills can also be carried out.

Members draw on various sources of technical expertise provided by the IPW, including an online forum, e-mail support and a document checking service. From day one, this network of support delivers confidence to a new member, through confirmation that their advice and work is professional, ethical and competent.

IPW members also benefit from the IPW's provision of crucial professional indemnity insurance (PII) at sector leading rates. Its negotiated rates enable members to provide £2 million of cover, with a £1000 excess, for a premium of just 1 pc of fee income.

The IPW is the first organisation in its sector to obtain Stage One approval from the Office of Fair Trading for its Code of Practice. This endorsement has enabled IPW members to continue to develop business opportunities, despite the difficult economic situation.

IPW training courses have enjoyed a high level of attendance throughout the year, according to Paul Sharpe. In October, the demand from people wishing to become professional Willwriters was such that an additional entrance examination was laid on.

As more people look around for ways in which to cope with rising food prices, high mortgage payments and fuel charges, IPW membership is likely to become even more attractive to those wishing to become a qualified and professional Willwriter.

More information about the IPW and the opportunities available for people wishing to train as professional Willwriters can be obtained from www.ipw.org.uk or by telephoning 08456 442042.

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