

Annual Report 2021 / 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 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.

The Association publishes information on a quarterly basis in relation complaint outcomes and actions that have been taken to improve its services.

This annual report both summarises and builds upon the quarterly reports published by the Association. The report includes:

- Performance statistics, in line with the performance indicators published by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and
- Complaint trends and the actions that have been taken to improve services following the receipt of complaints.

This report provides an overview of the complaints handling procedure and key performance information relating to complaints that were received and investigated during the year 2021 / 2022 which covers the period 1st of April 2021 to 31st of March 2022. The report also provides comparative information for the years 2020 / 2021 and 2019 / 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
- How complaints were received
- Escalation of complaints to Stage 2 of the complaints handling procedure
- Complaints investigated by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)
- Who made complaints?
- Equalities
- The time taken to respond to complaints
- The types of complaints that were received
- Customer satisfaction
- 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 complaints handling procedure on the 17th of September 2012.

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

Measuring Performance

To ensure the provision of an effective complaints service, the Association records and publishes performance data against the key performance indicators published by the SPSO in their documents 'SPSO Complaints Self-Assessment Indicators for the Housing Sector' and 'Complaints Key Performance Indicators for the Model Complaints Handling Procedures'.

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:

- Failure or refusal to provide a service;
- Inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service;
- Delays in responding to enquiries or requests;
- Unfairness, bias or prejudice in service delivery;
- Lack of provision, or the provision of misleading, unsuitable or incorrect advice or information;
- A repair that has not been carried out properly or in an agreed timeframe;
- Dissatisfaction with one of the Association's policies or its impact on the individual;
- Failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services;
- Failure to follow the appropriate administrative process;
- Conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor; or
- Disagreement with a decision.

A complaint is **not**:

- A routine first-time request for a service;
- A request for compensation only;
- Issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal;
- Disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector;
- A request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts;
- A grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment;
- A concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern);
- A concern about a child or an adult's safety;
- An attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision;
- Abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about the Association or staff where such actions would be covered by other internal policies; or
- A concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where the Association has no involvement in the issue.

How are complaints investigated?

The Association's complaints procedure has two stages. How complaints are investigated depends on the nature and complexity of the 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 a complainant remains dissatisfied after their complaint has been dealt with, they can ask for their 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, the complaint will be investigated fully, and the complainant will be issued with a full response within twenty working days.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after their complaint has been investigated under Stage 2 of the procedure, they can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to independently review the complaint.

The diagram below provides an overview of the complaints handling process.

Complaints Procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing

We have a **two-stage complaints procedure**. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

Stage 1: Frontline Response

We will always try to respond to your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.

Stage 2: Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they need investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**.

We will confirm the points of the complaint to be investigated and what you want to achieve.

We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **twenty working days** *unless* there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

There are some complaints about housing that have an alternative route for independent review. We will tell you how to seek independent review when we give you our final response on your complaint.

Annual Complaints Handling Procedure Report

Number of complaints received

A total of fifteen complaints were received and investigated by the Association between during the reporting year. This compares to the eighteen for 2020 / 2021 and sixteen for 2019 / 2020. The table below shows the number of complaints received and investigated at each Stage of the complaints handling procedure for the last three years.

	2021 / 2022	2020 / 2021	2019 / 2020
Stage 1 only	14	16	16
Stage 1 then escalated to Stage 2	0	2	0
Stage 2 only	1	0	0
Total	15	18	16

Performance: The number of complaints received during the reporting year was lower than the numbers received during 2019 / 2020 and 2020 / 2021.

How complaints were received

Customers who are dissatisfied with a service that they receive from the Association are encouraged to complain and can do so in a number of ways. Customers have reported complaints using a variety of methods. Of the fifteen complaints received during the reporting year, fifty-three percent were received by telephone, thirty-three percent by email, seven percent by letter and seven percent by complaint form. The table below provides a comparison of how complaints have been registered for each of the last three years.

	2021 / 2022	2020 / 2021	2019 / 2020
Telephone	8	10	11
Email	5	5	3
Letter	1	2	-
In person	1	-	2
Complaints Form	-	1	-
Total	15	18	16

Performance: Over the last three years telephone has been the most used method of complaint. The Association's offices re-opened during August 2021 following the removal of restrictions imposed by the Scottish Government in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this, the majority complaints continued to be received by telephone and email.

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 fourteen complaints originally investigated at Stage 1 during the reporting year, no complainants asked for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2 of the procedure.

This compares 11.1% of complainants during 2020 / 2021 and 0.0% of complainants during 2019 / 2020 asking for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints handling procedure.

