

*“The next 25 years will be the biggest transfer of wealth from generation to generation ever seen in history. You’re either a part of that, or you’re not.”*

Rob Cope, Director of Remember A Charity



Legacy and In-Memory 2045 | October 2019

# Giving Tomorrow



LegacyForesight

# Introduction

Legacy Foresight have been at the forefront of the UK legacy and in-memory markets for 25 years, providing data, insight and forecasts that have helped shape these £5 billion sectors.

We've seen charities' approach to legacy and in-memory giving become ever more sophisticated over the past 25 years. From simple 'write to us for your free booklet' asks, to today's tech-orientated long-term relationship building, the value of investing in legacy and in-memory giving is increasingly recognised across the sector.

In response to this clear potential, new groups of professional fundraisers and administrators have emerged. Since it was founded in 1999, the Institute of Legacy Management has seen its membership grow to over 500 members from some 350 British charities.

Meanwhile, the annual Legacy Fundraising conference in London now attracts hundreds of delegates, including a growing international contingent. Our own In-Memory Insight research programme has worked with over 80 charities, both large and small, from across the UK.

To help celebrate our 25th anniversary, we have produced this report to showcase brand new thinking on where legacy and in-memory giving will be in 25 years' time, and to provide insight and inspiration for those working in the sector today. We hope you find it useful.

## A look to the future

There's no doubt UK society will see some fundamental shifts over the next two decades, including many people living well into their 90s, more child-free donors and a huge transfer of wealth as the baby boomer generation dies out. Given current trends, we predict that legacy and in-memory incomes will double by 2045.

The number of gifts is also due to rise quickly, thanks to rising death rates. But compared to the last 30 years, gift values will rise relatively slowly, due to the uncertain economic and social climate. That uncertainty is also affecting willingness to give to charity – those with children feel they are more likely to need their money, and so charities can lose out.

Which means those who are child-free are more important than ever. Twenty percent of women born in the 1960s are child-free, compared to just 12% of those born in the 1930s. This trend will undoubtedly flow through into legacy giving over the next two decades.

We are likely to see small charities making big gains, with people increasingly looking to support local and specialist charities and campaigns. Baby boomers want to give money and time to causes they feel can make a tangible difference – often on a local/one-to-one basis – and this includes their legacies, as well as their giving or volunteering when they are alive.

The way charities interact with their supporters will also change, with virtual reality and other digital innovations bringing donors into direct contact with beneficiaries. Charities should be putting plans in place now to prepare for this.

We've already seen how quickly the world has changed in just the last decade or so, and so it's no great leap to imagine that 2045 will bring with it technology we can only dream of, and aspects of life that would be unimaginable to us today.

So, what might the world look like in 2045?



*The three trends I predict in the next 25 years are an increase in volunteering, increasing interest in philanthropy and an increase in social enterprise.*

**Sir Stuart Etherington**

Legacy Foresight are the UK's foremost analysts of the legacy and in-memory sectors. We offer benchmarking, forecasting, research and consultancy services to charity clients. Since our first project in 1994 we have worked with over 200 charities, including the top 20 UK fundraising brands and a growing number of international clients.

# Welcome to 2045

For those of you old enough to remember Facebook and the iPhone X, times have changed considerably in your lifetime. The charity landscape in particular has seen fundamental changes.

One of the most controversial came in 2035, when Prime Minister Charlotte Church passed legislation that banned charities from using synthetic human emotions to encourage increased donations. Many argued distributing synthetic empathy to donors was unethical – while others pointed out the tactics were commonplace in the advertising industry, so why shouldn't the technology be used for good?

The debate was influenced by memories of the great financial crash of 2024, and the outcry over Gates-gate, when a merger between Microsoft's international research laboratories and three of the world's biggest anti-poverty charities formed a not-for-profit superpower. Given that the new conglomerate now has a bigger income than many of the world's countries, including the UK, many worried whether it had too much knowledge and power at its disposal.

The good news is that charities helped the UK reach net zero carbon emissions 15 years ahead of target, although it took sharks infesting British waters for concerted action to happen. The selection of Greta Thunberg as CEO of the renowned Attenborough Centre for Climate Studies piled on the pressure, as did the unexpected announcement in 2022 from Jeff Bezos, former CEO of Amazon, that pressure from his children had persuaded him to shut down the company and use the proceeds to buy and preserve the Amazon rainforest.

The use of virtual reality to gift money in your will – but to see its potential effects before you die – was a positive trend that started in the late 2020s. And, now that traditional currency no longer exists, charities have invented a raft of new ways for people to digitally donate, including 'thought-gifting', the use of brain waves to transfer money to fundraising initiatives, and the hugely popular Minerva, the emotionally intelligent virtual assistant that debates ethical issues with her users as a way of encouraging giving.

