



LEAVE YOUR LEGACY

A Lasting Gift to Britain's Mammals

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Please note that this brochure does not represent professional advice and is intended as a guide only. We strongly advise that you take legal advice when drawing up your will.

1. About us

The Mammal Society works at the interface of science, policy-making and practice. As the only society with an interest in all British mammals, our mission is to provide the scientific evidence-base for effective conservation and management.

We support an ever-growing network of experts and enthusiasts all working to survey, monitor, research and learn more about the nation's mammals. By sharing the results of new research, providing specialised training courses, campaigning, networking and working together, we can help to secure the future of mammals in the British Isles & Ireland.

2. Why remember the Mammal Society in your will?

A gift left in your will helps us to continue to:

- raise public awareness of mammals, their ecology and conservation needs;
- encourage people to participate in mammal monitoring and recording;
- develop the knowledge and field skills of those working for mammals;
- disseminate the results of research and new information;
- provide up-to-date, reliable information on which to base effective conservation policy.

In 2018 some of our achievements included:

- Publication of the first approved Red List for native British Mammals;
- Publication of the Review of the Conservation and Population Status of Britain's Mammals - the culmination of a twenty year research project involving more than 1.5 million individual biological records;
- Development and launch of the Mammal Mapper app - a vital tool which allows members of the public to record and upload signs and sightings of mammals whilst on the move;
- Development and launch of Ecobat - a website which allows consultants/practitioners to upload bat survey data and to download report-ready summaries;
- Completion of the Hedgehogs & Lighting Project and Hogwatch Surveys;
- Provision of a diverse programme of training for practitioners and amateur enthusiasts at locations across the UK;
- A national Conference for practitioners and enthusiasts held in Spring 2018 and a national Symposium on Non-Native Species in Autumn 2018.

In 2019, some of our projects will include:

- Completion of the UK Mammal Atlas - the first atlas produced in over 20 years which presents vital new baseline distribution data on the UK's 58 terrestrial mammal species;

- Small mammal trapping - a UK-wide project being undertaken by local mammal groups;
- Camera trapping - a UK-wide project which will estimate mammal density in woodlands. Due to launch in the summer;
- Hedgehogs on Roads - we are currently assessing the role played by road casualties in the decline of the hedgehog and, working with other charities, are mapping road casualty hot spots to identify locations that present high risks to hedgehogs.

Unlike most organisations monitoring British wildlife, we receive no central government funding for our core work. Our activities to halt the decline of threatened species, monitor their conservation status and advise on issues affecting British mammals, therefore depend entirely on the generosity of our supporters.

With your help we can continue this research and conservation work to benefit Britain's mammals for years to come.

3. How to leave a gift in your will

If you haven't written your will yet, take a look at section 5 below (Making Your Will – a quick guide) which explains more about what your will should include. One of the first things to do is decide what kind of gifts you want to leave to your family and close friends. Then think about what you'd like to give the Mammal Society.

Next, we suggest that you go to a solicitor to have your will written. We can't recommend a particular solicitor but if you go to the law society website www.lawsociety.org.uk you will be able to use their online service to find a solicitor near you. Alternatively, you could visit the Goodwill Partnership who provide a home visit will-making service. Visit www.thegoodwillpartnership.co.uk for more information.

If you already have a will – you can simply add a codicil. Make sure you get a solicitor to help you, or you may accidentally invalidate your existing will. When you store them, don't pin or staple your codicil to your will, just keep them all together.

Useful websites

The Law Society – for general advice on how to draw up a will and finding a solicitor in your area - www.lawsociety.org.uk

UK government website on wills – www.gov.uk/make-will

The Goodwill Partnership - will drafting service – www.thegoodwillpartnership.co.uk

4. Wording for different types of gift

There are four different types of gifts which can be left in your will. The different types are described below. It is very important to use the correct words so we have suggested some wording below which your solicitor may wish to use.

Cash Gift

The gift of a fixed sum of money is also called a **pecuniary gift**. The value of this type of gift will go down over time as the cost of living increases. The suggested wording for a pecuniary gift is below.

I give the sum of £ (words and figures) to the Mammal Society, 18 St John's Church Road, London E9 6EJ, registered charity number 278918, to be used for its general charitable purposes and a receipt of this payment from their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge of the Trustees duties.

Share of your Estate

Also known as a **residuary gift**, this is the remainder of your estate after you've provided for your friends and loved ones. The suggested wording for a residuary gift is below.

I give all (or a ___ % share of) the residue of my estate to the Mammal Society, 18 St John's Church Road, London E9 6EJ, registered charity number 278918, to be used for its general charitable purposes and a receipt of this payment from their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge of the Trustees duties.

