



ELM LEGAL SERVICES GUIDE TO ESTATE PLANNING

WHAT IS ESTATE PLANNING?

Estate planning is the process of arranging and managing your assets and affairs in preparation for your eventual passing or potential incapacitation. This involves creating legal documents that detail how you want your assets to be distributed, who will take care of any minor children or pets, and who will be able to make decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make them yourself.

It isn't just a single event, but a meaningful journey that ensures your wishes are honoured and your loved ones are protected. At ELM Legal Services, we guide you through every step of this process, providing expert advice, and complete peace of mind.

ABOUT US

We take pride in being one of the UK's leading providers of Will Writing, Estate Planning, and Probate services. Our entire team shares a common mission: to protect your loved ones and your hard-earned assets with simple and accessible solutions.

Since 2000, we've helped over 30,000 families secure their legacies. With our wealth of experience, we make the entire process easy to understand, hassle-free, and personalised for every stage of life. Every service we offer comes with expert guidance, ensuring you always receive one-to-one support.

“ A LITTLE PLANNING TODAY CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE TOMORROW ”



LAST WILLS & TESTAMENTS

A Last Will and Testament is a legal document that outlines the distribution of your estate (everything you own) upon your death. It also serves several other critical functions, such as naming Guardians for minor children or pets, appointing Executors to handle the distribution of your estate, and providing instructions for funeral and burial arrangements.

Without a valid Will, your estate will be distributed according to the Rules of Intestacy. These rules do not automatically allow unmarried partners, stepchildren, foster children, or friends to inherit, and they might even direct your assets to people you may not have wanted to inherit, such as the Crown.

We help you craft a comprehensive Will that addresses all aspects of your estate and personal wishes, providing peace of mind that your legacy will be preserved.



FAMILY & PROPERTY TRUSTS

Trusts are a powerful tool for safeguarding your assets and have been used in the UK for centuries. A Trust is a legal arrangement where one or more individuals, known as Trustees, are given the responsibility to manage assets on behalf of others, the Beneficiaries.

- **Property Protection Trust:** Safeguards your share of a property for your intended Beneficiaries, preventing it from automatically passing to the surviving partner. This ensures your children inherit if your partner remarries and protects their inheritance from potential care costs.
- **Right to Occupy Trust:** Allows an individual to live in your property for a specified period after your passing. They do not own the property as it is managed by your Trustees and ultimately inherited by your chosen beneficiaries.
- **Vulnerable Persons Trust:** Trustees manage assets for individuals unable to do so themselves due to disability or illness while protecting any means-tested benefits they receive.
- **Lifetime Discretionary Trust:** Grants your Trustees the power to determine who will inherit, as well as the amount and timing. This allows them to respond to changing or unforeseen circumstances, maximising the inheritance your loved ones receive.

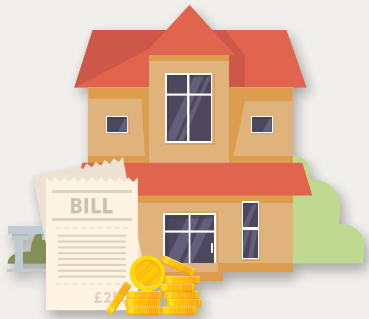
This type of Trust is the cornerstone of our Estate Management Plan, designed to protect your entire family during and after your lifetime and bypass the Probate process for assets within the Trust.



LASTING POWERS OF ATTORNEY

Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA) are powerful legal documents that grant someone you trust the authority to make decisions on your behalf should you become unable to do so due to illness or incapacity. Many people assume their loved ones will automatically have the authority to make decisions on their behalf, yet this is often not the case. Your partner or children might need a registered LPA to access bank accounts or to make decisions about your health.

There are two different types of LPA that provide your Attorneys with different powers:



PROPERTY & FINANCIAL

- ✓ Buy, sell, or maintain any properties or land that you own.
- ✓ Access and manage any of your bank accounts or investments.
- ✓ Pay bills and collect pensions or benefits on your behalf.



HEALTH & WELFARE

- ✓ Decide where you live, for example, at home or in care.
- ✓ Accept or refuse life-sustaining treatment based on your preferences.
- ✓ Manage your daily routines, meals, medicine, and clothes.

WILL STORAGE & UPDATES

Choosing the right location to store your Will is essential, as the original version must be kept safe. If damaged in any way, it may cause delays due to uncertainty and can even be declared invalid by the courts. Your Estate Planning documents also act as a guide for your loved ones when you are no longer here, making it equally important that these documents are easy to locate.