It's a challenging new world, but it's one that charities can start to harness now.

# Our story to date



*Legacy Foresight give the sector more insight and credibility. They are experts who travel alongside you as you make your way in the legacy world.*

**Stephen George**  
Fundraising and Leadership Expert

We are proud of what we have achieved since our beginnings in 1994. Here are a few of our highlights over that time.

**1994** Stuart Etherington, CEO of RNID, convenes a consortium of 13 charities to fund a 20-year forecast of charitable legacy income. **Legacy Foresight is born.**

Soon afterwards, we start providing **legacy income forecasts** for individual charities – today we work with some 30 large charities on an ongoing basis.

**2007** **Living Forever: Baby Boomers and Posterity** – our flagship research into baby boomer donors explores their impact on legacy giving over the next 40 years. Our first project to combine numerical modelling with consumer research.

**2008** **Legacy Monitor benchmarking programme** launches. Instigated by a group of senior legacy clients, with 31 founder members.

**2010** **Baby Boomers Revisited** updates our 2007 work in light of the global recession.

**2011** **In-Memory Insight programme** starts to map, measure and research the growing in-memory giving sector. Since then over 80 charities have taken part

Legacy Monitor reaches 50 members!

**2014** **Legacy Monitor Netherlands** is set up in partnership with local expert Arjen van Ketel and eight pioneer charities (now 19 and counting!).

**Legacy Giving 2050: Legacy Giving in an Age of Uncertainty** assesses the long-term outlook for legacy giving in the aftermath of the global recession.

**2015 Legacy Monitor website** is developed. Clients can now download and manipulate benchmarking data, feeding results directly into plans and budgets.

**2016 Legacy Marketing Benchmarks 2.0.** A new approach to marketing benchmarking exploring capacity, activity, marketing responses and legator profiles.

**2017 The Invisible Legator project** investigates the many charity legacies that apparently arrive out of the blue; whether from known supporters who had not disclosed their gift, or from people who cannot be traced on charities' databases.

**In-Memory Consultancy** offers bespoke in-memory fundraising research, strategies, new product development and supporter journey planning.

Legacy Monitor tops 80 members.

**2018 Understanding Legacy Stewardship.** Funded by 29 charities, this project set out to understand legacy stewardship from both charity and donor perspectives, using a combination of detailed case studies and in-depth supporter interviews.

**Marketing Evaluation Service launches** to assess the financial impact of an additional investment in legacy marketing and the time it will take to see a return.

**2019 Legacy Journey** – an innovative new service tracking communications received by charities' potential legacy and in-memory donors.

**Baby Boomer Legacies.** An update on previous research now that boomers are reaching retirement. Focusing on two distinct cohorts: core and shadow boomers.

**Australian Gifts in Wills 2040.** Long-term forecast of the Australian legacy sector over the next 20 years, presented across Australia as the lynchpin of Include A Charity week, September 2019.



*Legacy Foresight have brought an enormous amount of authoritative analysis. In a part of the sector that is still a bit of a mystery to many senior people, they have earned the right to be heard.*

Eifron Hopper  
Legacy Income Manager, RNLI

# Legacy and in-memory giving today

The UK has a long-established, vibrant not-for-profit sector, with charities covering every possible cause, area and population. In 2018 British charities received over £5 billion through gifts in wills and in-memory motivated giving. That's a tenth of total income, and this figure is on the up.

Over the past 25 years, legacy incomes have more than doubled in real terms – despite death rates falling over much of that period. Our projections for the next 25 years suggest legacy incomes will almost double again, reaching £5.9 billion at today's prices by 2045.

The trend in falling death rates has recently reversed, and over the past two years the number of UK deaths exceeded 600,000 a year. This number is expected to top 700,000 a year by the mid-2030s and reach 770,000 by 2045.

As the numbers of deaths rise, the numbers of legacies also increase, as does their value. We have now seen the share of estates gifts to charities – which has been sitting at 3% for decades – climbing to 4%. It may seem a small increase, but it's a significant one, suggesting that the collective efforts of legacy fundraisers are bearing fruit.

## The B word

As we write this in late 2019, Brexit is creating a state of extreme uncertainty. However it plays out, that uncertainty is likely to have an impact on both legacy and in-memory giving.

Share prices, house prices and the value of the pound are all fluctuating and unpredictable, which has an impact on legacy values. The uncertainty is further encouraging people to stop spending and batten down the hatches, so financial decisions are being taken that protect family and loved ones first, not just for now but well into the future.

Which all means the short-term projections for legacy giving are less than rosy – in fact, income had already fallen slightly for the first time in seven years in 2018.

