

Things to think about before making your Will

Why Make a Will?

There are many reasons why you should make a Will, but the key reason is that it tells your family and friends what your wishes are for your assets when you die.

For some people, particularly unmarried couples and 'blended' families, a Will is critical to make sure that your family do not lose out hugely when you die.

If you do not make a Will, a set of legal rules dictate where your money and property go: it is not up to your family to decide.



What can I expect at the meeting?

We will discuss your family and other people who are important to you, discuss your assets and property that you own, discuss how inheritance tax will affect your estate, and obviously go through your wishes for your Will.

The meeting should last between 30 minutes and one hour.

What do I need to consider before coming?

It's useful to have at least thought about your views on some of the points below before the meeting, although it is not necessary to have actually made firm decisions. The solicitor will help guide your decision making process and advise you on things you are not sure about. Some things you could think about are:

- What assets you own, and think about what they might be worth. These include bank accounts, investments, property and also personal items such as jewellery and antiques.
- Whether you have pension pots, life insurance policies or a Death in Service lump sum, and check these to see who gets the benefit of them when you die.
- Who to appoint as your executors
- Who to appoint as guardian of your children
- Would you like to make some cash gifts, or gifts of specific items?
- To whom would you want to leave the rest of your estate (called the "residue")? What you would want to happen to your estate if they died before you?

What do I need to bring?

- Full names and addresses for all the people you want to mention in your Will
- A brief list of all your assets
- Photo ID and Address ID so we may take copies
- A copy of your existing Will, if you have one

What will it cost me?

- We charge fixed fees for drawing up a standard Will, or a pair of standard mirror Wills for a couple—'standard' means a Will which essentially leaves everything to a named person or persons, with a back-up in case they have died before you. The usual example is to leave everything to your husband or wife, and then to the children on the second death.
- If your circumstances mean that a more complex Will is required, including trusts, multiple shares or gifts, or with complex arrangements for the beneficiaries, then we will charge more. The solicitor will advise you of our charges in the meeting, before going ahead.
- If you need advice as to your inheritance tax position beyond the standard overview given at the meeting, we will also charge additional fees based upon our hourly rates. The solicitor will give you more details.
- Please contact us by email or telephone to confirm the current fixed fees.

What happens after the meeting?

- We will send you a draft Will to check together with an explanatory letter, and when you are happy with the draft, we will arrange another brief meeting for you to come to sign the Wills.
- We will store your Wills for free in our fire-proof cabinet, and register your Wills with the Certainty Will Register