

External complaints policy — MARGRAVES  
SOLICITORS

- 1 We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service.
- 2 We acknowledge that we may not always get it right, so if something has gone wrong, including in relation to our charges, we need you to tell us. This will help us to improve our standards of service.

### **3 How do I make a complaint?**

- 3.1 You can contact us in writing (by letter, fax or email) or by telephone.
- 3.2 In the first instance, it may be helpful to contact the person who is working on your case to discuss your concerns and we will do our best to resolve any issues. If you do not feel able to discuss your concerns with them, please contact the person responsible for the overall supervision of your matter, who will be named in the client care letter we sent you at the beginning of your matter.
- 3.3 If you do not feel able to raise your concerns with either of these people, or you are unsatisfied with their response, please contact Patrick Bourdillon who has overall responsibility for complaints and whose contact details are: Patrick Bourdillon, Managing Partner, Old Court Chambers, Spa Road, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5EY or [pb@margraves.co.uk](mailto:pb@margraves.co.uk) or 01597 825 565.
- 3.4 To help us to understand your complaint, and in order that we do not miss anything, please tell us:
  - 3.4.1 your full name and contact details;
  - 3.4.2 what you think we have got wrong;
  - 3.4.3 how you would like your complaint to be resolved; and
  - 3.4.4 your file reference number (if you have it).
- 3.5 If you require any help in making your complaint we will try to help you.

### **4 How will you deal with my complaint?**

- 4.1 We will write to you within *two* working days acknowledging your complaint, enclosing a copy of this policy.
- 4.2 We will investigate your complaint. This will usually involve:
  - 4.2.1 reviewing your complaint;
  - 4.2.2 reviewing your file(s) and other relevant documents; and
  - 4.2.3 liaising with the person who dealt with your matter.
- 4.3 We may also need to ask you for further information or documents. If so, we will ask you to provide the information within a specific period of time.
- 4.4 We will update you on the progress of your complaint at appropriate times.

- 4.5 We may also, if appropriate, invite you to a virtual or face-to-face meeting to discuss your complaint. You do not have to attend if you do not wish to or if you are unable to. We will be happy to discuss the matter with you by telephone.
- 4.6 We will write to you at the end of our investigation to tell you what we have done and what we propose to do to resolve your complaint. Where possible, we will aim to do this within 21 days of the date of our letter of acknowledgement.

## **5 What to do if we cannot resolve your complaint**

- 5.1 We have eight weeks to consider your complaint. If we have not resolved it within this time you may be able to complain to the Legal Ombudsman. This applies if you are an individual, a business with fewer than 10 employees and turnover or assets not exceeding a certain threshold, a charity or trust with a net income of less than £1m, or if you fall within certain other categories (you can find out more from the Legal Ombudsman). The Legal Ombudsman will look at your complaint independently and it will not affect how we handle your matter.
- 5.2 Before accepting a complaint for investigation, the Legal Ombudsman will check that you have tried to resolve your complaint with us first. If you have, then you must take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

5.2.1 within six months of receiving a final response to your complaint;

**and**

5.2.2 no more than six years from the date of act/omission; or

5.2.3 no more than three years from when you should reasonably have known there was cause for complaint.

- 5.3 If you would like more information about the Legal Ombudsman, please contact them.

### **Contact details**

Visit: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

Call: 0300 555 0333 between 9.00 to 17.00

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Legal Ombudsman PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ

- 5.4 Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) bodies exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme, eg *Ombudsman Services, ProMediate or Small Claims Mediation*. We have, however, chosen not to adopt an ADR process. If, therefore, you wish to complain further, you should contact the Legal Ombudsman.
- 5.5 If we are unable to resolve your complaint, and it relates to a contract we entered into online or by other electronic means, you may also be able to submit your complaint to an approved alternative dispute resolution provider in the UK via the EU 'ODR platform'.

5.5.1 The ODR platform is an interactive website offering a single point of entry for disputes between consumers and traders relating to online contracts. The ODR platform is available to consumer clients only, ie where you have instructed us for *purposes outside your trade, business, craft or profession*.

5.5.2 *The website address for the ODR platform is: <http://ec.europa.eu/odr>.*

## **6 What to do if you are unhappy with our behaviour**

6.1 The Solicitors Regulation Authority can help 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.

6.2 Visit their website to see how you can raise your concerns with the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).

## **7 What will it cost?**

7.1 We will not charge you for handling your complaint.

7.2 Please note that if we have issued a bill for work done on the matter, and all or some of the bill is not paid, we may be entitled to charge interest on the amount outstanding. This is explained in our *Terms of Business*.

7.3 The Legal Ombudsman service is free of charge.

7.4 The ODR platform itself is free to use, but the ADR entity to which the complaint is transmitted may charge for its service. The ADR entity is responsible for informing all parties of the cost of its dispute resolution procedure.

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