## Boom baby boom

But the long-term outlook is still extremely positive, thanks to baby boomers. This generation, born 1946-1964, are currently in their 50s, 60s and early 70s. They are a large, generally affluent, socially-minded and liberal group, more open to leaving a charitable legacy than the generation before. This outward-looking spirit means that the number of gifts in wills is likely to rise significantly over the next 25 years.

Baby boomers will also help fuel the rising death rate over the next few decades. Today they account for one in five deaths – by 2030 that figure will be one in two; while by 2045 two thirds of those dying will be boomers.

Many are actively invested in local groups and activities, and this can lead to supporting a cause financially too. However, they may be charitably minded, but they are also demanding

and want control over their gift, and proof of value. Technological advances over the next few years are likely to help persuade more of them to make charitable gifts.



*As technology changes we expect to see many relationships almost bypass the charities themselves. Charities are going to have to work even harder to explain why they are still an important link.*

**Rob Cope**  
Director of Remember A Charity

## Keep it in the family? Not any more

Many people still put family first when writing a will. But if that family is touched by charity, perhaps through receiving support or volunteering, then people can and do make space in their wills to reward that cause.

But family dynamics are changing. For a start, we're not having babies anymore. Well, not in the same way as in the past. The 'shadow boomer' generation, now in their 50s, are far less likely to have children than older boomers (now in their 60s), and those born during the second world war.

Twenty per cent of women in their 50s are child-free, and we know that those without children are far more likely to leave a large gift to charity. For such people the decision to leave money to charity is practical as much as emotional – while it's been the 'done thing' to leave money to wider family, people are increasingly asking, why should I, when I can support a cause I love instead?

## The wealth effect

Baby boomers are a uniquely privileged generation – the kind of wealth and prosperity they have experienced in their lifetimes may never happen again. Many recognise and are grateful for this and are keen to show that by making gifts to causes outside the family.

In addition, that wealth means they have more to spare. Some simply don't want to give it all to family. Those with children may want to set a good example, or to stop them from having it all on a plate. Those without children may begrudge automatically leaving money to relatives. They are far more likely than previous generations to leave it to charity, or to spend it all before they die.

## Small is beautiful

Good news for smaller charities – more people are choosing to support smaller, often local causes instead of the large, long-established causes that have traditionally dominated.



*Charities founded after 1970 now account for £1 in every £4 of legacy income – and their combined income is growing at a rate of 9% a year.*

**Meg Abdy**  
Development Director, Legacy Foresight



In 2006 the top 10 legacy charities accounted for a third of all legacy income. In 2019, it's down to a quarter. Legacy donors are gravitating towards smaller organisations that they trust and feel a personal connection with. These patterns are likely to continue as baby boomers fill time in their retirement with volunteering, again often for local charities and groups.

Overall, today's high growth sectors include air ambulances, hospitals, wildlife trusts, arts organisations and universities. Other contemporary causes such as development charities and environmental charities are also gaining ground.



*In 25 years', time there will be an increasing influx of social enterprise and a huge shift in the different models of 'for good' enterprise. Increasingly we will be going around traditional charity models. There are players who will embrace it, but the traditional charity model feels quite fixed – is there the courage to make that change?*

Stephen George  
Fundraising and Leadership Expert

## Where there's a will

A will is an intensely personal, private document – the majority of people never tell a charity they have left them a gift in their will. Wills are also living documents, reflecting the changing relationships, experiences and passions of the individual. Beneficiaries change over time. We believe that once 'charity' is in the will, it's there to stay; but the specific causes supported may well change from one will to the next.

### Spotlight on in-memory giving

Unlike legacies, in-memory is a reason for giving to charity, rather than a way of donating. Our research shows it's a significant motivation underpinning many donations – from the obvious (funeral collections and commemorative benches), to the invisible (setting up a direct debit to commemorate a parent; running a marathon to raise funds for the cancer charity that helped a colleague). We have found that one third of adults have given money in memory over the past 12 months, and this giving totals over £2 billion a year.

Many in-memory donors develop an enduring personal connection to their chosen charity, as it represents a link to someone they have loved and lost. The act of giving in honour of a loved one can be helpful to the bereaved as well as the charity; providing focus or diversion, giving something positive to think about, and encouraging mutual support between family and friends. This is particularly important when a life has been 'cut short' due to illness, accident or violence, where the need to make good out of bad is often compelling.

Although in-memory giving is about far more than legacies, it's an important motivation here too. According to our recent survey, two fifths of charitable legacy donors had included at least one in-memory gift in their will – and once there, those bequests were unlikely to ever be removed, as they formed an indelible link to a special someone.

