

## **YMCA Bournemouth Complaints and Satisfaction Report 2024/25**

This report provides the YMCA Board of trustees with the annual complaints report for Housing services which forms an essential part of our compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Service and that of the Regulatory Standards. Non-compliance with the code places a high risk of YMCA Bournemouth's registration with the regulator. Therefore, an annual review has taken place of our policy and procedures and compliance against the code. The annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman code of conduct has also been completed and published alongside this report on our website.

At the beginning of 2024, in response to the new information from the Housing Ombudsmen, we decided to have a major look at our complaints and satisfaction processes.

### **COMPLAINTS**

In our old processes a complaint was never responded to or actioned unless it came to us written. Our clients would often come down to see staff, to shout, moan and complain about something they are not happy with either to do with YMCA Bournemouth, other residents, or other services they may be engaging with. We would always offer them a complaint form, or to have a complaint form filled in with them, but unfortunately, they wouldn't choose this option, generally due to lifestyle choices and it would therefore not be a priority to them.

In response to the new information from the Housing Ombudsmen, we decided to make it easier for clients to complain anonymously if they wanted to, or for staff to log complaints for them. The 2 main ways we aimed to do this were:

- Resident Complaints & Compliments Card – These are situated by the black comments box in the main reception. Residents are welcome to fill these in and put them in the box. The Comments Poster was put on the wall on all floors and in the canteen and reception area so that clients know that they have this opportunity.
- Complaint Card – This is for staff to fill out and is kept on reception. If a client comes to see us and complains verbally in person, this is now seen as a complaint. This complaint card gives staff the way to record these complaints. These are then passed on to the Housing management and reviewed as service requests (e.g. the light in my room is not working), complaints (e.g. I mentioned to staff about my light not working 2 weeks ago and it still hasn't been fixed), and whether it is an actual complaint.

When we attempted this new system in Autumn 2024 there was a little resistance from staff initially, as they felt there would be more work for them, and it was also a challenge to change the attitude around receiving complaints, and seeing them as a good tool to help us improve the service we provide. We ended up bringing the proposal to staff again in early 2025 and started the new process officially then and it was put into place.

YMCA Bournemouth understand that beneficiary satisfaction is of utmost importance to delivering a fair and inclusive service. The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code is

clear in its expectations on what all residents should expect from their Landlord, including Social housing services such as ours.

The number of complaints recorded for this last year were 14 compared to 5 in the previous year. 5 of these complaints were upheld and action taken to make improvements – only 1 anti-social behaviour complaint was escalated to stage 2 and dealt with by the COO.

- 3 regarding Cleanliness. These complaints were all dealt with very quickly and changes were made.
- 6 regarding Antisocial Behaviour. These complaints have all been addressed. Although Antisocial Behaviour outside the front of our main Hostel is still a big issue. Some of our residents contribute to this, but there are also non-residents, associated with our residents who contribute. We are working closely with Police, businesses in the road we are based, and local authorities to tackle what is a challenging issue.
- 2 regarding Staff Conduct. These complaints were found to be unfounded, but the clients felt listened to, which is a positive.
- 2 regarding Quality of Service. These complaints were also found to be unfounded, and there was just some miscommunication, which when residents were spoken to about this helped them.
- 1 regarding Food. This complaint came from a particular resident and was an isolated opinion in the Hostel.

Learning opportunities from this have been;

- To improve the communication we have with residents, particularly where there may be a maintenance job, that may inconvenience them.
- Antisocial Behaviour outside the Hostel, particularly in the evenings and overnight is an issue for us, but as mentioned above, we are working with various authorities and businesses, as well as increasing our own efforts to tackle this challenging issue.

## **CLIENT SATISFACTION**

At the end of June, we gave a Client Satisfaction Survey to every resident to fill in. Of 110 residents at the time, we have currently had 16 filled in. We have tried various incentives to get the surveys filled in, with not much success, but hope to have large enough proportion filled in to get meaningful statistics by the end of September.