

# CRANE STAPLES

SOLICITORS

## Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney



### Meet The Team

Our friendly team combines a depth and breadth of experience, so you can be confident you are matched with the right solicitor for your requirements. With a genuinely personal approach, we take the time to listen, understand your individual circumstances, and offer clear advice, reassurance and support throughout your matter.

“We couldn't have chosen better. The staff were incredibly welcoming, professional and friendly. Their interpersonal skills and legal knowledge immediately reassured us and put us at ease.”



**Samantha Webb**  
Head of  
Department  
Partner



**David Bird**  
Partner



**Georgina Christou**  
Senior  
Associate



**Katie Lane**  
Senior  
Associate



**Mischa McKevitt**  
Associate



**Albert Green**  
Solicitor



**Eloise Bishop**  
Solicitor



**Elizabeth Rowlands**  
Solicitor

#### Support Team



**Karen Slatter**  
Legal Secretary  
and Client  
Support



**Lisa Bourke**  
Legal Secretary  
and Client  
Support

**Contact:** 01707 387074 [wills@crane-staples.co.uk](mailto:wills@crane-staples.co.uk)  
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*“You have a perfect balance of being kind, professional, efficient and empathetic, which makes you a pleasure to be with. Thank you again for everything you have done for our family over the years.”*



## About Us

At Crane & Staples, we provide specialist legal advice on Private Client matters, including Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney, Trusts and Probate. For over 85 years, we have helped clients in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire and beyond plan for the future with confidence and peace of mind.

We understand that later life and estate planning can feel complicated or emotionally challenging. Our role is to guide you through every step with care, clarity and understanding to ensure that your wishes are protected and your loved ones are supported.

Our Private Client team help you safeguard your property, finances, possessions and wishes during your lifetime and, as far as possible, after your death. We take the time to understand your personal circumstances, family relationships and long-term goals so that your advice is tailored precisely to your needs.

Whilst Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney, Trusts and Probate matters can be legally complex, our team have extensive experience and specialist qualifications so you can be confident that your matter is being handled by an expert. Qualifications include the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) and Lifetime Lawyers. These reflect our expertise, professionalism and commitment to client-focused advice.

Furthermore, we are proud to be the only law firm in Welwyn Hatfield recognised by both the Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners High Net Worth legal directories, with senior team members ranked individually. These independent accolades highlight the quality of our advice, depth of experience and the trust our clients place in us.

We are based in Welwyn Garden City town centre. Appointments can be arranged at our offices, by video call or, where appropriate, in the comfort of your own home. We look forward to meeting you.

### Contact:

01707 387074

[wills@crane-staples.co.uk](mailto:wills@crane-staples.co.uk)

[www.crane-staples.co.uk](http://www.crane-staples.co.uk)



*“Our family’s requirements were handled diligently, with kindness and efficiency throughout. For thirty years Crane and Staples have met all our legal needs and offered value for money.”*





A Will is a legal document that sets out how your money, property and personal possessions should be distributed after your death. It also allows you to appoint executors. These are the people responsible for administering your estate and ensuring your wishes are carried out.

### Why make a Will?

Making a Will ensures that your estate is administered according to your wishes. A properly drafted Will provides clarity, reduces the risk of disputes and helps protect your loved ones during what is already a difficult time.

“*We wish to thank you for your help and patience in guiding us through the update of our Wills. You and your team have been a pleasure to deal with.*”

### Benefits of making a Will

- Ensure your estate goes to the people or organisations you wish
- Appoint executors to manage your estate
- Choose guardians for children, if applicable
- Protect assets for vulnerable beneficiaries
- Help to mitigate Inheritance Tax liability
- Minimise family disputes and reduce stress for loved ones
- Provide peace of mind that your wishes will be followed

### What happens if you do not have a Will?

If you die without a Will, the rules of intestacy will determine how your estate is distributed, which may not reflect your wishes. Potential consequences include:

- Your estate passing to people you might not have chosen
- Loved ones you intended to benefit may receive nothing
- Your estate being administered by someone you would not have chosen, causing delays and stress
- If you have children under 18, the Court may decide who will act as their guardian
- Possible unnecessary Inheritance Tax liability

### When should I write my Will?

It is a common misconception that only older people or people with a medical diagnosis should write a Will. In reality, everyone should make a Will. Anyone over the age of 18 can make a Will at any time. It is entirely up to you when you choose to write your Will. Certain life events should prompt you to make or update your Will.

