

Unregulated Will Writers Are Putting Families at Risk

Consumers are being warned about the growing dangers posed by unregulated Will writing companies, with experts raising serious concerns about misleading practices, excessive fees, and invalid legal documents that can leave families devastated.

The Legal Ombudsman has called on the government to take urgent action to better protect the public from unregulated providers offering Will writing, probate, and estate planning services. Thousands of consumers are reportedly being pressured into paying inflated costs for Family Will Trusts, Lasting Powers of Attorney, and pre-paid probate packages – often without fully understanding what they are buying.

Consumers Left Vulnerable

Chief Ombudsman Adam Sampson warns:

“One service which crops up a lot is will writing. It’s a service carried out often by will-writing firms who aren’t regulated. Because of this, customers are left with little means of redress when things go wrong.”

The concerns have also been supported by Which? and The Law Society, both of which have called for stronger safeguards for consumers.

Poorly drafted or invalid Wills can have devastating consequences. Families may discover too late that a loved one’s wishes cannot legally be carried out, and often lead to unknown taxation and deprivation of asset consequences causing emotional distress, family disputes, and costly legal complications.

The Risks of Using Unregulated Will Writers

Currently, anyone can set themselves up as a Will writer in the UK without legal qualifications or regulatory oversight. This has opened the door to:

- Invalid or incorrectly drafted Wills
- Misleading sales tactics
- Excessive and hidden fees
- Pressure-selling of unnecessary services
- Fraud and deception
- Inadequate probate services
- Expensive Will storage contracts

Investigations have found that many consumers are led to believe they are paying for full estate administration services when in reality, they are only receiving limited assistance such as obtaining a Grant of Probate.

In many cases, families later face significantly higher legal costs to correct mistakes that could have been avoided by using a qualified solicitor from the outset.

Why Regulation Matters

The Legal Services Board has long campaigned for tighter regulation of will writing, probate, and estate administration services. Its findings revealed widespread concerns about unfair practices and consumer harm within the unregulated sector.

Professional solicitors are required to meet strict regulatory and ethical standards. They are trained to ensure Wills comply with all legal formalities, accurately reflect a client's wishes, and take into account complex issues such as inheritance tax, trusts, and family circumstances.

Why Clients Choose Pengillys Solicitors

At Pengillys Solicitors, our Private Client team is fully regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and committed to delivering trusted, professional legal advice.

We are proud to:

- Provide fully regulated legal services
- Offer free secure storage of clients' wills
- Hold the Lexcel Practice Management standard
- Be accredited members of STEP
- Be members of Solicitors for the Elderly
- Deliver tailored estate planning advice based on your individual circumstances

Our experienced solicitors take the time to understand your financial and personal affairs to ensure your wishes are properly protected.

Protect Your Family and Your Wishes

A professionally prepared Will gives you peace of mind that your loved ones will be protected and your estate handled correctly.

Do not leave such important decisions in the hands of unregulated providers.

Contact Our Private Client Team Today

If you would like advice on:

- Making or updating a Will
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Probate and estate administration
- Trusts and inheritance planning

Contact Pengillys Solicitors today to speak with a qualified member of our Private Client team and arrange a confidential consultation.