



giving  
nature  
a home

Leaving a gift in your Will to the RSPB can do something

**INCREDIBLE**

Your legacy is nature's future

We will make you this

**PROMISE**



## Our commitment to you

---

If you are considering remembering nature in your Will, we promise you this:

- **We value any gift, large or small**
- **Your gift will be used wherever it can have the greatest impact on the conservation of nature**
- **We will respect your privacy and handle your enquiry with care, sensitivity and respect**
- **You can always change your mind about your gift to the RSPB.**

### **Priorities change as nature changes**

As the world changes, threats to nature change too. For your gift to have the most impact, we would like to be able to use it wherever the need is greatest. But if you feel strongly about a specific area of work, please speak to one of our legacy advisers on **01767 693276** or email **[legacy.team@rspb.org.uk](mailto:legacy.team@rspb.org.uk)**



A brighter future  
for the nature you

LOVE



---

Nothing beats being out there, either in bright sunshine or in the elements, and seeing some of our most beautiful birds in their natural habitat. There is a wonder to it. A breathtaking connection that touches you on a very deep and personal level.

I'm sure you recognise feelings like this. Yet I suspect that you do more than just love nature. You're making efforts to protect it, wherever you can. And by supporting the RSPB, you've joined up with others who care too. Clifftops, woodland, meadows, fells and riverbanks are all safer because of you. As are the birds and wildlife that live there.

This booklet tells you how a gift in your Will can help defend our wild places and wildlife far into the future. It shows how you can make a lasting and profound difference.

Thank you for everything you've done already, and for considering this now.

*Martin Harper*

**Martin Harper, Director of Global Conservation**

**“I'll never forget watching swifts skim across the long gone ponds near my home. My wife and I have made a provision for a gift to the RSPB in our Wills, to help them preserve and benefit our natural environment.”**

**Paul Greenstreet, Legacy pledger**





What we achieve

TOGETHER

## The power of collective action

---

By coming together with others who care, you provide nature with a dedicated champion. And that allows us to achieve some truly awe-inspiring things. Together, we have strengthened wildlife laws. We have worked with land developers, to ensure that natural habitats aren't damaged. We have helped create and conserve spaces where our native birds can flourish.

These things take time, sometimes even decades. But when we stay committed, positive things happen. Together, we can help the UK's birds to live in peace and to thrive.

As just one example of something the RSPB's supporters are helping us to achieve, look at the golden eagle. Wildlife crime is causing serious problems for these beautiful birds, but because of you, we can now satellite-tag them to monitor their safety more effectively. You've also allowed us to fight for stronger sanctions against wildlife crime. These are watershed moments in the battle against raptor persecution and, in time, we will win our fight for the golden eagle. Because of the support that you give us.

**“With a gift in your Will to the RSPB, you can leave a rich heritage of natural history.”**

**Andy Evans, RSPB, Head of Nature Recovery**



The gift of

**STRENGTH**



## You can provide a sure footing for the future

---

Picture tens of thousands of starlings, cresting and falling in formation as the sun sets over the horizon. You may have been lucky enough to have seen this spectacular phenomenon and if so, you'll know just how breathtaking it is.

Such murmurations of starlings, and many more spectacular sights, are now more common in Britain thanks to the safe and sustainable habitats we can provide at our RSPB reserves. This is just one example of how your support can result in beautiful, natural spaces for the birds we all love.

Gifts in Wills help form the backbone of this support, and they are a vital component of what we've been able to achieve over recent decades. To put it very simply; without them, we couldn't do as much. You could even go as far as to say that our birds and their habitats rely on these acts of kindness.

By establishing a sure foundation for our work, we can do great things. And with a gift in your Will, you can help build the strong future that nature deserves.

**// It is wonderful to know that my legacy gift to the RSPB will one day go towards helping create many more wild places."**

*Judith Woodman, Legacy pledger*



You can make a big

**DIFFERENCE**



## What a gift in your Will could mean

---

There is an important role that you can play in the future. A gift in your Will could achieve some magnificent things for birds, wildlife and the natural world.

- You can help to keep our beautiful reserves at the heart of the RSPB's work. You can help them to form an important part of the UK's landscape and its wild spaces.
- You can ensure that our migratory birds, which give us the sights and sounds of summer, are protected and cared for.
- You can ensure that there is always urgent, intensive help available to any species at risk. And you can prevent others, such as puffins and the turtle dove, from declining in numbers.
- You can help science to better understand threats to birds and wildlife, find intelligent workable responses to these threats, and to help the wider world live and work in a way that is not detrimental to nature.

