

JOHN BIRKBY & CO

SOLICITORS

Complaints handling procedure

We want to give you the best possible service. However, if at any point you become unhappy or concerned about the service we have provided then you should inform us immediately, so that we can do our best to resolve the problem for you.

In the first instance it maybe helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues at this stage. If you would like to make a formal complaint then you can read our full complaints procedure below. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority 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 raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority at www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems.page

What happens if we cannot resolve your complaint

If we are unable to resolve the complaint with you then you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates problems about poor service from lawyers.

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 know there was cause for complaint.

If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman please contact them. Their contact details are shown at the end of the complaints policy below.

Our complaints policy

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 you have a complaint, please contact us with the details. We have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time you can have the complaint independently looked at by the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman investigates complaints about poor service from lawyers.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within two working days of us receiving the complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our client care partner, Fiona Goode, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. Fiona Goode will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. She will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of the meeting, Fiona Goode will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions she has agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, Fiona Goode will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including her 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 an independent solicitor nominated by Oldham Law Association 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. If we have not resolved your complaint within 8 weeks you may complain to the Legal Ombudsman.
8. If you are not satisfied with our handling of your complaint you can then ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider your complaint. Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman (www.legalombudsman.org.uk) within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint or within six years of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring (or if outside of this period, within three years of when you should reasonably have been aware of it).

9. For further information, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman whose contact details are:

Legal Ombudsman,
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

Telephone 0300 555 0333 (Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm).

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: visit www.legalombudsman.org.uk

John Birkby & Co
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