

Agenda ref:	Report Title: Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report	Author: Melissa Lloyd	Meeting: YMCA Blackburn Board	Date of meeting: 24 th June 2024	Paper is for: Discussion
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Executive summary:

YMCA Blackburn has undertaken an annually self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. An updated version of the Code was published in February 2024, with our self-assessment against this new Code presented in June 2024.

It showed an overall a good level of compliance. However, there was one outstanding requirement, which is to produce an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and for this report to be published on our website, alongside a response from the Board.

This paper provides the information needed to fulfil that outstanding requirement alongside a recognized improvement plan in ensuring all service requests and complaints are centralised on a newly adopted housing management software. It sets out a summary of complaints received by each YMCA Blackburn department in the 2023/2024 financial year. It also outlines:

- How the complaints policy and YMCA complaints culture allows for resident dissatisfaction to be addressed swiftly and predominantly as service requests.

To enable us to fulfil the final outstanding requirement identified from the recent self-assessment of the Code. The board are requested to provide a formal response to this report, which will be published on our website.

1 Background

- 1.1 YMCA Blackburn welcomes all feedback from residents, service users and third parties, as it provides us with an opportunity to continually improve what we do and how we do it. Any comments, compliments and complaints received are managed through the YMCA Blackburn satisfaction forms.
- 1.2 The complaints policy was reviewed in April 2024 as per the 'Code' the policy reflects a two stage complaints process, ensuring all complaints are investigated thoroughly and, if required, the findings reviewed. After this point, should a complainant remain dissatisfied with the outcome, the policy supports people to escalate their complaint further to the independent Housing Ombudsman or other relevant body, such as the Local Government and SocialCare Ombudsman or the Care Quality Commission.
- 1.3 In the Summer, the Government's new Social Housing (Regulation) Act came into force, designed to deliver the aims of the 2021 Social Housing White Paper around strengthening consumer standards, improve resident involvement and tackle poor performing landlords. The Act further strengthens the powers of the Regulator for Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman, to provide more support to residents and ensure housing providers were managing feedback effectively.

- 1.4 This paper provides a summary of the number and types of complaints received in 2023, as well as an overview of the service improvement made as a result. It also provides a completed version of the self assessment form to monitor policy and action against the complaints handling code.

2 Summary of complaints received in 2023

- 2.1 Tables 1 and 2 below provide a summary of the number and main types of complaints received by YMCA Blackburn in 2023/2024.

Table1: The number of complaints received in 2023 split by YMCA Blackburn department.

As a social housing provider service request information was not collected in 2023/2024 from managing agents with only complaints information collected through the KPI information.

YMCA Bolton is operated through YMCA Blackburn and as such service request data is monitored and reviewed through YMCA Blackburn.

Department	Service request	Stage 1	Stage 2	Ombudsman
Bolton Housing services	1	1		1
Managed Housing Services				
Development and asset management				

Table 2: Common complaint types (Stage 1), split by YMCA Department

Department	Most complaints by type		
	Most received	Second	Third
Bolton Housing Services	Service requests- Staff unable to take responsibility for resident deliveries.	Landlord not insuring resident contents as outlined within tenancy agreement.	
Managed Housing services			

Development and asset management	Issues surrounding high energy costs and snagging works during the snagging period of recent construction at YMCA Bolton		
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3 Engagement with the Housing Ombudsman

- 3.1 As shown in Table 1, there was 1 complaint escalated to the Housing Ombudsman. This was received in January 2024 however had been submitted to the Housing Ombudsman almost 12 months prior unbeknown to YMCA Bolton. This complaint had not progressed through the complaint stages and had been addressed as a number of service requests. On response to the Ombudsman and the resident it was confirmed the resident did not wish to progress as a complaint and all issues had long since been resolved.

4. Oversight of Complaints

- 4.1 All complaints and compliments received are managed through our managing agents each with their own appoint complaints team. Complaints in 23/24 that entered stage 1 are required to be reported to YMCA Blackburn both at the point of complaint and also on the quarterly KPI reporting document. This ensures a strong level of oversight and control, helping us to identify worrying patterns and opportunities for service improvement. Moving forward and as part of our continual improvement YMCA Blackburn has invested in the ARTHUR housing management software which will be utilized and accessed by all managing agents. The new software will allow for residents to make complaints through the online portal in addition to existing methods of reporting. As a result of this new software all service requests data will also be collated in the same format. It is anticipated this will result in a sharp increase in reporting numbers as a result of the increased accessibility.
- 4.2 In addition, a report detailing feedback information is shared with YMCA Blackburn Board each quarter. Performance against complaints is also reported as an element of the wider performance scorecard.
- 4.3 To support our commitment to ensuring greater transparency with residents, complaints performance information is also now added to the YMCA Blackburn website on a regular basis.