- You can change the way we all think and feel about nature. From government officials to the person on the street.
- You can build a future that is stronger, better and brighter.





Ready for the

**FUTURE**

## Preparing for an uncertain world

---

There will always be pressures on the natural world. It's why our woodlands, forests, and coastal and marine areas will always need people who recognise their beauty and value them. People like you.

The good news is that our efforts for nature make a positive difference. Already, we have helped to develop and implement sustainable methods of crop cultivation that work better for birds and wildlife, while retaining high yields for the UK's farmers. We have devised and influenced fishing practices, so that the albatrosses and other birds are left alone and unharmed. We have helped change the way governments, both here and abroad, see nature.

None of these things were simple or easy to do. But you helped us to do them. So we know that with your support, and by using our research, expertise and influence effectively we can meet future challenges and change things for the better. All we have to do is stay committed, and stay the distance.

**“ I love nature. It is beautiful but I worry what we have done to it. I can help by leaving a gift to nature to say thank you for all it's given me.”**

**Katie Thorne, Legacy pledger**



A kingfisher with a blue back and orange breast is perched on a thin, curved branch. The background is a blurred waterfall with white water cascading down. The scene is set in a lush, green environment with various plants and leaves visible on the right side.

A lasting

# LEGACY

## Take the time that you need

---

Everyone has their own reason for leaving a gift in their Will to the RSPB. For some, it's to help protect a species that they really love. For others, it's to strengthen the future of our reserves, and other wild places that mean something special to them. Whatever your reason, we know that considering leaving a gift is a very private and personal matter. And so we want to thank you for taking the time to think about this.

There are some things that you can be certain of, however, as you consider leaving a gift to the RSPB.

- We would never expect you to prioritise our work over your personal and family relationships. We would only ask you to consider us after such decisions about your Will have already been made.
- You do not have to be wealthy to make a tangible difference.
- The RSPB is proud to be a world leader in the protection of birds and nature. You can trust us to use your gift wisely.

**// The RSPB aims to protect birds, but also the entire ecosystem of which they're a part. Their support and guidance when I was thinking about a gift in my Will has been excellent."**

Stuart Robinson, Legacy pledger





giving  
nature  
a home

How to leave something

AMAZING

An introduction to making your Will





# How this guide can help you

---

**We hope you'll find this to be a helpful introduction if you're considering making your Will, or updating one you already have.**

It isn't legal advice, as everyone's situation and wishes are different. But we hope that dipping in here will de-mystify some aspects of Will making and you'll feel better equipped for a conversation with your solicitor.

It's easy to get DIY Wills wrong, so we strongly recommend using a legal professional such as a solicitor or an accredited Will writer. It doesn't have to cost a lot, and there are savings to be made if you and your partner want to make very similar 'mirror' Wills.

If your affairs are straightforward, you may, however, prefer the convenience of an online or telephone Will writing service.

Our legacy advisers are also here to help, so do get in touch with any questions you have after reading through these pages.



# Why is it important to make a Will?

---

**If you want the people and causes that matter to you to benefit from what you leave behind, then writing a Will is the best way to be sure of this.**

If you own your own home, you may be surprised at how much it's worth today, and your Will enables you to choose who should receive the proceeds of its sale.

A Will lets you decide who you would like to give any savings or shares to. And it allows you to choose who your 'goods and chattels' should go to – these are your possessions, anything from a car, to jewellery you love.

Many people also use their Will to say something about what they'd like for their send-off, for example donations to charity instead of flowers, what music they'd like, even what they'd like people to wear!

If at the time of your death you don't have a valid Will, you'll be declared 'intestate', which means your estate will be shared out according to strict rules that determine who in your family circle should inherit, even distant relatives.



# Choosing your gift

---

**Your Will is a chance to look after the people you love. The RSPB understands this completely. But if you would also like to protect the nature you love with a gift in your Will to the RSPB, there are different ways to do so.**

## **Residuary gift**

The residue of your estate is whatever's left over after any specific and pecuniary gifts, administration fees, and the cost of sorting out your estate have been paid. You can leave a share of the residue.

## **Pecuniary gift**

This is the gift of a fixed sum of money. It's worth bearing in mind that inflation can nibble at its value over time, so we recommend reviewing your Will from time to time to make sure it still reflects your intentions.

## **Specific gift**

This is the gift of a specific item, like jewellery, or an asset, like shares.



