

Complaints procedure

Let us know.... If there is a problem

We are committed to providing a high quality and professional service to all our clients. Please tell us as soon possible if you feel we have not met these standards. We will:

- Look into your complaint and put things right if something has gone wrong
- Make sure that we learn from any mistakes we may have made and take action to help prevent them in future
- Not charge you for investigating your complaint.

1. If you are a client (including a beneficiary in a will we are working on)

Making a complaint will not normally affect any work we are carrying out for you.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, including your bill, you should contact the person who is working on your case as soon as you are aware that there is a problem. If they are unable to resolve your problem you should write to or email:

The Complaints Partner

Wilkin Chapman LLP
Cartergate house
26 Chantry Lane
Grimsby
DN31 2LJ
Email: complaints@wilkinchapman.co.uk

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter or email acknowledging your complaint within 3 working days of receiving it
2. Your complaint will be recorded on a register of complaints
3. We will investigate and respond promptly to your complaint but in any case within 8 weeks of sending you an acknowledgement letter or email.

If we think we have provided poor service we will tell you and offer a suitable remedy along with an explanation of what went wrong. If we think there was no poor service we will explain why. We will not normally consider a complaint about a problem which took place over 6 months ago.

The Legal Ombudsman

If you are client of the firm and you are unhappy with our response, you can then contact the **Legal Ombudsman** about your complaint. The Legal Ombudsman will expect you to have given us chance to resolve your complaint before it will get involved.

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806

Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

Switchboard: 0300 555 0333 between 8.30am and 5.30pm

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Calls to the Legal Ombudsman are recorded and may be used for training and monitoring purposes. Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than calls to 01 or 02 numbers from mobiles and landlines.

This service is free but you should contact the Ombudsman:

- within 6 months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint or
- no later than 6 years from the act or omission or
- 3 years from the date you should have reasonably known there was cause for complaint.

Complaints about your bill

Under sections 70, 71 and 72 of the Solicitors Act 1974 you have a right to an assessment of your bill by an Officer of the Court.

- If all or part of the bill remains unpaid, we have the right to charge interest on it.
- The Legal Ombudsman may not deal with a complaint about your bill if you have already applied for an assessment by the Court.

Solicitors Regulation Authority

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. Please see below for their address and contact details.

2. If we are collecting a debt from you

If our Debt Recovery and Insolvency Department is in contact with you about a debt you owe to one of our clients (such as Npower, Booker or a Local Authority) and you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the debt recovery process or a member of the team you may contact:

Recoveries Department Complaints

Wilkin Chapman LLP

Cartergate House

26 Chantry Lane

Grimsby

DN31 2LJ

Telephone: 01472 262626 and ask for the Recoveries Department Complaints.

You don't have the right to go to the Legal Ombudsman but you can contact the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) if you think we have failed to comply with the SRA Code of Conduct. You must do this within 6 months of the problem arising.

Solicitors Regulation Authority

The Cube

199 Wharfside Street

Birmingham

B1 1RN

Telephone: 0870 66 2555

Email: report@sra.org.uk

3. Unreasonable behaviour

We are committed to dealing with all complaints professionally, fairly and impartially. We also have a duty to protect the safety and welfare of our staff against unreasonable or persistent behaviour.

Unreasonable behaviour is where the frequency or nature of your contact with us takes up unjustifiable time and resources or if you are offensive, threatening or abusive. Behaviours which we consider to be unreasonable and unacceptable include:

- Making unnecessarily excessive demands on the time and resources of our staff while your complaint is being investigated. This includes excessive telephoning, the sending of numerous emails, writing long and complex letters frequently and expecting an immediate response
- Repeatedly raising issues which have already been addressed in a response to an earlier complaint
- Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint or to co-operate with the complaints procedure
- Changing the basis of the complaint and introducing irrelevant information
- Recording meetings or conversations without the prior knowledge of the persons involved
- Using bullying, physical or psychological threats as a means to influence the person(s) handling the complaint.

If we consider your behaviour to be unacceptable we will write to you and tell you. We may decide to restrict contact between you and us:

- To a nominated person only
- By requiring communication by letter only or
- By ceasing contact altogether.

If we think your behaviour towards us in a telephone call is unacceptable, we may end the call without notice.

If you need this information in another language or in large print, Braille or an audio CD, please get in touch.