



## **Managing your digital legacy Guide for computer and other digital information with your next of kin in mind**

**This is a general guide only, this does not constitute professional advice,  
any suggestions or recommendations may vary over time  
and may not be appropriate to your personal circumstances.**

### **Introduction**

We live so much of our lives online. Our digital legacy is all the information and assets you leave behind online – some of which could be very valuable to your loved ones, whether financially or sentimentally. Those left to sort out our affairs can find it hard to find your accounts if there isn't any paperwork, let alone access the contents.

### **Keep a record**

You need to have a record of those accounts that contain valuable data and information. If you don't leave a list of accounts, your family (or executor) may never know you owned them.

*Tip: Start now; use a small (paper) notebook; every time you access an account, make a note of it and (at a minimum) the username you are using, and record the web address (URL) or actual physical location.*

*Tip: If you also choose to record the password - make sure the notebook is kept somewhere safe and secure.*

A starter, or memory jogger, list of accounts to include is in the Appendix overleaf.

### **Don't forget your Digital Devices**

The devices we use all contain data and often the method to access that data, via specific programmes, or stored passwords for external accounts. This should also include USB drives and external hard drives.

*Tip: In your list, include the devices you own and how to access them*

*Tip: Many modern phones allow you to register multiple unlock fingerprints - why not register one for your partner (or digital executor)?*

### **Prepare a "Social Media Will"**

Hopefully, you've already written your will. A "social media will" defines what you want to happen with your social media accounts, data that you own, data about you and other digital assets that aren't listed in your standard will. You can do this either as part of a current will (or as a codicil to a current will), or as a separate legal document - but, just like a will, it should be signed and witnessed.

### **Choose a Digital Executor**

This person can be the same one you have for your regular will, but make sure this person knows about technology. This person would be responsible for shutting down your online accounts, if that is what you choose. This person also would need to know how to sort and download any photos and videos.

You may also want to leave instructions to delete certain data or accounts! Or have certain accounts set to

“memorialisation”.

**Tip:** A “social media will” won't do you any good if no one knows about it. Make sure the executor of your will knows about your wishes for your digital legacy.

## Appendix

### A starter list of accounts and places that may hold valuable data or information

#### Financial Accounts

- Current accounts, Savings accounts, ISA Accounts, Stocks and Shares (Broker Accounts), Credit Cards, Loans, Premium Bonds, Peer-to-peer lender accounts, Bitcoin (Cryptocurrency) and PayPal.
- Pensions accounts.

#### Government, Health and Tax

- Tax & Self-Assessment Account with HM Government (include a record of your NI Number)
- Office of the Public Guardian (“lasting power of attorney”; has now gone digital)
- Health records, NHS (include a record of your NHS Number) including full medical history (useful for children looking at genetically related health issues that may be passed on)

#### Loyalty and Store Accounts

- Store cards, Airmiles, Loyalty cards, Cashback websites, Holiday currency cards, and also gambling and bingo accounts.

#### Social Media Accounts etc.

- Email accounts (and potentially multiple email addresses)
- Internet Service Provider (ISP) account details (often the email is via the ISP)
- Social accounts: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Reddit, Dating profiles, Linked-In etc.
- Messaging Apps: WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, Wickr, Zoom etc.

#### Gaming profiles: Steam, Valve, Microsoft, Sony, Twitch, Minecraft etc. Media that you physically own

- CDs, DVDs, Music (MP3s etc.) stored on devices
- Photos and Videos - both in digital format, but also Video Tapes, Camcorder media and Cine
- Books (and eBooks)

#### Media that you “logically” own (probably on Cloud Storage)

*Using services such as Google Photos & Google Drive, Microsoft One Drive, Amazon Music & Video, Dropbox, iCloud, Photobucket, Flickr, Spotify, Pandora etc.*

- Music (both personal that you have uploaded, but also music you have purchased)
- Photos and Video
- eBooks

#### Do not forget

- Backup tapes and back-up services

#### Finally

Anything “unusual” you own that might be worth money if sold - such as a domain name, professional website, patents, a computer game character or NFTs (Non-fungible tokens).