

Gibbons Solicitors Limited

Estate Administration Fees and Timescales

I carried out a survey of 17 probate cases which I commenced since August 2015 and completed before November 2018, and I have grouped them below into three sections.

‘Single Beneficiary’ cases:

Six cases in this category were surveyed. All but one were cases in which one of a couple had died and the estate passed in full to the survivor. My normal expectation is that these cases take 6-9 months to complete and engage between 8 and 15 hours of my time and five of them fell within this category. One case (in which there was a large portfolio of shares in certificated form, including some registered overseas) took 28 hours work over 18 months.

Full Administration Service:

These are cases where I substantially managed the entire process. There were seven cases, involving estates worth between £500,000 and £1,5 million. My normal expectation is that these cases taken between one and two years to complete and engage 35 to 50 hours time. But one of the cases took 34 months to complete and engaged 69 hours; another involved exactly the same amount of time but took only 15 months to complete

Restricted Service:

In four cases I was only asked to prepare the inheritance tax return and apply for probate, the executors opting to carry out the remainder of the administration work (including estate banking, distribution and annual tax compliance) personally. I usually estimate 3-4 months to probate in a non-taxpaying estate, and 5-6 months in a case where there is inheritance tax to be paid, or for other reasons a full (IHT400) inheritance tax return is required. The time engaged was between 5 and 15 hours, depending on the complexity of the estate.

Tim Gibbons

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