



## Consumer Complaints Service

*Most people have a good experience with their solicitor, but sometimes things do go wrong. We are the part of the Law Society which helps people who have a problem with their solicitor.*

*We deal with complaints about poor service by solicitors. We also deal with applications for 'remuneration certificates', which is a free service we provide for checking to see whether your solicitor's bill is fair and reasonable. (We can only do this if the work the solicitor has done for you has not involved court proceedings.)*

*We also receive reports about professional misconduct by solicitors. These are dealt with by the Regulation Compliance Directorate, who regulate the solicitors' profession.*

*Some members of the public approved by the Master of the Rolls are involved in our decision and policy-making. The Consumer Complaints Service is overseen by our Consumer Complaints Board, which has a chairperson and most members are not solicitors. The Legal Services Ombudsman reviews the work we have done.*

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## Where to start

Read through this booklet. If you're still not sure what to do, call our helpline on **0845 608 6565**. *(Calls are charged at local rates.)* It's open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. The lines can get very busy so we run a queuing system. (For our minicom service, phone **0845 601 1682**.)

### Our helpline can:

- give you practical advice to help you to solve your problem;
- tell you who to contact if we are not able to help; and
- tell you how to complain to us.

Our helpline is not able to answer legal queries or give you legal advice. However, our Information Services Department can give you details of solicitors or other organisations to contact for legal advice. Their phone number is **0870 606 6575**. *(These calls are charged at national rates.)*

## Special needs

We can provide our literature in different languages and in different formats, for example, in Braille, in large print or on audio tape.

We can also use the Tynetalk phone service, so if you have hearing or speech problems we can talk to you using this service. Our minicom number is **0845 601 1682**.

If you have any difficulty accessing our services, contact our helpline and they will do their best to help.

## Making a complaint on someone else's behalf

Sometimes, complaints are made on behalf of people who have impaired mental capacity. (Impaired mental capacity means that someone cannot make a decision because of his or her mental state or is not able to communicate that decision, or a combination of the two.)

If you make a complaint and have a court of protection order or an enduring power of attorney, we will deal with the complaint as if it were made by the client. If you do not make the complaint under either a protection order or power of attorney, we may not be able to deal with it in this way. In these circumstances, we may need to carry out some enquiries before we can make any decision to investigate the complaint. If we decide not to investigate, we will tell you. If the complaint is upheld after an investigation, the client will receive any compensation or other award.

## Complaining about your own solicitor

This section looks at what you should do and what we can do if you are complaining about a solicitor who is acting for you or has acted for you in the past.

Sometimes, we receive complaints from solicitors on their client's behalf. The solicitor may be charging you for this service. In most cases, you will not be able to claim back the costs you have had to pay as a result of making your complaint to us through your new solicitor.

### Where should I start?

Your first step must be to discuss your concerns with either your own solicitor or the person in the firm who deals with complaints. All firms of solicitors must have their own procedure for handling complaints.

If your solicitor practises alone, he or she may have an arrangement with another local firm or with the local Law Society.

### How do I complain to my solicitor?

You don't have to complain in writing, but it's a good idea because your solicitor will then have a record of the details. You should keep a copy of your letter.

If you don't want to write a letter to your solicitor, you can fill in our resolution form. This form helps you to put your complaint in writing to the firm.

### You can get this form from:

- our helpline;
- your solicitor; or
- a citizens advice bureau.

### Please don't use our resolution form if:

- your complaint is about your solicitor's bill, given that there are strict time limits (please see **'How to get your bill checked'** on page 6); or
- you want to report the conduct (behaviour) of someone else's solicitor.

If you'd rather phone or make an appointment to visit the solicitor's firm, you should do the following.

- Make sure you speak to the person at the firm who deals with complaints.
- Tell them what your complaint is about.
- Say what you want them to do about it.
- Take notes of your conversation.
- Ask the solicitor to confirm in writing:
- the name of the person at the firm who will be dealing with your complaint;
- the action they will be taking; and
- the date by which they will do this.



### When should I refer my complaint to you?

You should get in touch with us in the following circumstances.

- You haven't received a detailed reply to your initial complaint from your solicitor within a reasonable time, normally 28 days.
- You haven't been able to sort out your complaint with your solicitor.

