

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards. If at any point you become unhappy with the service we provide to you or you have concerns about your bill, then you should inform us immediately so that we can do our best to resolve the problem for you. We will not charge you for handling your complaint and we will deal with it promptly and fairly.

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our client care manager, Andrew Dixon, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. He will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. He will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of the meeting, he will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he has agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, he will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for a partner or someone unconnected with the matter at the firm to review his decision.
7. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. If we are unable to resolve your complaint then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about poor service from lawyers.

The Legal Ombudsman can investigate complaints up to six years from the date of the problem happening or within three years of when you found out about the problem. If you wish to refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman this must be done within six months of our final response to your complaint.

However, please note that from 1 April 2023 these time limits are changing. From 1 April the Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within a year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within a year of you realising there was a concern. The requirement to refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you remains the same.

The contact details for the Legal Ombudsman are as follows:

- Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
- Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
- Telephone 0300 555 0333 between 8.30am to 5.30pm

Calls from both mobiles and landlines to 03 numbers cost no more than calls to national geographic numbers (starting 01 or 02). Calls are recorded and may be used for training and monitoring purposes.

- For minicom call 0300 555 1777
- In writing: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH

Do not send original documents to the Legal Ombudsman. They will scan any documents you send to make computer copies and then destroy the originals.

9. The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you if you are concerned about our 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. You can raise your concerns directly with the Solicitors Regulation Authority (www.sra.org.uk).
10. If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.
11. If we are unable to resolve your complaint, we will send you information about alternative dispute resolution.