A Guide to Leaving a Legacy to Hillside

Why is Making a Will Important?

Nobody likes to think about it, but writing a Will needn't be daunting; it shows your appreciation to those you leave behind, and ensures that your ideals live on after you're gone. Writing a Will is the only way to be sure that your Estate goes to the people and organisations that you want it to go to. For example, if you have no family and don't make a Will, your entire Estate could pass to the Crown. You may have told your friends what you want to do with your money… but even if they wanted to, they won't be able to act on your behalf. The only way to be sure your wishes are carried out is to write a Will.

It is possible to write up your own Will, but it is always advisable to be guided by a solicitor, who will make sure it meets all the legal requirements. Having a professionally drawn Will is not expensive and gives you peace of mind, knowing that your wishes will be carried out.

However, solicitors' charges do vary according to how complicated your Will is. Make sure that your instructions are clearly written down and that you take a list of all your assets to the Solicitor. This includes possessions such as property, furniture, jewellery, shares, bonds or insurance certificates. You will also need to bring your banking/building society details. Organising yourself in advance will save time and money.

What Else Goes in a Will?

Be sure to list your funeral arrangements, since this will make life much easier for those you leave behind. Many people never discuss such things with their family, and it can cause a lot of stress in an already difficult situation if your family are left unsure what you wanted in this area.

You should state everyone you wish to benefit from your Will, leaving specific gifts to individuals or organisations. You will need to write down their names and current addresses, the amounts or gifts that you wish to leave them, and a clear description of any goods.

Anything left over after your specific gifts forms the 'residue' of your Estate, and you can divide this up as you please amongst family, friends or organisations that you support.

Most importantly… if you are a parent you need to appoint a Guardian for any children under eighteen. However, many people forget to provide for their pets. If you care for any animals, you must leave clear instructions to provide for their future well-being. Animals need particular protection, since many loved pets are put to sleep after the death of their human companion. Sometimes even well-meaning friends and relatives can forget about animals in the shock immediately following a bereavement. We have known cases where animals were left without food or water while family members try to organise the Estate. This can all be avoided by drawing up a clearly worded Will, leaving the animals as a Bequest to a named Beneficiary, who should be contacted immediately when the need arises. This will ensure that your animals are immediately taken care of.

Leaving a Legacy to Hillside

Legacy choices you can consider:

A Pecuniary Legacy would consist of a specified sum of money, or a specific item of personal property. Companion animals would fall under this category. **Hillside will always give sanctuary to any animal** if we are named as the beneficiary in this kind of case, regardless of whether the deceased leaves us money or not. We would advise that the Will should not name individual animals, in case the individual animals you are caring for changes. Your Executor needs to know that Hillside should be contacted immediately if anything happens to you. This will ensure your companion animals' safety for life.

A Residuary Bequest is what is left of your Estate after any debts, and bequests to other people are settled. For many people leaving a legacy in the form of a percentage is the best option. Your solicitor will advise you on how your bequest should be worded.

Legacies to Hillside are exempt from inheritance tax so the full value of your gift will go straight to help our animals.

What if I Change My Mind?

Many people worry about making a Will because they are concerned about what would happen if they changed their minds. This isn't a problem… you don't have to write out another Will; you make a 'codicil.' This is simply a list of changes and additions. It needs to be signed, dated and witnessed, like a Will (it can be different witnesses) and it needs to be kept with your Will. That's all there is to it. You can make as many codicils as you like.

How Your Legacy Can Help Us Protect Animals in the Future

Hillside Animal Sanctuary was founded in 1995 by Wendy Valentine to help and campaign for animals in need particularly those who suffer every day in the intensive factory farming industry. So, with just 20 acres of land, Hillside began rescuing animals. Since then our numbers have steadily grown and we are now home to over 4000 rescued animals, including over 2500 horses, ponies and donkeys and 650 cows, living on two thousand acres of land, including **Hillside Shire Horse Sanctuary** at West Runton in Norfolk, which we set up in 2008. All our animals receive good basic care and our ability to save so many is attributable to the loyal help of our supporters, without whom we would not have been able to turn a vision into reality.

Hillside's Farm Animal Investigation Team gains our own evidence of the appalling standards of animal welfare in the factory farming-industry. Our undercover work has gone from strength to strength, resulting in a number of successful prosecutions.

We regularly work with high profile TV programmes, (such as 'Watchdog' and 'Tonight with Trevor McDonald') to create a high level of awareness about the plight of animals used for food.

Thank you for considering leaving a legacy to Hillside Animal Sanctuary, and for your kindness and support.

Hillside Dog Rescue was founded in 2010, following our investigations into puppy farms. Our aim is to create awareness of the dreadful type of conditions in which these poor dogs and puppies are kept and to encourage people to offer a home to a rescued dog, **instead of buying a puppy from a breeder.**

Little Mo- before ...

... and after rescue

We keep all the dogs that come into our care until we can find them a loving home.
Although we are pleased to have already rehomed many dogs, some come into our care with temperament or health issues. To give them a better quality of life, and save them from spending too long in a kennel situation waiting for a family home that is unlikely to come their way, we have to consider providing additional long-term facilities for them. We will not put any dog to sleep that is still able to enjoy life.

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Hillside is a non-profit making organisation
Registered Co. No. 3027338

Hillside
Animal Sanctuary

A Legacy for Life

If you would like to secure Hillside's future, helping and campaigning for animals in need, please consider a legacy to Hillside Animal Sanctuary so that your ideals may live on through our work.