

Writing your Will

- 1. The Value of your Estate.** Make a list of all your assets – include property, savings, shares and life insurance – and estimate their value. This will give you a good idea of the value of your estate.
- 2. Beneficiaries.** Decide who will benefit from your Will such as family, friends or organisations, and decided what you would like to leave each beneficiary.
- 3. Appoint Executor(s).** Executors are people (or a person) named in your Will who will carry out your wishes. They can also be beneficiaries of your Will.
- 4. Seek Professional Advice.** Although making a Will can be a straightforward process it is important to seek professional advice to make sure your Will is valid and represents your wishes.
- 5. Keep your Will Safe.** Only the original signed and witnessed Will is legally binding. You can store your Will with some banks, your solicitor or accountant, or with professional Will writers. The Probate Department (Probate Office in Northern Island) can also store your Will for you. Tell your Executor(s), a close friend, or a family member where it is.
- 6. Keep your Will Up to Date.** An out of date Will is potentially the same as having no Will. You should review your Will every five years or so, and after any major changes in your life such as a change of relationship status, having a child, moving house or if an Executor dies.
- 7. Changing your Will.** You cannot change the Will itself once it has been signed and witnessed but you can make simple alterations via a Codicil. A Codicil, a legally binding document inserted into your Will, changes specific provisions of your Will but leaves the other provisions unchanged. There are no limits to how many Codicils you can add to your Will but for major changes it is recommended you make a new Will.
- 8. Outside the United Kingdom.** If you are making a Will outside the UK please ensure that you obtain advice in the relevant jurisdiction as different rules may apply.

More detailed information can be found at:

www.gov.uk/make-will

www.willaid.org.uk

