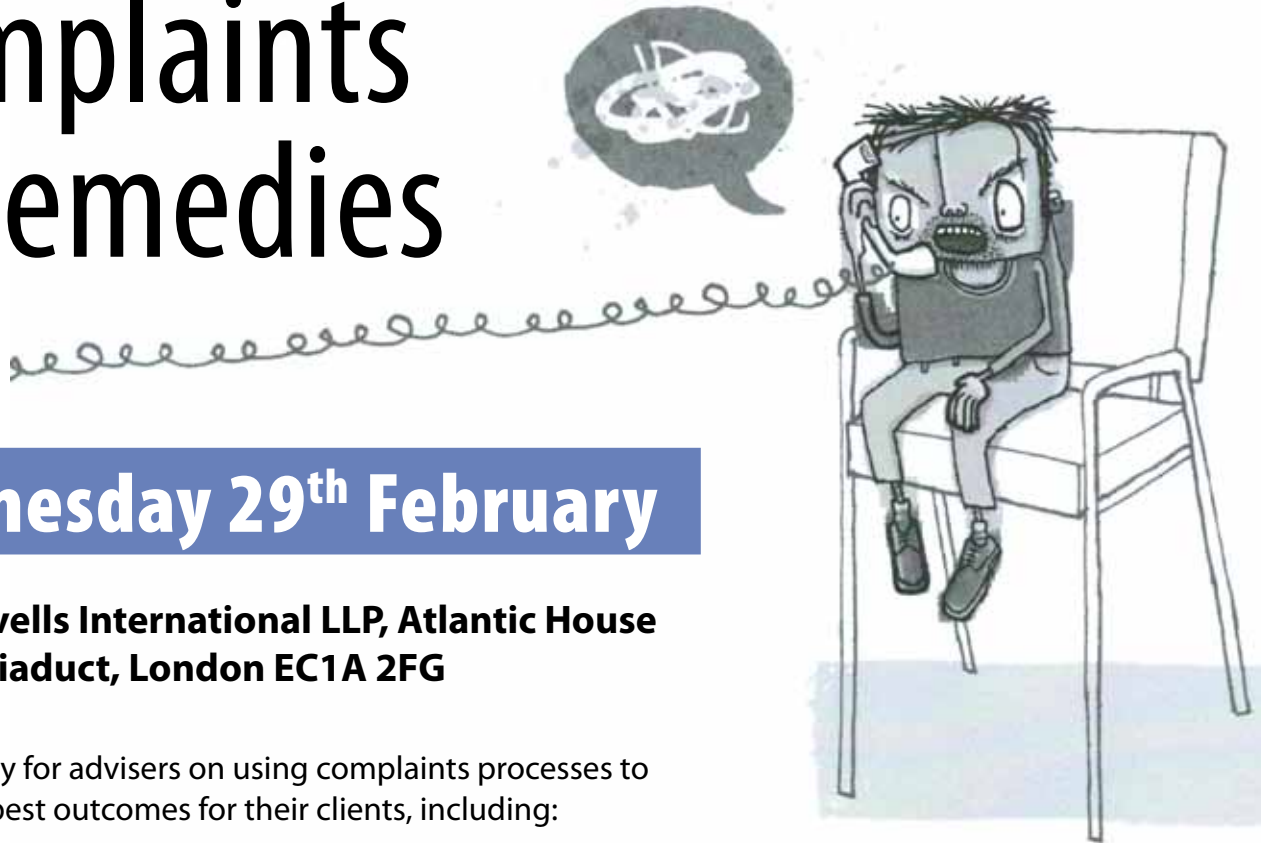


# How to Make the Perfect

## Complaint 2011:

# Complaints & Remedies



**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> February**

**Hogan Lovells International LLP, Atlantic House  
Holborn Viaduct, London EC1A 2FG**

A Training day for advisers on using complaints processes to achieve the best outcomes for their clients, including:

- Effective complaints against local authorities and the use of the Local Government Ombudsman
- A guide to energy and telecoms sector complaints delivered by Ombudsman Services and the Consumer Focus 'Plug the Debt' campaign
- How to support clients in bringing complaints against the DWP and in subsequent tribunal hearings
- Introduction to mediation in disputes with public bodies
- The changing consumer advice landscape

**A limited number of subsidised places are available for community groups and voluntary advice services. See booking form for details.**

**Still only £59 per delegate!**

**Solicitors earn 5 cpd points**

For full programme and booking form go to [www.publiclawproject.org.uk](http://www.publiclawproject.org.uk)

