

Good Divorce Week and no-fault divorce

Good Divorce Week provided a platform to highlight the benefits of implementing no fault divorce. On 26 November we presented [our response](#) to the Government consultation on divorce law reform to Lucy Frazer, Minister for Family Law. In our press release, the Minister commented:

“We have committed to scrapping this archaic rule as soon as possible, making the process less acrimonious and helping families look to the future. I am pleased so many important stakeholders support our reforms, including Resolution, and we welcome all feedback on our proposals.”

We then hosted a Parliamentary briefing session on no fault divorce where we were joined by academic Liz Trinder, and representatives from [Only Mums and Dads](#). Thank you for supporting our letter writing campaign, all MPs who attended the session had been previously contacted by a Resolution member.

Our [YouGov survey](#) results showed that 8 in 10 people support removing blame from divorce, with 71% agreeing it is needed urgently. In our [letter to the Guardian](#) we partnered with 13 other legal, family and relationship organisations to call on government to implement no fault divorce without delay.

Members of our Family Law Reform Group recently attended a Ministry of Justice event for professionals to discuss in detail the technical/practical aspects of implementing the proposed reforms. We now await the government’s response to the consultation, which is expected in March 2019. Many thanks to all those who supported our Good Divorce Week and responded to the consultation on divorce law reform.

Resolution recognised for excellence in campaigning

Resolution was recognised for campaigning excellence, receiving the PRCA’s campaigning award for work on no fault divorce. The PRCA represents PR and communications practitioners across the UK.

Brexit

Our International Committee and Brexit Working Party, working with the FLBA and others, continue to seek to influence and get clarification about future arrangements. The Committee and Working Party are

looking to provide practice support for members, especially in the event of a no deal scenario. International Committee Chair Daniel Eames and Eleri Jones have joined the President of the Family Division’s Group on the EU exit.

[This report by](#) Resolution’s Brexit Working Party lists domestic family legislation implementing and affected by EU instruments.

Further information will be made available in our Brexit briefings, emailed to all members and [published on Resolution’s website](#) as soon as possible.

Family legal aid and legal aid for mediation

Thank you for completing our legal aid survey, which provides valuable evidence about the impact of legal aid reforms and LAA practices on both clients and providers. You can access the results in our [response to the LASPO post-implementation review](#).

Sam Little also represented Resolution at the final consultative panel held by the review team. Government is expected to publish their review into LASPO shortly.

Zoe Fleetwood from Resolution’s National Committee and Tony McGovern, winner of 2018’s LALY award for Family Law [spoke to BuzzFeed](#) about the challenges legal aid family lawyers are facing.

Court modernisation

A number of digital pilots are currently running, including the solicitor divorce petition tool (the pilot is expected to expand soon in terms of numbers of firms and content) and the online tool for submitting finance consent order applications. You are encouraged to consider getting involved, [You can view online tools](#) as introduced at an HMCTS event on family court projects, including the public law ‘shared storage solution’.

HMCTS is proposing to proceed with a small Family Flexible Operating Hours pilot in Manchester Civic Justice Centre from Spring 2019. This comes despite concerns raised in [the responses by Resolution](#) and others. Resolution will continue to seek to influence this issue and monitor developments. We have now been invited to join the Evaluation Advisory Group.

Other news:

- President of the Family Division Sir Andrew McFarlane is keen to engage with Resolution and your regional representatives going forward. He will also present the keynote speech at our [National Conference in April](#).
- Resolution is participating in the President's new working group to look into the issue of shortages of medical experts in children cases.
- Resolution has been [briefing peers](#) on the potential impact of the Divorce (Financial Provision) Bill brought forward by Baroness Deech. This is a private member bill and we do not believe it has government support.
- The Government has confirmed its intention to extend civil partnerships to opposite sex couples. A consultation on the legal consequences is expected. Resolution will respond while continuing to impress that this does not protect cohabiting couples.
- Resolution has discussed the Care Crisis Review [report](#) and members' experience of settlement conferences in both public and private children cases with the Ministry of Justice.
- Cafcass has developed and published a [Child Impact Assessment Framework](#) with accompanying tools and guides to support their practitioners in assessing the harmful impact of a range of complex case factors on the children they work with in private law cases. Members may find it helpful to familiarise themselves with this and find the guidance helpful.

New resources:

- The Drafting Committee has launched [an interactive, online version of the Standard Financial Remedy Order](#), complete with extensive advisory footnotes that provide practical guidance and highlight potential pitfalls.
- An interactive, [digital parenting plan](#) which you can use with clients to set out child arrangements has been launched by our Parenting after Parting committee. Login to [My Resolution](#), click "agreements" then "create new agreement" and chose "parenting plan" to access.
- Resolution has released a [guidance note on safeguarding children](#) to support you and your firm.
- The new OnlyMums and Dads book, [101 Questions Answered About Separating with Children](#), features many contributions from Resolution members. We've been offered a **10% discount on the purchase price, with the code OMODRES18**
- We recently launched a new guidance note, [Instruction of accountant experts to assist with tax and company valuation](#), complete with downloadable forms and templates as well as expert advice on main themes, key steps and the challenges of completing the process of instruction.
- Our [Guidance Note on First Directions Appointments](#) has now been updated to include the Family Procedure (Amendment) Rules 2018.

Get involved

Family Mediation Week 2019 runs from 21-25 January and aims to raise awareness of mediation and its benefits for separating families. The Family Mediators Association is encouraging people to get involved by using the hashtag #familymediationweek on Twitter.

Resolution will soon be launching a **membership survey** aimed at painting a realistic picture of our membership to help understand where priorities lie. Details for completing the survey will be shared by email and on social media as soon as it the survey launches. Your views are crucial to ensure Resolution continues to be an organisation run by members for members. Please do consider getting involved and look out for information on how to complete the survey.