



## CLIENTS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We are committed to providing a high quality service to all our clients. We constantly monitor our service and seek to improve it. It is very important to us to know whether or not you are satisfied with our service. Any complaint about the quality of our service will be considered in accordance with this procedure.

### **Our complaints procedure**

If you have a complaint, you should contact the fee earner handling your matter or their supervisor. If you prefer not to contact them directly, please contact our Practice Manager on 01639 884884.

### **What will happen next?**

1. Once we have received your complaint, our Principal Sam Hawking will write to you within 7 days to acknowledge receipt of your complaint and how it will be investigated.
2. We will record your complaint in our central register (for monitoring and management information purposes) and open a separate file for your complaint.
3. We will investigate your complaint by reviewing your file and speaking with those who represented you. Within 4 weeks of receiving your complaint, we will respond in writing to the concerns you have raised. If for any reason it is not possible to provide our response in that time period, we will write to you explaining why and when you can expect to hear from us.
4. If, having received our written response, you remain dissatisfied with our service or the manner in which your complaint has been addressed please feel free to contact our Director of Operations, Mrs Charlene Jenkins, who will conduct a separate review of your complaint. You will be told about the conclusion of this review within 28 days.
5. If you are still not satisfied, you may be able to ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman is the independent organisation which handles complaints against solicitors. The Legal Ombudsman service is open to all members of the public, very small businesses, charities, clubs and trusts. For more information including who may use their services and the time periods for involving them please contact the Legal Ombudsman:

PO Box 6806 Wolverhampton Birmingham WV1 9WJ  
Tel: 0300 555 0333  
[www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

Please note there are time limits that you must meet before the Legal Ombudsman will investigate your complaint.

The act or omission you wish to complain about must have happened after 5 October 2010, or, if it happened on or before 5 October 2010, you must only have become aware of it after 5 October 2010.

You must refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman no later than:

six years from the act or omission; or

three years from when you should have reasonably known there was cause for complaint. In addition, you must contact the Legal Ombudsman no more than six months after the date of our final response to your complaint - otherwise they may be unable to investigate your complaint. If you are concerned about meeting this deadline, please call the Legal Ombudsman - 0300 555 0333.

6. If we do not hear from you 28 days from the date of our letter at number 3 above, we will consider that response to be our final response and will close your complaint. Your time limit to take your matter to the Legal Ombudsman will be six months from the date of that letter.
7. The ombudsman deals with service-related complaints; any conduct-related complaints will be referred to the Council for Licensed Conveyancers.
8. Alternative complaints bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should you wish to use such a scheme such as The Small Claims Mediation Service – [www.smallclaimscourtgenie.co.uk](http://www.smallclaimscourtgenie.co.uk). We, Sam Hawking Property Lawyers, agree to use of The Small Claims Mediation Service should you wish to do so.