

Alerts

Warning: Letters misusing the name Bates Wells & Braithwaite and an address used by Bates Wells

17 September 2021

Letters from 'Vance Jorge' misusing the name Bates Wells & Braithwaite and an address of Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP (t/a Bates Wells).

What is the scam?

We understand that letters have been sent to members of the public from 'Vance Jorge', in relation to a supposedly unclaimed inheritance from someone with the same surname as the recipient.

In the letter seen by the SRA, 'Vance Jorge' falsely misuses a genuine firm's name and address (please see below).

The recipient of the letter is asked for their consent to provide details to a 'Custodian Firm' as next of kin to the late client in order to obtain the release of the inheritance, which would then supposedly be split in equal parts between the member of the public and 'Mr Jorge'.

The letter provides contact details of a telephone number of '+44 7883250268' and an email address of 'vancejorge5@gmail.com'.

The SRA does not authorise or regulate an individual solicitor called 'Vance Jorge'. Any business or transaction through the letters, email address or telephone number referred to above is not undertaken by a solicitors' firm authorised and regulated by the SRA.

Is there a genuine firm or person?

The SRA authorises and regulates a genuine firm of solicitors called Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP (SRA ID: 465497), which trades as Bates Wells. The firm can be contacted on 02075517777 and its office genuine office address is 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE.

The genuine firm of Bates Wells & Braithwaite London LLP has confirmed that it does not have any connection with the letter referred to in the above alert.

The SRA also authorises and regulates genuine firms called Bates Wells & Braithwaite (SRA ID: 464759), which is based in Ipswich, and Bates Wells and Braithwaite Limited (SRA ID: 591524) which is based in Sudbury,

Suffolk. Neither of those genuine firms are believed to be connected to the letters or matters in the above alert.

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.