

What should you do now?

The cost of making a will is not high, especially when compared to the heartache and confusion that could be caused after your death if you have no will, or have left an ambiguous 'home-made' one.

But, perhaps most important of all, a properly drafted and up-to-date will means your family and friends are provided for, as you intended, after you have gone.

Whether you are considering making a will for the first time or reviewing your existing will, we will be happy to talk to you and provide you with an estimate of our costs without obligation. Please feel free to contact us for further information on 01942 777777.

We believe the information contained within this leaflet to be correct at the time of publication. While all possible care is taken in producing this leaflet, no responsibility for loss can be accepted by the firm, however caused.

About Stephenson's

Stephenson's provides legal advice for all aspects of your personal or business life. By understanding your circumstances and keeping the red-tape to ourselves, we focus on efficiently delivering what you need, when you need it. Operating from a number of regional locations, we rank among the top 100 UK law firms and are one of the fastest growing practices in the north west. With over 300 staff, you can trust our specialists to take care of things on your behalf, always putting your best interests first. So, for legal advice and action the way you want it, just turn to Stephenson's.

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legal services the way you want them

www.stephenson's.co.uk

T: 01942 777777

Now is the time to make a will



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Why you need a will

Whilst most people don't like to plan too far into the future or contemplate the inevitable, we all need to make sure our loved ones are looked after. As someone who cares deeply about the welfare of your family and friends, you will want to make sure that your money and possessions (known as your 'estate') are distributed as you would wish when you die.

Considering the following questions should help you to understand why it's so important to have a legally binding and up-to-date will:

- Do you expect your spouse to inherit all your property?
- Do you want to make special provisions for children, grandchildren and friends?
- If you have young children, wouldn't you feel safer having appointed a legal guardian in case something should happen to you and your spouse?
- Would you like advice about how best to minimise the impact of Inheritance Tax so that it is your family that benefits, not the taxman?
- Wouldn't you want to appoint someone you know and trust to ensure your wishes are respected?

If your answer is 'yes' to any of the above, you need a properly drafted and current will.

If you die without making a will ('intestate'), your estate will be divided according to the law, regardless of your wishes.

Administering an estate is always complicated, and dying intestate can add further heartache and stress to what is already a difficult time. Stephenson's has vast experience in making wills, dealing with associated tax issues and administering estates of any size – which we do speedily, efficiently and sympathetically.

When circumstances change

Changes in your personal circumstances can affect parts or all of your will, to the extent that you may even need to draft a new one.

Examples of this include:

- Getting married or re-married
- Divorcing or separating from your spouse
- Additional children in the family
- Your wealth increasing

If you need to alter your will, you should seek legal advice. We can recommend whether you should make a completely new will or whether an amendment ('codicil') is all that is required. You should not attempt to alter an existing will or attach anything to it, as this may cause the will to not be legally binding.

Why you need qualified legal advice

Your will is an important legal document and needs to be drawn up by a qualified legal expert. Solicitors are uniquely placed to offer unbiased, confidential advice and usually we will be able to complete matters quickly and simply.

There are, however, occasions when more detailed planning may be needed. In these circumstances, we have the resources to provide the right advice. We can, for example, provide advice on Inheritance Tax, trusts and other financial matters where substantial savings could be made to benefit your family.

We can also act as your executor (the person who takes charge of administering your estate after death), if you wish.

