



# Treasury Solicitor's Department

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Our reference: BVFOI/363/14 re Arthur Coote

## Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

You asked for the following information from the Treasury Solicitor's Department ("the Department"):

Can you tell me if it is worth claiming the estate and if we make a claim can we do it through you and what are your fees.

Your request will be dealt with by the Bona Vacantia Division ("the Division") under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Division holds all the information that you have requested.

Details on how to claim an estate can be found on our website using the following link:

[www.gov.uk/make-a-claim-to-a-deceased-persons-estate](http://www.gov.uk/make-a-claim-to-a-deceased-persons-estate)

You will be required to provide certificates (birth, marriage and death) to prove your relationship to the deceased and two forms of ID, one to prove your name and another for your address. A full list of documents we accept can be found on our website.

Deductions will be made from the estate for the administration by this Division. The amount charged is dependent on the actions taken (i.e. number of letters received and sent, time spent etc) which will vary from estate to estate plus an additional £150+VAT for dealing with the kin claim.

I am withholding information with regard to the value of the estate as it is exempt from disclosure under section 31(1)(a) of the Act. Section 31(1)(a) provides that information is exempt from disclosure if that disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. We believe that disclosure of the requested information to any member of the public would, or would be likely to, help enable the commission of fraud or other criminal activity. In applying the exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that the Division's activities are conducted in an open, transparent and honest way. However, disclosure of the exempt information could help enable the commission of fraud which would be likely to result in a loss to the public purse. There is a strong public interest in protecting the public purse and it is therefore considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption in section 31(1)(a) in this case outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.