Specific Gift

The gift of a particular named item that you want to pass on, such as a painting, a piece of jewellery, or even a property. The suggested wording for a specific gift is below.

I give my _____ (describe the gift you want to leave, eg my book collection) to the Mammal Society, 18 St John's Church Road, London E9 6EJ, registered charity number 278918, to be used for its general charitable purposes and a receipt of this payment from their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge of the Trustees duties.

Gift in Trust

A gift for someone to use over a specified period of time. Once that period has ended, the gift can be passed on to someone else, or even a charity. If you're interested in making a gift in trust, please talk to your solicitor about the right wording for your individual needs.

5. Making your will – a quick guide

Your will should set out:

- who you want to benefit from your will and details of any gifts you wish to leave, either financial or a named item – see above (section 4).
- who should look after any children under 18
- who is going to sort out your estate and carry out your wishes after your death (your executor)
- what happens if the people you want to benefit die before you

When you need legal advice

We would always suggest that you contact a solicitor or other professional when writing your will but you should definitely get advice from a professional if your will isn't straightforward, eg:

- you share a property with someone who isn't your husband, wife or civil partner
- you want to leave money or property to a dependant who can't care for themselves
- you have several family members who may make a claim on your will, eg a second spouse or children from another marriage
- your permanent home is outside the UK
- you have property overseas
- you have a business

Keep your will safe

You can keep your will at your home or store it with:

- your solicitor
- your bank
- a company that offers the storage of wills - you can search online

You should tell your executor (the person you've chosen to carry out your will), close friend or relative where your will is.

For your will to be legally valid, you must:

- be 18 or over
- make it voluntarily
- be of sound mind
- make it in writing
- sign it in the presence of 2 witnesses who are both over 18
- have it signed by your 2 witnesses, in your presence

If you make any changes to your will you must follow the same signing and witnessing process.

Note that you can't leave your witnesses (or their married partners) anything in your will.

You should review your will every 5 years and after any major change in your life, eg:

- getting separated or divorced
- getting married (this cancels any will you made before)
- having a child
- moving house
- if the executor named in the will dies

Making changes to your will

You can't amend your will after it's been signed and witnessed. The only way you can change a will is by making an official alteration called a codicil.

You must sign a codicil and get it witnessed in the same way as witnessing a will. There's no limit on how many codicils you can add to a will.

Making a new will

For major changes you should make a new will.

Your new will should explain that it revokes (officially cancels) all previous wills and codicils. You should destroy your old will by burning it or tearing it up.

6. Answers to questions you may have

There can be a lot to think about when it comes to making or adapting your will. Here are answers to some of the questions you might have.

Do I have to make a will?

Making a will is the only way to make sure your family and friends are provided for in the way that you want. Otherwise, your exact wishes may not be carried out after you die. It's also important to make a will to protect your loved ones from an unwelcome tax bill.

Do I need a solicitor?

No, but we'd always recommend that you use a solicitor. It's extremely important that your will contains the correct legal wording.

Can you recommend a solicitor?

We can't, but the Law Society can help you find a suitable solicitor in your area. For more details, visit www.lawsociety.org.uk or call 0207 242 1222. Alternatively, you may wish to contact an organisation such as the Goodwill Partnership (www.thegoodwillpartnership.co.uk) who provide a home visit will-making service.

Can I change my existing will to include a gift?

Yes, simply ask your solicitor to add a codicil to your will. It's also a good idea to regularly review your will to make sure it's up-to-date with your circumstances. For example, there may have been births, deaths, marriages or divorce in your family since you last looked at your will.

How will my gift be used?

The Mammal Society will use your gift to fund our work to conserve British mammals. Our work includes: raising public awareness of mammals, their ecology and conservation needs; encouraging people to effectively participate in mammal monitoring and recording; developing the knowledge and field skills of those working for mammals; encourage and disseminating the results of research and new information; providing up-to-date, reliable information and science-led advice to advocate effective conservation policy.

What if I can only leave a small gift?

Every gift we receive, large or small, can help us to secure the future of Britain's mammals, so we're extremely grateful for whatever you can spare.

Do I need to think about inheritance tax?

There's no tax payable on a gift left to charity in your will. What's more, it could reduce the total amount of your estate that may be liable for inheritance tax.

7. Contact us

For more help and advice on leaving a gift to the Mammal Society in your will, call 02380 010982 or email membership@themammalsociety.org.

8. Let us know

If you have already committed to leaving a legacy to the Mammal Society we would really appreciate an opportunity to say thank you. If you don't mind letting us know, please drop us a line to membership@themammalsociety.org.

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Registered Office: 18 St John's Church Road, London E9 6EJ