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Middleton's £97k inheritance windfall to help pay for big day

Kate Middleton's family are in line for a cash windfall of almost £100,000 – just in time to help fund the Royal wedding.

The money is from the estate of her 90-year-old paternal grandfather, Peter Middleton, who died last November.

Like Prince William, Mr Middleton was an RAF pilot who got his wings at RAF Cranwell. He later became a civilian pilot.

His father was a solicitor while his mother was from a Yorkshire family who built up a fortune as wool merchants and mill owners before investing in property and railways.

Details of his will show the widower, a father of four and grandfather of five who lived in Vernham Dean, Hampshire, left an estate of £647,758 gross.

The net sum after settling outstanding affairs and debts was £432,121.

His wife Valerie was named as beneficiary, but as she died in 2006, the sum is to be shared between the couple's four sons.

Of the total legacy, £325,000 is exempt from inheritance tax. The remaining £107,000 will be subject to 40 per cent death duties.

That will leave the brothers a share of £97,300 each from the £389,2000 remaining after tax.

Kate's parents, Michael and Carole, want to chip in with up to £50,000 for the wedding.

Andrew Kidd, a lawyer of City firm Silverman Sherliker, said: 'It is unusual for someone of 90 to have debts of £200,000. It suggests there may have been some soft family loans.'

Mr Middleton was expected to have left a greater legacy but it is thought the money he inherited from his ancestors is in a trust.