

## Probate and administration of estates

### Death of a loved one

When a loved one or close friend dies, it is the responsibility of the Executor to prove the Will. This can be difficult particularly combined with other commitments or the emotions surrounding a bereavement.

However as an Executor, you are under strict legal obligations to ensure that the debts of the estate are dealt with; that any taxes are paid and that the assets of the estate are distributed in accordance with the terms of the Will. If the deceased left no Will, he/she is said to have died "intestate" and the burden of administering the estate can be much greater than would have been the case had a Will been made. The closest relatives will then be responsible for sorting out the estate.

### Can Berry and Berry help?

Yes. We have experienced probate solicitors, who can help as much or as little as they are needed. On the one hand, we can offer advice on the procedures required to obtain "probate" and perhaps, obtain for you the documents needed to enable you to administer the estate yourself. On the other hand, we can take on the complete administration of the estate, relieving you of the burden and enabling you to fulfil the deceased's wishes with the minimum of difficulty. The choice is yours.

In any event, we will explain clearly what is involved and offer advice on all aspects of dealing with the Estate.

### Time and Costs

Each estate is unique and the matters needing to be addressed during the administration will vary considerably in their complexity. We will always manage the work in a sensible and cost effective manner, and can help the Executors to comply with all their legal obligations with the minimum of difficulty.

Executors and beneficiaries are sometimes concerned with the time that is taken for an estate to be dealt with and with the costs involved.

As soon as the details of the estate are known, we will explain clearly an estimate of the length of time it will take to complete the administration, when we will charge and provide an estimate of these charges. Throughout the matter we will tell you at regular intervals what progress is being made and what further action is required to complete the administration.



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