AV Trinity

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What is Collaboration?

Overview
Collaboration is sometimes known as “friendly divorce” and under the process, each person appoints their own collaboratively trained lawyer and you and your respective lawyers all meet together to work things out face to face.
Everyone signs an agreement committing to trying to resolve the issues without going to court and prevents the lawyers from representing you in court if the process breaks down, and attempts to find the most palatable solutions by agreement, rather than acrimony.

How does the process work?
Following the agreement to proceed, you will both meet with your lawyers to discuss and prepare for the upcoming collaborative meetings which are usually referred to as 'four way' meetings as they are held between you and your partner and your respective lawyers.

The first four-way meeting:
At this meeting the lawyers will make sure that you both understand that you are making a commitment to working out an agreement without going to court and you will all four sign an agreement to this effect. You and your partner will be invited to share your reasons for choosing this process and the agenda for future meetings will be agreed. This might include discussions on how any children are reacting to the onset of divorce. Also it may be agreed as to what financial information will be required and in what format.

Later four way meetings:
Subsequent meetings will deal, in more detail, with you and your partner’s priorities. At this stage it may be decided to involve professional advisers such as an IFA with pension expertise or people trained to help children cope and understand the dramatic changes that your divorce will bring. The meetings will enable you to agree upon on how the family finances will be shared and what arrangements need to be made for any children.

The final meeting:
Here your lawyers will present documents detailing the agreement that you have made and will be signed by all parties. Time will then be spent by you your lawyers discussing anything else that needs to be done in order to finally implement the agreement. The timescale for final implementation may need to be flexible eg if the matrimonial home is to be sold.

So how long does the process take?
One benefit of collaborative law is that it’s not driven by timetables imposed by the availability of court hearings. To a large extent the process revolves around you and your partner taking into consideration work commitments and other priorities, many of which will have been discussed at the initial meeting.

In conclusion
There are many different ways to divorce and a suitably qualified family solicitor will guide you on your options. To find a collaboratively trained solicitor please contact us

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All information has been prepared with care to ensure accuracy and is based upon our understanding of legislation and HMRC practice, which can be subject to change. This is intended to provide information only and should not be considered as advice.

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