



Happy New Year Divorce?

Today is traditionally referred to as 'Divorce Monday' (January 9th). Whether it's because the highs of the festive season are over or the very stressful toll of buying presents, Christmas cooking and close proximity to each other, since 2010 the month of January has been the highest month for divorces, increasing year on year.

While the number of divorces over a whole year are actually decreasing, potentially due to an increase in cohabiting couples, divorce petitions in January are still at a peak.

The average length of a marriage in 2015 remained at 11.7 years, the same as in 2014 and 2013, showing a small increase from 11.4 years in 2009.

Some may say that if a marriage can survive the Festive season and the January blues, it is a good sign for the coming year and the marriage is strong.

However; should there be an issue that might lead to a permanent situation, it is important that couples think carefully about whether a separation is the right course of action. It's not only the major financial impact on the family, it is also the emotionally traumatic experience for the partners, their children, their family and friends when a couple split up.

It is vitally important that both parties consider the impact especially on their children, who are often forgotten while arguments occur. A divorce should not be a knee jerk reaction as it will affect everyone concerned for many years to come.

Martin Boniface, a Family Law specialist at leading and award winning regional law firm Pictons says "Every year it seems to surprise people that January is an extremely busy time for us in the Family Team. You have to take into account that families or spouses will have spent lots of time together trying to plan the perfect Christmas and are quite out of their usual routine. Cracks can start to appear, commitments can get broken, relationships can break down and in some cases children can suffer the most. You need an expert to step in, that's why I'm offering free 30 minute consultation clinics on January 23, 24 and 25th to help people in relationship crisis take that first step and understand their options.

"People really do their best to enjoy the Christmas season but no matter what you might want to happen sometimes it just doesn't go to plan and it can end up being a very stressful time juggling money, family, feasts, shopping and time."

Martin's free clinics are from 9am-1pm on Monday 23rd, Tuesday 24th and Wednesday 25th January at Pictons' central Luton office. To book your free appointment call 01582 870880 or email martin.boniface@pictons.co.uk