

A **civil partnership** is the correct legal term for what has been described in the media as **gay marriage**. This common expression is misleading as a religious ceremony is not permitted.

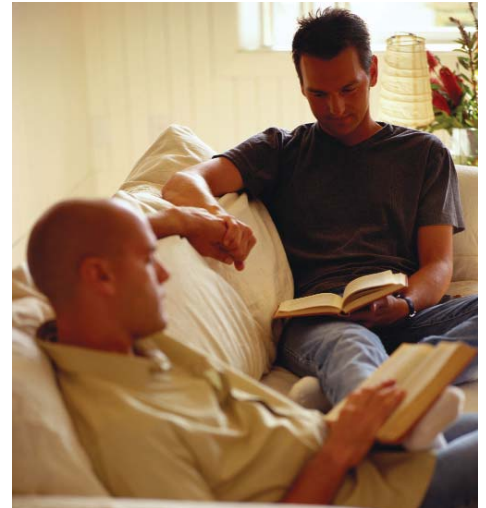
However, since December 2005 a same sex couple now have the opportunity of publicly registering their relationship and to bestow upon each other their legal rights as if they were a married couple. This has wide reaching effects, for example on pension provisions, housing rights, state benefits and so on. This development is reflected in other legal areas, such as the right for same sex couples to be considered by child adoption panels.

Furthermore, a civil partner will be able to acquire parental rights over his or her partner's child through being the step parent of that child. Within this context, the rights of sperm and egg donors are also developing and is an interesting field.

A separating same sex couple, who have registered their relationship under a civil partnership, would face the same legal process as a divorcing married couple. Although this is expressed as a **dissolution**, in fact, a **divorce** occurs. However, such a divorce cannot take place within the first year following registration.

The financial division is dealt with in the same way and the procedure regarding any children is identical to a divorce. However, not all family County Courts have the legal powers to deal with the divorce in these cases. Perhaps the media's perception of the process is not too far from the mark.

Buckles' lawyers welcome discreet discussions with anyone who has questions about the new law or faces the difficulty of **separating** or **divorcing**, in such circumstances.



Process for undefended dissolution



Buckles Solicitors LLP – key contacts

Buckles Solicitors LLP has a strong Family Law Department with in-depth experience of dealing with the breakdown of family relationships, whether in marriage, cohabitation or civil partnership, whether or not children are involved.

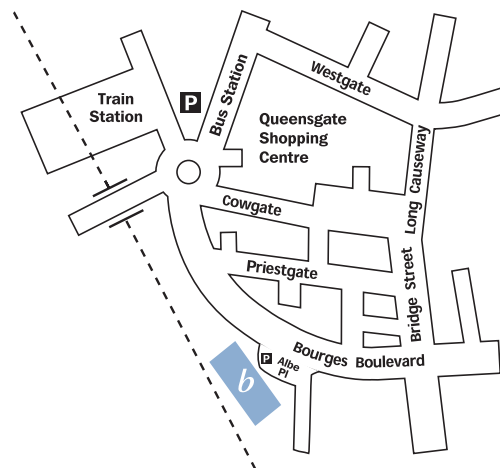
We tailor solutions to the needs of each client offering a bespoke service based on an individual's circumstances, and understand the related practical issues, such as how to separate, where to live, the arrangements for any children, and money or property matters.

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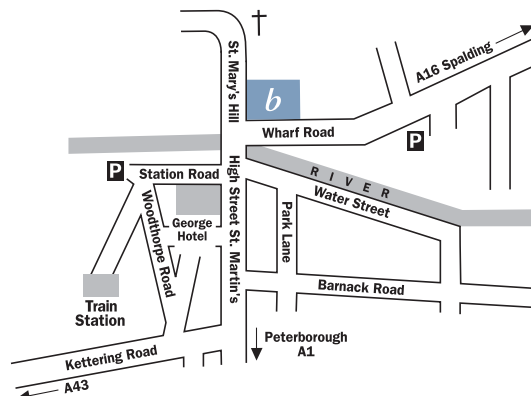


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