Annex H
Complaints Handling Policy

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need our clients to tell us about it. This will help improve our standards. Whenever possible, please raise any initial client care problems with the person acting on your case to give them the opportunity of resolving matters with you. Often, matters can be quickly resolved in this way.

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the service you have received, or about the bill, please contact Clare Usher our Client Care Manager. Alternatively, if your complaint is in respect of Ms Usher, we will direct your complaint to Mr Amir Assadi who is a Director. You can contact us at 105 Howard Street, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE30 1NA. Our policy aims to ensure that your complaint is dealt with promptly, fairly and free of charge. Making a complaint will not affect how we handle your case. We have a procedure in place which details how we handle complaints as follows:

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within five days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Ms Usher, who will review your matter file and speak to the member of staff who acted for you.
3. We will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will do this within 10 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of that meeting we will write to you to confirm what took place and to set out any solutions that have been agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting, or it is not possible, you will be sent a detailed written reply to your complaint, including the suggestions for resolving the matter, within 15 days of sending you the acknowledgement latter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for another Director within the firm to review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 10 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. If we have to change any of the above timescales, we will let you know and explain why.

The Legal Ombudsman

If you are still not satisfied with our handling of your complaint you can ask the Legal Ombudsman to consider the complaint. We would hope that this does not become necessary and that we can resolve matters between ourselves. Contact details are as follows:

PO Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH
0300 555 0333
enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk
www.legalombudsman.org.uk

The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned, or within one year of you realising there was a concern. You must also refer your concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you.

Complaints in relation to bills

The procedure above also applies to complaints arising concerning our bill. There may also be a right to object to the bill by applying to the court for an assessment of the bill under Part III of the Solicitors Act 1974; The Legal Ombudsman may not consider a complaint about a bill if you have applied to the Court for assessment of that bill.

Raising concerns with our regulator

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) can help you if you are concerned about our behaviour. This could be for things like dishonesty, taking or losing your money or treating you unfairly because of your age, a disability or other characteristic. You can find information about raising your concerns with the SRA www.sra.org.uk/consumers/problems/report-solicitor/