

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Initial concerns**

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

In the first instance, we ask that you contact the person who is handling your matter, or their Manager, to discuss your concerns. They will do their best to resolve any issues at this stage.

If this informal chat does not resolve your concerns, you can formalise it by contacting the Compliance Department.

### **Formal complaint – what we need to know**

It would be helpful if you could provide the following information:

- Your name, contact details, and preferred method of contact;
- File reference;
- Details of your concerns;
- Details of how you feel we could put things right.

You can use our dedicated email address [complaints@thornecrofts.co.uk](mailto:complaints@thornecrofts.co.uk).

You will not be charged for complaining and it will not affect how we handle your matter.

### **What will happen next?**

1. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days of receiving it and provide a copy of this procedure. We will record the complaint in our central register and open a designated complaint file.
2. A member of the Compliance Department will investigate your complaint. Your file will be reviewed and the person handling the matter for you may be spoken to.
3. Upon completion of the investigation, our findings will be communicated to you in writing and may include suggestions for resolving the matter.
4. Alternatively, if considered appropriate, you may be invited to the office for a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your concerns. The outcome of the meeting would be followed up in writing.
5. We aim to investigate and respond to all complaints, where possible, within 5 weeks of acknowledging receipt of it.
6. If you remain dissatisfied, you should contact us within 1 week of our written response date, so that we can arrange for the decision to be reviewed. We will need details from you to highlight the area(s) that required review, and reason(s) why.
7. We will aim to let you know the result of any review, where possible, within 2 weeks of receiving your request. We will confirm to you in writing our final position, explaining the reasons for the decision reached.

If we have to change any of these timescales, we will let you know and explain our reason why.

### **What to do if the firm cannot resolve your complaint**

If you are still not satisfied following our internal escalation process, you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman:

- Website: [www.legalombudsman.org.uk](http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk)
- Telephone: 0300 555 0333
- Post: Legal Ombudsman, PO BOX 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ
- Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Any complaint to the Legal Ombudsman must be referred to them within 6 months of the date of our final written response to you. The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within 1 year of the date of the act or omission being complained about or within 1 year from the date when you should reasonably have known that there was cause for complaint.

It should be noted that the Legal Ombudsman service cannot be used by businesses or most other organisations, unless they are below certain size limits. Further details are available on their website.

### **What to do if you are unhappy with our fees**

If your complaint is in respect of our fees, you also have the right to challenge the fees by applying to the Court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974.

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

If you have any concerns regarding our behaviour, such as dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic the Solicitors Regulation Authority can help you.

You can raise your concerns with the Solicitors Regulation Authority at <http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor.page>