



Digital Legacy Guide

WHY YOUR DIGITAL LEGACY MATTERS

Your digital life now forms an important part of your estate. This may include email accounts, photographs, social media, online subscriptions, cloud storage, and online financial services.

If no arrangements are made, your executors or family may experience difficulty accessing important information, closing accounts, or preserving sentimental items. In some cases, valuable digital assets may be lost permanently.

A digital legacy plan helps:

- Your executors administer your estate efficiently
- Your family access important memories and information
- Reduce stress, delay, and cost
- Protect against identity misuse

WHAT IS A DIGITAL LEGACY?

Your **digital legacy** covers your online accounts, digital files, and online services, together with instructions about what should happen to them after your death or if you lose capacity.

Your Will can authorise your executors to deal with digital assets, but many providers require you to take steps **during your lifetime**.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Passwords, PINs, and security codes **must not** be included in your Will. A Will becomes a public document once probate is granted. Access details should be stored securely elsewhere.

Please let us know if you hold any digital assets as this is an important consideration when drafting a Will or creating Lasting Powers of Attorney.

STEP-BY-STEP: FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM (META)

Facebook and Instagram allow you to choose what happens to your account after death.

Option 1: Appoint a Legacy Contact

Option 2: Request account deletion

How to set this up:

1. Log into Facebook
2. Select Settings & Privacy
3. Click Settings
4. Select Memorialisation Settings
5. Choose a Legacy Contact, or select Request account deletion after death
6. Save your changes

What a Legacy Contact can do:

- Update your profile picture
- Post a pinned message
- Respond to friend requests

What they cannot do:

- Access private messages
- Post as you
- View login details



STEP-BY-STEP: GOOGLE (GMAIL, DRIVE, PHOTOS, YOUTUBE)

Google provides an **Inactive Account Manager**.

How to set this up:

1. Log into your Google Account
2. Go to Data & Privacy
3. Select Inactive Account Manager
4. Choose how long Google should wait before treating your account as inactive
5. Nominate trusted contact(s)
6. Select what data they may receive
7. Choose whether the account should be deleted after sharing
8. Save your settings

This is one of the most effective digital legacy tools available.



STEP-BY-STEP: APPLE (APPLE ID & ICLOUD)

Apple allows you to add **Legacy Contacts**.

How to set this up (on iPhone or iPad):

1. Go to **Settings**
2. Tap your name
3. Select **Password & Security**
4. Tap **Legacy Contact**
5. Add a contact
6. Save the **access key** somewhere secure

Without a Legacy Contact, Apple may refuse access even to executors.

USING A DIGITAL ESTATE VAULT

A Digital Estate Vault is a secure place to store:

- A list of your digital accounts
- Passwords and access keys
- Instructions for executors

It allows you to update information without changing your Will.

NB: This document is for general guidance only and does not constitute legal advice. Pearson Hards LLP is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.



DIGITAL LEGACY CHECKLIST

Personal & Devices

- Email addresses
- Mobile phones
- Computers / tablets
- Cloud storage services

Online Accounts

- Facebook / Instagram
- Google account(s)
- Apple ID(s)
- LinkedIn / X
- Subscription services

Financial & Business

- Online banking
- Investment platforms
- Crypto-assets
- Online businesses
- Domains / websites

Legacy Settings

- Facebook Legacy Contact or deletion set
- Google Inactive Account Manager completed
- Apple Legacy Contact added

Digital Estate Vault

- Vault provider chosen
- Passwords stored securely
- Executor access arranged
- Instructions uploaded

Legal Coordination

- Will includes digital asset authority
- Executors informed
- LPAs updated
- Annual review planned

ADDITION: DIGITAL LEGACY & LASTING POWERS OF ATTORNEY (LPAS)

Why LPAs Matter for Digital Assets

If you lose mental capacity, your attorneys may need access to:

- Email accounts
- Online banking
- Utility and subscription services
- Cloud-stored documents

Without authority, providers may refuse access.

Best Practice for LPAs

Clients should:

- Appoint attorneys they trust with digital matters
- Keep digital access information separate from the LPA
- Use Digital Estate Vaults for secure storage
- Align LPA authority with Will provisions

Attorneys should be given **lawful authority**, not passwords.

