



**POLICY:
COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS & COMPLIMENTS**

1. Purpose

YANA aims to provide a high-quality service to individuals and organisations but recognises there may be occasions when the users of our service feel that the quality or level of service received has been less than they could reasonably expect. Responding to complaints, comments and compliments is part of providing a high-quality service.

YANA recognises that it is every person's right to use the formal procedure and YANA should do everything it can to make that process as easy, and straightforward, as possible for the person making the complaint.

All complaints will be taken seriously and investigated accordingly. Complainants will be notified of the outcome of their complaint in writing where appropriate.

If you feel unhappy about any aspect of the organisation we would like you to inform us as soon as possible, so that we can improve the running of YANA and the wellbeing of our volunteers and clients.

2. Scope

This policy and connected procedure is intended to provide a means to resolve a dispute between YANA and any external complainant. Complaints are likely to be in one or more of the following areas:

- a) Dissatisfaction with YANA's service: for example, inadequate work, problems with casework, unacceptable delay or failure to deliver a service
- b) Disputes between users and the organisation regarding policy, procedures or activities
- c) Discourtesy or unhelpfulness on the part of staff.

This policy concerns complaints from users of the service, an organisation, or member of the public. It does not address complaints made by staff or volunteers (see Disciplinary Policy and Grievance Policy) nor by job applicants (see Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and Recruitment Policy).

3. General procedure

When someone wishes to register a complaint, the following procedures should be adopted, excepting where the complaint is against the Charity Manager, where the same procedures will be followed, but with the Chair of the Trustees substituting for the Charity Manager's role at all stages.

Complaints about serious issues, such as sexual abuse, dishonesty, or violence by members of staff, should be addressed directly to the Charity Manager.

Where there is dissatisfaction with the service provided by YANA, the service user has a right to raise this, either formally or informally. Both types of complaint will be treated seriously and will be reviewed for learning outcomes.

4. Informal Complaints

If a comment is made about the service, which indicates dissatisfaction, it will be dealt with as an informal complaint.

Informal complaints may be resolved through discussion and mutual agreement. Written confirmation of the outcome should be sent if requested and should always include any learning or procedure change that YANA has implemented as a direct result of the complaint.

If the matter is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, they will be advised to make a formal complaint.

5. Formal Complaint

Anybody wishing to make a formal complaint will be encouraged to do so by putting it in writing. The Charity Manager will formally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 days.

YANA will advise the complainant as to how their complaint will be dealt with, i.e. what will happen, who will investigate and the likely timescale; and will ask and record what the complainant is able to say they want to happen as a result of their complaint. We will investigate the circumstances of the complaint promptly.

If the complaint concerns the behaviour of an employee or volunteer from YANA, then that worker will be informed of the complaint against them at the earliest possible stage.

On completion of the investigation, we will produce a report setting out the findings and any recommendations for action. Where necessary we will seek clarification whether personnel are willing / able to implement the action recommended.

YANA will notify the complainant, or their representative, of the results of the investigation clearly and simply, and give reasons for their decision within a reasonable time. If this is not within 21 days of the complaint being made, then we will give an explanation for the delay.

During the course of investigation into any complaint, all matters relating to it will be treated in a confidential manner and will be discussed only with those immediately concerned.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the investigation or the proposed resolution of their complaint, they will be advised that the matter can be referred to a Review Panel for adjudication. The panel will comprise three persons, including at least one independent person from YANA.

The complainant will have the right (if they so wish), to put their case in person, or via their representative, to the panel. The Panel will review all the circumstances and their recommendation will be recorded in writing within 48 hours of completion of their deliberations and sent to YANA.

We will respond to the recommendation of the Panel and make its resulting action/ decision known to the complainant within 21 days.

6. Monitoring and learning

YANA will keep a written record and monitor all formal complaints received. This record will include the nature of complaints, time taken to respond, action taken and outcomes. Outcomes will be monitored in terms of user satisfaction and implications for future service delivery and training. The data will be anonymised in line with The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.

YANA Trustees will receive regular reports on complaints received and processed, and will undertake an annual review of working procedures to ensure the introduction of any beneficial changes indicated by complaints investigation and resolution.

Related Documents:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Recruitment Policy

Revision history

This policy and related guidance will be monitored by the Chair of Trustees/Charity Manager on a regular basis for compliance and will be reviewed at least annually.

Date policy approved or amended	Amendments	Signed
4 November 2020		
7 December 2021	Updated Policy and Process	E.Haley
October 2023	Policy and procedure updated by external consultants, Kiltti Ltd	E.Haley