



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

In this Complaints Handling Procedure, the words “we”, “our” and “us” mean Vanessa Newman Property Lawyers a firm with a Recognised Sole Practitioner, namely Mrs Vanessa Newman. The firm is regulated by the Council of Licensed Conveyancers.

We are committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our clients. However, we also accept that mistakes, misunderstandings, delays and other errors can occur. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards. We will not charge you for handling your complaint.

We aim to resolve any complaint you have about the service we have given you as quickly as possible.

All complaints should be made to our Director, Vanessa Newman. Once we have received your complaint, we will write to you within 7 days to acknowledge receipt of your complaint and explain how your complaint will be investigated if a complete response to your complaint has not been made by that time. You will be told the latest date by which a complete answer will be given to your complaint (this should be not more than 28 days after we received your complaint). If you have made the complaint verbally - either at a meeting or on the telephone - we will set out in our full response our understanding of the nature of your complaint.

The assessment of the complaint will be based upon a sufficient and fair investigation. We will explain in writing our findings and where the complaint is upheld will offer remedial action or redress. Such solutions or remedies may include but are not limited to,

- An oral or written apology
- A review of our policies and procedures
- An appropriate and proportionate reduction in our fees
- An appropriate and proportionate refund of our fees

This will be actioned promptly. At this point in time we will provide you with a survey for completing so that we can gauge your satisfaction with the process.

If you are dissatisfied with the way your complaint is handled, please let me know in writing and with your consent, arrangements will then be made for a member of the Society of Licensed Conveyancers or another Licensed Conveyancer who will conduct a separate review of your complaint for me. You will be told about the conclusion of this review within 28 days.

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

If after following the review process you remain dissatisfied with any aspect of our handling of your complaint, you may contact directly the Legal Ombudsman to ask them to consider the complaint further:

Tel no: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

Website: <http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/>

Legal Ombudsman

PO Box 6806

Wolverhampton

WV1 9WJ

Unless it agrees there are good reasons not to do so, the Legal Ombudsman will expect you to allow us to consider and respond to your complaint in accordance with the procedure set out above in the first instance. You can refer your complaint up to 6 months after you have received our final written response to your complaint. You can also use the Ombudsman service if we have not resolved your complaint within 8 weeks of us receiving it. A complaint can be referred to the Legal Ombudsman up to six years from the date of the act or omission or up to 3 years after discovering a problem. The ombudsman deals with service-related complaints; any conduct-related complaints will be referred to the Council for Licensed Conveyancers.

Alternative complaints bodies (such as ProMediate: www.promediate.co.uk/) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme.

We will record all complaints in our complaints file, using the data obtained to prevent recurrence of similar-themed complaints, identify any training needs and increase client satisfaction. This will also allow us to review complaints trends. Lessons can then be learned and complaints be opportunities to improve systems and services. We shall also periodically review the complaints-handling process to identify if there are any improvements needed.

To increase the accessibility of our complaints process please let us know if someone else is to make the complaint on behalf of a vulnerable client, if you require the complaints procedure in large print or if you require a translation of the procedure into another language. We shall try to tailor our procedure to the needs of clients wherever appropriate and possible.

Survey for complainants

1. How did you find out about our complaints procedure and was the information useful and easy to understand?
2. How did you initially contact us with the complaint and what was the nature of your complaint?
3. Did staff make you feel it was okay to make a complaint and were you given a clear explanation of the complaints-handling process?
4. Did you need help from us to make your complaint? If yes, did you get it and were our staff helpful in dealing with your complaint?
5. Did we keep you well-informed about the progress of your complaint and was the complaint dealt with quickly enough?
6. Did you feel the investigation into your complaint was thorough and conducted fairly?
7. Did you feel we understood your complaint?
8. Was our response easy to understand and did it address all the points you had raised?
9. Were you satisfied with the final outcome of your complaint?
10. How do you rate your overall experience of the complaints process?
11. Do you feel that age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion or sexuality impacted in any way upon the complaints process?
12. Do you have any additional comments?