

Policy	Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Procedure	
Department	Young People Services and Housing Team	
Approval Date		Issue Date
Last Amended Date	June 2024	Next Review Date: June 2026
Other Relevant Policy(ies)	The Eviction Procedure (ASB, rent arrears) House-rules Substance Misuse Policy and Procedure Anti-social Behavior	

## 1.0 Introduction (Section 1: Complaints Handling Code - Definition of a complaint)

This Complaints Policy outlines YLCAN’s procedures and principles governing the management of complaints within our accommodation projects. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and responsive environment for our young people. This policy ensures that residents have a clear and effective means to voice their concerns, seek resolution, and contribute to continuous improvement, including comments and compliments.

## 2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 **Accountable person:** Is the person responsible for all building safety matters, YLCAN (YMCA London, City and North) as an organization is the accountable person. This only applies to LandAid House.
- 2.2 **Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction or concern raised by a resident or their representative regarding any aspect of our Housing Provision. A resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such.
- 2.3 **Acceptable Exclusions:** Complaints not deemed as valid to consider or escalated.
- 2.4 **Complainant:** The resident or their representative who lodges a complaint.
- 2.5 **Designated Complaints Officer:** A staff member of YLCAN assigned the responsibility of receiving, documenting, and managing the complaints, based on its nature in accordance with this policy.
- 2.6 **Service Request:** A request from a resident to YLCAN requiring action to be taken to put something right. A service request is different from a complaint. However, residents can raise a complaint when they express dissatisfaction with the response to their service request. The initial service request will still be live and remain ongoing, and efforts will be made to address the service request.

- 2.7 **Survey and Feedback:** When YLCAN ask for wider feedback, residents will be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint and will be provided with the complaint reporting procedure such as QR Code and other reporting methods.

### 3.0 Principles (Section 2: Complaints Handling Code – Exclusions)

- 3.1. **Accessibility:** YLCAN is committed to ensuring that the complaints process is accessible to all residents, including those with disabilities or communication barriers. Reasonable considerations and adjustments for residents will be made under the Equality Act 2010 where appropriate.
- 3.2. **Confidentiality:** YLCAN will treat all complaints with the utmost confidentiality, disclosing information only on a need-to-know basis. Confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
- 3.3. **Fairness and Impartiality:** All complaints will be considered on their own merits. Complaints will be addressed impartially, without bias or prejudice. All parties involved will be treated fairly and respectfully throughout the process.
- 3.4. **Timeliness:** YLCAN will accept complaints within 12 months of the initial issue. YLCAN can decide to accept complaints outside of the 12-month window.
- YLCAN will strive to resolve complaints promptly and efficiently, acknowledging receipt of the complaint (at any stage) within 7 days (minimum 5 working days).
  - YLCAN will provide a full response within 2 weeks (minimum 10 working days) of the complaint being acknowledged, and 4 weeks (minimum 20 working days) at stage 2. Regular updates will be provided on the resolution process's progress.
  - Where an extension is required, residents will be notified and given an appropriate explanation, including contact details of the Ombudsman (see No 9). The extension should not be more than 10 working days at stage 1 and no more than 20 working days at stage 2.
  - If YLCAN does not accept the complaint, an explanation will be provided to the resident with reasons why the complaint cannot be accepted.
- 3.5. **Transparency:** The complaints process will be transparent, with clear communication about the steps involved, expected timelines, and outcomes.
- 3.6. **Acceptable Exclusions:** Circumstances in which a complaint is not deemed to be a valid complaint (Exclusion), YLCAN will evidence this reasoning, and the resident will be given a full explanation. Acceptable Exclusions are:
- the issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over 12 months ago
  - legal proceedings have started - this is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court
  - matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy

## 4.0 Making a Complaint (Section 3: Complaints Handling Code - Accessibility and Awareness)

4.1 YLCAN will publish details of our complaint policy and process on our website. Residents are encouraged to report complaints through any of the following channels:

- QR Code at Reception (scan code to fill form and press submit after filling all 4 sections)
- Verbally to any staff member
- Or by email [housingfeedback@ymcalcan.org](mailto:housingfeedback@ymcalcan.org)

4.2 YLCAN residents can be supported by friends, relatives, other residents, YLCAN staff, other agencies, and independent advocates to make complaints.

4.3 We will endeavor to resolve complaints within 10 working days (max 2 weeks). Where complaints are resolved informally, they will be logged appropriately by the YLCAN's investigating manager.

4.4 Where it is not possible to resolve a complaint informally, it will be managed in accordance with our 2 Stage Complaints Procedure (see sections 8).

4.5 The Whistle-blowing Procedure applies where complaints involve alleged fraud, misconduct, malpractice, ill treatment of residents or any other wrongdoing by YLCAN, and the complainant is not satisfied with the response at Stage 2.

4.6 Anonymous complaints will be accepted but may be more challenging to investigate and resolve due to the lack of contact information for follow-up. Efforts will be made to address these complaints to the best of our ability.

4.7 The same complaints process is followed for any "building safety Risks" you may have or any concerns you have around the performance of an accountable person concerning their duties with the building safety regulator.

4.8 Residents will not be treated differently if they make a complaint.

4.9 Where further complaint is raised during an existing investigation and the stage 1 has not been completed, it will be added into the stage 1 response if they are related. However, where the stage 1 response has been issued, and the new complaint is unrelated, it will be logged as a new complaint.

## 5.0 Comments and Compliments

We encourage residents to use the QR Code service at reception, to share with us their feedback, comments, compliments, and suggestions. We use this process to improve our services and facilities to ensure a safe and supportive living environment they can be proud of.

