

Press Release

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MEDIATION GROWS AS COUPLES SEEK CIVILISED SEPARATION

More and more estranged couples in Lincolnshire are turning to mediation to help settle disputes and minimise the emotional and financial costs of divorce or separation.

Family mediation service Mediation East has helped dozens of couples since being set up a year ago, allowing people to avoid going to court and “to take back control over what happens in their lives”.

In a review of the service’s first year, family specialist and accredited mediator Jacqui Skelton said mediation was not a means of mending relationships but was becoming increasingly popular as a way of enabling couples to sort out finances and other issues themselves, with professional assistance.

“In particular, mediation can help parents work out arrangements for their children, including maintenance payments, without the courts having to make those decisions for them,” she said. “It can also assist wider family members, like grandparents, who are not able to spend time with their grandchildren.”

Mediation East was set up by county solicitors Bridge McFarland but many other family lawyers are now referring people to the service.

“Several solicitors have remarked that they have seen both practical benefits and emotional improvements in their clients after referring them for mediation,” said Mrs Skelton. “The role of the mediator is not to tell couples what to do or to make a decision like a Judge but to encourage them to look at all the angles and try to reach a fair settlement that they are both able to live with.

“So often, when people are forced to go to the courts for a decision in financial or children’s matters, neither person is left feeling that they have secured a fair deal and both feel they have lost. In mediation, we aim to let people take back control of their lives and allow them to move on in a more civilised way.”

Mediation East has helped couples from all over Lincolnshire in the past year. Mediation meetings can normally be arranged close to where people live and clients who qualify for legal aid are often able to use the service free of charge, depending on circumstances.

Mediation East can be contacted by calling 01522 548290 or by e-mailing mediators Jacqui Skelton at jrs@bmcf.co.uk or Mary Briggs at mxb@bmcf.co.uk.

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Press release issued by Forest Communications for Bridge McFarland.

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