

# Charitable Legacies

When Christina Foyle, the eccentric owner of Foyle's Bookshop, died in 1999 she left much of her £59 million estate to charity. Battersea Dogs Home, the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce, the Book Sellers Provident Association and the animal charity the Cinnamon Trust were specifically named as beneficiaries of £5,000 gifts but most of the estate was left to set up a charity in her own name. The Foyle Foundation was established the following year to fund education, arts and health. Ms. Foyle also left £20,000 to look after her dog and four tortoises!

The National Trust received a legacy of the whole of the Kingston Lacy Estate in Dorset, worth millions of pounds. This included artworks, land, villages and cottages. The conservation charity received another legacy with the specific request to "bestow some visual benefit on more properties to improve exteriors, particularly glazing bars in windows". Another was "to provide and maintain bench seats on the Isle of Wight".

Sir John Gielgud left £1.5m in his Will to small charities including the Actors Charitable Trust and the King George V charity for actors and actresses.

In 2002 a cancer charity was bequeathed a pub. There was the man who left his testicles to the manager of a local branch of NatWest bank as "he had no balls of his own". And the woman who gave £100,000 to a pot plant, because "it was the only thing that listened to her".

Only 4% of people give money to a charity in their Will, although 70% give to charity during their lifetime. Sixty-eight per cent of legacies are left by women. More than 40% of income from the top 10 charities comes from donations left in Wills.

The National Trust, for example, received £39m in legacies in its financial year ending February 2002. Cancer Research UK, the charity formed through the merger of the Cancer Research Campaign and the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, receives half of its income through legacies, which totaled £104m in its financial year to March 2002. Since the merger income from legacies has risen further.



In an article in the Guardian Richard Radcliffe, chairman of specialist legacy consultants Smees & Ford, said: "Legacy income is likely to go down as women in their 80s who are leaving legacies now tend to be asset ignorant, not realising the value of what they are leaving to charity. The next generation will be more aware of the value of their estate and may only leave a fixed sum to charity, which will tend to be seven times smaller than a residue."

The average residue left to charities is £23,000!

The 'Giving Campaign', launched in 2001, has the ambitious goal of encouraging a culture of giving. They predict that by 2014 they can double the amount of 'giving' in the UK. Their statistics show that only two thirds of adults give to charity each year and only a minority of these gifts are planned and tax effective. Surprisingly their research also shows that the poorest households give up to 3% of their household expenditure to charity while the richest fifth of the population give just 0.7%, meaning those who can really afford to donate actually give proportionately less.

The English Will Company are able to help you through your own Will to make both legacies to family members and friends, as well as to charitable organisations. If you would like to include this within your Will we make no additional charge and will help you locate registered charity numbers and charity head office addresses to ensure the gift is made as you request.