### Time limits for making complaints

You must contact us:

- within six months of the work which the solicitor did for you; or
- within six months of the solicitor's final response to your complaint;

whichever is later.

It's important that you contact us within the timescales outlined above. If you leave it any longer, we may decide not to investigate your complaint. However, in some circumstances we may decide that the six-month time limit should not apply. If we think your complaint is particularly serious or you can show us a good reason for not making the complaint within the time limit, we may investigate even if you are out of time.

### How do I complain to you?

If you want to make a formal complaint to us and haven't already talked to our helpline, you might find that they are the best starting point. They will talk you through the best way for you to make your complaint. They might ask you to write to us or fill in our complaint form. You can get these forms from our helpline on **0845 608 6565**. (Our minicom service is **0845 601 1682**.) If you have any difficulty filling in the form, please contact us and we will try to help you.

(A solicitor may be entitled to charge you interest on any unpaid bills, even if you have complained to us and we are investigating your complaint.)

### How will you deal with my complaint?

We will give you more information about how we will deal with your complaint when we look at your concerns.

We will check that the solicitor you are complaining about knows that you have made a complaint. This may include sending your letter or form to the solicitor concerned.

Sometimes, we may decide not to take any further action. If this is the case, we will write to you explaining the reasons for our decision.

If you are not happy with how we have handled your complaint or with the decision we've taken, you can refer the matter to the Legal Services Ombudsman (*please see page 4*).

### Local conciliation officers

Local conciliation officers (LCOs) are mostly solicitors, either in practice or retired, who act as our local representatives. We have

trained them and they can visit people to help them set out their complaints and try to sort out matters where possible.

We could decide that your complaint should be referred to an LCO. For example, it may be that:

- the complaint appears to be very detailed or complicated, so it would be difficult to reach an early solution without face-to-face discussion with an LCO; or
- you find it difficult to put your complaint in writing and would prefer to discuss it face-to-face.

If you think that a local conciliation officer may be able to help you, please let us know when you send us your complaint. However, please remember that the LCO will not be able to act for you or give you legal advice.

### What action can you take?

If you are not able to sort your complaint out with the solicitor concerned, we may be able to help you. We can look at the service you have received from your solicitor.

In most cases we will try to sort out the complaint informally by getting you and the solicitor to agree on the best way to sort it out.

If we cannot sort your complaint out informally, we may decide that we are not able to take any further action. We will write to you to tell you if this is the case and what to do if you are not satisfied with our decision.

In some cases we need to make formal decisions on complaints. If we find the service you have received from your solicitor was not good enough, we can:

- reduce your solicitor's bill;
- order your solicitor to pay you compensation of up to £15,000; and
- tell your solicitor to correct a mistake and pay any costs involved.

### In 2004:

- we sorted out 34% of the complaints we received about solicitors' service informally by getting both sides to agree on the best way forward;
- we only had to make formal decisions on 7% of the complaints we received about poor service; and
- the average amount of compensation which we ordered a solicitor to pay (following a formal decision) was £740.91.

There are rules which govern how solicitors should practise. Broadly speaking, these rules concern the standard of behaviour of solicitors. We deal with some complaints which have service issues but also the solicitor may have broken the rules of professional conduct. If there has been misconduct which has affected the service you have received, we can take that into account when looking at your complaint.



We may decide that as well as ordering the solicitor to pay you compensation, we might have to give advice or a warning to the solicitor or take disciplinary action.

### Legal claims and negligence

In some circumstances, we will investigate complaints where you could also take legal action in the courts. We will try to investigate your complaint whenever we can. However, in some cases we may not be able to help you as we are not able to decide complicated issues of fact or law. If this is the case, we will tell you as soon as we can and suggest where else you might be able to get help with your problem.

Some cases may lead to a legal claim and an investigation of poor service. We may be able to deal with the complaint within our powers but this will depend on how much compensation you are looking for. We can award compensation of up to £15,000 or reduce the solicitor's bill (or both).

If we decide we are not able to help you, you might be able to take a legal claim through the courts or to the solicitor's insurers. Solicitors get their insurance from a variety of companies. You will need to ask the firm who their insurers are.

We may decide that it would be helpful to refer you to a member of our negligence panel scheme. The panellist will give you up to one hour's free advice about whether they think you have a legal claim for negligence in the courts. This will usually take place at a meeting, but not always. This hour includes the panellist's time for preparing their advice, and the time they take to read the documents you have provided to support your complaint.