### What life events affect your Will?

There are a variety of life events which should prompt you to make or update your Will. For example:

- Getting married
- Having children or grandchildren
- Getting divorced or separated
- Buying a house
- Change in financial circumstances

### Do I need a Will if I own property?

We strongly encourage anyone who owns property to make a Will to ensure that the property is inherited by people of their choice. People with significant property portfolios may also make considerations for taxes or trusts in their Will. Clients who have recently instructed us on a property matter may find it convenient and beneficial to arrange for a Will at the same time, ensuring their wider affairs are fully organised.



## Key elements of a Will

- Appointment of executors to administer your estate
- Identification of beneficiaries and specific gifts or inheritance
- Appointment of guardians for children
- Cross-border considerations for foreign property
- Business succession or disposal instructions
- Tax planning, including mitigating Inheritance Tax
- Trusts to protect assets or vulnerable beneficiaries
- Appointment of trustees, if applicable

## Appointing Children's Guardians

If you have children under 18, it is important to formally appoint a guardian in your Will. Without this, the Court may decide who looks after your children. In some circumstances, this could result in delays or temporary foster arrangements. Our team can help you plan carefully to ensure your children are cared for by someone you trust.

“*“I wish to thank you personally and most sincerely for your expertise and attention in helping us to formulate and finalise our wills. As you know very well, the complexities of ‘step’ families can be worrying, and your help has been invaluable in making the process as smooth and understandable as possible for all of us. With much appreciation.”*”

## Choosing Executors

Executors carry out your instructions. You may appoint family, friends, solicitors or a combination. Executors can:

- Apply for probate and administer your estate
- Collect assets and pay debts
- Distribute property and funds to beneficiaries

## Professional Executor Service

At Crane & Staples, our Partners can act as professional executors, alone or alongside a loved one, ensuring smooth and impartial administration.

## Who should benefit from your Will?

You can decide who receives your estate, including family, friends or charities. Dependants may have legal rights to challenge your Will under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975. We can provide guidance to minimise disputes.

## Leaving a Gift to Charity

Charitable legacies are exempt from tax and allow you to support causes important to you.

“*“My wife and I have used Crane and Staples to prepare our Wills. We feel confident that this advice will benefit both ourselves and our eventual beneficiaries.”*”



## Making a Will at Crane & Staples

The process of making a Will at Crane & Staples is outlined below. We aim to make this as smooth and straightforward as possible.

- You arrange an appointment with one of our specialist Will Solicitors. This can either be in our offices, by video call or in your own home, where possible.
- In the appointment, your Solicitor takes your instructions and provides tailored advice in light of your personal circumstances.
- Your Solicitor prepares a draft Will and sends this to you for checking.
- Any amendments are made and agreed.
- A final copy of the Will is produced for signing.
- The Will is signed and witnessed either:
  - At a meeting in our offices, where our staff act as witnesses
  - At a home visit, where our staff or other suitable people act as witnesses
  - After being posted to you, and you arrange to sign your Will with two suitable witnesses
- The final Will is given to us so we can make copies for ourselves, you and anyone else you wish.
- The original Will is stored, either:
  - In our fireproof deeds room, at your request for a one-off fee of £10 plus VAT; or
  - Retained by you in a safe place of your choosing.
- Please ensure that you inform relevant people, such as executors and family members, where to locate your original Will.
- We register your Will with Certainty, The National Will Register. This is included in our service and ensures that the existence and location of your Will is recorded in this national database, so it can be found in the future.

“

*“We always found the thought of making or updating our Wills a difficult subject. Your friendly approach quickly put us at ease. You listened, empathised and used your considerable legal knowledge to produce our Wills precisely as we wanted.”*

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## Timescales

It is important that a Will is completed with accuracy and the appropriate amount of time is spent producing it. Of course, we aim to produce your Will as efficiently as possible.

In urgent circumstances, such as when a client has become very ill, we will prioritise writing these Wills to ensure they can be finalised and signed in good time.

## Meeting Us

Appointments can be:

- In-person at our offices in Welwyn Garden City
- Online via a Microsoft Teams video call
- At your own home. We regularly carry out home visits to care homes and clients with access needs. There may be a charge for a home visit if the location is outside of our local area.

## Guide to Fees

We aim to be transparent with our fees and ensure they are reasonable to our clients whilst reflective of the quality service we provide.

*As a guide only:*

- Single Will for one person – from £400 plus VAT
- Mirror Wills for couples – from £550 plus VAT

We will provide a **tailored estimate** after discussing your individual circumstances.

