

Complaints Handling Procedure Report 2024 / 2025
(1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

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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 any 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 simple as possible for tenants and other customers to tell us about 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 2024 and the 30th of September 2024.

The report provides information under the following headings:

The Complaints Handling Process

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

Complaints Report

- The 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.
- Complaints relating to issues of equality and diversity.
- The types of complaints that were received.
- The outcome to complaints.
- Customer Satisfaction.
- Learning from complaints.

How to Access the Complaints Handling Procedure

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 registered social landlords 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 revised complaints handling procedure was adopted by the Association 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 all 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. A complaint can also relate to dissatisfaction about the service that is 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 enquiries and requests;
- Failure to provide a service;
- The Association's standard of service;
- Dissatisfaction with Association policy;
- Treatment by / or attitude of a member of staff;
- Complaints relating to issues of equality and diversity; and
- The Association's failure to follow proper procedure.

The Complaints Handling Process (continued)

How are complaints investigated?

The Association's complaints procedure has two stages. How a complaint is investigated depends on the nature and complexity of the issue(s) raised.

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.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO):

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

Complaints Report

The number of complaints received

During the period from the 1st of April 2024 and the 30th of September 2024 the Association received and investigated eight complaints (seven cases). One case involved an investigation in accordance with both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the procedure. In accordance with the Scottish Housing Regulator’s Annual Return on the Carter (ARC) guidance, this case was recorded as two separate complaints to reflect the individual investigations carried out at both Stages. The table below compares the number of complaints received and investigated during the reporting period compared to the corresponding period last year.

	01/04/24 - 30/09/24	01/04/23 - 30/09/23	Trend
Stage 1	7	5	↑
Stage 1 & Stage 2	1	-	↑
Stage 2	-	1	↓
Total	8	6	↑

The total number of complaints received between the 1st of April 2024 and the 30th of September 2024 is higher than the number of complaints registered for the equivalent period last year.

The table below gives a breakdown of the number of complaints received and investigated by quarter for 2024 / 2025.

Quarter	Stage 1 Only	Stages 1 & 2	Stage 2 Only	Total
01/04/24 to 30/06/24	1	-	-	1
01/07/24 to 30/09/24	6	1	-	7
01/10/24 to 31/12/24	-	-	-	-
01/01/25 to 31/03/25	-	-	-	-
Total	7	1	-	8

Service users can express dissatisfaction in a number of ways which include telephone, letter, complaint form, email or by reporting a complaint in person. Six (75.0%) complaints investigated during reporting period were received by email, one (12.5%) was received by telephone and one (12.5%) 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. Seven complaints received during the reporting period were originally investigated at Stage 1. Following investigation, one complainant asked for their complaint to be escalated to Stage 2 of the procedure (complaint 8)

Complaints Report (continued)

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 a complaint closed at Stage 2 of the procedure is provided with details of the SPSO. During the reporting period the SPSO was not asked by any complainant to conduct an independent 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. Six (75.0%) complaints were received from tenants of the Association. Of the Association’s total rented stock of 652, the six complaints relate to 0.9% of the Association’s stock. The remaining two (25.0%) complaints were received from owner occupiers who receives a factoring service. Of the Association’s 271 factored properties, the two complaints relate to 0.7% 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 the statutory timescale of five working days while complaints investigated at Stage 2 of the procedure should be investigated within twenty working days. All complaints investigated were concluded within the statutory timescales.

The table below details the Association’s performance, in relation to the time taken to conclude complaints, compared to the corresponding period last year.

	SPSO Target	Performance 01/04/24 – 30/09/24	Performance 01/04/23 – 30/09/23	Trend
YHA Stage 1 response	5 days	2.3 working days	2.2 working days	
YHA Stage 2 response	20 days	14.0 working days	17.0 working days	

The average time taken to conclude complaints investigated at Stage 1 of the procedure is slightly higher than for the equivalent period last year. Despite this increase, the average time taken to conclude Stage 1 complaints remained within the statutory timescale of five working days.

The average time taken to conclude complaints investigated at Stage 2 of the procedure is slightly lower than for the equivalent period last year. The average time taken to conclude Stage 2 complaints was within the statutory timescale of twenty working days.

Complaints Report (continued)

Complaints relating to issues of equality and diversity

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

The complaints investigated during the reporting period did not refer to discrimination, victimisation or harassment in relation to the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010.

The types of complaints that were received

Four complaints investigated between the 1st of April 2024 and the 30th of September 2024 related to the services provided by the Association’s Housing Services Department while the remaining four related to the Property Services Department.