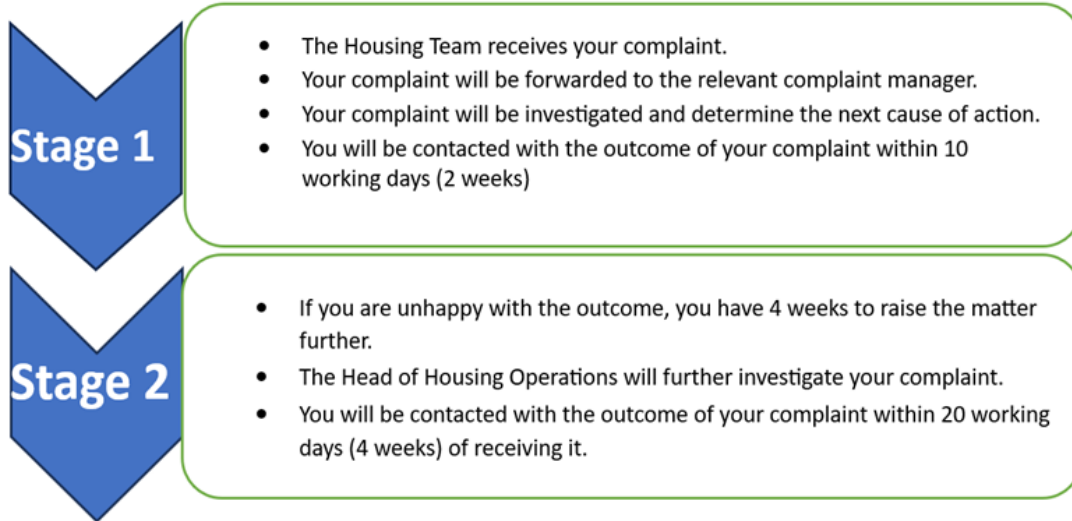
## 6.0 Complaints Handling (Section 4 & 5: Complaints Handling Code – Complaint Handling Staff and Complaint Handling Process)

- 6.1 **Designated Complaints Officer:** A YLCAN staff member will be designated as the Complaints Officer responsible for receiving, documenting, and managing complaints, depending on its nature. This individual has full authority and autonomy to act independently to resolve disputes promptly and fairly. Any third party acting on our behalf to handle our complaints will be in line with the Complaint Handling Code. The housing management team is the responsible team overseeing housing complaints.
- 6.2 **Initial Assessment:** Upon receiving a complaint, the Complaints Officer will assess its nature and determine the appropriate course of action. This may involve gathering additional information or contacting relevant parties. We will take measures to address any or perceived conflict of interest.
- 6.3 **Resolution:** Complaints will be resolved through informal means whenever possible. Residents and staff involved will be encouraged to engage in open and constructive dialogue to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution. YLCAN will respond when the answer to the complaints is known.
- 6.4 **Escalation:** If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, it may be escalated to a higher level of management for further investigation and resolution.
- 6.5 **Communication:** The Complaints Officer will maintain regular communication with the complainant, providing updates on the status of the complaint and the expected timeline for resolution. YLCAN will make clear where complaints are not within its power to resolve.
- 6.6 **Building Safety Risks, concerns, or performance:** The Director of Estates and Major Projects will be responsible on behalf of the organisation to ensure that any matters concerning LandAid House are fully investigated and resolved.

## 7. Records and Documentation

All complaints, including details of the complaint, actions taken, and resolutions, will be recorded on our online database and retained for reference, analysis, and continuous improvement purposes.

## 8. The Complaints Procedure (Section 6: Complaints Handling Code – Complaint Stages)



## 9. Escalation to Housing Ombudsman:

If all the 2 stages are used and the complainant remains unsatisfied with YLCAN's response, the complaint can be escalated externally with the relevant agency, Housing Ombudsman via: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk) or 0300 1113000

## 10. Review and Analysis (Section 7: Complaints Handling Code – Putting things right)

YLCAN will review (every 2 years) complaints to identify trends, potential areas for improvement, and opportunities to enhance the quality of services and facilities. Where something has gone wrong, YLCAN will acknowledge this and act accordingly, to put things right, in the agreed timeline. These can include:

- Apologising
- Acknowledging where things have gone wrong
- Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons
- Taking appropriate action if there has been delay
- Reconsidering or changing a decision
- Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum
- Providing a financial remedy
- Changing policies, procedures, or practices

## 11. Conclusion

This Complaints Policy reflects our commitment to transparency, accountability, and resident satisfaction within our supported housing project. All YLCAN staff members are expected to be familiar with and adhere to this policy. YLCAN will confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 or stage 2 in clear, plain language:

- the complaint stage
- the complaint definition
- the decision on the complaint
- the reasons for any decisions made
- the details of any remedy offered to put things right
- details of any outstanding actions
- details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response

## 12. Self-Assessment and Complaint: Section 8: Complaints Handling Code – Self-assessment, reporting and compliance)

YLCAN will produce an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for scrutiny and challenge, which will include:

- the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure our complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements
- a qualitative and quantitative analysis of our complaint handling performance – this will also include a summary of the types of complaints we have refused to accept
- any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman
- the service improvements made because of the learning from complaints
- any annual report about YLCAN's performance from the Ombudsman
- any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to our work.
- YLCAN will carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in Procedures. We will also do a review and update our self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.
- If YLCAN is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, we will notify the Ombudsman, our residents and publish this on our website, and provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.

## 13. Building Safety Complaints





If there is a building safety complaint following **Stage 2** of the complaint procedure, this will be escalated to the Building Safety Regulator by calling **0300 790 6787** or via [How can the Building Safety Regulator help you? \(contact-building-safety-regulator.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/contact-building-safety-regulator)

**14. YLCAN will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010.**