

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. OBJECTIVE

Our aim is to give you an excellent service at all times. However, if you have a complaint or concern you are invited to let us know as soon as possible. It is not necessary to involve solicitors in order to make your complaint but you are free to do so should you wish.

Please note that Parklane Plowden will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of the act or omission of which is complained.

2. SCOPE

Our policy is available to Clients, solicitors and suppliers

3. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

3.1 Complaints made by telephone

In the first instance, you can contact Chambers on 0113 228 5000 and ask to speak to Rachael Duck – Office Manager to discuss your complaint on an informal basis. If the complaint is about the Office Manager, please ask to speak to our Head of Chambers – Christopher Williams. The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and will discuss your concerns with you with an aim to resolving them. If the matter is resolved s/he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

3.2 Complaints made in writing

If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to us about it within 14 days so that it can be investigated formally.

We recommend that you use our Complaints Form as this will ensure that you provide us with all the relevant information to enable us to investigate the complaint. This can be found on our website www.parklaneplowden.co.uk which has a section on complaints and a link to our word format complaints form. Please send this form to Rachael Duck, Office Manager, Parklane Plowden, Park Lane House, 19 Westgate, Leeds, LS1 2RD or Rachael.Duck@parklaneplowden.co.uk. Alternatively, you can address your complaint to Christopher Williams if your complaint is regarding our Office Manager. We will, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two days and provide you with details of how your complaint will be dealt with.

3.3 Panel

Parklane Plowden has a panel chaired by our Head of Chambers and is made up of experienced members of Chambers which considers any written complaint. Within 14 days of your letter being received the head of the panel, or his deputy in his absence, will appoint a member of the panel to investigate. If your complaint is against the head of the panel, the next most senior member of the panel will investigate your complaint. In any event, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

The person appointed to investigate will write to you as soon as possible to let you know s/he has been appointed and that s/he will reply to your complaint within 14 days. If s/he finds later that s/he is not going to be able to reply within 14 days s/he will set a new date for his/her reply and inform you.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

His/her reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of his/her investigation;
- His/her conclusion on each complaint and the basis for his/her conclusion; and
- If s/he finds out that you are justified in your complaint, his/her proposals for resolving the complaint.

3.4 Confidentiality

All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure will be to the Head of Chambers, members of the Executive Board and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister / member or staff who you have complained about, the head or relevant senior member of the panel and the person who investigates the complaint. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents to seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

3.5 Records

As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years.

3.6 Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

We hope that you will use our procedure, however, if you would rather not do so or are unhappy with the outcome you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman at any time. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has a twelve month time limit from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining within which to make your complaint. However, should you raise your complaint with Parklane Plowden first, there is a six month time limit from the conclusion of the investigation by Parklane Plowden in which to raise your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman.

You can write to them at:

Complaints Team, Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6806
Wolverhampton
WV1 9WJ
Telephone: +44 (0)300 555 0333
Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.legalombudsman.org.uk