

SOUTHERNS
Solicitors
Burnley, Nelson and Colne

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy

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

Our complaints procedure

Miss Sarah Bentley is our Client Care Partner. You can contact her at Mackenzie House, 66/68 Bank Parade, Burnley, Lancashire (Telephone number: 01282 422711). If you cannot contact Miss Bentley or if your complaint refers to Miss Bentley then please contact Mr. John Rusius at 23 Carr Road, Nelson, Lancashire (telephone number: 01282 603663).

Action on Receipt of your Complaint

The Partners to whom the complaints will be referred are as follows: -

Private Client Department	- Miss Kirsten Morgan; Mr Gary Taylor; Mr Steven Jackson
Family/Litigation Department	- Miss Sarah Bentley
Criminal Department	- Mr Mark Williams; Mr Richard Taylor; Mr John Rusius
Civil/Tribunals Department	- Mr Neil Cronin

What will happen next?

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain the details set out. We will also send you a copy of our Complaints Procedure. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You can expect to receive our letter within five working days of us receiving your complaint.
2. We will then record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint. We will do this within five working days of receiving your complaint.
3. We will then start to investigate your complaint. This may involve one or more of the following steps.
 - We may ask the member of staff who acted for you to reply to your complaint within ten working days.
 - We may examine their reply and the information in your complaint file. We may then ask them for more information. This will take up to five working days from receiving their reply and the file.

4. If appropriate we will then invite you to meet the Partner dealing with your complaint to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will do this within five working days of receiving all the details we need from the member of staff who acted for you.
5. Within five working days of any meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions we have agreed with you.

If you do not want a meeting or if a meeting is not possible for any reason, we will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include our suggestions for resolving the matter. This will happen within five working days of us completing our investigation.

6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you can contact us again. We will then arrange to review our decision. The review will be undertaken by our Miss Sarah Bentley unless the complaint refers to her or she is absent or she dealt with the complaint initially, in which case it will be dealt with by Mr John Rusius. When the complaint refers to Mr John Rusius or he is absent, it will be referred to a different Partner/Consultant in the Firm. The review of your complaint will be completed within ten working days of your request.
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.
8. If you are still not satisfied, you can then ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. 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.

You can contact the Legal Ombudsman at P. O. Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ.

If you would prefer to make contact by telephone please call 0300 555 0333 or by e-mail at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk We very much hope that this will not be necessary.

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