Once the panellist has given you advice, the referral comes to an end. If you need more help, the panellist can charge for this. On the other hand, you may be eligible for legal aid or you may have legal expenses insurance. You will need to talk about the costs involved with the panellist. We are not able to refer you to a panel member if you are already receiving, or have received, independent legal advice.

There are time limits for making a claim against your solicitors so you should consider getting independent legal advice as soon as possible. If you are told that you may have a legal claim, you should contact your solicitors and tell them that you plan to make a claim against them. In some circumstances, the solicitors will need to tell their insurers.

In cases where the insurers get involved, they will carry out an investigation and decide whether it's appropriate to settle your claim. If they decide to do this, they'll also decide the amount you will be awarded. If they decide not to settle, you will probably have to go to court to follow up your claim. You may have to pay the court costs.

### Complaining about our service

We want to deal with your case efficiently. Sometimes things go wrong and we will try to put them right as quickly as possible. We have a procedure for dealing with all complaints we receive about our service.

If you're not happy with the way we are dealing with your case, you should start by contacting your caseworker or their team manager. (If you complain to the team manager, please have your reference number to hand.)

If you've done this and you're still not happy, you can refer your complaint to our Quality and Service Standards Team.

We describe our complaints procedure in a leaflet called '*If you are not happy with our service*', which you can ask us for.

### Referring your complaint to the Legal Services Ombudsman

We will tell you in writing that we have done all we can for you and we are not taking any further action on your file. If you're not happy with the way we've handled your complaint or with the decision we've taken, you can refer the matter to the Legal Services Ombudsman.

The Legal Services Ombudsman for England and Wales is Ms Zahida Manzoor CBE. She was appointed by the Lord Chancellor under the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990, and this act also sets out her powers.

The Legal Services Ombudsman oversees the way we handle complaints about solicitors.

Once we've told you our final decision in writing, you normally have three months to refer the case to the Legal Services Ombudsman.

If you miss this three-month deadline, the Ombudsman will not normally consider your case. However, she might extend the deadline if there are 'special reasons' for doing so. 'Special reasons' are circumstances beyond your control that prevented you from referring your case to the Ombudsman in time. For example, you or a member of your close family might have been seriously ill. You should contact the Ombudsman's office in writing if you think this situation may apply to you.

The Ombudsman is not able to look into complaints which have involved the following.

- Applications to the Compensation Fund.
- Applications for a remuneration certificate.
- Us closing down a solicitor's practice (an intervention).
- Deposit interest certificates. (If a solicitor holds money for you, you may be entitled to interest on that money. If the solicitor does not deposit your money in an account which earns interest or does not account to you for the interest the money earns, you can ask us to issue a certificate which will show how much interest the solicitor should pay you.)

If the Ombudsman finds that your complaint has not been properly handled, she can recommend that we reconsider your complaint. She also has the power to recommend or (in some cases) order that either we or the solicitor involved pay compensation to you for the loss, distress or inconvenience that you have suffered.



There is no limit to the amount of compensation that the Ombudsman can recommend or order, but she will not normally recommend or order more than we can award.

If we reconsider your complaint, we may reach a different decision to our original one. (Please see page 8 for the address.)

## Administering estates

In all probate cases, the executor is the solicitor's client (in other words, the person appointed by the will to carry out the instructions of the person who has died). If you are the executor, we can look into your complaint because you will be the client - even if there are other executors (co-executors).

If you are not the executor and someone other than the solicitor is, you should firstly ask him or her to deal with any complaints you have about the way in which the estate is being handled.

If the executor is the solicitor, we will investigate your complaint.

We will accept and investigate complaints from any beneficiary and in circumstances where the estate administration is not finished. However, what we can do for people who are not clients is limited. In some cases, we may only be able to try to get you and the solicitor talking.

In all cases, please send us a copy of the will and the grant of probate or letters of administration when you first write to us. This means we can identify what your position is at the beginning.

## Reporting someone else's solicitor

We are not able to investigate your complaint about the service given by someone else's solicitor to their own client.

If you report to us about the way someone else's solicitor has behaved, we can only take action if the solicitor has breached (broken) the rules of professional conduct which all solicitors must follow. Often, a solicitor will quite properly just be doing what's best for their own client and not what's best for any other people who may be involved.

