# Electrician wins court battle over mother's will



An electrician has successfully contested the legitimacy of his late mother's will, leading to a court ruling that entitles him to half of her estate valued at £700,000. This legal battle unfolded after a video surfaced showing Lisa Baverstock appearing to assist her mother, Margaret Baverstock, in signing away her inheritance while she was gravely ill.

Margaret Baverstock, who was 76 years at the time of her death in March 2021, was diagnosed with advanced dementia, arthritis, and suspected lung congestion. According to court testimony, she was severely incapacitated and could "barely flicker an eyelid." Just eight days before her passing, Margaret signed a will that excluded her son, John Baverstock, leaving all her assets to Lisa, her daughter.

John, now 61, contested the will at the Central London County Court, arguing that Lisa had manipulated their mother into signing the document while she was in a mentally weakened state. The court heard that John had been effectively excluded from his mother's house in the period leading up to her death, which prompted him to challenge the will on the grounds of undue influence.

The evidence presented included a video recorded by Lisa herself. In the footage, Margaret struggles to respond accurately to questions and appears unable to comprehend her surroundings or the implications of signing a document. John’s barrister, Mark Jones, articulated that Lisa was seen "repeatedly attempting to place a pen into her mother’s right hand" and that she "propelled" her mother’s writing hand to make marks on the will, indicating a heavy reliance on manipulation rather than authentic consent.

Judge Jane Evans-Gordon, presiding over the case, ultimately ruled the will invalid, determining that Margaret "had no idea what was going on" during its execution. The court found that Lisa physically manoeuvred her mother's hand to make a signature that bore no resemblance to prior examples and that the poor condition of Margaret's health rendered her incapable of understanding or approving the will's contents.

Judge Evans-Gordon stated that although Margaret could respond with a simple "yeah" or sound to direct questions, these responses did not equate to an understanding or acceptance of the document being presented. She highlighted that throughout the will's reading, Margaret exhibited a blank demeanour, further underscoring her mental frailty.

Lisa Baverstock, who represented herself during the trial, claimed that the will accurately reflected her mother's wishes and that Margaret had been adamant about wanting her daughter to inherit the estate. Lisa argued that she had dedicated herself to caring for her mother and alleged John had distanced himself from his mother's care. However, John's defence presented him as someone who consistently sought to support and visit his mother before being pushed out by Lisa.

In addition to declaring the will invalid, the judge ruled that, as no other will existed, Margaret died intestate. This means that her assets will be divided equally between John and Lisa, although Lisa will also be responsible for covering John’s legal fees, which are expected to reach around £80,000.

This case sheds light on serious concerns regarding the influence and decision-making capacity of individuals in vulnerable positions and the ethical responsibilities of those closest to them during their final days.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/2024-04_agenda_book_for_evidence_rules_meeting_final.pdf> - This document discusses legal evidence rules and the importance of authentic consent in legal documents, which is relevant to the case involving Margaret Baverstock's will.
2. <https://jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol30no2/walker.html> - Although not directly related, this article touches on legal contests over inheritance, which is a central theme in the Baverstock case.
3. <https://acf.gov/orr/policy-guidance/unaccompanied-children-program-policy-guide-section-2> - This policy guide discusses the importance of verifying identities and relationships in legal contexts, similar to the need to establish the authenticity of Margaret Baverstock's will.
4. <https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML0534/ML053420313.pdf> - This document highlights the importance of due process and fair legal proceedings, which are crucial in cases like the Baverstock will contest.
5. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/22/2024-07496/guidance-for-federal-financial-assistance> - This guidance on federal financial assistance emphasizes the need for clear legal documentation and compliance with regulations, similar to the scrutiny applied to Margaret Baverstock's will.
6. <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is the source of the original article about the Baverstock case, detailing the legal battle over Margaret Baverstock's will and the court's ruling.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14463735/Son-battle-sister-video-dying-mums-pen.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data