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## **Phillips' Legal Corner Q&A**

### **Is there such a thing as a 'quickie divorce'?**

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by **Rob Parker, solicitor, specialising in family law**

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Question: is there such a thing as a 'quickie divorce'?

Answer: Rob Parker, family lawyer at Phillips explains why it's a myth

'The recent press coverage of Cheryl Cole, celebrity singer, reportedly wanting a 'quickie' divorce from England footballer Ashley Cole unfortunately perpetuates the popular public misconception that 'quickie divorces' are possible' says Rob Parker, solicitor.

'Couples who reach the conclusion that their marriage is at an end naturally wish for their separation to be formalised as quickly as possible – and of course almost all lawyers are in the business of helping them do just that. But, the reality is that even in the case of a straightforward undefended divorce, it takes weeks and more often months.

There are many steps that are necessary before a divorce can happen; so anyone embarking on the divorce process should exercise extreme caution if tempted to instruct any firm or website organisation promising a 'quickie' divorce, as these are simply a myth. All undefended divorces (and civil partnership dissolutions) have to follow the same process and there are no short cuts.

If you want to speed up the process, here are some sensible tips that can at least help prevent delays:

1. Get advice from a specialist solicitor practising in family law from the very outset.
2. Choose a solicitor who is a member of Resolution, the national organisation of family lawyers which requires its members to follow a Code of Practice to resolve matters in a constructive, non-confrontational manner.

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3. Try and agree the content of the petition with your husband/wife/civil partner before it is sent to the Court. Otherwise, if the other party is taken by surprise by what is said in the petition, it risks being defended and the process will take longer and be more costly.
4. Try one of the many dispute resolution options available to help you agree the matrimonial finances, property and children issues. Mediation, round table meetings and collaborative law are great alternatives. Mediation in particular is a cost effective way of resolving problems, amicably, without fighting through the Courts. Each party, with the help of the mediator, focuses on finding solutions that they can both agree on.

Whether Ashley and Cheryl Cole's high profile divorce will be played out in weeks or months remains to be seen, but their case will undoubtedly continue to generate widespread media interest. If you'd like help with family matters then contact one of our family team who are all members of Resolution.'

Call Rob Parker on 01256 854676, or email: [rparker@phillips-law.co.uk](mailto:rparker@phillips-law.co.uk)

Find out more at [www.phillips-law.co.uk](http://www.phillips-law.co.uk)

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### **Note to editor:**

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