

# **Thorntons combine forces with Edinburgh law firm Stuart & Stuart in historic merger**

**Two of Scotland's oldest legal firms have announced a merger strengthening the fourth-largest independent legal business in Scotland.**

Edinburgh firm Stuart & Stuart WS has joined forces with leading Scottish firm Thorntons Solicitors. Both firms can trace their roots back to the 19th century and will now create a new, expanded business of 564 people, of whom 71 are partners.

Stuart & Stuart senior partner, Chris Anderson, described the merger, which takes effect on 1 April, as "a fantastic move for two firms which share a remarkably similar outlook".

He said: "In a career which has seen its fair share of deals, this was one of the simplest and most positive transactions. Both firms have a long and proud pedigree of client service and I have no doubt the newly enlarged firm will continue to forge ahead."

Under the terms of the merger, Stuart & Stuart's entire team of 31 based at their Rutland Street offices will transfer to Thorntons. Chris Anderson will become a consultant to the new firm and John MacKenzie, Fergus Macmillan, Andrew Bertram and Emma Horne will be appointed partners at Thorntons, with Ken Lauder appointed a legal director.

Thorntons recently posted a record turnover for last year of £31.2million, and has grown in recent years into one of the country's leading full-service law firms, with offices in Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth and in Angus and Fife.

Thorntons managing partner, Lesley Larg, emphasised the importance of ensuring its expansion aligns with the values it brings to clients and the communities it serves.

She said: "It is incredibly encouraging, having received many, many approaches over the years, that Stuart & Stuart have chosen Thorntons as a trusted home for their clients and their people. I'm looking forward to welcoming Stuart & Stuart's people to Thorntons and am excited about the significant benefits arising from this deal. There are many similarities in terms of the services the firms provide, our shared values which drive how we operate for our people and our communities, and our mutual focus on excellent client care.

"Stuart & Stuart is a venerable private client firm in the broadest sense, offering residential conveyancing, estate agency, wills, trusts, powers of attorney, executries and family law. It is central to our strategic plan that we remain a full-service law firm and accelerate our growth in the Central Belt, and therefore Stuart & Stuart is a superb, complementary fit, given its culture, history and commitment to outstanding client service.

"We look forward to providing a wide range of opportunities for the Stuart & Stuart team as we welcome them into the Thorntons family."



Left to Right Colin Graham Chairman of Thorntons, Lesley Larg Managing Partner and Chris Anderson Senior Partner of Stuart & Stuart