If you report the behaviour of someone else's solicitor, we are not able to pay you any compensation even if we find that the rules of professional misconduct have been broken. However, we can take other action in the public interest.

We are not able to help with many of the concerns we receive about other people's solicitors. It might help to discuss your concerns with either your own solicitor or our helpline before you write to us.

### When should I report the solicitor to you?

You should get in touch with us straight away if you want to report a solicitor's conduct. You must contact us within six months of the conduct taking place.

It is important that you contact us within the timescales outlined above. If you leave it any longer, we may decide not to consider your report. However, in a limited number of cases we may

decide that the six-month time limit should not apply because there is a good reason to investigate the matter.

### How do I make my report?

If you want to report a solicitor's conduct, you can either write to us or fill in our complaint form. These forms are available from our helpline on **0845 608 6565** (our minicom service is **0845 601 1682**). If you have any difficulty filling in the form, please contact us and we will try to help you.

### How do you deal with my report?

Our role is to regulate solicitors in the interests of the public and people who use legal services.

When we receive your report we will tell you what information you can expect us to give you about any action we may take. We will usually only give you further information if you have been directly affected by the conduct you are reporting.

If possible, and it is appropriate, we may be able to sort out issues between you and the solicitor. This can only happen if there is evidence that the solicitor has broken, or not carried out, a specific duty owed to you under the rules of professional conduct. In this case, we will usually try to sort out the issues before we decide whether we need to take any other action.

Before we decide how to deal with your report, we may ask you to help us by giving us any evidence you have which may show whether the solicitor has broken the rules of conduct.

If we decide that there is not enough evidence for us to take action, we will usually tell the solicitor that you have made a report, then close the file.

If we decide that there is enough evidence, and that the matter is serious enough, we will investigate it further. The first step will usually mean contacting the solicitor, showing them a copy of your letter, and asking for an explanation. What further steps need to be taken will depend on the individual case.

Sometimes an investigation may take time to complete. This can be because:

- the investigation is complicated;
- we are also dealing with other reports involving the same solicitor (which we cannot tell you about, because they are confidential); or
- we have decided that other matters we are dealing with involving other solicitors pose a greater risk, and must take priority.

We will make decisions about how to deal with reports about a solicitor's conduct, and what action to take after an investigation, after we assess the risk caused in the particular circumstances.

We will take account of the effect that breaking the rules has had, and whether it is likely that the solicitor will repeat the behaviour.



We may decide:

- that no action is necessary (for example, because no damage has been caused, and a repeat of the behaviour is unlikely);
- to give the solicitor advice; or
- to give the solicitor a warning about their future conduct.

We will deal with most cases in one of these three ways.

In more serious cases, we may give the solicitor a reprimand. In a limited number of the most serious cases, we may need to refer the solicitor's conduct to the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal. This tribunal is independent of us, and holds public hearings. Only the tribunal can fine, suspend from practice or strike a solicitor off the roll (which means they cannot carry on practising as a solicitor).

We have a procedure for dealing with all complaints we receive about our service. Please see page 4 for more details about our procedure and who to contact.

If you are not happy with how we have handled your report, or with the decision we've taken, you can contact the Legal Services Ombudsman. (You can find more information on pages 4 and 5.)

## Problems we are not able to help you with

We don't have the power to do the following.

- We cannot investigate your complaint if it is to do with a solicitor who practises in Northern Ireland or Scotland. (Please see page 9 for details of who you can contact.)
- We cannot deal with complaints about barristers, licensed conveyancers or legal executives (unless they are employed in a solicitors' firm to provide legal services). You should contact the General Council of the Bar, the Council for Licensed Conveyancers or the Institute of Legal Executives. (Please see pages 8 and 9 for the addresses.)
- We cannot give you legal advice or a 'second opinion' on legal advice that you've received.
- We cannot tell your solicitor how they should handle your case.
- We cannot decide complicated issues of fact or law which can only be decided by a court.
- We cannot look into the outcome of court cases. You should talk to a solicitor or contact a citizens advice bureau for advice about what you can do about the decision.
- We cannot review a decision taken by the Legal Services Commission. You should ask the commission or a solicitor about how you can appeal. (The Legal Services Commission is a new organisation responsible for managing community legal services. It used to be called the Legal Aid Board.)
- We cannot examine the solicitor's bill if the case has involved court proceedings. You can use a procedure known as 'assessment' for this. (Please see page 7 for more information.)