## Legacy Foresight in Australia and the Netherlands

Legacy Foresight has been monitoring the Dutch legacy sector since 2014, working in partnership with Dutch fundraising expert Arjen van Ketel. This year we've also moved down under, analysing the fast-growing Australian sector on behalf of the Include A Charity campaign.

Our work in these markets has brought us into contact with many enthusiastic legacy fundraisers, keen to grow gifts in wills in their country. We've learned a great deal from these international explorations. While both countries have many parallels with the UK, there are also some intrinsic differences.

Australia's gifts in wills sector is still maturing, and participation varies widely. However, there has been a huge uplift in the attention given to legacies in recognition of their enormous potential, and incomes are now growing at 10% a year.

*"The number of deaths is increasing year on year and that's going to accelerate over the next 25 years,"* says Ross Anderson, Gifts in Wills Manager, RSPCA Victoria. *"By 2045 I can see legacy income more than doubling, just by sheer force of numbers and some shifts in society."*

In the Netherlands, *"There are some legal differences with the UK. We have a smaller population, and in general people leave less to charities,"* says Arjen van Ketel. *"But still, charities receive more than 25% of their income through individual legacies."*

Currently, about 70% of the Dutch give to charities, usually split among up to 40 different causes. *"We would like to have a larger percentage of people leaving a legacy in their will,"* says Arjen. *"For now, it's about 5%, but potentially that can grow, when people feel more confident about their financial future."*

# The legacy and in-memory givers of the future

Who are the people who will be leaving legacies and in-memory gifts in 2045? What are their motivations? What behaviours are they likely to exhibit?

Allow us to introduce you to five of them.

## Penny

Penny, age 105, lives in the Independent Dreams residential home. The home is well-equipped, and Penny enjoys life here. There is a room where she can use interactive screens to talk to her family, and she can also converse with them on her video glasses.

Family mean the world to Penny – she has two kids (now in their late 70s), three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Technology enables her to keep good contact with all the different members of her family, and several visit regularly.

*25 years ago*, in October 2019, Penny's husband died of Alzheimer's. Penny looked after him at home for as long as possible, but he became too difficult to manage and reluctantly she agreed he needed to go into care. She wishes he were alive now, given the major breakthroughs in treating the disease. People can now manage their symptoms far more successfully, and in some instances, the disease can be reversed.

Penny managed to live in her own home until she was 95. Technology helped her feel safe and connected – she had her own personal robot, which helped her with basic tasks and ensured she took her daily medication.

In 2045, Penny knows she can end her life easily if she chooses to, since voluntary euthanasia was legalised 10 years ago, but she is still enjoying life despite her age. She has had her hip and knees replaced, and they are actually better than her natural joints.

Penny has always been religious and finds her beliefs a source of guidance whenever she feels low. She used to go to church regularly, where she made many friends. Until it became too much for her, she helped with fundraising and outreach events. The church has been a constant in her life, while so much has changed around her.

Penny's not sure how much money will be left for her family once her care costs have been paid, but she has had numerous discussions with her children, and they want her to be well looked after. They also have their own established lives and are financially comfortable.

Penny's will includes the following (on the proviso there is money left after her care costs):

Cash gift to the dementia charity she has supported since her husband's illness. She wants her bequest to fund further research so that significant breakthroughs can be made, and to support people like her in the future.

Cash gift to a children's charity. She does not support this charity now, but it reflects her love of children and the fact that she hates to think of children suffering around the world.

Cash gift to an animal charity – this is another charity Penny has supported for some time. It reflects the pleasure she and her husband got from owning rescue dogs over the years.

Penny knows her family won't resent these gifts – after all, these charities are almost part of the family themselves.

## Steve

Steve, age 80, and husband Rob live in a 'frommune' – a friends' commune – in a rambling country house they own with three sets of friends. Steve has no children.

The friends have known each other for years. They used to jokingly talk about sharing a house together in their old age. *25 years ago*, at the end of a drunken evening, they decided to do it.

They rent the basement out to young workers – the rent is low, and in return tenants help with jobs around the estate, as well as IT problems, which seem to recur ever more frequently since they bought a domestic care robot!

Without really intending to, Steve has become fairly wealthy over the years. He and Rob both had good careers, with no break for children. They were hard workers and careful planners. After retirement they moved their investments into ethical funds, hoping to make a difference where they could.

Five years ago, a friend, Jenny, was diagnosed with terminal illness. Although it was a terrible shock, pain management treatments these days are fantastic, so at least she wasn't too uncomfortable. And Jenny was glad to have a sense of how long she had left, since it helped her plan precious time. She drew up a 'bucket list' of things she wanted to do and managed to get most of them done before the illness took hold.

As well as treating friends and family, Jenny gave money and practical help to some charities she loved. It was great to see the impact immediately, rather than having to imagine what it might do after she was gone.

