

CLARKSON HIRST SOLICITORS COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

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 raised 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 73 Church Street, Lancaster, LA1 1ET, telephone 01524 39760 or email mw@clarksonhirst.com. We have a procedure in place which details how we handle complaints as follows:

The Procedure

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within two 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 Complaints Manager, Matthew Winder who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. Matthew Winder (or Maureen Fawcett if the complaint involves Matthew Winder) will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. He/she will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgment letter.
4. Within three days of that meeting Matthew Winder 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 acknowledgment letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another Director 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. We would hope that this does not become necessary and that we can resolve matters between ourselves. Contact details are as follows:

PO BOX 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

Tel 0300 555 0333
Email : enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint and within the following timescales:

- a) Six years from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring, or
- b) Three years from the date you should reasonably have known there were grounds for a complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman will not accept complaints where the act or date of awareness was before 6th October 2010.

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

Complaints in relation to bills

The complaints procedure above 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. The Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the Court for assessment of that bill.