

Cooper Stott Solicitors

Complaints Policy



Our commitment

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 client care 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, or about the bill, please contact us by post to our office at Aykley Vale Chambers, Durham Road, Aykley Heads, Durham, DH1 5NE, by telephone 0191 384 7210 or email catherine.auston@cooperstott.co.uk. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case.

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three working days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Client Care Director, Angela McGurk, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you. If your complaint is in connection with Ms McGurk, the complaint will be referred to James Cooper who is a Director.
3. We will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will do this within 10 working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within five working days of that meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting, or it is not possible, you will be sent a detailed written reply to your complaint, including the suggestions for resolving the matter, within 15 working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another senior member of the firm to review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 10 working days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. If you are still not satisfied with our handling of your complaint, or if we have not resolved it within eight weeks, you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. We would hope that this does not become necessary and that we can resolve matters between ourselves. Contact details are as follows:

PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ

☎ 0300 555 0333

✉ enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

🌐 www.legalombudsman.org.uk

Normally, you will need to bring a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint **and** within the following timescales:

- a) Six years from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining occurring, **or**
- b) Three years from the date you should reasonably have known there were grounds for complaint.

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

Complaints about your bill

The above complaints procedure also applies to 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 Practice may be entitled to charge interest.

Raising concerns with our regulator

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. You can find information about raising your concerns with the SRA at www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.

Alternative dispute resolution

Alternative complaints bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm consent to use such a scheme. In the event that you wish to use an alternative complaint body you should advise us accordingly.

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