Jenny's funeral was an amazing event, attended 'virtually' by people from around the world. She worked with a funeral planner to orchestrate the venue, décor and music, and recorded her own goodbye message through a 3D avatar.

Since they downshifted, Steve and Rob have volunteered – both hands on and virtually – using the skills and contacts they built up over their working lives. Steve is still involved as a trustee and volunteer for a couple of charities close to his heart, but he's starting to slow down and jettison unwanted responsibilities.

Steve first wrote a charitable will in his 40s – he can't remember exactly when. Over the years, he has changed his will several times for practical reasons (inheriting money, going trekking in Chile ...), and each time he has tweaked the list of charities included.

He's never told the charities about his gifts, even those he is close to – it's none of their business, and who knows how his needs will change in future?

He's about to revise his will again in light of Jenny's death – he wants to 'put his house in order'. He plans to think seriously about the charities he includes – a chance to make a statement about who he is, and the world he wants to leave behind.

Steve's will includes the following:

Small cash gifts to nieces and nephews. Steve and Rob agree their nieces and nephews don't need or deserve their money as they are grown up and will likely inherit from their own parents.

A development charity based in Nepal, which Steve and Rob came across while on holiday. Over the years they have met some amazing and inspiring people, sometimes living in harsh circumstances. It's made them realise how lucky they are to have been born when and where they were.

A local farmer who farms vegetables and salads using hydroponics. Despite the interest in sustainable farming, it's still hard to make organic foods pay – and Steve wants the farm to be there for future generations.

Steve is also considering bequeathing his lifelong online diary to his local theatre group, in the hope they will turn it into an award-winning play!

## Amita

Amita, age 60, has lived in Manchester since the 2028 Northern Green Powerhouse Revolution. Amita and partner Matt always had strong ecological beliefs, and when Manchester and Liverpool crowdfunded to turn their cities 100% carbon neutral, the couple were quick to stake a claim.

Amita is second-generation Hindu, and her background instilled a love of travelling and exploring. After graduating as a lawyer, she decided to spend time travelling before settling down. She travelled the world, first as a volunteer then as a paid employee on environmental projects, where her skills as an advocate for local groups were invaluable.

*25 years ago*, Amita and Matt had their son Tom. Tom is autistic, and until recently couldn't live independently. But he now participates in the National Excellence Pathways project, living part-time in a specially developed centre where his unique brainpower is being used to aid scientific innovation. He is lucky to be able to work in an autism-friendly environment with uncluttered, quiet spaces with soothing colours and fewer people.

Amita and Matt have never had a lot of money, but they try to live lightly, with limited possessions. They have never owned a property – why tie yourself down with a mortgage, when you want to be free to make the most of the opportunities that arise?

Amita's dad was a pillar of his local community. When he died (at just 70 years old), there was a huge Hindu funeral. It lasted for days, and everyone in their community came, including little-known relatives from India. There was a collection in honour of her dad, which raised thousands for a diabetes charity, as well as some projects in the village he grew up in.

When Matt's mum took ill in New York, he was glad to be able to reach her to say goodbye. Her Jewish funeral was a complete contrast to Amita's dad – very plain and austere. There was no collection, but every year they mark the anniversary with prayers and a donation to the hospital that cared for her.

Matt's dad was a wealthy New York businessman who died five years ago. With the help of financial planners, he had set up a large charitable foundation, which is now administered by his children.

Due to his passion for the environment, Matt has encouraged the foundation to make significant donations to environmental charities and projects. He is particularly pleased with the Technology Challenge Fund they set up, awarding start-up grants to innovative projects tackling water pollution around the world.

Although still passionate about seeing the world, these days Amita travels by virtual reality only – partly because of the ecological disadvantages of the old way of travelling, and partly because the complicated borders between England and the rest of the world make it hardly worthwhile.

Amita's will includes the following:

Both Amita and Matt see their legacy to their son as the values and experiences they have passed onto them, not material possessions. That said, Tom's autism means he may not be able to live fully independently. Accordingly, they have left a large donation to his specialist housing scheme, in return for future support.

Amita volunteers for her local green charity. She has left her allotment lease to them, with instructions to auction it to the highest bidder.

## Hazim

Hazim, age 45, is a successful climate change engineer. It's a booming industry, especially after the government cut foreign aid spend to support actions in the UK, such as improving flood defences in low-lying areas.

Hazim learns first-hand from relatives the effects this reduction in foreign aid spending has in Pakistan, which persuaded him to send a regular monthly donation to an Islamic charity in Pakistan that provides aid and support in the poorest communities.

