

Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing a high quality legal service to all of our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it.

What to do if you have a Complaint

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the work we do for you, including our bill, please discuss this with the Solicitor overseeing your matter in the first instance. If you are unable to resolve the issue directly, please set out your complaint in writing to our Complaints Director, Jill Owens, either by post to 5 Marden Road, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, NE26 2JL; or by email to jill.owens@yarwood-stimpson.co.uk

We have eight weeks to deal with your complaint.

What Will Happen Next

We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within 2 weeks of us receiving the complaint. We will enclose a copy of this procedure.

We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve reviewing your file and speaking with member(s) of staff who have acted for you.

You will then be invited to a meeting with the Complaints Director to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. This will be done within 2 weeks of sending you the initial acknowledgement letter.

Within one week of the meeting, the Complaints Director will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions that have been agreed with you.

If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, the Complaints Director will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including their suggestions for resolving the matter. This will be done within 3 weeks of sending you the initial acknowledgement letter or 2 weeks of you advising us that you do not want a meeting; or us agreeing with you that a meeting will not be possible, whichever is later.

At this stage, if you are still not satisfied with our written reply (whether following a meeting or not), you should contact us again, and request that our reply to you is reviewed and we will arrange for another Director or someone unconnected with the matter at the firm to undertake that review. We will write to you within 2 weeks of receipt of your review request confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

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

If you are still not satisfied, you can the contact the Legal Ombudsman at:

PO Box 6806

Wolverhampton

WV1 9WJ

Telephone: 03005550333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

There are time limits within which complaints must be made to the Legal Ombudsman, as indicated below.

Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint, or within 6 years from the act or omission about which you are complaining or within 3 years from when you found out about the act or omission about which you are complaining.

For further information about the Legal Ombudsman, go to www.legalombudsman.org.uk

If you think we have breached one of the principles as set out by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority, then you should direct your concerns to them directly. For further information about how to contact them, please go to <https://www.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/>

The Principles are set out here:

There are seven **Principles** that all people and law firms that are regulated by the SRA must meet. This means that they must act:

1. in a way that upholds the constitutional principle of the rule of law, and the proper administration of justice
2. in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons
3. with independence
4. with honesty
5. with integrity
6. in a way that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion
7. in the best interests of each client.