

Complaints Handling Procedure Report 2022 / 2023
(1 April 2022 – 30 September 2022)

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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 achieve this and fall short of the standards we wish to attain. 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 their concerns and for us to inform them of what we are doing to resolve them.

To ensure that a customer complaint can be dealt with as effectively as possible, all Association staff 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 2022 and the 30th of September 2022.

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. All housing associations in Scotland were required to adopt this prior to October 2012. The Association implemented the new procedure on the 17th of September 2012.

The SPSO subsequently reviewed the model complaints handling procedure and placed a requirement on housing associations to implement the revised procedure prior to the 1st of April 2021. The Association implemented the revised complaints handling procedure on the 28th of January 2021

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. 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 ten complaints were received and investigated by the Association between the 1st of April 2022 and the 30th of September 2022. 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.

	01/04/22 - 30/09/22	01/04/21 - 30/09/21	Trend
Stage 1 Only	10	6	↑
Stage 1 & Stage 2	0	0	↔
Stage 2 Only	0	1	↓
Total	10	7	↑

The total number of complaints received between the 1st of April 2022 and the 30th of September 2022 is greater than the number of complaints registered for the same period last year.

The table below gives a breakdown of the number complaints received and investigated between the 1st of April 2022 and the 30th of September 2022 by quarter for 2022 / 2023.

Quarter	Stage 1 Only	Stages 1 & 2	Stage 2 Only	Total
01/04/22 to 30/06/22	3	0	0	3
01/07/22 to 30/09/22	7	-	-	7
01/10/22 to 31/12/22	-	-	-	-
01/01/23 to 31/03/23	-	-	-	-
Total	10	0	0	10

Service users can express dissatisfaction in a number of ways including telephone, letter, complaint form, email or in person. Of the ten complaints received, seven (70.0%) complaints were received by telephone, two (20.0%) were received by email and one (10.0%) was 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. None of the complainants who lodged their complaint between the 1st of April 2022 and the 30th of September 2022 asked for their complaint to be 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 2022 and the 30th of September 2022 no complaints were investigated in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure, meaning that no complainants were in a position to ask the SPSO to review their complaint.

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 (80.0%) complaints were received from tenants of the Association. Of the Association's total social rented stock of 648, the eight complaints relate to 1.2% of the Association's stock.


One (10.0%) complaint was made by an owner-occupier who lives below one of Association's long-term void properties on Dumbarton Road. This property is located in a tenement property that is not factored by the Association, therefore this complaint does not relate any of the Association's 275 factored properties.

The one (10.0%) remaining complaint was received from an owner occupier who lives within a property factored by the Association. Of the Association's 275 factored properties, this complaint relates to 0.4% of the Association's factored stock.

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 ten 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 01/04/22 – 30/09/22	Performance 01/04/21 – 30/09/21	Trend
YHA Stage 1 response	5 days	1.2 working days	1.8 working days	
YHA Stage 2 response	20 days	n/a	n/a	n/a

The response time for complaints investigated at Stage 1 between the 1st of April 2022 and the 30th of September 2022 is less than it was for the same period last year.

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. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Of the ten complaints investigated during the reporting period, none related to issues surrounding equalities.

The types of complaints that were received

Five (50.0%) complaints received between the 1st of April 2022 and the 30th of September 2022 related to the services provided by Association's Maintenance Department while the remaining five (50.0%) complaints were made in relation to Housing Services.

Seven (70.0%) complaints related to dissatisfaction with the service received, one complaint (10.0%) related to dissatisfaction with a staff member, one complaint (10.0%) related to dissatisfaction with a contractor and one (10.0%) complaint related to dissatisfaction with communication from the Association.

The table below illustrates the nature of complaints received by department during the reporting period.

	Maintenance Services	Housing Services	Finance Services	Total
Dissatisfaction with Contractor	-	1	-	1
Dissatisfaction with Staff	1	-	-	1
Dissatisfaction with Service Provided	4	3	-	7
Dissatisfaction with Policy / Procedure	-	-	-	-
Dissatisfaction with Communications	-	1	-	1
Total	5	5	-	10

The types of complaints that were received (continued)

An analysis of the complaints investigated has been conducted with a view to determine whether or not any trends exist in relation to the nature of the complaints received. The analysis confirmed that seven complaints related to dissatisfaction with the service provided. However, these complaints related to different issues. These seven complaints related to the following:

- **Complaint 1** - The complainant was unhappy that a member of staff had visited her father to complete a direct debit mandate to cover his rent payments. The complaint was not upheld since the home visit was arranged after the tenant and his other daughter had requested assistance with completing the mandate.
- **Complaint 2** - The complaint was received from a private owner who was subject to water penetration. The property is located directly below an unimproved property owned by the Association. On receipt of the report, a contractor visited the property and took photographs confirming no water was present within the Association's property. Following the contractor's visit, the Association, in the absence of a property factor, referred the case to Glasgow City Council Environmental Health. The owner was then advised that no water was noted within the Association's property and the case had been referred to Glasgow City Council. The owner was unhappy with the explanation and was adamant that the water was emanating from the Association's property. The complaint was not upheld based on the outcome of the property inspection and the subsequent referral to Glasgow City Council.
- **Complaint 3** - The tenant returned his keys to the Association after submitting a termination notice. On inspection of the property, it was noted that a number of items had been left in the property. The tenant was contacted and advised the Association would charge for the removal and provided the tenant with an opportunity to collect the keys with a view to removing the remaining items. The tenant accused the staff member of being aggressive and insensitive. The complaint was not upheld on the basis that the Association was giving the tenant opportunity not to accrue rechargeable repair charges. The tenant subsequently made an arrangement to remove his belongings and apologised for his conduct.
- **Complaint 4** - The tenant complained following a maintenance visit to her property in relation to a fault with the shower. During the visit it was determined that parts were required. These parts were ordered but no update was provided by either the Association or the contractor. The tenant was unhappy that the reason for delays in the repairs were not communicated. Following investigation, it was determined that there had been no communication with the tenant since the contractor's visit. The complaint was upheld and the tenant was provided with an apology and access arrangements were made for the contractor to return and complete the repairs.
- **Complaint 5** - The tenant had previously contacted the Association to advise that he was directly subjected to anti-social behaviour within the close. However, during the conversation he advised that he did not wish to formally complain due to concerns that he may antagonise his neighbour. The tenant advised that the Association had taken no action following his complaint. It was confirmed to the complainant that he had decided not to pursue the complaint at the time. The Association offered to seek advice from Community Safety Glasgow (CSG). Following discussions with CSG the complainant maintained that he did not wish to make a formal complaint against his neighbour. The complaint was therefore not upheld.

The types of complaints that were received (continued)

- **Complaint 6** - The tenant had been served with a notice of proceedings and subsequently entered into a repayment arrangement. However, he failed to adhere to the repayment arrangement and court action was initiated. The tenant expressed dissatisfaction with the Association's decision to initiate legal action and advised that he should have been given an opportunity to address the missed payments. The complaint was not upheld on the basis that prior to the court action being initiated, the tenant had been issued with a warning notice regarding his failure to maintain his repayment and that he had failed to respond.
- **Complaint 7** - The tenant advised that he was unhappy after the Association refused to replace his shower cubicle with a larger cubicle. The tenant was advised that the cubicle would not be replaced because it was not faulty or damaged. The tenant was advised that if the shower was unsuitable owing to medical needs that he could apply for the shower facilities to be replaced as a Stage 3 adaptation. The complaint was not upheld.

In the case relating to dissatisfaction with a staff member, an arrangement had been made for a contractor to attend a property that afternoon in response to an electrical fault. The tenant was unhappy that a specific appointment time could not be confirmed and complained that the staff member was being obstructive when she explained that an afternoon call had been arranged but could not provide a specific time. The complaint was not upheld on the basis that an arrangement had been made for the contractor to attend on the same day that the repair issue had been reported.

In the case relating to dissatisfaction with a contractor, the complainant was unhappy that the backcourt de-littering contract had not been carried out in her backcourt. Following an inspection of the backcourt it was noted that the de-littering had not been carried out and staff removed loose litter from the backcourt area. The contract had just expired, and a new contractor had been appointed. The new contractor has been advised of the issued in this backcourt and to ensure that de-littering takes place in all backcourts in accordance with their contract. The complaint was upheld.

In the case relating to dissatisfaction with communication from the Association, the complaint was unhappy that she was unable to speak to a member of staff who was in a meeting at the time of the call. The tenant subsequently telephoned the Association but the staff member was still involved in the meeting. The staff member returned a telephone call once his meeting had ended and explained that he had been unavailable at the times she called. The complaint was not upheld on the basis that the staff member had contacted the tenant at the earliest opportunity.

An analysis of the complaints received indicated that all complaints investigated were considered to be of low risk to the Association.

The outcome to complaints

Of the ten complaints investigated during the reporting period, two (20.0%) were upheld.

Customer satisfaction

Following investigation at Stage 1 of the procedure, eight (80.0%) of the ten complainants were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint. The two remaining complainants failed to provide feedback.

Following investigation at Stage 1 of the procedure, eight (80.0%) of the ten complaints were satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with following conclusion of the investigation. The two remaining complainants failed to provide feedback.

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.

During the period from 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 the Association successfully implemented the SPSO's Complaints Handling Procedure and investigated ten complaints in accordance with this procedure. All complaint information was collected and recorded accordingly, and the complaints were investigated and concluded within the published timescales. The information collected has been analysed with a view to identifying the cause of complaints, learning opportunities and any necessary service improvements or staff training requirements. During this process, it was noted that seven complaints related to dissatisfaction with the service provided by the Association. These complaints related to different issues and in six cases the complaints were not upheld. In the case that was upheld a meeting was undertaken with maintenance staff to emphasise the importance communicating effectively with tenants regarding the progress of repairs to their property. Following the analysis of complaints, no further training needs for staff were identified.

How to Access the Complaints Handling Procedure

Copies of the Association's complaints handling procedure can be collected from the Association's office or can be posted out to customers.

The following information can be viewed or downloaded from the Association's website at www.yokerha.org.uk/complaints

- Details of how to complain;
- The Association's Complaints Policy;
- The Association's Complaints Handling Procedure;
- The Association's Customer Complaints Handling Procedure;
- Complaints Form;
- Information relating Significant Performance Failure; and
- Information relating to Whistleblowing Complaints.

For further information regarding the contents of this report or our complaints handling procedure please contact Housing by telephone on 0141 950 9052 or by email at housing@yokerha.org.uk.