5 Using insights from complaints to improve services

5.1 When residents have taken the time to provide us with feedback, be that in the form of a complaint, compliment or other less formal method it is important that we value this feedback and use it to inform service improvements.

Trend identified	Examples of actions taken in 2023-24 to improve services
Communication – residents particularly at Bolton have communicated disappointment by snagging of the new development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff have ensured continual communication with residents of YMCA ongoing communication with contractors during the snagging process. Anticipating potential disruption and communicating via emails and text to residents to ensure appropriate sharing of information.• 24/7 on call service available for residents to notify of issues and concerns.
The perception that YMCA should be able to take parcels on behalf of residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear communication to residents of the reasoning YMCA cannot take responsibility for parcels.• Consistency amongst staff members and other organisations operating within the building.

6 Ensuring compliance with the updated Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code

6.1 In June 2024, a paper was presented to Board, for information, to provide the results of our self-assessment against the new Housing Ombudsman's Code. At that point it showed that YMCA Blackburn was compliant with 71 out of the 72 mandatory requirements to which the board completed a response to be attached alongside the report and submitted to the website. To ensure full compliance the following action was required:

"The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this"

6.2 To fulfil this requirement, Board are asked to provide a formal response to this report. This can then be published in the relevant section of the website, alongside the report and the updated self-assessment (Appendix B).

Appendix A – Summary of complaints in 2024 in which YMCA Blackburn received a Housing Ombudsman determination.

Summary of the complaint	Determination	Comments and Action taken to improve services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">YMCA Bolton- Housing Ombudsman notification received 8/01/24 relating to a complaint period between 01/23-02/23.	No action required	Following notification in 01/24 YMCA Blackburn responded to the resident complaint stating this had not been addressed initially as a formal complaint in 01-02/23 due to the tenant being happy with the resolutions offered at the time. The tenant confirmed they did not wish to pursue a complaint then or now and were happy with the resolutions offered at the time.

Appendix B – April 2024 updated self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	The HO definition of complaints is used within the complaints policy section 1.4	All staff are aware of this definition and continue to consider this when approached by any party regarding dissatisfaction.
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	This is included within the complaints policy. Section 2.1 and 4.2	As set out in policy
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	Within policy section 2.3	Complaints will be reported via the ARTHUR software, further analysis to ensure the clear distinction between requests and complaints.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	See policy section 2.3	Often the request/complaint is completed before the complaint response however the handling does not cease until resolved.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where	Yes	See policy section 2.4 and 1.4.	Residents are reminded how to make a complaint.

	landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.			
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Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	See policy section 5.1	We have not refused a complaint in the last 12 months.
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve 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. 	Yes	See policy section 5.2	Should this be the case we would always discuss this and explain to the resident.
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	See policy section 5	We would also always consider complaints on its own merits.
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not	Yes	See policy section 6	As written in policy, notifying the resident of their rights.

	suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.			
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	See policy section 1.5	Each case considered on its own merits, investigations undertaken and personal responses provided

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	See policy section 1.5	Multiple channels available to complainants, including email, face to face, telephone, letter. New app reporting being integrated.
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	See policy section 1.4	All staff aware of the policy and procedures for reporting.

3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	YMCA recognises complaints forms must be accessible, regular KP information is collated on complaints numbers and also reviewed via the TSM data to determine if there are underlying complaints that need to be actioned. It is identified that many service requests never escalate through complaints processes as residents are satisfied with responses. New software being introduced will allow for residents to communicate request centrally.
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			intention is not to keep complaints low	
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes		Complaints policy to be published to website.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	See policy section 1	Details issued within the policy of where to access the policy and ombudsman information.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	See procedure	We also promote the use of an independent advocate.
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	All Ombudsman information included within policy	

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	See policy section 1.5	Complaints team identified within the policy, each service has a designated service lead responsible for initial management of complaints.

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4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of	Yes	Feedback Coordinator is able to contact staff at all	Supported by service head
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	complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.		levels. Also has direct contact with Executive Directors and Board	
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	Complaints discussed at various levels, including Executive and Board.	Promotion of positive complaints culture across all services.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Single policy in place	Available on website
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Policy has two stages as set advised by the HO	Staff encouraged to deliver early resolution where possible
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Policy has two stages as set advised by the HO	No additional stages included in the process
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Policy identifies how third-party involvement will be addressed to ensure this remains within the 2 stage response.	The YMCA recognizes there may be times a third-party involvement is required in complaint management such as an adjudicator and as such allows for this within the complaints policy.