## Take the Next Step

Planning your Will is one of the most important ways to protect your loved ones and ensure your wishes are carried out. At Crane & Staples, our friendly and experienced team will guide you through the process with care, clarity and support, making it straightforward and stress-free.

**To arrange an appointment with one of our specialist Will Solicitors, please contact us:**

01707 387074

[wills@crane-staples.co.uk](mailto:wills@crane-staples.co.uk)

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## Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs)

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is a legal document which allows you to appoint people you trust, known as your Attorneys, to deal with matters on your behalf.

It is strongly recommended that everyone has an LPA, regardless of age or assets. An LPA is a safety net if you have an accident or become unwell through illnesses such as dementia or strokes.

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*“They are very attentive and have looked after my legal affairs with compassion, support and understanding.”*

”

### Types of LPA

#### 1. Property and Financial Affairs (PFA)

- Allows your Attorneys to manage financial matters such as paying bills, managing bank accounts and selling property.

#### 2. Health and Welfare (HW)

- Allows your Attorneys to make decisions about healthcare, treatment and personal welfare, once you lose capacity.

You can opt to make both powers or just one power, but it is recommended that clients have both in place.

### Establishing Capacity

To make a Lasting Power of Attorney, you must have the mental capacity to do so:

- You must be able to understand the information relevant to the decision;
- You must be able to retain that information;
- You must be able to use or weigh up that information; and
- You must be able to communicate that decision.

If you are unable to do the above, a new LPA cannot be made.

### When each LPA takes effect

- The Property and Financial Affairs LPA takes effect as soon as it is registered with the Office of the Public Guardian. This means your Attorneys can assist with these decisions straight away.
- The Health and Welfare LPA cannot be used until you have lost the capacity to make your own decisions. Your Attorneys must obtain evidence of incapacity, such as a letter from a doctor or professional, before they can make any Health and Welfare decisions for you.

### Certificate Provider

An LPA must be signed by a certificate provider. A certificate provider is an independent person who can confirm that the donor has capacity to make an LPA.

This must either be:

- Someone who has known the donor personally for at least two years but is not a relative or listed in the LPA document. An example could be a friend or colleague.
- A professional with the relevant skills to determine capacity. For example, a GP or healthcare professional. A solicitor can also act as a certificate provider and we offer this option at Crane & Staples.



## Powers and Decisions

Each LPA grants your Attorneys different decisions, permissions and responsibilities.

### Property and Financial Affairs LPA

- Buying or selling property
- Managing bank accounts and investments
- Paying bills and expenses
- Authorised to withdraw money responsibly on your behalf

### Health and Welfare LPA

- Decisions about medical treatment
- Choice of care home
- Communicating with doctors and attending appointments
- Collecting prescriptions
- Life-sustaining treatment decisions (if authority granted)



## Choosing Attorneys

- Attorneys should be trusted individuals such as family, friends or solicitors
- Substitute attorneys can be appointed if necessary
- Practically, it is important to consider geographic proximity, the ability to manage administrative tasks and a willingness to work together when appointing more than one Attorney
- Attorneys may act jointly, jointly and severally or a combination, as specified in your LPA

### Jointly

This is where Attorneys must make all decisions together. This can include significant decisions, such as selling a house, but can also include minor decisions such as attending the bank together to pay in a cheque. In practice, this arrangement can be impractical and may cause difficulties if the Attorneys disagree or live some distance from one another. If one of your Attorneys dies, then none of your Attorneys will be able to make these joint decisions.

### Jointly and severally

This allows your Attorneys to make some decisions jointly and some independently. This is the most common and flexible form of appointment. This way your Attorneys could make significant decisions jointly and everyday decisions individually. It is up to your Attorneys when they choose to act together or alone.

### Jointly for some decisions, jointly and severally for other decisions

This option allows you to specifically list which decisions your Attorneys should make jointly and which decisions they are able to make alone. This is beneficial if you are concerned about which decisions you wish for your Attorneys to make together. However, as with option one, if one of your Attorneys dies, then none of your Attorneys will be able to make these 'joint' decisions.

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*“Everyone I work with at Crane & Staples takes the time to listen to the issue I'm aiming to address and understand my feelings about possible outcomes. They are diligent, patient and their advice has always stood the test of any challenges.”*

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## Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA)

EPAs made before 1 October 2007 remain valid for Property and Financial Affairs but cannot cover Health and Welfare matters. Updating to an LPA provides greater flexibility and ensures modern legal safeguards.