## How to get your bill checked

There are two ways you may be able to have your bill checked to see if it is fair and reasonable.

- The remuneration certificate procedure is a free service that we provide. This scheme is only available to you if your solicitor's bill is for work which hasn't involved court proceedings. (If the bill has been for divorce proceedings, this will have involved the courts so you will not be able to use the remuneration certificate procedure to challenge the costs.)
- Assessment is the way of having your bill assessed by the courts. (In other words, the court will check that your bill is fair.) Although assessment is the only method for checking bills which involves court proceedings, you can also use it for all other types of work. You may have to pay the court costs.

### Remuneration certificates

The procedure for getting a remuneration certificate will look at the work which the solicitor did for you and assess whether his or her charges are fair and reasonable. This process won't deal with issues or concerns which you have about the service you have received from your solicitor. You might find it useful to talk to our helpline about the best thing for you to do in your circumstances.

If you think your solicitor's bill is too high, you should contact them as soon as possible. There are strict time limits for challenging your solicitor's bill.

If you are not able to come to an agreement about the fee, write to your solicitor asking him or her to apply to us for a remuneration certificate. Again, please remember that strict time limits apply.

Your solicitor will have to fill in an application form and send it to you for your comments. Once the solicitor receives your comments, they will send the application form, your comments and the original file of papers to us.

Please remember that you must ask your solicitor to apply for a certificate, because you are not able to apply yourself.

### Am I entitled to ask for a remuneration certificate?

You must meet certain conditions before you can ask your solicitor to apply for a certificate. These conditions are listed here.

- Your solicitor must receive your request to apply for a certificate within one month of the date that they told you about your right to ask for one. This information might simply be included somewhere on your bill (sometimes on the back of it) or in the covering letter sent with your bill.
- You've not paid the bill. The solicitor is entitled to ask you to pay part of the bill (see the section on **'Should I pay the bill if I want my solicitor to apply for a remuneration certificate?'**). You must make this part-payment within one month of the date you received, from your solicitor, notice of your right to a remuneration certificate and apply to us for a waiver of the part-payment. This notice is often printed on the bill.



- If your solicitor takes their costs from money they are holding for you and tells you about your right to ask for a certificate, you must ask for it within one month from the date that you received the bill.
- If your solicitor takes their costs from money they are holding for you (for example, if you are selling a house) and **does not** tell you about your right to ask for a certificate, you must query the bill in writing within three months from the date you received the bill.

If you'd like more information about this, please call our helpline on **0845 608 6565**.

### Should I pay the bill if I want my solicitor to apply for a remuneration certificate?

If you haven't paid your bill, your solicitor is entitled to ask you to pay:

- half of the professional charges;
- all of the VAT; and
- any money that they have paid on your behalf.

Your solicitor is also entitled to charge you interest on the amount you owe from one month after they sent you the bill.

In very rare circumstances you can apply to us for a 'waiver', which means that you may not have to pay anything at this stage.

You can avoid paying interest if you pay the bill in full and, at the same time, write to your solicitor saying that you are only paying the bill on the strict condition that they get a remuneration certificate. You should keep a copy of your letter for future reference. If the solicitor does not agree to this condition, they must return the money to you.

If you pay your bill in full without asking your solicitor to apply for a remuneration certificate, you lose the right to challenge the bill in this way.

### How will you deal with the application?

The solicitor will send the filled-in application form to us. If we are not able to sort the case out at this stage by conciliation, we'll examine the file in more detail and prepare a report. We will send you and the solicitor a copy of the report for comments.

One of our staff will then review this report and any comments made by you and the solicitor. They will then send you and the solicitor a provisional assessment. This assessment will show what fee we think is fair.

If you and your solicitor agree with our assessment, we'll issue the remuneration certificate for the amount that you'll have to pay. If either you or your solicitor don't agree with our assessment, you or they can ask us to review the assessment. There are time limits which will be explained to you. You can also use the assessment process (see the next section) at a later stage.

