

Complaints Handling Procedure Report 2020 / 2021
(1 April 2020 – 31 December 2020)

This document is available in other languages or formats.
Please contact the office for details

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 2020 and the 31st of December 2020.

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 twelve complaints were received and investigated by the Association between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of December 2020. 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.

	01/04/20 - 31/12/20	01/04/19 - 31/12/19	Trend
Stage 1 Only	11	9	↑
Stage 1 & Stage 2	1	0	↑
Stage 2 Only	0	0	↔
Total	12	0	↑

The total number of complaints received between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of December 2020 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 2020 and the 31st of December 2020 by quarter for 2020 / 2021.

Quarter	Stage 1 Only	Stages 1 & 2	Stage 2 Only	Total
01/04/20 to 30/06/20	1	0	0	1
01/07/20 to 30/09/20	5	0	0	5
01/10/20 to 31/12/20	5	1	-	6
01/01/21 to 31/03/21	-	-	-	-
Total	11	1	0	12

Of the twelve complaints received between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of December 2020, six (50.0%) were received by telephone, four (33.3%) were received by email and two (16.7%) were received letter.

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 twelve cases originally investigated at Stage 1 between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of December 2020, one complainant 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 2020 and the 31st of December 2020 one complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure. The complainant did not ask the SPSO to review the 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. Seven (58.3%) complaints investigated were received from tenants of the Association and the remaining five (41.7%) complaints were received from owner occupiers.

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 twelve 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 01/04/20 – 31/12/20	Performance 01/04/19 – 31/12/19	Trend
YHA Stage 1 response	5 days	2.3 working days	1 working day	
YHA Stage 2 response	20 days	18 working days	n/a	n/a

The response time for complaints investigated at Stage 1 between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of December 2020 is greater than it was for the same period last year. The same comparison is not available for Stage 2 complaints because no complaints were dealt with at Stage 2 of the procedure between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of December 2019.

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 twelve complaints investigated none (0.0%) related to issues surrounding equalities.

The types of complaints that were received

The complaints that were received between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of December 2020 related to the services provided by Housing Services, Maintenance Services and Finance Services.

An analysis of all complaints received and investigated indicate that six (50.0%) related to Maintenance Services, four (33.3%) related to Housing Services and two (16.7%) related to Finance Services. The table below illustrates the nature of complaints received against each department.

	Maintenance Services	Housing Services	Finance Services	Total
Dissatisfaction with Contractor	3	2	-	5
Dissatisfaction with Service Provided	2	1	1	4
Dissatisfaction with Policy / Procedure	1	1	1	3
Total	6	4	2	12

Customer satisfaction

Following investigation at Stage 1 of the procedure eight (66.7%) of the twelve complainants were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint. Of the complainants who were dissatisfied, only one requested that their complaint be escalated to Stage 2 of the procedure. The complainant who asked for the complaint to be escalated failed to provide feedback following the conclusion of the Stage 2 investigation.

Eleven of the twelve complainants (91.7%) were satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with. The complainant who asked for their complaint be escalated failed to provide feedback following the conclusion of the Stage 2 investigation.

The outcome to complaints

Of the twelve complaints investigated, two (16.7%) were upheld and ten were not upheld. The one complaint that was escalated to Stage 2 was not upheld following its conclusion at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the procedure.

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 three complaints were received in relation to policy and procedure. However, these complaints related to different issues with one complaint relating to the Association's cyclical maintenance programme, one relating to the Tenant Reward Scheme and the other relating to the waiting list and allocation of housing. In all cases the complaints were not upheld.

Four complaints received related to the services provided by the Association's stair cleaning and backcourt de-littering contractor. The first complaint related to the stair cleaning service but following inspection by staff it was found that the service had been provided and the complaint was not upheld. Two complaints related to dissatisfaction with the de-littering service but following discussion with the contractor and property inspections, it was noted that the service had been provided and the complaints were not upheld. The fourth complaint also related to dissatisfaction with the de-littering service. Following discussion with the contractor it was confirmed that the property in question had been missed by the contractor. The contractor explained that this was an oversight on their part and subsequently provided the service to that property. This complaint was upheld and additional monitoring has been introduced to ensure no repeat of this in the future.

Four complaints were also received in relation to dissatisfaction with the service provided. No trends existed as these complaints related to different issues. However, one of complaint related to dissatisfaction with the Association continuing to provide backcourt services during the lockdown period imposed by the Scottish Government in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This complaint was not upheld because the works were permitted in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.

One complaint relating to dissatisfaction with the service provided was not upheld but did result in the Association changing its procedures. The complainant was unhappy that she could not access the tenement loft to arrange the installation of Sky television. The complaint was not upheld because the arrangements for connecting to the communal satellite dish were explained during her tenancy sign-up interview as well as being detailed in her tenancy agreement and resident handbook. To provide further clarity, Housing Services subsequently developed a separate advise sheet regarding television and internet services which is now issued to all incoming tenants.

The analysis also highlighted no need for additional staff training.

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.