## MORNING SESSION

- 9.30 **Registration and Coffee**
- 10.00 **Open Public Services: What this means for complainants and how organisations can use complaints to help improve services.**  
**Jessica Crowe**  
Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny
- 10.30 **Making the Perfect Complaint – A dialogue**  
We tackle the complaints process from both sides – with a senior caseworker at a law centre, and a local authority complaints manager. Lorna and Ivan will look at what actually makes ‘the perfect complaint’, how the process can be used, and sometimes abused, and how it can both remedy situations and alert authorities to failure in service delivery.  
**Lorna Reid**  
Welfare Benefits Caseworker Supervisor,  
Islington Law Centre  
**Ivan Connolly**  
Complaints Manager, Islington Council
- 11.15 **Refreshment break**
- 11.30 **Workshops 1hr 20mins please choose one of the following:**
- **Option 1: The Local Government Ombudsman**  
The trainer will take you through the process of investigating a complaint against local government. There will also be a short update on changes in jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman including their new powers to investigate complaints against private care homes.  
**Tom Grimes**  
Local Government Ombudsman Investigator,  
London Office
  - **Option 2: Complaints to the DWP – update on issues and ‘facing the Tribunal’.**  
Tim will analyse typical problems encountered by benefits claimants and give tips on how to help your clients through the Tribunal system, and when it is appropriate to approach an organisation such as the Free Representation Unit.  
**Tim Baldwin**  
Garden Court Chambers
  - **Option 3: The Ombudsman Services and Consumer Focus.**  
This session will focus on energy complaints – complaining to the service provider (the energy company) and how you can escalate serious or mishandled complaints, on to effective use of the Ombudsman Service in resolving disputes. This session will also touch on telecoms complaints and their resolution, as this is also within Ombudsman Services scope. Consumer Focus will introduce the European consumer ADR report looking at Good practice and what’s needed from an energy ombudsman scheme.  
**John Baguley**  
Ombudsman Services Limited  
**Dhara Vyas**  
Policy Manager – Energy - Consumer Focus

12.35 **Lunch**

## AFTERNOON SESSION

- 13.30 **Citizens Advice and the consumer**  
A look at the changes occurring in the consumer advice landscape in the UK.  
**John Nodder**  
Project Manager, Citizens Advice
- Plug the debt**  
Consumer Focus introduce their winter campaign raising consumer awareness of rights and responsibilities for those in debt to their electricity or gas supplier. This session is supported by a pack which will be distributed with the conference papers.
- 14:00 **An Introduction to mediation – The parameters, pitfalls and potential**  
The Government confirmed its intention to promote mediation in the Dispute Resolution Commitment issued in June 2011. This snapshot will look at how available mediation is today, who can access it, how it happens and what outcomes can be anticipated whether the dispute is small or large.  
**Helen Curtis**  
Mediator, Restorative Justice Facilitator
- 14.30 **Mediation and the Ombudsman**  
This presentation will look at the history to the LGO being given powers to mediate, the development of a “pilot” in Coventry and the extension of the service. It will also look at some examples of cases where the LGO have mediated – successfully and unsuccessfully!  
**Vereena Jones**  
LGO Assistant Ombudsman
- 15.00 **Refreshment break**
- 15.20 **Panel Discussion: Non - litigation remedies and Access to Justice**  
**Helen Curtis**  
Garden Court Chambers, Chair  
**Margaret Doyle**  
Independent Mediator and Consultant on ADR  
**Vereena Jones**  
LGO Assistant Ombudsman  
**Lorna Reid**  
Welfare Benefits Caseworker Supervisor, Islington Law Centre  
**Tim Baldwin**  
Barrister and Mediator, Garden Court Chambers  
**Dhara Vyas**  
Consumer Focus
- With pressure to settle more disputes outside the courts, what are the issues for complainants offered non-litigation remedies? Are the results of mediation and ADR comparable to those of litigation, and what kind of funding is in place, or planned, for these forms of dispute resolution? We will also be asking questions of arbitration in the consumer sector context as this field becomes increasingly complex with the introduction of different charging and supply regimes overlaid with consumer debt issues.
- There will be an opportunity for delegates to pose questions to the panel.
- 16.30 **Finish**

I would like to book a place on:

'How to Make the Perfect Complaint: Complaints and Remedies' training day at **Hogan Lovells International LLP, Atlantic House, Holborn Viaduct, London EC1A 2FG**, on **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012**.

Please use a fresh booking form for each delegate (you can photocopy this form) – or book online where you can make multiple bookings on one form.

Please choose workshop sessions by circling one choice:

Option 1: The Local Government Ombudsman

Option 2: Complaints to the DWP

Option 3: Consumer Complaints

Special Dietary requirements

Access requirements

Name

Position

Organisation

Address

Post code

Tel

Email

I enclose a cheque for £

Please invoice me for £

*(Delete as applicable)*

Please make cheques payable to **The Public Law Project**. Please make sure your accounts department raise a purchase order where necessary.

**PLEASE NOTE: Payment must be made before the conference, unless specific arrangements have been made to the contrary and agreed with PLP administration.**

Course Fees £59 + VAT (£70.80 per delegate) – includes refreshments and lunch!

All cheques and correspondence to: The Public Law Project, 150 Caledonian Road, London N1 9RD

All e-mails (incl. scanned booking forms) to **training@publiclawproject.org.uk** or call **0845 543 5946**

There is some subsidy available, on a limited, first come first serve basis for community groups and smaller voluntary advice services. Please e-mail [a.lukes@publiclawproject.org.uk](mailto:a.lukes@publiclawproject.org.uk) or call 020 7843 1266 (cheaper from a mobile) or 0845 543 5946 (best from landline) to enquire how to access this. We will ask for some evidence that your organisation does not have funds to pay for training, and that you, or your clients, are likely to benefit from the training.

Cancellation policy and fees:

A refund of fees will be made only for cancellations received in writing at least 10 working days before the event. Should you cancel less than 10 working days before the event, no refund is payable. However, a substitute delegate will be accepted at any time before the event.

This programme is correct at the time of being released. However, we reserve the right to alter or cancel the programme due to unforeseen circumstances.