## Assessment (by the court)

Either you or your solicitor can apply for the bill to be assessed. This is a legal term that means the court will review your bill. Assessment is a complicated process and you should consider getting legal advice before you go ahead.

As with all court proceedings, assessment is likely to involve you paying court costs. Even if your bill is reduced, you may have to pay your own costs and your solicitor's costs. The courts will decide this.

As with remuneration certificates, there are strict time limits for assessment. For example, if you:

- apply to the court within one month of having received your bill, the court will always allow the assessment to go ahead;
- apply between one month and 12 months of getting the bill and you have not paid it yet, the court may order the assessment, but it doesn't have to; or
- have paid your bill and it is more than 12 months since you received it, you can no longer challenge the bill.

If you want to find out more about assessment, you can phone the Supreme Court Costs' Office on **020 7947 7124** and ask for a copy of their information sheet.

## Other information

### Interventions

An intervention is when we close down a firm of solicitors. This can be for a number of reasons including where we believe that a solicitor has been dishonest or client's money is at risk. There are other reasons including where a solicitor cannot continue to practise due to illness.

We appoint a firm of solicitors to act as our agents to take possession of the client's files and money. The agents do not automatically act for the clients of the closed solicitor's firm. So if this happens, you will need to find a new firm of solicitors to act on your behalf.

We cannot recommend a new firm to you.

If your file is ongoing, the agents will pass the file to you or, more likely, to your new firm. They do this by writing a letter to you letting you know about us closing down the firm and telling you that they have your file. You will have to show proof of your identity so they can release the file to you.

If you are receiving legal aid, the file must be released to a new firm of solicitors as it cannot be released directly to you.

The agents will also try to distribute the money the solicitor was holding. However, this may take some time as our agent will need to work out exactly who is entitled to what. If the accounts are very complicated, you may have to apply to the Compensation Fund for any money you deposited with the solicitor to be returned.



The agents will not return completed files to clients but they do return the deeds and wills.

### The Compensation Fund

If the Post Intervention Unit is not able to help, the Compensation Fund may be able to help you if you have suffered financial loss due to a solicitor's dishonesty or a solicitor's failure to pay money he or she has received.

We may not be able to help you if you can recover the loss in some other way.

If you receive a payment from the fund, you may also receive interest and your new solicitor's costs if you have asked him or her to help you make a claim.

If you want to apply to the Fund, we will give you more information and ask you to fill in an application form which you can get by contacting us at the address below.

A caseworker will investigate your application and will let you know if we need more information. The caseworker will help you with any questions you may have. When the investigation is complete, your application will be referred for adjudication. The adjudicator will carefully consider your application before deciding whether or not to make a payment to you. We will tell you about the decision.

### Destroying your file

We destroy our complaint files after a certain time. Before we destroy the files we will check to see if there are any original documents on them. We will return any original documents to you or the solicitor (depending on who sent us the documents originally).

We will destroy our complaint files two years after we have told you that we have closed the file, unless there are reasons for keeping them longer.

## Useful contacts

### Consumer Complaints Service

The Law Society  
Victoria Court  
8 Dormer Place  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire  
CV32 5AE

**Switchboard:** 01926 820082

**Helpline:** 0845 608 6565

**Minicom service:** 0845 601 1682

**Fax:** 01926 431435

**Website:** [www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk)

**E-mail:** [enquiries@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@lawsociety.org.uk)

### The Compensation Fund

The Law Society  
Victoria Court  
8 Dormer Place  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire  
CV32 5AE

**Phone:** 01926 487015

**Minicom service:** 01926 487020

**Fax:** 01926 487062

### The Post Intervention Unit

The Law Society  
Victoria Court  
8 Dormer Place  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire  
CV32 5AE

**Phone:** 01926 487094

**Minicom service:** 0845 601 1682

**Fax:** 01926 487094

### Legal Services Ombudsman

Third Floor  
Sunlight House  
Quay Street  
Manchester  
M3 3JZ

**Phone:** 0845 601 0794 (lo-call number)

**Phone:** 0161 839 7262

**Fax:** 0161 832 5446

**Website:** [www.olso.org](http://www.olso.org)

**E-mail:** [lso@olso.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lso@olso.gsi.gov.uk)

### Citizens Advice

Myddelton House  
115 to 123 Pentonville Road  
London  
N1 9LZ

**Phone:** 020 7833 2181

**Website:** [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) (advice and information)

### The Complaints Commissioner

General Council of the Bar  
289 - 293 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 7HZ

