

Will Aid 2010 : Make a Will, Make a Difference

Will Aid, the UK's most enduring and successful charity Will-making scheme, returns this November. This very popular scheme provides the opportunity for adults of any age to have their basic Will drawn up by a professional solicitor in return for a voluntary donation to Will Aid.

The suggested donation is £75 for a single Will, £110 for mirror Wills or £40 for a codicil or change to a previous Will. Will Aid has also teamed up with *Certainty*, the National Will Register, to offer Will Aid clients the opportunity to register the location of their Will - for free (usual cost is £28.75). When a Will is needed, the register enables loved ones to quickly and easily locate it.

The idea of giving money to charity instead of paying a solicitor motivates many people to finally write their Will. In this way, Will Aid protects peoples' loved ones, as well as helping many in need around the world through the work of the Will Aid charities. Last November, seventeen thousand clients, made their Will with Will Aid, raising over £1.25 million, for the Will Aid charities.

The money raised from donations is shared between the participating charities (ActionAid, Age UK, British Red Cross, Christian Aid, NSPCC, Save the Children UK, Sightsavers, SCIAF and Trocaire) and is put to use helping people to live, build their communities and improve their future in the UK and around the world.

When planning a Will, loved ones should always come first, but with Will Aid, people can also take the opportunity to leave a gift to their favourite charity. For many, this may be the one and only time they can afford to give this help. And without income from legacies the Will Aid charities and the communities they help would face a very uncertain future.

Any legacy, small or large, could make a huge difference.

For example:

Sopheak aged 12, from Cambodia, had four brothers and sisters who all died in infancy from dengue fever. A generous ActionAid supporter left £3,000 to her community in Cambodia. This money paid for vital protection training that means Sopheak and her fellow villagers no longer have to live in fear of the disease.

It's so easy to take part in Will Aid. Simply find a convenient solicitor at www.willaid.org.uk or by phoning 0300 0300 013 and make an appointment for November as soon as possible. Participating solicitors can become booked up very quickly so don't delay in booking up to make a Will and make a difference.

All Hallows Eve

On the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or 'Summer's End'. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. There was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

When Christianity arrived, 1st November - All Saints' Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called 'All Hallows' Day'. The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called 'All Hallows' Eve', The Holy Evening, later shortened to 'Halloween'.

Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows' Eve, should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.