COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We work hard to meet the expectations of our clients and progress their files to conclusion as soon as possible, whilst giving the highest level of client care.

We appreciate that there may be times when you consider that the service provided by our firm does not meet with the standard you expect, and you may want to raise your concerns with us. If that's the case, please follow the steps set out below.

1. *What do I do if I want to complain?*

In the first instance, we would ask you to try and resolve matters directly with the solicitor assigned to your file by discussing your concerns with them. That person has immediate detailed knowledge of your file and they should be able to help or explain why problems have arisen and give you an idea of how they can resolve them to your satisfaction, so that you can continue to feel confident in them.

2. *Supposing the solicitor assigned to my file cannot help me, what do I do then?*

We take complaints seriously, and have appointed the following Partners to be responsible for dealing with any complaints that cannot be resolved by your solicitor. You can contact them as follows:

Client Relations Partner: Kate Hunt, Partner
Kate.hunt@cunningtons.co.uk
01268 732274
Cunningtons LLP
Gibraltar Walk, High St., Wickford, Essex SS12 9AX

Deputy: Jason Bradshaw, Senior Partner
Jason.Bradshaw@cunningtons.co,uk
01273 725 229
Cunningtons LLP
31 Duke St., Brighton & Hove BN1 1AG

In the absence of the Client Relations Partner or their Deputy, complaints will be referred to another appropriate Partner.

3. *What will the Client Relations Partner do next?*

You can call the Client Relations Partner (or Deputy) if you prefer, and they will give you an opportunity to explain your concerns and try to resolve those concerns for you during that telephone call. Where appropriate, arrangements may be made for your file to be reallocated to a different solicitor or a different office.

If the Client Relations Partner (or Deputy) are unable to deal with your concerns during that telephone call then they will ask you to put your concerns in writing either by email or letter and they will acknowledge your written complaint within 3 working days of receipt.

The Client Relations Partner (or Deputy) will then investigate your concerns and report back to you in writing within 21 working days of receiving your written complaint, although they may appoint another suitably senior and suitably qualified solicitor to investigate your complaint instead. This would usually be the case if it would result in you receiving a response faster.

4.   *What if I remain dissatisfied?*

If you still have concerns after we have investigated and reported to you, then you will need to put those further concerns in writing. The Client Relations Partner (or Deputy) will review the file further and report back to you in writing within 21 working days of receiving your further concerns in writing. If the Client Relations Partner (or Deputy) considers it appropriate, they may ask another Partner to undertake this further review.

If these steps have been exhausted and you still remain dissatisfied, then we can arrange a meeting at our Head Office in Braintree to discuss the issues further, at your request.

If we consider it appropriate we may refer the outstanding issues to the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

You would also be at liberty to pursue your complaint, within six months, with The Legal Ombudsman, whose address is:-

The Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ. Tel: 0300 555 0333. Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

The Legal Ombudsman will usually require you to have exhausted our complaints handling procedure before they become involved.

Please Note:-

- Your will be notified of any changes in the above timescales.
- Once your complaint has been resolved, any separate records kept regarding your complaint will be stored with your file.
- Reference to "solicitor" includes Licensed Conveyancer, Legal Executive, Conveyancing Executive or Trainee for the purpose of the complaints procedure.