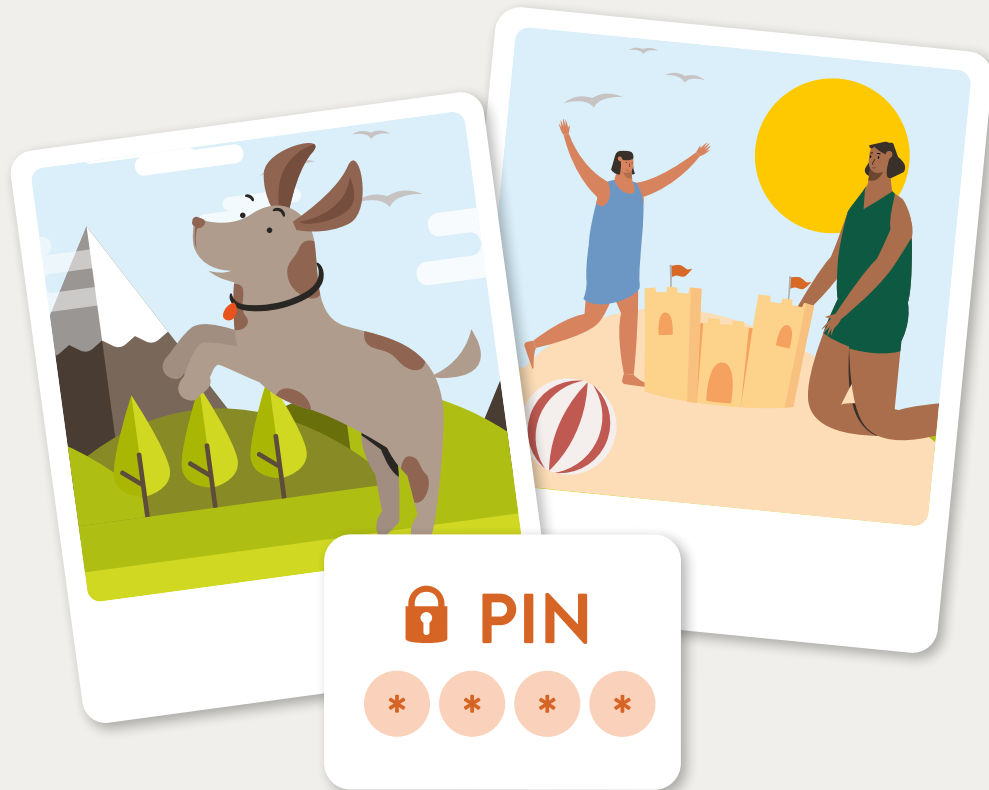
Our fully insured storage services ensure your important documents are safe from theft, fire, or water damage. Additionally, it allows you to make unlimited updates to your Will so that your wishes always reflect your current circumstances.



DIGITAL ASSET VAULT

Creating a Will provides security for your material possessions, but how will your loved ones access your devices, online accounts, and digital assets? Our digital asset vault provides a secure space to store cherished photos, crucial passwords, and significant digital documents. This service not only safeguards your digital assets but also ensures they are automatically distributed to your nominated Beneficiaries upon your passing.

By using our digital asset vault, you can provide your loved ones with clear instructions and easy access to your digital life, preventing potential confusion. This peace of mind ensures that your digital legacy is handled according to your wishes, just as your physical estate is managed by your Will.



PROBATE SERVICES

Probate is the process of validating a Will and grants an Executor the authority to administer the deceased's estate. If there is no Will, the deceased's next of kin can apply to be an Administrator, granting them the authority to carry out this process.

Not every estate requires Probate but it may be necessary before any asset transfers or distributions can occur, so it is best to check before making plans.

Acting as an Executor or Administrator can be a daunting task, especially during a time of grief. Our dedicated team is here to support you every step of the way. Whether you need us to manage the entire process or simply assist with applying for a grant, we are here to help.



WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

We are rated exceptional on the Feefo reviews platform with over 1,400 verified reviews and have held a 4.8 star rating for four consecutive years, achieving the platinum service award†.



“ Excellent service with a genuinely compassionate and understanding approach.

Highly recommended! ”



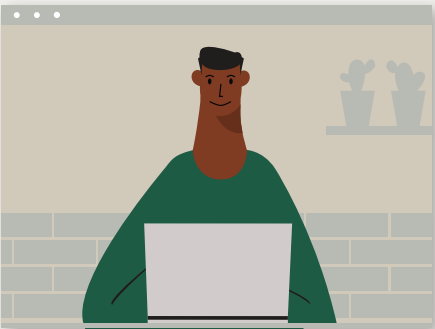
“ Good clear advice that we understood and followed up by email immediately. Professional throughout.

Made me feel comfortable! ”



“ Fantastic service. Very knowledgeable and professional advisor. Answered all our questions leaving no stone unturned.

Would definitely recommend! ”



WE ARE HERE TO HELP

For detailed information about our services, please refer to the individual product brochures available at: www.elm-online.co.uk/resources.

If you have any questions, would like additional guidance or need some support, we're here when you need us.

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