

Alerts

Warning: Email misusing the name of Hart Brown LLP

29 March 2023

An email has been sent falsely claiming to be from 'Gerard Sanders' of Hart Brown Solicitors.

What is the scam?

The SRA has been informed that an email has been sent falsely claiming to be from 'Gerard Sanders' of Hart Brown Solicitors.

The email seen by the SRA appears to be in respect of an unclaimed inheritance.

The email was sent from the email address garywatsonllp189@gmail.com.

Any business or transactions through the email address garywatsonllp189@gmail.com is not undertaken by a firm or individual authorised and regulated by the SRA.

Is there a genuine firm or person?

The SRA authorises and regulates a genuine firm called Hart Brown LLP whose head office is in Guildford. The firm's genuine email domain ends in @hartbrown.co.uk.

The SRA also authorises and regulates a genuine solicitor called Gerard Sanders who is a Partner at Hart Brown LLP. Mr Sanders' genuine email address is gts@hartbrown.co.uk.

Hart Brown LLP has confirmed that neither it, nor Gerard Sanders have any connection to the email referred to above.

What should I do?

When a firm's or individual's identity has been copied exactly (or cloned), due diligence is necessary. If you receive correspondence claiming to be from the above firm(s) or individual(s), or information of a similar nature to that described, you should conduct your own due diligence by checking the authenticity of the correspondence by contacting the law firm directly by reliable and established means. You can contact the SRA to find out if individuals or firms are regulated and authorised by the SRA and verify an individual's or firm's practising details. Other verification

methods, such as checking public records (e.g. telephone directories and company records) may be required in other circumstances.

More information

Update 5 May 2023

The SRA has been informed that further similar emails have been sent, relating to the above alert.

We understand that the further emails again related to a supposedly unclaimed inheritance and misused the name of a genuine solicitor and firm (see above alert), but were sent from the email addresses of 'gerardsanderssol@outlook.com' and 'garywatsonllp209@gmail.com.'

Any business or transactions through the emails of 'gerardsanderssol@outlook.com' and 'garywatsonllp209@gmail.com' is not undertaken by a firm or individual authorised and regulated by the SRA.