

# The unexpected equitable gift

**Meet siblings Martha (35) and John (28).**

Two years ago, their parents helped Martha with a \$300,000 home deposit right near her parents so they could spend more time with their two grandchildren.



**Martha and her partner could never have afforded their house alone and were happy to have the help and grandparents around them. John is also planning to buy his own home in a couple of years.**

Three months ago, sadly their parents passed away. Thankfully, and to Martha and John's surprise, their parents had prepared detailed wills to make sure all the finances were in order. It would have been easy for them to believe they would be around when John needed a helping hand; after all, they were fit and healthy and had a lot of living to do. But, just in case, they altered the will, so John received his \$300,000 before the estate was divided.

*"I cannot explain how grateful I was to my parents; they had always been clear they would help me, but having it all in black and white made it so much easier at the time, I didn't have to ask for the money."*

— John

*"This made sorting the legal matters so much easier at the time when we really needed it amidst all our tragedy."*

— Martha

## The checklist to remember

- 1** Decide how obligated you are to provide similar loans/gifts to other family members and whether you can afford to do so.
- 2** If there are reasons not to discuss with family or help other siblings in the same situation, make sure your reasons are well documented. This avoids any misunderstandings later on.
- 3** Update your will each time to reflect any new situations.
- 4** If you have discussions with family make sure you document and get them to acknowledge their agreement.

