

Wells Burcombe Solicitors

Price and Service Information

Probate and Administration of Estates

Introduction

As part of our professional rules, we aim to ensure that anyone wishing to use our services has the information they need to make an informed choice of legal services provider, including understanding what the costs may be.

Why instruct Wells Burcombe Solicitors?

At Wells Burcombe Solicitors we offer a friendly and efficient service in helping you to plan for the future. We have offices in West Drayton and St Albans and are accredited with the Law Society Lexcel standard. Our services include advice about preparing a Will, creating a Lasting Power of Attorney and Estate Planning.

We are also able to assist with estate administration after a loved one has died. We understand that this is a very difficult time and our aim is to make the administration of an estate as easy for our clients as possible. We are regularly instructed by executors to administer and distribute estates or the firm itself is appointed as the executor.

Occasionally clients feel comfortable distributing the estate themselves and seek our assistance in obtaining the Grant of Probate only. We can also help in situations when someone dies without a Will or where a Will has not been located. The administration of an estate in these circumstances is often more complicated, but it is our aim to make this as straightforward for you as possible.

About our fees

Obtaining a Grant of Representation and dealing with an administration of an estate can be complicated; it usually takes several months and complex cases can take well over a year to ensure everything is done properly. Every estate is different, and so it can be very hard to quantify probate costs. The work can vary from very straightforward estates with only one or two small value assets and one beneficiary, to complicated estates where there is inheritance tax to pay, multiple beneficiaries and assets held with numerous organisations, as well as property and land to sell or transfer. However, to assist our clients, we have set out below an indication of the likely costs involved in probate and administration of estate matters along with an indication of the potential timescales, but in view of the nature of such matters these should very much be seen as indicative only.

Estate Administration: Applying for the grant, collecting and distributing the assets

What the service includes

We will:

- Provide you with a dedicated and experienced probate solicitor to work on your matter

- Identify the legally appointed executors or administrators and beneficiaries
- Accurately identify the type of Probate application you will require
- Obtain the relevant documents required to make the application and liaise with all relevant organisations
- Complete the Probate Application and the relevant HMRC forms
- Draft a Statement of Truth for you to sign
- Make the application to the Probate Registry on your behalf
- Obtain Grant of Probate and office copies
- Deal with closure of accounts, collect in estate funds and pay any liabilities
- Prepare a final estate account and distribute the estate to the beneficiaries

Anticipated charges and expenses

As we have stated earlier, it is difficult to be precise about the anticipated costs as the exact cost will depend on the individual circumstances of the matter. Therefore, we have set out below the estimated costs of a typical, straightforward transaction. For this example we have assumed:

- There is a valid will
- An estate in which there are no more than three bank accounts;
- No more than one property in the sole name of the deceased;
- No debts;
- No likelihood of the estate being insolvent;
- No significant lifetime gifts;
- No shareholdings;
- No trusts to be established;
- No dispute between the beneficiaries on the division of the assets;
- No Inheritance Tax payable and the Executors do not need to submit a full IHT return to HMRC;
- No requirement to use the transferable nil rate band or residence nil rate band;
- No other intangible assets;
- No claims made against the estate;
- No agricultural or business element to the estate;
- No foreign element to the estate.

Administration of estates work is normally charged on a time spent basis. A typical example is set out below:

Estimated time required	16	hours
Hourly rate	£250.00	per hour (Partner-Solicitor)
Our fees	£4,000.00	excl. VAT
VAT at 20%:	£800.00	
Total	£4,800.00	+ disbursements (see below)

Disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to third parties, such as HM probate Registry fees. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process. Disbursements in addition to the above fees include:

Description	Typical costs
Probate application fee	£300.00
Office copies of the Grant of Probate	£1.50 per copy

Bankruptcy search fee	£1.00 per beneficiary
Section 27 Trustee Act notice fee (this protects the Trustees against creditors)	£300.00 - £400.00
Land Registry fees depending on the value of the property and whether it has been registered before. Please note that higher-value unregistered property can cost up to £680 and properties over £1M even more	£30.00 - £400.00
Land Registry search fees	£3.00 (plus £0.60 VAT)
Copy Death Certificate and any other Certificates required	£11.00 per Certificate

Factors that would increase the costs of your matter

- Not having all of the paperwork available or having incorrect information that needs investigation and correction;
- Third parties not responding to our communications promptly;
- Dealing with unusual, foreign or complex assets or items.

NB: Not all of the above fees are necessary for every probate case.

Potential additional costs

If there is no will or the estate consists of any share holdings (stocks and bonds) or assets with more than three different organisations, there are likely to be additional costs that could range significantly depending on the estate and how the assets are to be dealt with. Dealing with the sale or transfer of any property in the estate is not included in the above costs.

We can give you a more accurate quote once we have more information.

How long will this take?

It is difficult to estimate with any precision how long a Probate matter will take as it will be influenced by many factors, some of which are outside of our control. However, on average, typically, obtaining the grant of probate takes a minimum of 16-18 weeks from the time the papers are submitted to the Probate Registry. Collecting assets then follows, which can take several months, and once this has been done, we can then distribute the assets, and the time this takes is dependent on the nature of the assets but will often take a further 6 -12 weeks.

Application for Grant of Probate only

What the service includes

We will:

- Provide you with a dedicated and experienced probate solicitor to work on your matter
- Identify the legally appointed executors or administrators and beneficiaries
- Accurately identify the type of Probate application you will require
- Obtain the relevant documents required to make the application
- Complete the Probate Application and the relevant HMRC forms
- Draft a Statement of Truth for you to sign
- Make the application to the Probate Registry on your behalf
- Obtain the Grant of Probate and securely send copies to you

Anticipated charges and expenses

We can help our clients through this difficult process by obtaining the Grant of Probate on their behalf. Our typical costs below assume that we are instructed to seek Grant of Probate only, that no full Inheritance Tax Return requires to be completed and submitted to HMRC, and all financial information is supplied by the Executor.

Fixed fee (from):	£1000.00	excl. VAT
VAT at 20%:	£ 200.00	
Total	£1200.00	+ disbursements (see below)

Our typical costs for an application for Probate where a full Inheritance Tax Return is required to be submitted to HMRC is as set out below.

Fixed fee (from):	£1250.00 - £3000	excl. VAT
VAT at 20%:	£250.00 - £600.00	
Total	£1500.00 - £3600.00	+ disbursements

Disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to third parties, such as court fees. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process. Disbursements in addition to the above fees include:

Description	Typical costs
Probate application fee	£300.00
Office copies of the Grant of Probate	£1.50 per copy

Please note the above indicative figures are for obtaining a Grant of Probate only and do not include the administration of the estate.

Updated: October 2024