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

	Property Services	Housing Services	Finance Services	Total
Dissatisfaction with Contractor	-	-	-	-
Dissatisfaction with Staff	-	1	-	1
Dissatisfaction with Service Provided	4	3	-	7
Dissatisfaction with Policy / Procedure	-	-	-	-
Dissatisfaction with Communications	-	-	-	-
Total	4	4	-	8

Complaints Report (continued)

The types of complaints that were received (continued)

Complaints are analysed with a view to identifying learning opportunities that could be used to improve the services being provided by the Association. The analysis confirmed that seven complaints (six cases) related to dissatisfaction with the service provided. However, these complaints related to different issues. Details of the six complaints are detailed below:

- **Case 1** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure. The complaint was received from an owner occupier who was unhappy that the previous repair issues relating to the backcourt had not been actioned. The investigation into the complaint confirmed that the majority of repairs noted had not been reported previously. In the circumstances, the Association arranged for the appropriate contractor to carry out the necessary repairs. The new repairs were completed within the Association's target timescales.

The investigation also confirmed that two issues raised by the complainant had previously been reported. The first issue related to a report of a loose television aerial cable on the rear elevation of the building. The installation had been inspected at the time of the original report and the cable was secured to the building. A further inspection following receipt of the complaint confirmed that the cable was still secured to the building. The second report related to the presence of a refrigeration unit belonging to a commercial property that was fixed to the rear elevation. The complainant considered this to be a health and safety hazard. This matter was reported to Glasgow City Council Environmental Health following receipt of the initial report. GCC had inspected the installation and confirmed that the matter was not a health and safety issue and therefore did not consider it appropriate to investigate the matter further. The complaint was not upheld.

- **Case 2** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the procedure. The complaint was received from a tenant who was unhappy with the outcome to her gas service visit. During the visit (Contractor 1) noted damage to the boiler flue and subsequently isolated the gas supply. The boiler was then replaced by a separate contractor (Contractor 2). The complainant advised that she had been unwell for several months and advised that Contractor 1 had told her that she may have suffered from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. An investigation was carried out and it was concluded that Contractor 1 had not advised the tenant that she was subject to CO poisoning. Contractor 1 also confirmed that the sweep test carried out during the service confirmed that no CO was present in the room. Contractor 1 also confirmed that the CO alarm which had not activated had been tested during the gas service and had been found to be operating correctly.

Complaints Report (continued)

The types of complaints that were received (continued)

The complainant was unhappy with the response and asked for the case to be escalated to Stage 2. The complainant stated that repair had been carried out to the boiler several months earlier by Contractor 2. She advised that during the visit contractor 2 had advised that there was a leak at the boiler which indicated a CO leak. A further investigation was carried out during which it was noted that Contractor 2 had attended the property several months earlier to replace the thermostat. Contractor 2 confirmed that replacement of the thermostat did not require him to remove the casing as he did not require internal access to the boiler. Contractor confirmed that he would have reported any leaks to the Association.

Contractor 1 was also contacted as part of the investigation and confirmed that the boiler is a sealed system which would prevent CO escaping into the room. Contractor 1 also confirmed that CO alarms are activated by extremely low levels of CO in the atmosphere and confirmed that the alarm test confirmed that it was operating correctly. The complainant was issued with copies of the current and previous LGSR certificates carried out by Contractor 1 which confirm that the no CO was detected in the room on either occasion. The certificates also confirm that the CO alarm was operating correctly when tested during both visits. The complainant was also issued with the LGSR certificate carried out by Contractor 2 following the installation of the new boiler. This certificate also confirmed that the CO alarm was tested by Contractor 2 and found to be operating correctly. The complaint was not upheld.

- **Case 3** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure. The complaint was received from a tenant who believed that the Association was not taking her complaints of harassment by another tenant seriously. The complainant was advised that the complaints of harassment had been taken seriously and that an anti-social case had been raised. The complainant was advised that an investigation had been carried out in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour and Neighbour Nuisance Policy and procedures but, owing to a lack of corroboration and evidence, no further action was possible at the time. It was explained that appropriate action would be taken in the event that complaints could be corroborated. The complainant accepted this explanation and apologised for her complaint. The complaint was not upheld.
- **Case 4** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure. The complaint was received from a tenant who was unhappy that the Association had not supported him given that he is being harassed by other neighbours within the close. The complainant stated that the Association was encouraging harassment since neighbours were letting their dogs foul in the backcourt. The Complainant also stated that the Association was instructing the ground maintenance contractor to make noise outside his property while also ignoring previous complaints in relation to anti-social behaviour.

Complaints Report (continued)

The types of complaints that were received (continued)

In relation to the dog fouling within the backcourt, it was confirmed that the Association had responded to a previous report made by the complainant by issuing a letter to all households regarding their tenancy responsibilities in relation to keeping dogs. The complainant then stated that he was being targeted by the Association because he is the only dog owner in the close. The complainant was advised that visitors may bring dogs to the close and the letter served as a reminder for all residents to ensure that visitors are not allowing dogs to foul in the common areas. This aspect of the complaint was not upheld.

