



## OUR COMPLAINTS POLICY

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. If something goes wrong we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our service.

### 1 Our complaints procedure

If you have a complaint concerning any aspect of our service or the bill please contact Nigel Ledger at this office with the details (telephone number 01242 574244 or email [nl@hughespaddison.co.uk](mailto:nl@hughespaddison.co.uk)). Nigel Ledger is our Practice Manager and he will initiate our complaints procedure.

We have 8 weeks to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved your complaint within that time you may complain to the Legal Ombudsman.

### 2 What will happen next?

2.1 We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint, enclosing a copy of this procedure and asking you to confirm or explain any details of which we are unclear. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You can normally expect to receive our letter within three working days of us receiving your complaint.

2.2 We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Compliance Manager, Hayley Hunt, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.

2.3 Hayley Hunt may then invite you to a meeting, if appropriate, to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. She will do this within fourteen working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter referred to in paragraph 2.1 above.

2.4 Within three working days of the meeting Hayley Hunt will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions she has agreed with you.

2.5 If we decide that a meeting is not appropriate or you decline an invitation to a meeting, Hayley Hunt will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include her suggestions for resolving the matter. She will do this within twenty one working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter referred to in paragraph 2.1 above.

2.6 At this stage, if you are still not satisfied you should contact us again. We will then arrange to review our decision. Another Director of the company will review Hayley Hunt's decision within ten working days.

2.7 We will let you know the result of the review within five working 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.

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

2.9 If your complaint is about Hayley Hunt or Hayley Hunt cannot deal with it for any reason, then we will advise you of the Director who will deal with your complaint.

### **3 The Legal Ombudsman**

If you are not satisfied with our findings, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman at PO Box 6806 Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ about your complaint.

Certain clients do not have the right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman. These are companies, charities, clubs and trusts whose income net of tax is in excess of £1,000,000.00. The Legal Ombudsman sets some time limits in relation to complaints. Firstly, they allow us up to eight weeks to resolve your complaint. If after eight weeks we have failed to deal with the complaint to your satisfaction, you can involve the Legal Ombudsman.

There are three additional time limits. The Legal Ombudsman will accept complaints:

- up to six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint;
- up to six years from the date of act/omission about which you are complaining; or
- three years from when you should have known about the complaint.

The act/omission about which you are complaining must have happened on or after 6 October 2010. If the act/omission happened earlier than that, you must not have been aware of it before 6 October 2010.

If you are unsure about these time limits, or for further information, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman on 0300 555 0333 or [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

### **4 Alternative Dispute Resolution**

In addition to the Legal Ombudsman, several other complaints bodies exist which are also able to deal with complaints. Should both you and the firm wish to use such a scheme. These are: Ombudsman Services, ProMediate, Small Claims Mediation and the European Online Dispute Resolution platform. Information about these services can be found at:

[www.ombudsman-services.org](http://www.ombudsman-services.org)  
[www.promediate.co.uk](http://www.promediate.co.uk) [www.gov.uk/government/publications/small-claims-mediation-service-ex730](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/small-claims-mediation-service-ex730)  
[ec.europa.eu/consumers/odr/](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/odr/)

### **5 Complaints about our professional conduct**

If you are concerned about the professional conduct of the firm, or of an individual employed by the firm, you can contact the Solicitors Regulation Authority for advice. This could include concerns about dishonesty or a breach of the SRA Principles.

For more information on making a complaint of this nature you should contact the Solicitors Regulation Authority on 0370 606 2555 or visit [www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor](http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor)