

# GIFTS IN WILLS: FAQs

## **WHY SHOULD I WRITE A WILL?**

If you have children, family, friends or charities that you wish to provide for, having an up-to-date Will is the only way of ensuring that your estate is distributed exactly how you want. A Will enables you to set out what happens to your savings, property and possessions. Without one, your estate will be distributed in accordance with the law, and people or charities close to you may not receive the support you want.

## **WHEN SHOULD I WRITE A WILL?**

Many people choose to write a Will when they first buy a property; others may do so when they have children, nieces, nephews, or other people they'd like to provide for. It's up to you when you write your Will, but it's important to remember that unless you have a Will, there's no way to ensure your estate will be distributed as you want.

## **WHAT CAN I INCLUDE IN MY WILL?**

You can include almost anything you own in your Will. You should include any savings you have, any property you own and any other high value items such as a car. In addition to that, you may also want to include any items with sentimental value.

## **HOW MUCH DOES MAKING A WILL COST?**

If you use a solicitor, the cost of a Will may be cheaper than you'd expect. Costs vary and are likely to be higher depending on the complexity of your Will, but a simple Will can cost as little as £100.

## **DO I NEED A SOLICITOR TO MAKE A WILL?**

We strongly advise that you use a solicitor or qualified advisor to write up your Will. The main reason for this is to ensure that there are no mistakes in your Will, which may render it invalid. As well as ensuring accuracy, a solicitor will ensure that your Will is right for your particular circumstances. A solicitor can also store your Will for you.

## **I ALREADY HAVE A WILL; SHOULD I UPDATE IT?**

Circumstances change and it is advisable to review your Will every three to five years. If you want to make a fairly simple change to your Will, like adding a new beneficiary, such as the WGS Trust, you can do so by adding a codicil. A codicil form is included in this pack. If you want to make major changes, it is usually better to write an entirely new Will. Speak to your solicitor to find out more.

## **I DON'T HAVE MUCH TO LEAVE, SHOULD I STILL WRITE A WILL?**

No matter the size of your estate, you'll still want to ensure your assets are distributed in a way in which you are happy and that loved ones are looked after. If you choose to leave a gift to the WGS Trust in your Will, however large or small, it is always greatly appreciated and will have a real impact on the lives of future Withington students.

## **HOW WILL MY ESTATE BE TAXED?**

You may be liable to pay inheritance tax on the value of your Will over the current inheritance tax threshold. The threshold, and the percentage of tax that will need to be paid, is liable to change, so it is important to check the current situation when writing your Will. A gift to the WGS Trust, or any other charity, will be deducted from the portion of your estate that is liable for tax.

At the time of writing, the current inheritance tax rate is 40%. However, if you leave 10% or more of your estate to charities, such as the WGS Trust, you will pay a reduced rate of 36% inheritance tax on the rest of your estate.

## **HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?**

If you would like more information about leaving a gift in your Will or to discuss it further, please contact our Director of Development, Lesley Dowdall, on 0161 249 3491 or email [ldowdall@wgs.org](mailto:ldowdall@wgs.org).

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The language used in Wills is formal. Below is an explanation of some of the terms used.

<b>Beneficiary</b>	A person who benefits from a gift in your Will.	<b>Pecuniary Gift</b>	A gift of a specified sum of money.
<b>Bequest/Legacy</b>	A gift in your Will.	<b>Residuary Gift</b>	A gift of what is left of your estate (or part of) after all debts, taxes, costs and other bequests. It can be a percentage, fraction or part of an estate.
<b>Codicil</b>	A 'supplement' making a change or addition to your existing Will	<b>Reversionary Gift</b>	A gift of a Will that reverts to another beneficiary (such as a wife, husband or child) when the original beneficiary dies.
<b>Estate</b>	Total sum of all your assets such as possessions, property, savings and money, minus liabilities such as any mortgages or other debt, at the time of your death.	<b>Conditional Gift</b>	A gift that provides for the eventuality that if none of your named dependants survive you, your estate will be left to other named beneficiaries and charities, such as the WGS Trust.
<b>Executor/Executrix</b>	A person you ask to make sure the wishes expressed in your Will are carried out. Executors can also be beneficiaries.	<b>Specific Gift</b>	A gift of a particular item in your Will e.g. a painting, antique, jewellery, etc.
<b>Inheritance Tax</b>	The tax levied on your estate if it is more than an amount specified by HM Revenue and Customs. Making a charitable donation in your Will can reduce the inheritance tax paid on an estate. A gift to the WGS Trust is exempt from inheritance tax.	<b>Testator/Testatrix</b>	The person making the Will - you!
<b>Liabilities</b>	Any outstanding debt or expenses that need to be paid from your estate.	<b>Witness</b>	A person present at the signing/authorising of your Will. A witness cannot be a beneficiary. You need two witnesses, both present, when you sign a Will.