

## Death of a loved one

Coping with the death of a loved one or a close friend, can impose a great strain on you and your family, if you are appointed as the Executor of the estate, or are the Administrator designated by the Rules of Intestacy. However, you must also begin to comply with the provisions of the deceased's Will or the administration of his/her estate under the Rules of Intestacy if the deceased left no Will.

## Legal obligations

As an Executor or Administrator, 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 or the Rules of Intestacy.

## Intestacy

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 surviving relatives will be responsible for sorting out the estate and then sharing it out in accordance with the Administration of Estates Act 1925.

## Can Berry & Berry help?

At Berry & Berry, the lawyers in our Probate Department have many years experience in administering estates of all sizes and complexities and are able to steer a clear and logical path through the administration maze.

We are able to offer a range of services to meet your needs as Executor or Administrator. On the one hand, we can offer advice on the procedures required to obtain Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration and, perhaps, obtain for you the Grant or Letters 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.

## Dealing with the Estate

Naturally, we can deal with all aspects of the administration of the estate on your behalf, including:

- Assisting with the funeral arrangements
- Settling the Tax affairs of the deceased
- Arranging valuations of assets in the estate
- Obtaining the Grant of Probate or Letter of Administration
- Calculating Inheritance Tax on assets
- Settling any tax liabilities arising during the winding up of the estate
- Advising whether any tax savings are possible
- Arranging sale, auction or disposal of assets
- Arranging payment of any debts and legacies
- Advising on and dealing with the sale of any property
- Collecting in and distributing the assets amongst the beneficiaries

## Variable Complexity

Each estate is unique and the matters needing to be addressed during administration will vary considerably in their complexity. Whatever the size of the Estate, from a few hundred pounds to many millions, we have the experience to deal with it in a sensible and cost effective manner, and can help the Executors or Administrators to comply with all their legal obligations with the minimum of difficulty.

## Time and Costs

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

We will explain clearly at the beginning of the administration how and when we will charge and provide an estimate of these charges as soon as the details of the estate are known. We will also provide you with an estimate of the length of time it will take to complete the administration.

Throughout the matter we will tell you at regular intervals what progress is being made and what further action is required to complete everything.

Our aim is to provide a professional and personal service and to deal with all probate and administration matters as efficiently as possible. We will advise at all stages on the simple and more complicated aspects of the administration of the estate with which you are concerned.

Please contact us at any time for an informal discussion about your requirements.



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