

## News Release

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### **Ed Miliband explodes the myth of ‘common law’ rights**

A Frodsham law firm has issued a stark warning to unmarried couples following media revelations about Ed Miliband’s unorthodox lifestyle.

Specialist family solicitors at Forshaws Davies Ridgway (FDR) LLP are keen to explode the myth that common law husbands and wives have the same rights as married couples or civil partners.

The absence of Ed Miliband’s name on his eldest son’s birth certificate or on the deeds of the family home he shares with long-standing partner Justine Thornton, have both served to highlight the problems this can cause when relationships turns sour.

Ruth Hetherington, a partner in family law at FDR, explained: “I see so many couples, who think that because they have lived together for a number of years, they have the same rights as married couples or civil partnerships.

“Nothing could be further from the truth. If one partner is named as the ‘sole owner’ of the joint home, the other has no automatic right to stay, should he or she be asked to leave, and no automatic right to inherit.

“And if a parent is not specifically named on the birth certificate, he or she is left without vital ‘parental responsibility’ for a child. This means they cannot authorise medical treatment, view medical records, receive school reports or veto any adoption proceedings.

“Ed Miliband would have very little legal protection in the event of his relationship breaking up. If he, as leader of the Labour Party, and his partner, a barrister, can’t get it right, it’s not surprising there are so many people living with the misapprehension they are protected. There are legal procedures which can provide security for both parties if a break up happens. Rather than just hoping for the best, it is worth dealing with these issues when times are happy.”

For more information, contact Ruth Hetherington at Forshaws Davies Ridgway on 01928 739300. [www.fdrilaw.co.uk](http://www.fdrilaw.co.uk).

**EDITOR'S NOTES:**

**For further information, please contact: Ruth Hetherington at FDR Frodsham on 01928 739300. email [ruth.hetherington@fdrilaw.co.uk](mailto:ruth.hetherington@fdrilaw.co.uk).**

**About Forshaws Davies Ridgway LLP (FDR)**

- FDR is a full service legal practice with five offices in Cheshire and Warrington
- 18 Partners
- Over 120 staff
- Top 15 practice in NW
- Top 200 practice in England & Wales
- Mortgage Strategy Awards 2009 & 2010 'Best Conveyancer' Runner Up
- Services include: Commercial Law, Conveyancing, Criminal, Family, Litigation, Wills & Probate

***Issued by***

***Lynn Pegler, Pegler Communications***

***Tel: 01928 789042. Mob: 07783 686246. [lynn@peglercommunications.co.uk](mailto:lynn@peglercommunications.co.uk)***

*On behalf of Forshaws Davies Ridgway LLP*