

## Complaints Handling Policy

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### Our Commitment

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need our clients to tell us about it. This will help improve our standards. Whenever possible, please raise any initial client care problems with the person acting on your case to give them the opportunity of resolving matters with you. Often, matters can be quickly resolved in this way.

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the service you have received, or about the bill, please contact us by post to our office at 10 Paradise Square, Sheffield S1 2DE telephone 0114 2909500 or email [hester.russell@gwbharthills.co.uk](mailto:hester.russell@gwbharthills.co.uk) Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

### What will happen next?

- 1 We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within five days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
- 2 We will investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Client Care Partner, Hester Russell, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you. If your complaint is in relation to Hester Russell then it will normally be investigated by Elizabeth Lord.
- 3 We may decide to invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. If this is appropriate we will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
- 4 Within five days of that meeting we 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, you will be sent a detailed written reply to your complaint, including the 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 another Partner within the firm to review the 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 you are still not satisfied with our handling of your complaint you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. Contact details are as follows:

PO Box 6806

Wolverhampton

WV1 9WJ

☎ 0300 555 0333

✉ [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

🌐 [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

- 9 Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint

**and**

- No more than six years from the date of act/omission; or
- No more than three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

If we have to change any of the above timescales, we will let you know and explain why.

## **Complaints about your bill**

The above complaints procedure also applies to complaints arising concerning our bill. There may also be a right to object to the bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974; and that if all, or part, of a bill remains unpaid, the firm may be entitled to charge interest.

## **Raising concerns with our regulator**

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) can help you if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. You can find information about raising your concerns with the SRA at [www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/](http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/)

## **Alternative dispute resolution**

Alternative complaints bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm consent to use such a scheme. In the event that you wish to use an alternative complaint body you should advise us accordingly.