



Has Gwynnie's and Chris' 'Consciously Uncoupling' Started a New Trend in Amicable Divorces?

With Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow finally completing their much mocked 'consciously uncoupling' divorce this week, leading and award winning regional law firm Pictons' expert family team have taken a look at whether it's possible for 'ordinary couples' to achieve such an apparently amicable separation while also legally protecting both parties.

Will Roberts-Phelps, a Family Law specialist lawyer at the firm says "It's a common misconception that both parties instructing family solicitors tend not to be on amicable terms with each other. In fact we're experiencing a greater number of situations where parties are at least in partial agreement prior to taking legal advice to finalise a settlement."

Gwyneth Paltrow petitioned her now ex-husband Chris Martin for divorce citing "irreconcilable differences", displaying the amicable approach which the couple took when they decided to split up. Similarly in the UK, a divorce petition can be drafted to cause minimal upset to the other party, usually achieved by informing the other person of the process and by keeping them updated with the details.

Will comments "People regularly assume there has to be a threshold for 'unreasonableness' which must be demonstrated in court. In fact such phrases as 'the parties now lead separate lives' or 'the parties have grown apart' are sufficient for the court to process the divorce petition."

A large percentage of people incorrectly believe that the particulars for divorce can impact their claims for a financial agreement. As Will points out "Even if you are named as the Respondent on the divorce petition and do not agree with the statement this won't reflect on the likely settlement attainable during financial negotiations or proceedings."

In terms of the costs for the divorce these can be shared equally between the parties including the court fee. Pictons has fixed fees for some aspects of separation or divorce.

Couples are also advised to seek solutions first through Mediation, which Pictons also offers with qualified practitioners.

Gwyneth and Chris went to great lengths to ensure their break was amicable especially to minimise the impact of their separation on their two children Apple and Moses. With the best legal advice and a united willingness to achieve an amicable solution there is nothing to stop UK couples achieving divorce and financial separation in a similar manner to the world's first consciously uncoupled marriage.

To avoid 'unconsciously uncoupling' please contact Will or one of his team on 0800 302 9448 or email william.roberts-phelps@pictons.co.uk