

# When the slump hits the ex factor...

**A famous divorcée once quipped “I am a marvellous housekeeper. Every time I leave a man I keep his house.” Although said in jest, this remark does raise an important and increasingly difficult issue for divorcing couples – what to do with the family home.**

For most couples divorce has usually meant one partner buying the other’s share in the property or selling the house outright and splitting the assets. But with the mortgage market in crisis and the housing market in its worst ever slump, moving from one family home to two is easier said than done.

In recession hit Britain, more and more separating couples now have no choice but to continue living together post divorce, and those that do manage to sell are often left with much less money in the pot to share out. So it comes as no surprise that couples are looking to family lawyers to help them find alternatives to the traditional divorce process.

One such alternative, pioneered by the family law group Resolution, is a process known as collaborative law. Over 1000 lawyers in England and Wales have already received training

and can offer this option to their clients. Separating couples and their lawyers all sit down together and work things out face to face and at the heart of the process is a written agreement that the divorce won’t end up in court.

Alison\* and her ex decided to get divorced after fifteen years together. “We knew that selling the house was going to be difficult in the current economic climate and wanted to avoid taking our dispute

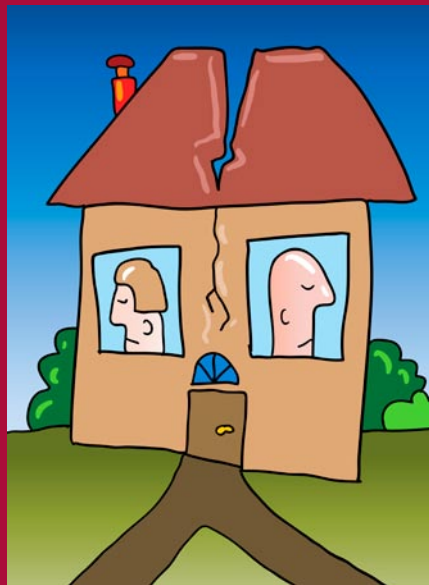
into the courts. When my lawyer recommended a collaborative divorce, I was instantly interested because the idea of sitting around a table together discussing things rather than letters going backwards and forwards between the solicitors seemed like a more sensible way for us to reach agreement.

“My ex and I did end up having to live together for several months after our divorce, which was terribly difficult, but it really helped that our divorce had been as amicable as possible. For me it has been a positive and helpful way of resolving something that I didn’t want in the first place.”

The collaborative process is not right for everyone – it takes time and commitment, and may not be cheaper than a traditional approach but it provides a very real alternative for many couples who are genuinely seeking to resolve their differences and move forward.

**For more information about collaborative law or to contact a collaborative lawyer log onto [www.resolution.org.uk](http://www.resolution.org.uk) or contact a local lawyer listed below.**

\* name has been changed



**Norman S Taylor**  
Zermansky & Partners  
10 Butts Court, Leeds, LS1 5JS  
Tel: 0113 2845 903

**Tina Abbott**  
Emsleys  
35 Austhorpe Road, Crossgates, Leeds,  
LS15 8BA  
Tel: 0113 2603115

**Sue McArthur**  
McKeag & Co  
1-3 Lansdowne Terrace, Gosforth,  
NE3 1HN  
Tel: 0191 2131010

**Jackie Lawson**  
Wake Smith & Tofields  
6 Campo Lane, Sheffield, S1 2EF  
Tel: 0114 2666660

**Toby J Netting**  
Banner Jones  
4 Bells Square, Off Trippet Lane,  
Sheffield, S1 2FY  
Tel: 0114 2755266

**Rachel Spencer-Robb**  
Clarion Solicitors LLP  
Britannia Chambers, 4 Oxford Place,  
Leeds, LS1 3AX  
Tel: 0113 2223241

**Justine Osmotherley**  
Clarion Solicitors LLP  
Britannia Chambers, 4 Oxford Place,  
Leeds, LS1 3AX  
Tel: 0113 3363323

**Emma Pearmaine**  
Chadwick Lawrence LLP  
13 Railway Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1JS  
Tel: 01484 519999

**Catherine Dews**  
Chadwick Lawrence LLP  
54 Bradford Road, Dewsbury, WF13 2DY  
Tel: 01924 455711

**Sian Thompson**  
Simpson Millar LLP  
27 St Paul’s Street, Leeds LS1 2JG  
Tel: 0113 3062820

**Lyn Ayrton**  
Watson Burton LLP  
1 City Square, Leeds, LS1 2ES  
Tel: 0113 2355740

**Philip Way**  
Mills & Reeve LLP  
Princes Exchange, Princes Square,  
Leeds, LS1 4HY  
Tel: 0113 3888446

**Andrew Meehan**  
Mills & Reeve LLP  
Princes Exchange, Princes Square,  
Leeds, LS1 4HY  
Tel: 0113 3888448

**Joanna Grandfield**  
Mills & Reeve LLP  
Princes Exchange, Princes Square,  
Leeds, LS1 4HY  
Tel: 0113 3888447

**Nicola Criscione**  
Mills & Reeve LLP  
Princes Exchange, Princes Square,  
Leeds, LS1 4HY  
Tel: 0113 3888444

**Richard Peaker**  
Jones Myers  
St Paul’s House, 23 Park Square,  
Leeds, LS1 2ND  
Tel: 0113 2460055

**Fiona Kendall**  
Jones Myers  
St Paul’s House, 23 Park Square,  
Leeds, LS1 2ND  
Tel: 0113 2460055

**Elizabeth Bowskill**  
Lester Morrill  
27 Park Square West, Leeds, LS1 2PL  
Tel: 0113 2458549

**Carol Grundell**  
DWF Solicitors LLP  
Bridgewater Place Water Lane, Leeds,  
LS11 5DY  
Tel: 0113 2616052

**Sarah Hull**  
DWF Solicitors LLP  
Bridgewater Place, Water Lane, Leeds,  
LS11 5DY  
Tel: 0113 2616019

**Nicola Mitchell**  
Sykes Lee & Brydson  
Judge’s Court, Coney Street, York,  
YO1 9NE  
Tel: 01904 731100

**Paul Lancaster**  
Blacks LLP  
Hanover House, 22 Clarendon Road,  
Leeds, LS2 9NZ  
Tel: 0113 2070000

**Juliet Kinsey**  
Kinsey & Co  
1st Floor Oakminster House, Northgate,  
Baildon, Shipley, BD17 6LR  
Tel: 01274 589900

**Helen Thewlis**  
Ramsdens Solicitors LLP  
Ramsden Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2TH  
Tel: 01484 821500

**Jane Auty**  
Ramsdens Solicitors LLP  
Ramsden Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2TH  
Tel: 01484 821500