

Complaints Handling Procedure Report 2019 / 2020
(1 April 2019 – 31 December 2019)

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Introduction

Yoker Housing Association Limited (the Association) aims to provide an excellent service to all its customers. However, there are times when we do not always get things right and fall short of the standard that we wish to achieve. When customers are unhappy with an aspect of our service, we want to deal with these issues as quickly as possible and find an effective solution.

When handling complaints, the Association aims to make it as easy as possible for tenants and other customers to let us know why they are unhappy and for us to inform them of what we are doing to resolve their issues.

To ensure that a customer complaint can be dealt with as effectively as possible, all staff employed by the Association have received important training in relation to dealing with complaints.

This report provides customers with an overview of the complaints handling procedure and information relating to complaints that were received and investigated between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019.

The report provides information under the following headings:

1. The Complaints Handling Process

- What is a complaint?
- How are complaints investigated?

2. Complaints Report

- Number of complaints received.
- Escalation of complaints to Stage 2 of the complaints handling procedure.
- Complaints investigated by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).
- Who made complaints?
- The time taken to respond to complaints.
- The types of complaints that were received.
- The outcome to complaints.
- Learning from complaints.

The Complaints Handling Process

In accordance with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) developed a series of model Complaints Handling Procedures (CHP) for use across the public sector. The legislation was introduced to improve how complaints within the public sector are handled through the development of simplified and standardised complaints handling procedures.

As part of this process, the SPSO developed a model complaints procedure for housing providers that all Housing Associations in Scotland were required to adopt prior to October 2012. The Association implemented the new procedure on the 17th of September 2012.

A requirement of the complaints handling procedure is for the Association to publish, on a quarterly basis, the details of complaints received and investigated.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction received from customers about the Association's action or lack of action, or about the service that the Association provides or has been provided on the Association's behalf by another party.

Complaints provide the Association with valuable feedback on how we deliver services. Complaints also allow us to improve our services and improve how we manage partnerships with our contractors.

Customers can make a complaint in person, in writing, by telephone or by email. The types of things that customers can complain about include:

- Delays in responding to your enquiries and requests;
- Failure to provide a service;
- Our standard of service;
- Dissatisfaction with our policy;
- Treatment by / or attitude of a member of staff;
- Complaints relating to issues of equality and diversity;
- Our failure to follow proper procedure.

How are complaints investigated?

The Association's complaints procedure has two stages. How your complaint is investigated depends on the nature and complexity of your complaint.

The different stages of the complaints handling procedure are:

Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution:

This stage allows complaints to be resolved quickly and close to the point of service delivery. Complaints are usually dealt with within five working days and the types of action taken in response to a complaint may include an on-the-spot apology or an explanation of why something has gone wrong.

If you remain dissatisfied after your complaint has been dealt with, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated through Stage 2 of the procedure.

Stage 2 – Investigation:

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require a detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2, your complaint will be investigated fully and you will be issued with a full response within twenty working days.

If you remain dissatisfied after your complaint has been investigated under Stage 2 of the procedure, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to independently review the complaint.

Complaints Report

Number of complaints received

A total of nine complaints were received and investigated by the Association between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019. The table below shows the number of complaints received and investigated at Stages 1 and 2 of the complaints handling procedure compared to same period last year.

	01/04/19 - 31/12/19	01/04/18 - 31/12/18	Trend
Stage 1 Only	9	13	Decrease
Stage 1 & Stage 2	0	0	Remain
Stage 2 Only	0	2	Decrease
Total	9	15	Decrease

The total number of complaints received between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019 is lower than for the same period last year.

The table below gives a breakdown of the number complaints received and investigated by the 31st of December 2019 by quarter for 2019 / 2020.

Quarter	Stage 1 Only	Stages 1 & 2	Stage 2 Only	Total
01/04/19 to 30/06/19	5	0	0	5
01/07/19 to 30/09/19	1	0	0	1
01/10/19 to 31/12/19	3	-	-	3
01/01/20 to 31/03/20	-	-	-	-
Total	9	0	0	9

Of the nine complaints received between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019, four (44.4%) were received by telephone, three (33.3%) were received by email and two (22.2%) were received in person.

Escalation of complaints to Stage 2 of the complaints handling procedure

Complainants who are unhappy with how their complaint was dealt with under Stage 1 of the procedure have the right for their complaint to be considered and investigated in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure. Of the nine cases originally investigated at Stage 1 between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019, none were escalated to Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints investigated by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

Complainants who are unhappy with how their complaint was dealt with under Stage 2 of the procedure have the right for their complaint to be independently reviewed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). In line with SPSO recommendations, every complainant who has their complaint closed at stage two of the procedure is provided with details of the SPSO. Between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019 no complaints investigated in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure and therefore no complaints were forwarded to the SPSO by the complainant for review.

Who made complaints?

Complaints can be made by any person who receives a service from the Association. Those who receive a service from the Association include tenants, owner occupiers who receive a factoring service and housing applicants. Eight (88.9%) of the nine complaints investigated were made by tenants of the Association. The remaining one (11.1%) complaint was made by an owner occupier.

The time taken to respond to complaints

Complaints investigated at Stage 1 of the procedure should be investigated and concluded within five working days while complaints investigated at Stage 2 of the procedure should be investigated within twenty working days. All nine complaints received were concluded within the target timescales.

The table below shows the Association's performance compared to the same period last year.

	SPSO Target	Performance 01/04/19 – 31/12/19	Performance 01/04/18 – 31/12/18	Trend
YHA Stage 1 response	5 days	1 working day	1 working day	Remain
YHA Stage 2 response	20 days	n/a	n/a	n/a

Equalities

The Scottish Housing Regulator asks the Association to provide information regarding the number of complaints that relate to issues surrounding equalities. Equalities complaints are those that makes reference to discrimination, victimisation or harassment, or any policy that has a detrimental impact of any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Of the nine complaints investigated none (0.0%) related to equalities issues.

The types of complaints that were received

The complaints that were received between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019 related to the services provided by Housing Management and Maintenance Services.

An analysis of all complaints received and investigated indicate that four (44.4%) related to Housing Management and five (55.6%) related to Maintenance Services. Of the four complaints relating to Housing Management, two (50.07%) referred to dissatisfaction with communication by the Association, one (25.0%) referred to dissatisfaction with a contractor and one (25.0%) referred to dissatisfaction with the service provided. Of the five complaints relating to Maintenance Services, four (80.0%) referred to dissatisfaction with a contractor and one (20.0%) related to information provided by the Association.

Customer satisfaction

Of the nine complaints investigated, six (66.7%) complainants were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint. Of the nine complainants, eight (88.9%) were satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with.

The outcome to complaints

Of the nine complaints investigated, four (44.4%) complaints were upheld and five (55.6%) were not upheld.

Learning from complaints

A requirement under the complaints handling procedure is for the Association to analyse complaints information in order to identify the cause of complaints and to determine whether any trends occur in relation to the types of complaints being received. This information is then used to determine whether or not improvements have to be made to services provided by the Association. The analysis confirmed that five complaints received related to dissatisfaction with contractors. However, these complaints related to different contractors and different issues. The two complaints that were received in relation communication by Housing Management staff related to different issues.

Two complaints were also received in relation to dissatisfaction with the service provided. However, there was no trend with both these complaints relating to different issues.

You can request a copy of our Complaints Handling Procedure by visiting the Association's office or by contacting Housing Management by telephone on 0141 950 9052.