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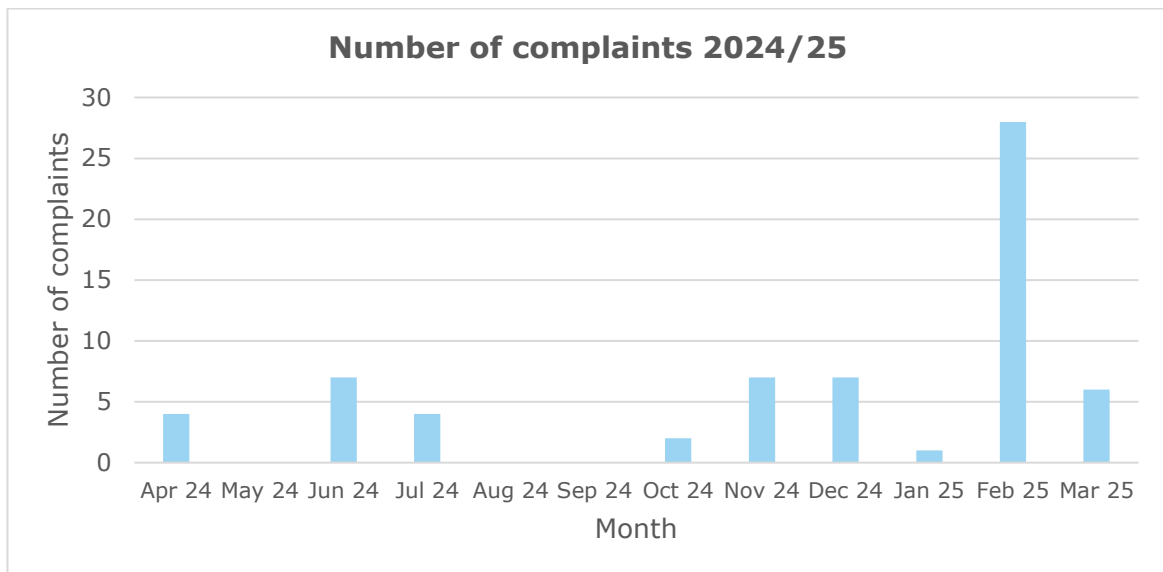
## **Annual Feedback Performance & Service Improvement Report 2024/25**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Our mission is to provide young people in Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire a safe place they can stay, people they can trust and support to fulfil their potential. At YMCA Milton Keynes we take every complaint very seriously, regardless of the format in which it is received, and value every compliment.
- 1.2 Our Feedback Policy takes into account the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which became statutory from April 2024. We have now completed our second annual self-assessment against the Code. We are pleased to see that the number of complaints recorded has significantly increased compared with last year, as we are committed to building a culture of learning from complaints - valuing all feedback and using it to identify areas for improvement and drive positive change.

### **2. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS**

- 2.1 A total of 66 complaints were received in 2024/25, a significant increase on the 16 complaints received last financial year. Last year we made amendments to our Feedback Policy based on our self assessment, and provided staff training on how to make it more accessible for residents to make a complaint.
- 2.2 Two issues led to 39 of these complaints. A fault with our heating and hot water system led to 13 complaints in November/December, and a change to our policy on receiving food donations led to 22 complaints in February. We are delighted that residents have felt empowered to complain in this way and that their voice is heard.
- 2.3 The remaining 27 complaints is still almost a 70% increase on the 16 received last year. This increase is thought to be due to staff better recognising and capturing when a young person is making a complaint but doesn't use the word "Complaint".
- 2.4 The vast majority (64) were from residents, two were from a neighbour.



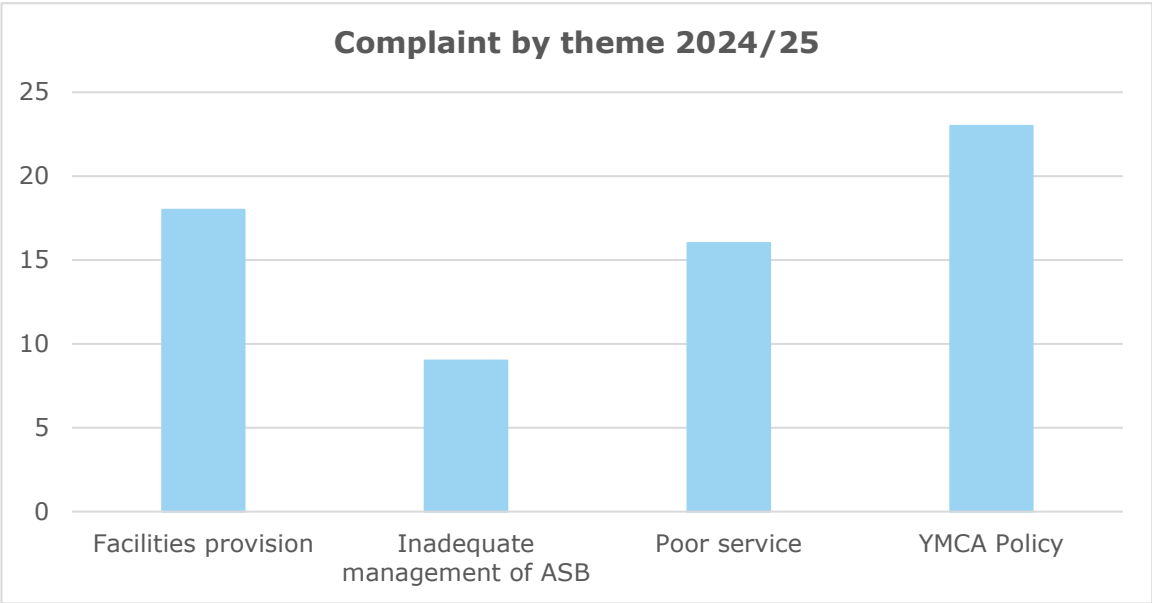
- 2.5 The busiest month for complaints was February due to the change to our policy on receiving food donations, plus 6 additional complaints in that month.
- 2.6 The complaints about the fault with our heating and hot water system were spread across November and December, and only one other complaint was received within those months, which makes them appear less notable in this breakdown.
- 2.7 Two complaints were escalated to stage 2, no complaints were refused.