*25 years ago*, Hazim's dad died, leaving him head of the household. He had to grow up fast, looking after his mum and sisters. Today, Hazim still lives in the house he grew up in – when he

married, his wife moved in, and now they live there with his mum and their three children. The house is owned outright, so Hazim doesn't have mortgage payments and has a reasonable income from his salary as an engineer. His family also benefits from government tax-breaks for inter-generational households, in recognition of the child and elderly care costs they save the state.

He lives frugally and saves the majority of his spare income in a savings account. His priority is the education of his children – he wishes both his sons and daughter to attend university as he did. Higher education costs are now extremely prohibitive, and Hazim is saving all he can to ensure his children can attend without incurring debts.

Both Hazim and his wife feel British – many of their friends are British (from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds), they work in British companies and the family speaks English at home and school. But Hazim's Islamic faith is still very important to him – he goes to Friday prayers every week and is involved in community activities organised through his mosque. He also sits on the board of a local community foundation, where his professional experience and expertise are greatly valued.

Bradford is an exceptional town these days – its decision to capitalise on the legalisation of cannabis in 2028 turned many derelict factories into cannabis farms, financing a city-wide regeneration project that places it as one of the country's model cities. Hazim is proud of his city and his local community.

Hazim is planning to write his first will, using an online will-making service that deals specifically with Sharia-compliant wills. But he's torn. Although he wants to observe Sharia inheritance laws, he also wants to treat his daughter equally to his sons. He intends to use the discretionary final third of his will to equalise the split of his estate, so his daughter is not left at a disadvantage.

His wish to ensure his children are provided for overrides any desire to leave a legacy to charity, however, if there is sufficient remaining, he would be keen to support those charities he already has an established relationship with.

Hazim is considering including the following charities in his will:

His local community foundation, which has been working closely with his mosque over the past 10 years to build a cohesive community – there's much less tension and suspicion of Muslim people these days. He'd like to know the vital work is continuing after he's gone.

When Hazim's dad died they sent what little money they could afford back to his local village as he requested. Now that Hazim is more established, he'd like to give them more in honour of his father's memory.

Hazim has also been toying with the idea of passing on his knowledge of climate change engineering by programming an avatar to answer questions from beyond the grave.

# Archie

Archie, age 20, wasn't born *25 years ago*. He bounces into the world in February 2025, a few days earlier than planned.

These days, Archie is very close to his grandparents, who largely brought him up while his parents were at work. His granddad was in the armed services, fought in Afghanistan – he tells Archie lots of combat stories. Archie visited Afghanistan just once, as part of an immersive, virtual experience.

One of Archie's best friends was recently killed on an e-motorbike. Archie is compiling a digital record of his friend's life using a combination of still and moving pictures, recordings of his voice and the many things he wrote. So many people have contributed their memories and tributes to this digital record – Archie only wishes his friend could be there to hear and see what they said.

He and his friends have clubbed together through crowdfunding to have his friend's ashes sent into space in a private funeral rocket. His friend's dream was to go on one of the missions to Mars, maybe one day to join one of the permanent human colonies being set up.

Archie deals with trauma by retreating to gaming. He regularly travels and meets people using avatars – it's his safe zone. Archie is also close to his advanced, human-like assistant. She's super-intelligent and a good listener.

When he does venture out, he's increasingly mindful of his behaviour. Public surveillance and social scoring have become much more advanced, and some of his mates are finding doors closed to them.

Like his granddad, Archie's good with his hands – he's recently completed 3-D printing a shed for the garden. For a college project, Archie has uploaded footage of the way people used to shop. His implanted, wearable technology allows him to order anything he wants at the tap of a finger – at least, it would do if he had the money.

Ultimately, Archie would like to settle down with someone nice and save up together to back-up their brains online. But he's pessimistic about achieving this any time soon.

Archie's too young to think about a will, but he takes part in sponsored events, raising bitcoins for the air ambulance (for his friend) and a war veterans' charity (in honour of his granddad).



# 10 predictions for legacy and in-memory giving in 2045

What will the sector look like in 25 years' time? Who will be giving? What and how will they give? Legacy Foresight have crunched the numbers and analysed the trends – and we have 10 big predictions for 2045.

## 1. Double the income. Double the opportunity

UK legacy and in-memory giving will be worth twice as much in real terms as it is today. The number of charitable bequests will have grown from 120,000 to 200,000, thanks to a combination of more deaths, more will-making and a higher proportion of people leaving a gift in their will.

This growth will be driven by the large, mainly affluent and liberal baby boomer generation, by now in their eighties and nineties.

### Food for thought?

*“Competition is going to increase for donors’ money, so that gives donors more power. I think they will start to ask why there are so many different charities supporting the same causes. I think some charities may have to merge because they can’t all sustain. It would certainly be better from the donors’ perspective.”*

Dan Carter, Global Legacy Director, IFAW.

