



*Eatons*

## Dangers of Cohabitation

### NEWS RELEASE

Recent figures show that approximately 25% of adults in Yorkshire who are not married are living together. Unfortunately the majority of these fail to consider what their legal position might be in the event of the relationship breaking down and regarding any property that they have either purchased jointly or which may be in the sole name of one of them, but which they have both contributed financially towards the purchase price.

It is perhaps understandable that in the early stages of their romance couples will not want to address what might happen if their relationship breaks down. Unfortunately failure to address these issues at the time can cause significant problems later on if the relationship does indeed break down.

Whilst it may be that regulation of financial arrangements of cohabiting couples will be the subject of legislation in the future thereby giving cohabittees similar rights to those of married couples, that is not the position at present. Cohabittees do not have rights over the property as their cohabit purely

by virtue of living with them and do not, contrary to common belief, acquire common law rights after a period of cohabitation of any particular length.

Liz Williams of Eatons Solicitors commented that "If it is intended that you should both have an interest in a property then it is extremely important if possible that that property is purchased in joint names at the outset and that there is a Declaration set out in the purchase documents showing exactly who is contributing what to the purchase of the property and what shares they are each intended to have."

If this is not recorded then it can lead to significant difficulties on the break down of a relationship if the parties then disagree about what each is entitled to. Often this can only be resolved by costly Court proceedings which could have been avoided if the issue had been addressed at the outset!

**For more information on this or other matters relating to family or matrimonial law please contact Liz Williams on Tel: 01274 728 327.**

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