

Collaborative Law

Family Law without going to court



**KNIGHT
POLSON**

SOLICITORS

We are very pleased to be able to offer clients this new and increasingly popular approach to resolving family disputes.

The breakdown of a relationship is never easy and divorce or separation can be a challenging process. Confrontation over the terms of the separation will make things even more difficult.

If you are looking for an approach that avoids going through the courts, then collaborative law may be the right process for you. The principles of collaborative law are fundamentally different from the traditional court litigation based approach.

The collaborative law process is based on open, honest and dignified discussions. Each client is supported by their own trained collaborative lawyer. The clients and their lawyers work together in a series of meetings without the threat of court proceedings, to find a fair and mutually acceptable solution specifically tailored to the needs of their family.

How does the process work?

- At the outset, you and your lawyers will sign an agreement “Participation Agreement” not to commence court proceedings. The agreement will also set out the objectives of the process. This means that everyone is committed to finding a solution even in the most difficult of situations
- You will agree to be honest, respectful and cooperative throughout the process and to work together to find a mutually acceptable and amicable solution
- There will be a series of four-way meetings between you and your lawyers during which information will be exchanged and negotiations will take place
- Each meeting will be minuted and an action plan agreed
- You will be encouraged and supported to find creative and individual solutions specific to your family’s circumstances
- Once agreement has been reached your lawyers will draw up a document setting out the terms which will usually be submitted to the court for approval and made into an order

Why choose the collaborative process over the traditional court based approach?

- You avoid potentially hostile, stressful and protracted court proceedings
- You retain control of the process by participating at each stage
- You make decisions about your family's future and avoid the uncertainty of a court-imposed timetable and outcome
- The process can help to preserve family relationships in the future.

Nicola is delighted to be able to offer this alternative to clients and is fully committed to the process.

If you would like further information about Collaborative Law, Nicola is pleased to offer a Free First Appointment to all new clients.

NICOLA MITCHELL
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Nicola is a Law Society Family Law Panel Member, Resolution Member, Trained Collaborative Lawyer as well as Head of Family Department.

Nicola and her colleagues in the Family Department are also able to provide the full range of family services.



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This leaflet is not a complete guide to the law and is not intended to be a guide to how the law will apply to you or to any specific situation. You should speak to a professional about your particular problem.

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