## 2. Show me the money (and where you spend it)

Compared to the war babies who came before them, baby boomers are far cannier about the money they leave behind. To them their gifts are investments – they want to see the way that money will be spent and the impact it will have. Expect far more questioning of the causes they support, and more ambitions for their legacy and what it can achieve.



*Donors need to be treated with much more respect. They are philanthropically aware, entitled people and they want proof of impact to make sure their investments are going to be well used.*

**Richard Radcliffe**  
Independent Legacy Specialist

### 3. Child-free and non-conformist

Nearly one in five women born in the 1960s are child-free. By 2045, this group will account for a significant share of all legacy giving.

These child-free donors are happy to flout convention, basing their legacy decisions on who 'needs' and 'deserves' their gift the most, whether that's family, friends or a trusted charity – rather than who 'should' have it.

Meanwhile, in the face of ever more economic and social uncertainty, those with children are finding it harder to make space in their will for anyone outside their immediate family.

### 4. Competition is intense. So let's split up

Rather than leaving one or two charitable donations, people are choosing to split their giving between more charities, a mixture of national, local and international causes.

That means football clubs, mosques, temples and local parks will benefit from a share of a pie currently reserved for big charities. Technology is helping to level the playing field, enabling the smallest charities to reach and inspire supporters. And some people are ignoring charities altogether – making a direct link with the person or cause they want to help.



*“Bigger charities will be less nimble. Smaller local charities will win people's hearts, as they are seen as more authentic and genuine.”*

**Ross Anderson**  
Gifts in Wills Manager for RSPCA Victoria



*“Small charities will come alive to the possibility that legacy fundraising is just as much for them as it is for larger charities.”*

**Nick Pride**  
Fundraising Strategy Director, WPNC

### 5. Online, and on the money

Rather than dusty old parchments, wills are now created, stored and read online. Films, recordings, texts, even holograms, are accepted as testamentary evidence. People can directly communicate their final wishes to family, friends and lawyers even after they are gone.

### 6. It's my (digital) life

Almost all life is played out in the digital world. Nobody wants those assets to disappear when they die. That means wills and legacies now include intellectual property, knowledge, skills and connections that can be used by the people who follow – perhaps using avatars to continue the conversation from beyond the grave.



*“When somebody dies, they won't really die. Their body will, but in terms of digital they live on. I think online tribute funds will evolve to online spaces where you can interact with a digital version of the person who has died. It might sound very Black Mirror, but we're not far from it now.”*

**Vicky Reeves**  
Digital MD and Group Deputy CEO, WPNC

## 7. Volunteers are the new revolution

With a longer gap between retirement and death, people are spending more time volunteering. They value the direct link with a charity or their local community, and it's a useful way to shut out the insecurity of the wider world.

Those who can't make it in person are doing it virtually, deploying their skills, energies, knowledge and connections wherever and whenever they choose. Volunteering often influences who people give a gift to in their will, or nominate as an in-memory charity.



*Charities will have to broaden their thinking and learn to see volunteers not just as those who help deliver the service the charity is set up for, but also as a rich source of advocates and of legacies.*

**Eifron Hopper**

Legacy Income Manager, RNLI

## 8. Remember me when I'm gone. Not like that, like this

People are happy to talk about death and plan their own passing – including how they want to be remembered. Letters of wishes specifying exactly how the funeral should be organised, along with the charities they want friends and family to support, are commonplace.

Instead of physical memorials such as plaques, benches and bricks, some are choosing to nominate fitting living memorials, such as sponsoring a child in a developing country or training a support dog for people suffering from epilepsy.

For those left behind, tangible memorials continue to be important – a focal point where they can connect with their loved one.

## 9. Before I say goodbye...

Thanks to advances in medical technology and the legalisation of euthanasia, some people know how long they have left, and have a sense of control over how they spend their remaining time and money. They are choosing to give a 'living legacy' of money, ideas and experiences to the people and organisations they love while they are still around to see the impact.

## 10. Let's work together. We can beat this thing

Wealthy individuals are endowing borderless legacy funds to address 2045's ongoing social and environmental issues – from curing disease to tackling inequality to sustaining local communities. They also challenge others – whatever their wealth level – to add their gift to the overall pot and maximise combined impact.

# Implications for Fundraisers

We asked a panel of experts how fundraisers should be approaching the legacy and in-memory markets, both now and in the future. Here's what they had to say.