Performance: The Association experienced a decrease in the number of complainants asking for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2 of the procedure compared to the previous year. The Association aims to meet customer expectation by resolving all frontline complaints at Stage 1 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.

During the last three years, no complainant has asked the SPSO to independently 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. During the reporting year eighty percent of complaints investigated were received from tenants of the Association while the remaining twenty percent were received from owner occupiers. The table below provides a comparison of who has registered complaints for each of the last three years.

	2020 / 2021	2019 / 2020	2019 / 2020
Tenants	12	12	14
Owner Occupiers	3	6	2
Housing Applicants	-	-	-
Total	15	18	16

The complaints received from tenants during the reporting year related to 1.9% of the Association's rented stock. This compares to 1.9% for 2020 / 2021 and 2.2% for 2019 / 2020. The complaints received from owner occupiers during the reporting year related to 1.1% of the Association's factored stock. This compares to 2.2% for 2020 / 2021 and 0.7% for 2019 / 2020.

Performance: The number of complaints received from both tenants and owner occupiers during 2021 / 2022 relate to a very small proportion of both the Association's social rented stock and factored stock.

Equalities

The Scottish Housing Regulator previously asked the Association to provide information regarding the number of complaints that relate to issues surrounding equalities. Equalities complaints are those that make 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. As part of its commitment to the promotion of equalities the Association continues to record this information.

None of the complaints received during the reporting year related to equalities issues. This is consistent with the previous two years where no complaints recorded related to equalities issues.

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 fifteen complaints received during the reporting year were concluded within the relevant target timescales. This is consistent with the previous two years during which all complaints were concluded within the SPSO's target timescales.

The table below shows the Association's performance against the SPSO's target timescales for concluding complaints that were received in the last three years.

	SPSO Target	Performance 2021 / 2022	Performance 2020 / 2021	Performance 2019 / 2020
YHA Stage 1 response	5 days	1.6 working days	1.9 working days	1.2 working days
YHA Stage 2 response	20 days	17.0 working days	19.0 working days	n/a

The average time for concluding Stage 1 complaints received during the reporting year was lower than that for the previous year but higher than that for 2019 / 2020. The average time for concluding the Stage 2 complaints received during the reporting year was lower than the previous year.

Performance: During the reporting year the Association concluded all complaints within the SPSO's target timescales. The time taken to conclude both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints during the year was lower in comparison to the previous year.

The types of complaints that were received

During the reporting year the Association registered complaints relating to the Association's Housing and Maintenance services. Sixty-seven percent of complaints received during the year related to Maintenance Services while the remaining thirty-three percent related to Housing Services.

The table below compares the number of complaints registered against each department over the last three years.

	2021 / 2022	2020 / 2021	2019 / 2020
Housing Services	5	5	6
Maintenance Services	10	10	10
Finance Services	-	3	-
Total	15	18	16

Customers have right to complain about any dissatisfaction that they have with any aspect of the service that they receive from the Association. During the reporting year the largest number of complaints received related to dissatisfaction with services provided by the Association, which amounted to sixty-seven percent of complaints received.

The table below details the number and nature of complaints registered against each department during the reporting year.

	Maintenance	Housing	Finance	Total
Dissatisfaction with Contractor	1	1	-	2
Dissatisfaction with Service Provided	7	3	-	10
Dissatisfaction with Staff	2	1	-	3
Total	10	5	-	15

The table below details the number and nature of complaints registered against the Association over the last three years.

	2021 / 2022	2020 / 2021	2019 / 2020	Total
Dissatisfaction with Contractor	2	9	9	20
Dissatisfaction with Service Provided	10	5	5	30
Dissatisfaction with Policy / Procedure		4	-	4
Dissatisfaction with Staff	3	-	-	3
Dissatisfaction with Communication	-	-	2	2

Performance: The Association works closely with contractors with the aim of providing the best possible service and therefore reduce levels of dissatisfaction. The Association is pleased to note the significant reduction in the number of complaints received in relation to contractors during the reporting year.

Customer satisfaction

During the reporting year, thirty-three percent of complainants were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint while twenty-seven percent were dissatisfied. The remaining forty percent of complaints failed to provide feedback. This satisfaction level is significantly lower than for previous years where fifty-six percent and eighty-one percent of complainants were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint during 2020 / 2021 and 2019 / 2020 respectively.

During the reporting year, twenty-seven percent of complainants were satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with while thirty-three percent were dissatisfied. The remaining forty percent of complaints failed to provide feedback. This satisfaction level is significantly lower than for previous years where seventy-eight percent and ninety-four percent of complainants were satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with during 2020 / 2021 and 2019 / 2020 respectively.

The outcome to complaints

During the reporting year, four of the complaints investigated at Stage 1 were upheld. The one complaint that was investigated at Stage 2 was also upheld. A summary to the complaints received is provided under the “Learning from complaints” section of this report.

