

Client Complaint Information

Policy

We take very seriously all expressions of dissatisfaction from our clients. If you have received this leaflet, it is likely that you have already expressed your concerns verbally or in writing to Lucy Gregory or Julie Ridley who are responsible for dealing with complaints. This leaflet explains our procedures for handling complaints to ensure that each complaint is dealt with swiftly in an attempt to reach an amicable and satisfactory solution.

Reporting & Investigation Responsibilities

Informal verbal complaints should be addressed to your solicitor in the first instance. The name of that person will have been given in your initial client care letter, but if you are unable to locate this, you can ask your solicitor or a member of our support staff. If the matter cannot be resolved informally with your solicitor, it would assist investigations if you were to fully detail your concerns in writing so there is less room for misunderstanding your concerns and requirements. The Legal Ombudsman (see below) also recommends that you put your complaint to us in writing, clearly stating 'Formal Complaint' at the top of your letter and that you keep a copy (see the example suggested by the Legal Ombudsman on their website entitled "Putting your complaint in writing" – the website details are set out below). You should also keep copies of everything, including any replies you receive from us.

Response Times

Written complaints will be acknowledged within seven days of receipt whereby the name of the person responsible for handling the complaint will be confirmed. A full reply will be sent as soon as the matter has been investigated and our proposals for dealing with your concerns have been agreed upon. In any case, we will always endeavour to provide a full response within 21 days of our acknowledgement. If that is not possible, an interim response will be given explaining why it is not possible to meet this deadline, when we expect our investigations to be completed and a response finalised. We should provide a response to all complaints within eight weeks.

Unresolved Issues

If for any reason we are unable to resolve any problem between us, you may be entitled to complain to the Legal Ombudsman who can be contacted at PO Box 6806 Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ or by email at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk or by telephone on 0300 555 0333.

The Ombudsman will usually expect you to allow us at least 8 weeks to resolve the matter. The time limit for referral of complaints to the Ombudsman is 6 months from the date of our final response in relation to your complaint. See www.legalombudsman.org.uk for further information about the timeframe and eligibility for the Ombudsman service. If your complaint concerns an invoice, you may also apply to the court for an assessment under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority can assist you if you are concerned about a solicitor's behaviour. This could be for concerns about dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. The contact details are:

SRA, The Cube, 199 Wharfedale Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN

DX: 720293 Birmingham 47

Telephone number: 0870 606 2555.

Costs

We do not charge for handling complaints, however, if an invoice has been issued for work completed on a matter and some of that bill remains outstanding the firm may be entitled to charge interest on that amount as explained in our terms of business.

Management

All complaints (written or verbal) are recorded and logged centrally to enable us to detect recurring problems and trends. In recording such information, we will comply with our obligations under the GDPR Guidelines 2018. As necessary, we will implement corrective action in response to individual complaints and improvement measures to prevent adverse trends and correct recurring problems. In this manner, we aim to constantly improve the service we provide.