# What to consider when writing your Will

---

**Thinking about the things below will help you to gather your thoughts. You can also note down any questions you want to ask before you go to a solicitor or accredited Will writer.**

## **Work out what you have to leave**

It's useful to jot down what you own and a rough idea of the value. This could include: property or land, investments, savings, life insurance, your car, furniture and all your personal possessions. Then jot down anything you owe, for example a mortgage, bank loans, overdraft and credit cards.

## **Decide who you want to remember in your Will**

Most people want to use their Will to look after family and friends. After that, you may like to leave something to a charity whose work matters to you. Before going to a solicitor or Will writer, have a think about how you would like to divide your estate between everyone.

You can leave a percentage or portion of your estate (a residuary gift), a possession (a specific gift), a sum of money (a pecuniary gift), or a mix of these.

## **Inheritance tax**

This is a tax payable on the value of your estate when you die. The first part of your estate is taxed at 0%; i.e. no tax, but any value over your 'nil rate band' will pay tax at 40% or 36% depending on the terms of your Will.

There are a number of exemptions and reliefs available from paying inheritance tax depending on your personal circumstances. Gifts in your Will to a charity like the RSPB are tax free, so can help reduce any tax bill or rule one out completely. If you think inheritance tax could apply to you, it is important to seek professional advice as an expert will be able to tell you the best and most tax efficient way to write your Will.

---

### **Keeping your Will safe**

Once you've written your Will, it's important to keep the original Will safe. A solicitor or Will writer can store it, or you can store your Will yourself with the Probate Service (England and Wales). There are other dedicated Will storage businesses available. We would also recommend registering the location of the Will with Certainty, the National Will Register.



# Solicitors, Will writers and executors

---

## Choosing a legal professional

You can find a local solicitor in your area who specialises in Will writing by visiting [lawsociety.org.uk](https://www.lawsociety.org.uk) or by calling **020 7320 5650**. Fees for writing a Will vary, so it's worth shopping around. Alternatively you can find a professional Will writer on [ipw.org.uk](https://www.ipw.org.uk) or by calling **0345 257 2570**.

## Appointing your executors

Your executors are the people who will carry out the wishes in your Will and pay from your estate any debts or tax you owe. It can be quite a time-consuming job, so it's sensible to ask someone first before making them an executor.

Anyone can be your executor, including people who benefit from your Will (though beneficiaries must never act as a witness to the signing of your Will). Sometimes people appoint their solicitor as an executor.

In certain circumstances the RSPB may act as your executor. If you'd like this, please call us first so we can talk about it and, if appropriate, give you some suggested wording for your Will writing professional to include in your Will.



# Wording for your gift to protect nature's future

---

Simple, small errors in a Will can create confusion and cause delay in carrying out people's wishes, which is the last thing any of us want for the people we leave behind. If you've decided that putting a gift in your Will to the RSPB matters to you, then it's important to get right the RSPB's name, address and charity number.

Here's an example of some useful and accurate wording for your solicitor:

*'I give to The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Registered Charity Number 207076, of The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL, (hereinafter called the RSPB) the residue (or share of the residue) of my estate/the sum of £\_\_\_ and I direct that (i) the proceeds may be used for the general purposes of the RSPB and (ii) a receipt signed by a person for the time being authorised by the Council of RSPB shall be a good and sufficient discharge to my executors.'*





# Explaining some of the legal jargon

---

## **Asset**

Something you own, such as a home, savings, shares, possessions.

## **Beneficiary**

Any person or charity receiving a gift in a Will.

## **Codicil**

A simple legal document that alters or adds to an existing Will.

## **Estate**

The total value of everything you leave behind.

## **Executor/executrix**

Someone you appoint in your Will to carry out your instructions when you're gone.

## **Intestacy**

If you die without making a valid Will.

## **Legacy/bequest**

A gift left to a person or charity in your Will.

## **Life interest/reversionary bequest**

A gift left to someone for the remainder of their life, for example a home, after which it is passed to a person or charity of your choosing.

## **Probate**

A legal process granting the executor(s) of your Will the right to go ahead and administer it.

## **Residue**

What is left of your estate after all expenses, administration fees, gifts of fixed sums of money and personal possessions have been distributed.





giving  
nature  
a home

**If you would like any more information or have any questions about leaving a gift in your Will to the RSPB, we are always happy to help.**

**Please call one of our legacy advisers on 01767 693276 or email [legacy.team@rspb.org.uk](mailto:legacy.team@rspb.org.uk)**

The RSPB is a registered charity in England and Wales no. 207076, in Scotland no. SC037654.

Cover image: Malcolm Hunt (rspb-images.com)