



Why should I make or revise my Will?

A correctly drawn Will is an inexpensive way of avoiding difficulties for your relatives and friends in the future in the event of your death. It puts you in control of the final destination of your estate.

If you do not have a Will:

1. Your husband or wife does not automatically inherit your entire estate. The law will determine how an estate is divided up which can cause problems. If you are not married but have a long-term partner they will get nothing - the law does not automatically recognise a common law wife or husband.
2. If you have children under 18 years old, they could be left without a legal guardian who can make decisions about where they live, their schooling and upbringing. If there was no other provision at all then they would be placed in the care of social services.
3. The estate that you expect to pass on could pay unnecessarily high taxes, reducing the amount available for the next of kin. Where an estate is worth a significant amount over £325,000.00 the Inheritance Tax saving by planning through Wills can be significant.
4. If you are divorced with young children and your ex-spouse cares for them, they may be able to take control of any money on behalf of the children even though they will not inherit it themselves.

If you make a Will:

1. You can enjoy peace of mind knowing that your loved ones are provided for and that they will receive the full value of your estate.
2. If you have children under 18 years old you can ensure that:
 - a) they will be cared for by the people that you choose (their guardians). You can also express your wishes regarding your children's upbringing.
 - b) the money you leave is looked after on their behalf by trustees who you have appointed. This is particularly important if you have

been divorced since control of the money may otherwise go to your ex-spouse.

3. You can remember your friends and relatives outside your immediate family and benefit chosen charities if you wish.
4. You can include your preferences for your funeral.

If you already have a Will:

- If you are going through a divorce or civil partnership annulment and made a Will whilst married or in registered civil partnership you need to review the position now. The Will made will still be valid until the divorce or annulment proceedings are completed. The Will is partially revoked by a divorce. It remains valid but any appointment of the former spouse or civil partner as executor and bequests to him or her are treated as deleted. Separation without divorce or annulment has no effect on the Will and if this applies to you, you should review your Will or make a Will now.
- You should update your Will regularly particularly, if you have children born after the date of your last Will or a change in your financial situation.
- You can easily transfer Wills from other solicitors to Wards Solicitors and we will hold the Will for you. There is no charge for this service and no production fee.
- We have implemented a system whereby we will contact you every 3 years and ask if you wish to review your Will. There may have been a change in your circumstances or the tax regime which you need to consider.

Wards Solicitors offer a Postal Will Service for your convenience and a personalised One to One Service for more complex Wills.

Please ask for our current Will charging rates.

For more information on Wills please follow the link wards.uk.com/wills-and-mental-capacity. Please feel free to contact Jenny Pierce, Solicitor and head of Wills & Probate on 01179 292811 or at jenny.pierce@wards.uk.com