The table below provides a breakdown of the number and percentage of complaints upheld for the last three years.

	Total Complaints	Upheld (Number)	Upheld (%)
2021 / 2022	15	4	26.7%
2020 / 2021	18	3	16.7%
2019 / 2020	16	5	31.3%

Performance: During the reporting year the number of complaints that were upheld was higher than for 2020 / 2021 but lower than for 2019 / 2020.

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.

This section provides information about trends and learning opportunities that were identified as a result monitoring and analysing the complaints received and investigated during reporting year.

This section provides a breakdown of complaints received under both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the complaints handling procedure.

Stage 1 Complaints

The analysis of complaints confirmed that three complaints related to dissatisfaction with staff. However, these complaints related to different issues with one complainant unhappy that the Association's staff were unable to arrange for the maintenance of shrubbery on land belonging to Glasgow City Council. One complainant expressed dissatisfaction with staff implementing procedures with regards to arranging an electrical inspection of his property and one complainant was unhappy at being contacted in relation to rent arrears. In all cases the complaints were not upheld.

Nine complaints received related to dissatisfaction with the service provided. However, these complaints related to different issues. Of these nine complaints three were upheld. The first complaint that was upheld related to a complainant that was unhappy that the repairs she had reported had not been actioned. The repairs were not correctly recorded and the complainant was issued with an apology. The repairs were also prioritised and subsequently completed. The importance of effectively recording and actioning repairs was also communicated to relevant staff members.

The second complaint upheld in relation to dissatisfaction with the service related to weeds becoming overgrown within the backcourt. Following a property inspection it was noted that the weeds in this particular backcourt had not been attended to. Discussions were held with the contractor regarding the level of service and a credit was applied to the complainant's property management account to cover the charge incurred.

The final upheld complaint regarding dissatisfaction with the service provided was received from a housing applicant. The applicant was unhappy after receiving a letter from the Association confirming that her housing application had been cancelled. It was explained that the application had not been cancelled and that the letter had been issued in error. The applicant was issued with an apology.

Six cases that related to dissatisfaction with the service were not upheld and these refer to the following:

- Two complainants were unhappy that they did not qualify for tenant reward, despite not meeting the eligibility criteria stipulated in the Tenant Reward Policy;
- One complainant was unhappy that they were advised to contact Glasgow City Council directly to arrange a bulk uplift, despite this being the correct procedure for non-tenement properties;
- One complainant was unhappy when a contractor failed to attend her property. On investigation it was found that the tenant had recorded the incorrect appointment date in her diary;
- One complainant was unhappy that works to the exterior to the property had not been carried out. It was explained to the tenant that prices were currently being sought in accordance with the Association's Procurement Policy and that work would commence once the procurement process had concluded; and
- One complainant was unhappy that the Association did not agree to paint the doors inside her flat despite internal decoration being the responsibility of tenants.

Two case related to dissatisfaction with a contractor of which one was upheld. In the case where the complaint was upheld, the complainant was unhappy that the contractor had failed to attend two pre-arranged appointments. The contractor accepted the complaint and an apology was issued to the tenant. A priority appointment was arranged for the day that the complaint was received and the necessary repairs were carried out. The importance of keeping to appointments was highlighted to the contractor.

The complaint of dissatisfaction with a contractor that was not upheld related to the Association's stair cleaning service. The complaint advised that the service had not been provided for several months. However, following a property inspection and interviews with other residents it was confirmed the service was being carried out on a weekly basis.

Stage 2 Complaints

The one complaint investigated in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure related to Maintenance Services and was made in relation to dissatisfaction with the service received from the Association. The tenant was dissatisfied after the Association's contractor failed to attend her property on two separate occasions to carry out repairs to her fence. The complainant was also dissatisfied after Association staff had failed to provide her with updates after initially reporting the damage to the fence. Following investigation, it was noted that the contractor had failed to attend the property on two occasions and that staff had failed to communicate with the tenant after she initially reported the issue. The complainant was issued with an apology and the repairs were prioritised and subsequently completed. The importance of keeping to appointments was discussed with the contractor. Furthermore, the importance of communicating with service users was reiterated to the relevant staff members.

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.

Performance Monitoring

In addition to the publishing quarterly reports, the Association reports performance against the Complaints Handling Procedure to Management Committee on a quarterly basis. Performance is measured against the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Percentage of 1st Stage Complaints resolved within required timescale.
- Percentage of 2nd Stage Complaints resolved within required timescale.
- Percentage of 1st Stage Complaints upheld.
- Percentage of 2nd Stage Complaints upheld.
- Number of formal complaints upheld by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.