

NOTTINGHAM MENCAP - Registered Charity No. 1046081

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Questions and Answers about Legacies

Q. Can I leave a legacy to Nottingham Mencap ? Is it a registered Charity?

A. Nottingham Mencap is a proud title but it is not an offshoot or branch of any other charity. It is an independent charity - Charity Commission registered No 1046081. We were founded in 1950 by parents of children suffering from a wide range of 'mental handicaps', who were described as backward, retarded, uneducable and many other negative descriptions. They came together to support one another in their struggle to care for their handicapped children and to fight for recognition and services to help them continue to care. Today, over half a century on, some of those original parents still lend their time and support but are joined by parents of later generations. Specialist services for people with a learning disability have been hard won and there is still a long way to go in the fight for justice and opportunity in the lives of the learning disabled.

Q. Do Nottingham Mencap need my legacy?

A. Legacies are hugely important to our work, which covers the Greater Nottingham area, including Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Gedling. We need them to contribute to supporting the efforts of staff and volunteers to provide services. We do receive some funding from local statutory authorities, as well as the Big Lottery Fund, European Social Fund and the Learning & Skills Council. A number of trusts and local companies have also pledged their support for Nottingham Mencap projects. Providing quality services and support costs a great deal of money. Available income allows some progress with these activities but some areas would welcome more financial support. We would like to maintain and increase the range of services we provide to children and adults with a learning disability, their families and carers in Greater Nottingham. This will only be possible with the support of statutory funding to maintain the long term stability of our Charity and its activities. We maintain rigorous budgetary control and our ability to deliver best value is recognised by the funders who have increased their investments in our services. We are conscious that we have achieved much in recent years, especially in the area of Learning and Development. However, we recognise that there is still much to be done before people with a learning disability in Greater Nottingham receive the services they deserve. We shall continue to campaign, to lobby, to apply for funding and welcome any help in maintaining this effort.

Q. Can I choose what my legacy is spent on?

A. Yes, of course you can. If there are special individuals that mean a lot to you, a favourite project or activity or an aspect of our work that you particularly want to support, such as helping to refurbish or re-equip one of our properties, you can specify this in your will. But legacies that are not specific are especially helpful as they can be used to fund our most urgent needs at the time they are received.

Q. Can I be sure that the Charity will spend my legacy where I want it to be spent?

A. You can be assured that we will use your gift as you wish. Of course, it must be for an activity within our care or a purpose the charity undertakes to fulfil under our constitution. You or your solicitor can check with our Legacy Trustee, in strict confidence, if in doubt.

Q. Can I be sure that my legacy will not be used for administration purposes?

A. Yes. All legacy donations we receive (unless otherwise specified) go directly to essential work on project activities or properties

Q. Are there any special words I should use in my will?

A. Yes, the full name of the charity - Nottingham Mencap - simply must appear. We ask that our registered charity number (1046081) is also clearly stated to avoid confusion with other organisations. Nottingham Mencap is a separate charity covering the Greater Nottingham Area, including bordering Districts, only. If your will states that name your bequest will be used in these places only. It is particularly important if you live outside Nottingham to see that any solicitor you employ puts Nottingham Mencap's full name in your will. It is also useful to add our address - Centre House, 4 Chapel Bar, Nottingham NG1 6JQ.

Q. Do I need to tell you that I've mentioned Nottingham Mencap in my will?

A. No, but it is really helpful if you do, although no details are necessary. The charity has to spend time and money raising funds from a number of sources in a variety of ways, including legacies. Knowing that we are attracting legacy support helps us plan how best to use these scarce resources in the future. Very importantly to us it lets the Charity say a modest 'thank you' by sending an annual report and open invitation to a special tour of any property, project or activity that you particularly like, if you wish. However, there is absolutely no question of you receiving unwanted communications.

Q. What are the tax advantages of leaving money to charity?

A. If, after bills are paid, you leave money and possessions worth more than a set threshold, currently £285,000, there may be 40% inheritance tax to pay on the balance over that amount. However, legacies to a charity like Nottingham Mencap are exempt from inheritance and capital gains taxes. Consequently, any gift should be received in full and before any tax is charged. For instance, a legacy of £10,000 to the charity might save an inheritance tax charge of £4,000. It is recommended that you ask your solicitor or other professional adviser about the best ways to reduce tax, including through donations, in your will.

Q. What will it cost me?

A. Contact your solicitor to find out. It might cost nothing or very little, and your solicitor will tell you whether a simple letter might do or whether a more formal document needs to be completed.

Q. Is a small legacy really any use?

A. Absolutely. Even though some of the bills we have to meet for the provision of services and other support for people with a learning disability can be large, general legacies are pooled to help meet them. This is why we are very grateful for any amount left to us. Please believe that whatever you are kind enough to leave will make a real difference to our work. For example, a donation singly or collectively totalling £500 can provide hands-on activities for a children's activity group; £1,000, provides a tower scaffold to help us safely maintain our buildings; £2,500 can pay for annual minibus use for a group; £7,500 can kick-start a much needed new project; and £35,000 would re-furbish an entire section of one of our properties. If you have any other questions about leaving a legacy to Nottingham Mencap please send them to ask our Legacy Trustee at :

info@nottinghammencap.org.uk