In relation to the ground maintenance contractor, the complainant was advised that the contractor provides services to all closes and the nature of work (bulk uplift / sweeping / grass cutting / power washing) does create temporary periods of noise. It was explained to the complainant that the contractor provides services during working hours and does not deliberately make noise to harass the complainant. This aspect of the complaint was not upheld.

In relation to the previous complaint of harassment, the Association confirmed that the complainant had previously raised the issue of noise nuisance and also the fact that other residents were failing to clean the common close. The complainant was reminded that he had asked the Association not to address the issue of noise nuisance with his neighbours since he had already dealt with the matter directly. The complainant was also advised that all residents had been lettered regarding the upkeep of the common close. The Association confirmed that an anti-social behaviour investigation could be initiated if the noise nuisance was still ongoing. The complainant advised that he did not want the matter to be investigated because he did not want to identify the alleged perpetrators. This aspect of the complaint was not upheld.

- **Case 5** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure. The complaint was received from an owner occupier who was unhappy that a stair cleaning service had not been introduced to his property. The Association responded to the complaint by advising that a stair cleaning service consultation had been carried but confirmed that neither tenants nor owner occupiers had agreed to the service being introduced. The Association advised that a further consultation would be conducted regarding the possibility of introducing a stair cleaning service. The complaint was not upheld.
- **Case 6** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure. The complaint was received from a tenant who was unhappy that repairs to her property were not carried out immediately following a leak. Following report of the leak, the Association advised the complainant that a plumber would be arranged to address the water ingress from the upper flat. The plumber isolated the water supply and carried out the necessary repair. The complainant was also advised that the ceiling would have to dry-out before the area could be repaired. In response to the complaint, the Association confirmed to the complainant that, as stated during previous communications, the water had be isolated but the repair to the ceiling could only be completed once the area had dried out. The complainant thanked the Association for clarification and apologised for her complaint. The complaint was not upheld.

Complaints Report (continued)

The types of complaints that were received (continued)

The analysis confirmed that one complaint related to dissatisfaction with staff. Details of this complaint are provided below:

- **Case 7** – This complaint was investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure. The complaint was received from a tenant who was unhappy after a member of staff had contacted her to discuss her rent payment date. The complainant stated that she was aware that her rent was due in advance. The complainant was advised that she was contacted as it was extremely close to the end of the month and payment had not yet been received. The intention behind the telephone call was to simply remind the tenant that the payment was due in order that she did not fail to qualify for the tenant reward scheme. The complainant confirmed that she was happy with the explanation provided. The complaint was not upheld.

When analysing complaints, the Association assesses the risk level that complaints pose to the Association. When assessing the risk level, the Association considers factors including whether or not complaints are a result of the Association's non-compliance with legal or regulatory obligations or whether the complaint could lead to reputational damage. All complaints investigated during the reporting period are considered to be of low risk to the Association.

The outcome to complaints

Of the six complaints investigated solely in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure, none (0.0%) were upheld. The one complaint investigated in accordance with both stages of the procedure was not upheld.

Customer satisfaction

Following investigation at Stage 1 of the procedure, four (57.1%) of the seven complainants were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint. One (14.3%) complainant was dissatisfied with the outcome to their complaint while the remaining two (28.6%) complainants failed to provide feedback.

Following investigation at Stage 1 of the procedure, four (57.1%) of the seven complainants were satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with following conclusion of the investigation. One (14.3%) complainant was dissatisfied with how their complaint was dealt with while the remaining two (28.6%) complainants failed to provide feedback.

In the case that was initially investigated in accordance with Stage 1 of the procedure and then escalated to Stage 2, the complainant was dissatisfied with both the outcome to the complaint and with how the complaint was dealt with following conclusion at Stage 1. The complainant did not provide feedback following the conclusion of the investigation at Stage 2.

Complaints Report (continued)

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 actions need to be taken in order to improve services provided by the Association.

During the period from the 1st of April 2024 to the 30th of September 2024, the Association successfully implemented the SPSO's Complaints Handling Procedure and investigated eight complaint in accordance with this procedure. The complaint information was collected and recorded accordingly, and the complaint was investigated and concluded within the published timescales. The information collected has been analysed with a view to identifying the cause of the complaint, learning opportunities and any necessary service improvements or staff training requirements.

During the analysis, it was noted that six cases related to dissatisfaction with the service provided by the Association. These complaints related to different issues of which none were upheld. Following the analysis of complaints, no learning or training opportunities 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 on 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 to Significant Performance Failures; and
- Information relating to Whistleblowing Complaints.

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