

Types of Gifts

Gifts of your possessions (Specific legacies)

Think about any particular items you want to give to particular individuals, or whether you would like individuals to choose themselves. If this is to be a lengthy list, you could include it in a letter to accompany your will.

Cash Gifts (Pecuniary Legacies)

Think about any gifts you want to make of set sums of money. This could be to individuals, or to your favourite charity, or charities. If you are supporting a charity, it would be useful to provide the solicitor with the registered charity number and telephone number.

Are there any gifts you'd like to make where you want someone to have the benefit of something you own (such as your house) for the rest of their life, after which someone else (or a charity) is to have the item? These are called Reversionary Legacies.

Cash Gifts (Pecuniary Legacies)

Think about what you want to happen to everything else that you own. This is called residue and gifts of residue are called Residuary Legacies.

The value of whatever else you own is arrived at after your funeral costs and any expenses such as final gas bills, tax and the costs of administering your estate have been paid,

and after the gifts of money and possessions referred to above have been made.

When deciding who should have what is left, think in terms of percentages, making sure that the shares you give add up to 100%. A share of residue may well be more valuable to the person you give it to than a gift of a fixed amount since it will not be eroded by inflation.

You will also need to consider what will happen if any of the individuals named in your will die before you. What would you want to happen to the gift they would have received?