Introduction

You have always been a united, functional family: Mum, Dad, and three children, all in good health with no major resentments or hard feelings amongst you. You do not see each other as often now as you used to. Recently the eldest child who has been living overseas for a few years, and is 4-months pregnant, has landed a well-paid job in your home city. Because house prices have gone up through the roof in recent years, Mum and Dad suggested that she moves into one of the three 3-bedroom houses they own in the city. The move should happen in about 6-months time but before then the house needs to be refurbished: the kitchen is quite old and tacky, the roof is leaking and the electrical wiring and plumbing definitely need to be replaced. In addition, she really dislikes carpets and so she would prefer to get them removed and instead sand and varnish the floor boards. She also has plans to install an open plan modern kitchen. Mum and Dad have appointed their youngest son to project manage the job given that their daughter is still out-of-town, and their older son is quite busy professionally and has two young children. The youngest son-turned-project manager is still on the job market and has welcomed this opportunity.

You and your partners are all getting together in less than 3 months time for Christmas. This has been a family tradition for many years that you all really look forward to. But it happens that you are all going to be in town in a week time too for different reasons without your partners. Spotting the opportunity, Mum and Dad have invited the three children to come over for dinner and talk about their daughter’s plan to move in 6-months time and the idea of renting one of the family houses to her at market prices. Because you have always been relatively united, you find it awesome that the eldest sibling is moving back from overseas. And you all want to make sure this dinner party is as enjoyable as other family gatherings have been so far. The eldest daughter is pregnant and with a new job, so there’s a lot to celebrate. Plus, with Christmas nearing, it is no time for big arguments. Still, it is important to discuss, as a family, the idea of having their eldest daughter move into one of the three houses in town. You all want to talk through the proposed plans to refurbish the house and ensure you get a consensus around the plans. Clearly, you share a common goal. The eldest daughter should rent Mum and Dad’s house at market prices, and the house needs to be refurbished before she moves in. The last thing you all want is to fall out because of this.

You are all busy people and you also have friends in town you want see, so you can only afford one hour and half to talk through the plans and settle on what needs to be done.

Have fun!