

Complaints procedure

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 maintain and improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details. If we have to change any of the timescales set out below, we will let you know.

Investigation and meeting

- 1 Within three days we will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain the details. We may suggest that we meet to clarify any details.
- 2 We will then record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint and investigate your complaint. This may involve one or more of the following steps.
 - Jayne Willetts will consider your complaint in detail; or
 - Bronwen Still or Matthew Moore who are solicitor consultants to the practice will investigate your complaint and report to us.
- 3 At this stage, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. We would aim to be in a position to meet with you within 14 days of first receiving your complaint. If you would prefer not to meet, or if we cannot arrange this within an agreed timescale, we will write to you setting out our views on the situation and any redress.
- 4 Within three days of the meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions that we have agreed with you. In appropriate cases we could offer an apology, a reduction of any bill or a repayment in relation to any payment received.

Review

- 5 At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, please contact us again. We will then arrange to review our decision within the next 10 days. This may happen in one of the following ways:-
 - We will review the decision ourselves; or

- We will ask an independent solicitor who is a specialist in professional regulation work to review your complaint. This may take longer than 10 days in which case we will let you know how long this process will take; or
 - We will invite you to agree to an independent mediation. This again may take longer than 10 days and we will do our best to let you know how long this will take.
- 6 We will let you know the result of the review within 5 days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

Legal Ombudsman

- 7 If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman (www.legalombudsman.org.uk) PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ (0300 555 0333) about your complaint. There are however restrictions to this service for certain business and other organisations – see the Ombudsman’s website for further details.
- 8 You will generally need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint. In addition, the Legal Ombudsman will not be able to accept your complaint if:
- more than six years have elapsed from the date of the alleged act or omission giving rise to your complaint;
 - more than three years have elapsed since the time that you should have known about your entitlement to make a complaint (if later); or
 - the date of the alleged act or omission giving rise to the complaint was before 6 October 2010.

Complaints about costs – detailed assessment

- 9 If your complaint relates only to the amount of our costs, you may be entitled to have our charges reviewed by the court. This is called “*detailed assessment*”. The procedure is set out in sections 70, 71 and 72 of the Solicitors Act 1974. You should be aware that there are strict time limits applicable to this procedure and you may wish therefore to seek independent legal advice. We may also be entitled to charge interest on any outstanding sums from any invoices that are unpaid in full or part.

JBW & Co Limited
trading as Jayne Willetts & Co Solicitors
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