## Duration and Revocation

LPAs remain in effect for life unless revoked while you still have capacity. Once capacity is lost, the LPA cannot be changed.

### Guide to Fees

*As a guide only:*

- One LPA (either PFA or HW) – from £550 plus VAT
- Two LPAs (one each for a couple or both LPAs for an individual) – from £650 plus VAT
- Four LPAs (both LPAs for a couple) – from £800 plus VAT
- Court registration fee: £92 per document (no VAT)

We will provide a **tailored estimate** after discussing your individual circumstances.

## Why Use a Solicitor?

A solicitor ensures:

- You have the necessary capacity to make the LPA
- Your decisions and instructions are legally valid
- Complex forms are completed correctly, avoiding registration delays
- Guidance on appointing attorneys appropriately and safely

## Practical Considerations

- LPAs are strongly recommended for everyone, regardless of age or assets
- They provide peace of mind if illness, accident or cognitive decline occurs
- Without an LPA, decisions may be made by someone you would not have chosen, potentially leading to delays or disputes

“Crane & Staples’ lawyers are genuinely engaged. They listen to clients’ points of view and respond helpfully and courteously with succinct advice.”

## Plan Ahead with Confidence

A Lasting Power of Attorney provides peace of mind, ensuring that the people you trust can make important decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so. At Crane & Staples, our friendly and experienced team will guide you through the process, helping you choose the right Attorneys and making sure your documents are legally sound and properly registered.

**To arrange an appointment with one of our specialist LPA solicitors, please contact us:**

01707 387074

[wills@crane-staples.co.uk](mailto:wills@crane-staples.co.uk)

[www.crane-staples.co.uk](http://www.crane-staples.co.uk)



## Wills and LPAs

You may find it simpler and more practical to instruct us to prepare your Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney at the same time. Dealing with both together allows you to take a joined-up approach to future planning, ensuring that your wishes are clearly documented and consistent across all arrangements. It can also be a more efficient use of time, reducing duplication and helping you feel confident that your affairs are fully in order.

If you would like advice on preparing your Wills and LPAs, or would like to discuss whether dealing with both at the same time is right for you, please contact our team to arrange an initial consultation. We would be happy to guide you through the process and answer any questions you may have.

“If you need a solicitor to sort out family affairs, I highly recommend Crane and Staples. They are a pleasure to use and go above and beyond what you expect and deal with your affairs with compassion and quiet dignity.”

At Crane & Staples, we are committed to excellence, empathy, integrity and community in every aspect of our work. Our Wills and LPA services reflect these core values by combining technical expertise with a supportive and approachable service.

We aim to help you make informed, confident decisions that protect your family, assets and wishes. By working closely with you, we ensure that each plan is carefully tailored to your circumstances, providing both clarity and peace of mind.

We would be pleased to welcome you to our offices, arrange an online consultation or visit you at home to discuss your needs in detail. Whether making a Will, establishing an LPA or reviewing your existing arrangements, our team is here to guide you with professionalism, care and insight.

**Contact Us**  
**01707 387074**  
**wills@crane-staples.co.uk**  
**www.crane-staples.co.uk**

We look forward to helping you make plans and decisions with confidence, protecting what matters most and supporting you and your loved ones, now and in the future.



**Our Wills, Trusts and Probate team can also assist with:**

- Probate and Estate Administration: including advising executors, beneficiaries and trustees
- Tax Planning and Trusts
- Asset Protection
- Declarations of Trust
- Court of Protection Matters
- Advice for Elderly, Vulnerable or Unwell Individuals and Their Families
- Disputes relating to any of the above: including the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975

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“  
“They have a wealth of experience in their team covering all aspects of legal work.”  
”

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Crane & Staples Solicitors is the trading name of Crane & Staples LLP which is a Limited Liability Partnership and is registered in England and Wales with registered number OC426048 and authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) (with SRA identification number 656984). Our registered office is detailed above.

*The word 'partner', used in relation to Crane & Staples LLP, refers to a member of Crane & Staples LLP or an employee or consultant of Crane & Staples LLP (or any affiliated firm) of equivalent standing.*



“ If you are looking for a team who work hard in your best interests, Crane and Staples are the Solicitors for you. ”

Online review



## Your Lawyers for Life

- & Family
- & Wills, Trusts and Probate
- & Business and Commerce
- & Commercial Property
- & Residential Property
- & Employment
- & Dispute Resolution

01707 329333

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