

PRESS RELEASE

FROM: The Institute of Professional Willwriters

The recent announcement that Tesco have started to sell legal packs, in particular on 'Making a Will', highlights the need to emphasise the importance of making a Will and keeping it up to date with one's wishes and to reflect changing financial and family circumstances.

However, it is doubtful whether the guidance provided with such 'over the counter' Will packs gives adequate advice on the important issues. Guardianship of children; how to distinguish between specific and non-specific gifts; dangers of incorrect signing and witnessing; inheritance tax planning and potential claims under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975 are just some of the matters of which a 'Do it yourself' Willwriter needs to be aware. Wills can be challenged and any ambiguity could cause the Testator's intentions to be misinterpreted in the eyes of the law.

The dangers of 'Doing it yourself' in general are well documented and similarly a DIY Will can be risky.

A face to face meeting with a professional gives the opportunity to address all the relevant issues including those mentioned above, together with obtaining relevant legal advice from an experienced practitioner. A professional knows what questions to ask in order to obtain all the necessary information, some of which a DIY Willwriter may unknowingly dismiss as irrelevant. A Will is an important document and for it to be legally binding it should be drafted, signed and witnessed correctly, so it is advisable to use the services of a professional, such as a qualified Willwriter or a Solicitor – but you should always check that your solicitor is conversant with writing Wills as many specialise in different aspects of the law and may not have practical experience in this particular area.

Paul Sharpe, Chairman of the Institute of Professional Willwriters, who are the professional body for Willwriters says: "All our members are qualified by examination and undergo mandatory ongoing training so that they are fully aware of current legislation and practice. They are all professional practitioners who specialise in this field of law and all carry full Professional Indemnity Insurance cover."

For further information regarding this Press Release or any other matter relating to the Institute of Professional Willwriters,

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