

Grant Saw 

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# Selling your business – what happens to your wealth?

Individual support for personalised solutions

For many business owners, selling a company is the single biggest financial event of their lifetime.

Achieving the right sale price matters, but what you do before and after completion can have an even greater impact on how much of that wealth is ultimately preserved for you and your family.

### **Why timing matters**

Before a sale, business owners often benefit from valuable tax reliefs, including Business Property Relief (BPR).

Once a business is sold:

- BPR may be lost.
- Sale proceeds may quickly become exposed to inheritance tax.
- Planning opportunities can narrow dramatically.
- Managing assets over the long term.

### **Common issues we see after a sale**

Business owners frequently tell us:

- "I didn't realise the inheritance tax exposure would be so significant".
- "I wish I'd thought about succession planning before completion".
- "Now the money is cash, I'm uncomfortable leaving it unprotected".

These issues are rarely the result of bad decisions. They are usually about timing and lack of early advice.

### **Planning before completion – what should be considered?**

Early advice allows you to explore:

- Your post sale inheritance tax position.
- The impact of losing BPR.
- Whether ownership or succession structures should be reviewed before any sale.
- How future wealth can be protected from risks such as divorce, creditor claims or family disputes.

This is not about implementing complex structures unnecessarily, but about understanding what options are available and when they need to be considered.

## **The role of trusts in business succession**

When used appropriately, trusts can:

- Allow wealth to be transferred or protected without loss of control over how and when decisions are made.
- Keep assets outside the personal estate for inheritance tax purposes.
- Provide long term protection for family wealth.
- Offer flexibility in how and when value is passed on.

Trusts are not suitable for every business owner. However, where they are relevant, they need to be considered before a sale, not afterwards.

## **Aligning tax, succession and Wills**

Effective succession planning requires coordination.

Trust structures, tax planning and Wills must work together. Poor alignment can:

- Undermine otherwise sound planning.
- Trigger unexpected tax liabilities
- Lead to disputes or uncertainty for family members.

Early review reduces these risks and provides clarity and certainty for the future.

## **Our approach**

At Grant Saw Solicitors, we work closely with our Commercial team and clients' other professional advisers to provide joined up advice that sits alongside the transaction itself.

Our focus is on the tax and succession issues that arise around a business sale, ensuring that the value created by the transaction is protected beyond completion.

We offer pre sale succession and inheritance tax reviews, designed to:

- Assess exposure following a sale.
- Identify planning opportunities that must be considered early.
- Provide a clear, practical roadmap rather than technical complexity.

Any further planning is discussed separately and only where it is appropriate for your circumstances.

### **Speak to us early**

Taking advice early can make a decisive difference to how much wealth you preserve and how confidently you can plan for the future. Please contact Charlotte Warren, Partner and Head of Trusts by emailing [charlotte.warren@grantsaw.co.uk](mailto:charlotte.warren@grantsaw.co.uk).

We would be happy to discuss your individual circumstances and advise what is best for you.

Get in touch by emailing [privateclient@grantsaw.co.uk](mailto:privateclient@grantsaw.co.uk) or contacting the Private Client department on **020 8858 6971**.

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## Contact Us

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## Other services we could assist you with:

- Wills
- Disputed Wills
- Probate
- Administration of Estates
- Wills and Estate Planning
- Trusts
- Deputyship Orders
- Court of Protection Matters
- Corporate and Commercial
- Dispute Resolution
- Employment
- Family
- Insolvency
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- Notary Services
- Property

