

GUIDE TO THE FIRST MEETING

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

We understand the importance of feeling secure and comfortable with your solicitor at this time and so before you commit to anything, we offer a no obligation fixed fee first interview package. Within the package we would meet with you to go through your case in detail, this usually takes around 1 – 1.5 hours. We would follow up with a detailed letter or note of the advice given at that meeting and your options moving forward. Please contact us for more details.

This gives you an opportunity to get to know us and find out if we can work together as a team.

The aim of the initial meeting is to provide you with all the information you need to decide whether or not to instruct us, so when we meet, we will take you and your partner's details, advise you on your legal position and discuss all the options available to you.

We try to find solutions that keep the financial and emotional cost to a minimum and preserve on-going relationships. We will also give you an indication of the costs of the courses of action you could take. Any information you disclose will be kept confidential in accordance with our professional obligations.

AFTER YOU HAVE INSTRUCTED US

Any information you think will be important to your case should be brought with you. This can be anything from a time-line of events throughout your marriage, or a diary recording contact that you have had with your children.

WHAT SHOULD YOU THINK ABOUT IN ADVANCE?

Because the first meeting is an opportunity for you to get to know us we would encourage you to make a list of questions you want answered – these may escape your mind at a first meeting. Some common questions are set out below.

Financial matters

- Will it make a difference if I move out of our home before we get divorced?
- Will my spouse's conduct be taken into account?
- How much maintenance is a spouse or former spouse entitled to?

Children Matters

- How will the Court reach a decision on any particular matters?
- What are my rights in relation to my child?
- Is it possible for a child to live with both parents?

If you are worried about your appointment, do ask a friend or family member to attend with you.

WHAT SHOULD YOU BRING WITH YOU?

- Either Passport or Driving Licence and a utility bill in your name which is not more than three months old must be provided;
- Your marriage or civil partnership certificate;
- Any correspondence that you have had with your partner or their solicitors;
- Any court papers you have received;
- A schedule setting out your assets and income and those of your partner (if known). Please refer to the checklist below.

CHECKLIST OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The checklist below may not be applicable to everyone and it is not an exhaustive list but we hope it may be of assistance.

- Value of any property owned by the couple
- Value of any mortgages
- Value of any savings, investments, insurance policies
- Value of any business assets
- A valuation of your rights or benefits under a pension scheme or plan.
- Your income and your partner's income from all sources
- Any other information regarding your financial position such as documentary proof of contributions to the marriage or inheritances etc.