## What are you waiting for? Invest now, or risk losing out

- Give your team the means to make things happen
- Balance strategic nous with intuition and creativity
- Fire up the whole organisation

*"It's very simple. You've got to invest in legacies now," says Rob Cope, Director of Remember A Charity. "In the next 25 years we will see a significant increase in potential income. Baby boomers will die off, and it will be the biggest transfer of wealth from generation to generation there has been in history. You are either a part of that, or you're not."*

Fundraising and Leadership Expert Stephen George agrees. *"Overwhelmingly charities should be investing more. They are significantly underspending. At the end of the day it's a given there will be a massive transfer of this [baby boomer] growth. We are at the cusp of that now."*

And, says Karen Rothwell, Director of Fundraising at Greenpeace UK, *"Your legacy plan for 2045 needs to start now. The people who will be leaving legacies then may already be in your supporter base. Who are they, what are their needs and expectations? Get real insight about what matters to your supporters and provide them with high quality interactions on their terms."*

Above all, we need to invest in leadership. As Stephen George puts it, *"We have a crisis in leadership in legacies, we're not good at retaining people. I think many current leaders simply don't get legacies. There are far too many people who think it will just keep coming through the door and they don't need to do anything. They do."*

## We are all human. Make an emotional connection.

- Listen and learn from your donors
- Change the language – on their terms, not yours
- The world changes, motivations stay the same

*“The most important driver is our ability to understand people,” says Stephen George. “We need to be a lot better at emotionally connecting, to show cause and effect. We’ve invented a way of giving that doesn’t chime with how people feel.”*

Ross Anderson, Gifts in Wills Manager for RSPCA Victoria, agrees. *“Have the ability to change the way you communicate. It’s not about us, it’s about the donor and their story. If you’re not investing in relationship management and getting to know your donors and supporters, you are probably going to come a cropper.”*

Eifron Hopper, Legacy Income Manager at RNLI, notes, *“We increasingly have to recognise the need to be donor-focused and tell them what they can achieve by making a gift, and not what they can help us to do. This will only increase as people become more discerning.”*

Karen Rothwell says, *“What doesn’t change is human nature, and that should be a key theme in looking ahead. Yes there will be big changes in terms of communications channels, but the message is ‘don’t get distracted by the tech’. Think about what people need. Real human interaction is always going to be important. That’s the foundation of a good marketing plan.”*

## **Innovate, innovate, innovate!**

- Look outside your own sector for inspiration: overseas, other channels, social enterprise
- Tell good stories: VR, digital and social media
- Connect beneficiaries with donors

*“We need much more creativity and innovation,” says Stephen George. “We already know a lot about what works and what doesn’t. But where’s the innovation? That all needs prototyping, testing, appetite and leadership.”*

Rob Cope says that, *“From a tech point of view I would expect to see more of a level playing field in the future. When I started, the big charities were the ones able to put big budgets behind legacies, but now smaller charities are able to reach out through local community forums and social media – effectively, efficiently and at very low cost.”*

*“Tech will help donors feel like they’re part of the reality [of the work],” says Ross Anderson. “You can already see some of that being applied by the more innovative charities, so think how much more experiential that information will be in 25 years’ time. For those charities that are clever and invest now, they can be best at inspiring people to do something big and brave when leaving a gift in their will.”*

## Stop fundraising. Start building relationships

- Integrate thinking across channels, audiences, campaigns
- Engage throughout the donor cycle – not just at the end
- Don't dictate, collaborate – work alongside donors to drive transformation

*"The more we connect with supporters on their terms, the more natural and obvious it is to move from how you can help in your lifetime to how you can help after your death,"* says Nick Pride, Fundraising Strategy Director at WPNC

Ross Anderson is in agreement. *"Think about engaging supporters now and keeping their interest and commitment for the next 25 years. People's interest and ability will peak and trough over that time. How will you communicate with them through their life stages? It's a different way of thinking and needs authentic ways of engaging, rather than simply looking at them in terms of monetary value."*

*"We'll see more people investing time, wanting to help over and above just money,"* adds Dan Carter. *"We will see more and more social-led activity. We'll see more sophistication in the legacy market. Legacies will be up there with other fundraising streams in terms of being respected. We have to make sure we are personalising things more to ensure we can continue to grow and are engaging people in relationships, rather than just pushing things at them all the time."*

## Hello tomorrow

The next decades will bring huge – and as yet largely untapped – potential for growth in the legacies and in-memory sectors. Legacy Foresight look forward to continuing to monitor, understand and shape this vital sector alongside our many valued clients over the next 25 years and beyond.

If you would like more information about us, and how we can work with you to help your organisation, please get in touch:

✉ [tomorrow@legacyforesight.co.uk](mailto:tomorrow@legacyforesight.co.uk)

🌐 [www.legacyforesight.co.uk](http://www.legacyforesight.co.uk)



*Legacy Foresight have helped the UK legacy market become a go-to place for best practice. The level of sophistication they offer is standout. These guys know exactly what they're talking about.*

**Dan Carter**  
Global Legacy Director, IFAW