### 3. COMPLAINT RESPONSE TIMES

- 3.1 Our response timeframe is set out in our Feedback Policy, which meets Housing Ombudsman guidelines. Unless we inform the complainant that an extension is necessary to fully investigate the matter, then we must acknowledge the response within 5 working days and respond within 10 working days after the acknowledgement has been sent.
- 3.2 In 2024/25 92% of complaints (61) were responded to with our response timeframe. Five complaints exceeded this timeframe, the response timeframe for these was between 20 and 66 days, see Appendix A for more details.
- 3.3 The delay that led to five complaints not being replied to within the time have been investigated to improve service delivery. See sections 7 & 8 for more information.

**4. COMPLAINT BY THEME**

4.1 The complaints can be broken down into four key themes.



4.2 The theme that received the most complaints was YMCA Policy, but all but one of these related to the decision not to receive food donations due to the food safety risk, the other related to residents not being treated equally.

4.3 Seventeen of the 18 complaints about our Facilities provision were about the fault with our heating and hot water system, this year we are pleased to see there was only one complaint about our Wifi provision.

4.4 Complaints about poor service were for a variety of reasons, 8 were about staff, 5 were about how staff dealt with a situation, and 3 were about how a repair was handled.

4.5 Complaints about inadequate management of ASB relate primarily to noise, with one also being about an ongoing smell of cannabis.

**5. SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**

5.1 All complaints are considered to assess whether any service improvements could be made in response to the complaint. Where service improvements are identified, this is communicated to the complainant as part of the response.

5.2 Service improvements this year are listed, by theme, in the table below:

<b>Complaint Theme</b>	<b>Complaint</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Service Improvement</b>
YMCA Policy	YMCA not receiving food donations because of food safety risk	Situation reconsidered to identify solutions that allowed donations in a safe way.	Community fridge installed in reception, to allow residents to safe storage of food donations.
YMCA Policy	Residents not being treated equally	We take a person-centred approach to support, and sometime apply elastic tolerance.	Frontline staff encouraged to explain this approach to residents when residents feel something appears unfair.
Facilities provision	Lack of heating and/or hot water	Residents (including those that did not complain) offered electric heaters, free coats, showers at local hotel or gym.	Boiler failure was out of our control, refunds were issued to all residents for the period they were affected. It was recognised that better management of complaints about facilities will allow us to better identify any future issues early and track whether works have fully resolved the issue – improvements made to our CRM.
Facilities provision	Wifi connectivity	Residents asked to provide the MAC address of the device so that the issue can be investigated by our IT provider.	Improved process based on last year's complaints has reduced complaints about wifi provision.
Poor service	Complaint about staff	Complaint investigated & completion of investigation communicated to resident.	Staff support, training, clearer communication of YMCA policies and where necessary performance management.
Poor service	How staff dealt with a situation	Situation investigated, and outcome of investigation communicated to resident.	Staff de-briefed and supported to identify how they might manage a similar situation differently in future.
Inadequate management of ASB	Noise and or cannabis smell not adequately managed	Residents encouraged to report noise issues or cannabis smell in the moment, so that our 24/7 staff team can react immediately.	This advice added to our FAQs for new residents.

## **6. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS**

- 6.1 Two complaints were escalated to stage 2. One was about the lack of heating/hot water in December, and the other was about staff not managing the noise from other residents well enough. Both of these were resolved at stage 2 within the appropriate timeframe.