**Phone:** 020 7242 0082

**Fax:** 020 7611 1342

**Website:** [www.barcouncil.org.uk](http://www.barcouncil.org.uk)



## Council for Licensed Conveyancers

16 Glebe Road  
Chelmsford  
Essex  
CM1 1QG

**Phone:** 01245 349599

**Fax:** 01245 341300

**Website:** [www.theclc.gov.uk](http://www.theclc.gov.uk)

## Institute of Legal Executives

Kempston Manor  
Kempston  
Bedfordshire  
MK42 7AB

**Phone:** 01234 841000

**Fax:** 01234 840373

**Website:** [www.ilex.org.uk](http://www.ilex.org.uk)

## Isle of Man Law Society

27 Hope Street  
Douglas  
Isle of Man  
IM1 1AR

**Phone:** 01624 662910

**Fax:** 01624 679232

**Website:** [www.iomlawsociety.co.im](http://www.iomlawsociety.co.im)

## Jersey Law Society

40 Don Street  
St Helier  
Jersey  
JE1 4XD

**Phone:** 01534 601700

**Fax:** 01534 601701

**Website:** [www.jerseylawsociety.je](http://www.jerseylawsociety.je)

## The Law Society of Ireland

Blackhall Place  
Dublin 7  
Ireland

**Phone:** 00 353 1 672 4800

**Fax:** 00 353 1 672 4801

**Website:** [www.lawsociety.ie](http://www.lawsociety.ie)

## Law Society of Northern Ireland

Law Society House  
98 Victoria Street  
Belfast  
BT1 3JZ

**Phone:** 02890 231614

**Fax:** 02890 232606

**Website:** [www.lawsoc-ni.org](http://www.lawsoc-ni.org)

## Law Society of Scotland

Client Relations and Complaints Office  
26 Drumsheugh Gardens  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7YR

**Phone:** 0845 113 0018

**Fax:** 0131 225 2934

**Website:** [www.lawsocot.org.uk](http://www.lawsocot.org.uk)

## Legal Services Commission

85 St Gray's Inn Road  
London  
WC1X 8TX

**Phone:** 020 7759 0000

**Website:** [www.legalservices.gov.uk](http://www.legalservices.gov.uk)

## Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal

3rd Floor  
Gate House  
1 Farringdon Street  
London  
EC4M 7NS

**Phone:** 020 7329 4808

**Fax:** 020 7329 4833

## Supreme Courts Costs' Office

Cliffords Inn  
Fetter Lane  
London  
EC4A 1DQ

**Phone:** 020 7947 7124

**Website:** [www.courtsservice.gov.uk](http://www.courtsservice.gov.uk)



## Data protection notice

We will use the information you give us to investigate your complaint. We will not use that information for any other purpose without your permission. We will have to reveal your information to the firm or solicitor you have complained about. We may also have to reveal that information to our agents (people acting on our behalf) and to others involved in:

- the complaints process;
- regulating the legal and other professions; or
- law enforcement generally.

We may also reveal certain information, on a confidential basis, to the research organisations we use to measure our customer satisfaction levels. If you do not want us to do this in your case, please tell the person who acts as our data controller. (The address is below.)

To help us keep a record of solicitors' professional details, we will have to keep your complaint information after we have dealt with the complaint itself.

If any of the information you have given us is sensitive or personal under the Data Protection Act 1998 (for example, information about your health), you agree to us holding that information if you go ahead with your complaint.

You can apply to us for a copy of your information (for which we may charge a fee), and to have any mistakes corrected. You should contact our data controller, Robert Stanley, Information Compliance Manager, at:

Law Society  
113 Chancery Lane  
London  
WC2A 1PL.

### Contacting us

Consumer Complaints Service  
The Law Society  
Victoria Court, 8 Dormer Place  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire  
CV32 5AE

DX 292320 Leamington Spa 4  
**Switchboard:** 01926 820082  
**Helpline:** 0845 608 6565  
**Minicom:** 0845 601 1682  
**Fax:** 01926 431435  
**Website:** [www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk)  
**E-mail:** [enquiries@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@lawsociety.org.uk)

