

### Our collaborative practice

No two families are alike. No two family breakdowns are alike. The difference between collaborative law and conventional proceedings is that the collaborative route enables you to resolve your family law issues in the exact way that is right for you and your family. Its approach to each case is unique and governed by the particular needs of you and your family. There is flexibility, openness and true consideration can be given to all the needs of the family

### How it works

- You sign up to a Partnership Agreement with your spouse/partner , your collaborative lawyer and their collaborative lawyer to resolve matters collaboratively
- You will need a genuine desire to resolve issues in this way and be willing to disclose information requested and communicate your views
- Your solicitor can no longer act for you if you choose to end the process and issue court proceedings. This ensures that all those involved are committed to the process.
- You will agree to be respectful, co-operative and honest in the process
- A series of four way meetings between you and your respective lawyers during which information will be shared and interest-based negotiations will take place

### The benefits

- You set the agenda and discuss the things that are most important to you and your family
- You set the pace of meetings and their timings to fit in with what suits your family timetable
- You have your own legal advice and guidance throughout and your collaborative lawyer will process all required legal documents for you
- You have access to third parties who can assist with the financial , emotional and practical issues affecting you and your family such as life coaches and independent financial advisers.
- The family benefits knowing that issues are being resolved together constructively without the threat of litigation
- Agreements can be reached as to how legal fees will be paid and it is unlikely that your fees will be significantly different to those of your spouse/partner
- Creative solutions can be constructed

## You should find out more about collaborative law if

- You want to retain control over your family issues and avoid them being dealt with impersonally by the court
- You want to retain control over the pace of the process and its cost
- You wish to prioritise the interests of the children and the needs of the family as a whole
- You are willing to listen and respect your spouse/partner's views
- You are willing to work towards a resolution in a co-operative and creative way
- You wish to avoid the damage that court proceedings could cause to you and your family
- You would like a supported and private environment in which to clarify your needs and interests and be listened to
- You require legal advice and guidance throughout the process
- You wish to create a platform on which your family can work together and from which it can move forward
- You wish to retain a respectful relationship with your partner/spouse beyond relationship break down
- You wish to bring closure to your relationship in a dignified way
- You wish to preserve relationships with family ,extended family and friends
- You wish to avoid conflict and expensive court proceedings