5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties	Yes	2 stages allows for hierarchy of responsibility and also allows for complaints to be dealt with by other parties at that level should issues be with the person named.	
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	handle complaints in line with the Code.			
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	See section 6 within policy	The procedure sets out clear guidance on understanding the complaint and outcomes requested.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes		We will meet with the resident to provide clarity if required
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	As set out in policy	Yes each complaint addressed individually, complaint definition completed, ability to use different complaints officers
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	See policy section 6.3	We are committed to responding to complaints within the agreed timescale whether possible.
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	See policy section 1.6	As outlined in the policy allowing for reasonable adjustments to be communicated, reviewed and recorded.

5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	See policy section 5.2	The Stage 1 response specifically sets out how to escalate to stage 2
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Written response issued, see policy section 7	
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Stages offered and opportunity to review as a service request	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	We have existing policies that address unacceptable behaviour	ASB policy/ equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policy
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Existing policies in place	Equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policy

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes		Initial discussion with the team allows for early discussion and potential resolution
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	Policy identifies acknowledgement within 24 hours and response within 5 days.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	As set out in the policy	Written responses issued within timescale
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	See policy section 6.3	Any extensions are discussed with the resident and resolved as quickly as possible.
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided	Yes	See policy section 6.3	This information is provided at several stages in the process.

	with the contact details of the Ombudsman.			
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	As set out in the policy	Responses issued within timescale regardless of whether issued resolved, communicating all actions agreed to resolve.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	The policy identifies the response information that will be included within a response.	Examples of where we have done this are saved in our files
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	See policy section 6.1	We keep a record of all separate communications with residents
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and 	Yes	As detailed within the procedure	All of these elements are included in our complaints letter template

	g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.			
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Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Policy states stage 2 will be the final response	As set out in the policy
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	As detailed in the procedure	
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	We have communication on file show we have accepted Stage 2 requests without a clear reasons.	We have on occasion asked the resident if they wish to clarify areas of specific focus for the Stage 2 and further clarification on rectification.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	As detailed in the policy	The person who investigates Stage 2 is generally more senior than the Stage 1 investigator
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	The policy identifies response timescales.	We aim to respond as quickly as possible to complaints or requests in a manner satisfactory to the resident.

6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	As set out within policy	Extensions are set as low as possible with anything more than a couple of days unusual
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6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Detailed within the policy	This information is provided at several stages in the process.
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	As detailed within the policy	We are introducing an app that will allow for residents to monitor progress.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	As detailed within the policy	Where appropriate colleagues will arrange to meet with residents to ensure they fully understand the reasons behind a decision
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	Copies of our letters are held on file.	All of these elements are included in our complaints letter template
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	CEO is the final response person who will liaise with the board here appropriate.	The complaint investigator will speak to all relevant staff

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking 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. 	Yes	As identified in the policy	Responses monitored and communicated to any other parties that may also be affected.
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	As set out in the policy	
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	As set out in complaint letters	Responses monitored and tracked until completed.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Review of HO policy and guidance	We also take into account the individual needs / expectations of the resident.

Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.	Yes	Code of conduct self-assessment presented to Board and shared on the website.	
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	To be actioned	Annual report produced for YMCA Blackburn Governing Body.	Updated report presented to Board on 22 nd June 2024 and subsequently published on the website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	NA	Not currently applicable as no restructure, merger and/or change in procedures has occurred recently
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	NA	No requests from the Ombudsman to this has been received
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional	Yes	NA	No such incident has occurred

	<p>circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.</p>			
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Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	<p>Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.</p>	Yes	<p>KPIs monitored and discussed within board meetings to consider complaint trends</p>	<p>Lessons learnt and review of trends allowing for rectification and communication to any other parties who may be affected. Review allows for early notification to residents of anticipated problems.</p>
9.2	<p>A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.</p>	Yes	<p>Complaint trends shared and discussed</p>	<p>Review of complaints and responses requested by residents allows for early action and learning.</p>
9.3	<p>Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.</p>	Yes		<p>Discussions on complaint themes within board and across services</p>

9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	CEO reviews policy and trends.	Regular updates and discussion about complaints within the board.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member	Yes	CEO Melissa Lloyd is appointed person who communicates with the board.	Melissa is engaged in with regular contact with services

	Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').			
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	CEO regularly reports to board	As the secretary of the Board, Melissa updates the board and accesses all information direct from services.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 	Yes	CEO appointed person	Board receive a quarterly complaints report
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. 	Yes	These objectives are set out in the policy	Staff are also expected to embrace a positive complaints culture