



**RISDON
HOSEGOOD**
SOLICITORS

Complaints Handling Policy

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

Whenever possible, please raise any initial problems with the person acting on your case to give them the opportunity of resolving matters with you. Often, matters can be quickly resolved in this way.

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the service
you have received please contact our
Client Care & Complaints Manager, Edward Judge:

Call: 01823 251571

Email: Edward.judge@risdonhosegood.com

Address: 1 Mendip House, High Street Taunton Somerset TA1 3SX

We will request that you detail your complaint in writing. This can be by email or by letter. However please feel free to call to discuss your concerns at any time.

We have a procedure in place which details how we handle complaints as follows:

Our Complaints Procedures

Step One

Please try to initially address your concerns with the person you are dealing with. This should be done as soon as possible. If that fails, then please contact their manager. It may be possible that the solution is to offer another person to finish off or handle your matter and that should be arranged as soon as possible to avoid there being delays. We know this does not always resolve the issue that you may have and that speaking to the person you are dealing with may be hard for you to do. The details of how to complain and the name of the person/s to complain to appear in your first letter (the one about costs). If you want to know the name and you do not have the letter, then ring Mr Judge or his secretary and they will tell you who to speak to initially.

Step Two

If you feel the need to complain further or you do not feel that the matter has been adequately resolved; then please do so in writing if possible to Edward Judge, giving as much detail as you can, and we will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within 4 working days of receiving it. Doing this usually means we can look into your complaint more thoroughly right from the start.



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Step Three

We will investigate your complaint. We will send a complaint form including full details of your complaint to the person handling your case and we may then ask for a written report from them. After this, if appropriate, we will look at your case file and the notes and letters that have been kept. This will take a little while. We usually allow 10-14 working days for this part of the investigations. If your complaint relates to Edward Judge, himself, it will be dealt with by an appointed deputy, we will tell you who that is but it will be another partner or senior manager within the firm.

Step Four

We will then write to you and tell you about our initial findings and if necessary, tell you how much longer we need to obtain all the information to write out to you in full. Usually this will be within around 21 working days. Sometimes it may be longer dependent upon the complexity and nature of the complaint. If we need more time, we will advise you as soon as we know and give you an idea of the time we will need.

If you would then like to meet to discuss this direct, we will agree a date, time and venue with you to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint.

Step Five

Within 4 working days of that meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions agreed with you.

Step Six

If you do not want a meeting, you will still be sent a detailed written reply to your complaint, including the suggestions for resolving the matter. We try to deal with most complaints within 28 working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.

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

Step Seven

If you are still not satisfied with our handling of your complaint you can then ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. The Ombudsman service like you to have exhausted our internal process before you complain to them.

Their contact details are as follows:

Legal Ombudsman
Call: 0300 555 0333
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk
Address: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

The current scheme rules with the Legal Ombudsman say they can look at complaints if:

- You refer your complaint to them within six months of our final response and
- It happened within six years of the problem happening; or



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- It happened within three years from when you found out about it.

From 1st April 2023 the Legal Ombudsman is changing the scheme rules and the timescales are being amended as followed:

Ordinarily you must refer the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman no later than:

- One year from the act/omission being complained about; or
- One year from when you should reasonably have known or realised that there was cause for complaint.

The Legal Ombudsman are not changing their time limit rule that requires you to bring your complaint to them within six months of the date of our final response.

We would hope that this does not become necessary and that we can resolve matters between ourselves. Some public authorities are excluded by the Legal Ombudsman criteria and the above website should be visited for eligibility details.

The complaints procedure also includes complaints arising concerning our bill. There may also be a right to object to the bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974; and that if all, or part, of a bill remains unpaid, the firm may be entitled to charge interest. If you do apply for an assessment the Legal Ombudsman may not be able to deal with your complaint. For more information the Ombudsman has a very good website and help line.

What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) 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.

Visit the SRA website: <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor>

Changes to this Complaints Handling Policy

This Complaints Handling Policy was last updated February 2023