## **7. AREAS OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH OUR POLICY & HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CODE**

- 7.1 The production of this report has identified areas of non-compliance with our Feedback Policy and the Housing Ombudsman's Code. These are:
- i) Five stage 1 complaints were not responded to within the stated timeframe.
  - ii) Spot checks indicate that not all correspondence was attached to the complaint record, making it difficult to know whether the complaint was acknowledged in writing (although often acknowledged in person during a discussion with the complainant about the issue).
  - iii) Spot checks identify that in some cases the acknowledgement did not use the template letter.

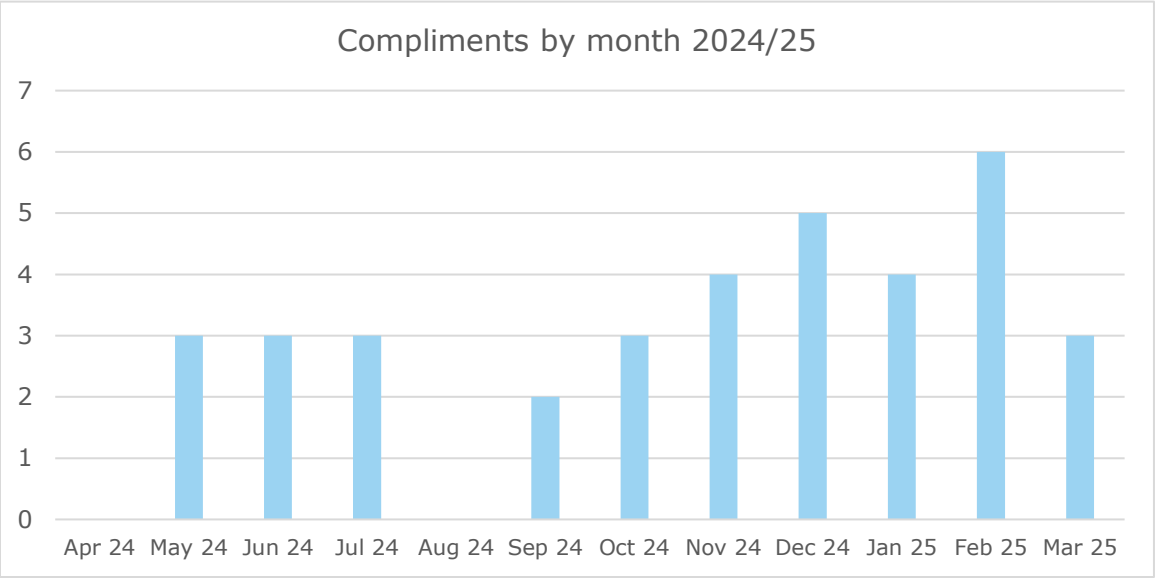
## **8. ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE COMPLIANCE WITH OUR POLICY & HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CODE IN 2024/25**

- 8.1 New complaint recording page on our CRM (In-Form), to track all dates relevant to the Housing Ombudsman's Code. The page automatically calculates the deadlines for acknowledgement and response, and email alerts will notify relevant managers of imminent deadlines.
- 8.2 Regular spot checks throughout the year will assess whether correspondence and supporting documentation are being recorded correctly.
- 8.3 All correspondence regarding a complaint will include the complaint reference number to make it easier to track and manage supporting documentation.

**9. NUMBER OF COMPLIMENTS**

9.1 A total of thirty-six compliments were received in 2023/24, a 26% increase on the previous year (up from 29). Two were from another professional, the rest were from residents.

Compliments are displayed by month.



**10. TOPIC OF COMPLIMENTS**

10.1 All compliments fell within the theme of “Great service”. The vast majority of compliments were about the support received from staff, with many compliments being shown in the form of a small gift such as chocolates or flowers. These small tokens of appreciation are only accepted in line with our Professional Boundaries Policy.



## 10.2 Examples of compliments are:

Support: "Thank you for supporting me to settle in YMCA and providing a safe space for me. I have had a brilliant time. I have enjoyed myself and took part in most of the activities especially football sessions which gave me a social circle. I made many friends. All the staff are helpful and attended to me when I requested support. I will forever be grateful of the skills I have acquired to live independently in a foreign land with no family."

Support: "I am a better person now, and you definitely have helped with that, so thank you"

Support: "You spoke to me outside when I had applied. I was freshly homeless and you just listened and gave me advice. You were a source of light in a very dark place. Thank you."

Whole project: "It feels like a family here and it feels like home"

Hard working: "Several residents complimented the way Michael handled a busy, stressful shift"



**Here for young people  
Here for communities  
Here for you**

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

FAMILY & YOUTH WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

HOUSING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

SUPPORT & ADVICE

## APPENDIX A – RESPONSE TIMES FOR THOSE THAT WERE OVER OUR TARGET TIMESCALES

Date	Complaint from	Complaint theme	Response time (days)
20/04/2024	Resident	Inadequate management of ASB	26
03/06/2024	Resident	Inadequate management of ASB	24
28/01/2025	Resident	Poor service	20
02/02/2025	Resident	Facilities provision	66
02/02/2025	Resident	Facilities provision	66



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