Basic elements of a will
A will must:

- Be in writing, signed and dated by the person making the will plus 2 witnesses who must not be beneficiaries or married to someone who is a beneficiary.
- Show clear details of who will receive your property and/or possessions.
- Name suitable executors who will see that your wishes are complied with.

Other things you might want to think about...

- Wider financial planning
- Organ donation
- Making a funeral plan
- 5 things you want to do before you die
- Powers of attorney
- Your future care

Useful contacts / websites

Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau
08444 111 444
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Law Society of England and Wales
020 7242 1222
www.lawsociety.org.uk

Solicitors for the Elderly
0844 567 6173
www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com

Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP)
020 7340 0500
www.step.org

We value your feedback. All comments to:
End of life Public Health Team
01270 758120
publichealth@eolp.org.uk
Winterley Grange, Unit 8, Wheelock Heath Business Court, Alsager Road, Winterley CW11 4RQ
www.cheshirerivingwelldyingwell.org.uk

If you do write a will as a result of reading this leaflet we’d particularly like to hear from you.

“We are Macmillan. Cancer Support”
www.macmillan.org.uk
Tel: 0800 808 00 00

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Misconceptions

I’ve got nothing worth leaving
Wills are not just about money and possessions.

You might:-
• Have children or pets and want to say who you want to look after them.
• Have your own business and want to take care of your employees’ future.
• Want to pass on ‘gems’ of wisdom or messages to your family.

I’m too young to make a will
• Life is uncertain – accidents or illness can strike at any time.
• It is easier to prepare in good times when life is less stressful.
• You can make a will if you are 18 or over and understand what you are doing.
• Research shows that writing a will can give you peace of mind.

I’m in debt but that gets cancelled when I die anyway
• Debts don’t die with you.
• Your debts will be paid before your loved ones receive anything.

Everything will go to my partner/family anyway
• Unless you have been through a legal ceremony like marriage or civil partnership, partners and friends have no entitlement to inherit without a will.
• Without a will, assets of more than £250,000 may be divided between members of the family in proportions that you wouldn’t wish for.
• Without a will, your partner may be left homeless if you own / part own their home.

It’s depressing and I don’t want to tempt fate
None of us like to contemplate our own mortality, but there is no evidence that writing a will invites bad luck!

It’s really complicated, time-consuming and costly
‘I couldn’t believe it was so easy. It only took about half an hour’ (J Hardiman, Winsford)

The cost will vary dependent on the complexity of your circumstances.
• Solicitors have special offers from time to time and will give a no obligation quotation if you call.
• Many solicitors will offer a short free consultation during which they can advise you of the cost. They can quickly tell whether it will be a straightforward or complex will.
• Charities frequently run will campaigns.
• Look out for special offers during Will Aid week.

Other reasons to make a will
• To have your say giving peace of mind for you and your family.
• To avoid family disputes/upsets and legal headaches.
• To give someone you love an opportunity e.g. a holiday, wedding, business opportunity or university education.
• To remember the kindness of a friend or give support to a charity.
• You have been married before and / or have step children.
• To reduce the chance of a large tax bill for your family.

Value of professional advice
• It’s possible to write a valid will without advice, but it’s easy to make disastrous mistakes.
• Professional advice can give you reassurance that you have created a valid document and that your wishes will be accurately carried out.
• If you have difficulty getting out, most solicitors can do home visits.
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