

RESIDENT HANDBOOK

CONTENTS

Welcome to YMCA Reading	1
Who we are	2
Your licence agreement	3
Our House Rules	4
Boundaries between staff, volunteers and residents	5
Safeguarding and protection from abuse	6
Facilities	6
Post	6
Laundry Facilities	6
TV Licence	7
WiFi Internet Access	7
Breakfast - Café Access	7
Other YMCA Reading Facilities	8
What you can expect from us	8
Resident's Charter	8
Privacy Policy	8
CCTV	9
Repairs and Maintenance	9
Moving in - Induction and Inventory	9
YMCA Reading's responsibility	9
Your Responsibility	10
Repairs	10
Annual Inspections & Planned Maintenance	12
PAT Testing Electrical Equipment	12
Know where equipment is	12
Disabled adaptations	13
Safety	13
Fire Safety	13
You, your neighbours and the people you live with	14
Unacceptable Behaviours	14
Dealing with unacceptable behaviour	15

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.

Complaints Procedure	17
Informal Complaints Procedure.....	17
Formal Complaints.....	17
Engagement – Getting Involved	19
Moving home.....	19
YMCA Support Services	20
Directory	22



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.

WELCOME TO YMCA READING

YMCA Reading would like to welcome you to your new home.

Our Support and Housing Team are here to help you adjust and to help you make progress towards being able to do the following:

- Enter employment or education if you have not already done so.
- Work with you to address the issues identified in your Support Plan and help you into work or education so that you can improve your life chances.
- Move-on to suitable independent accommodation

There are a number of responsibilities you have to accept when you move into YMCA Reading Supported Accommodation they include:

- Regular engagement with your Case Practitioner is an important aspect of your stay here at the YMCA.
- Your rent and service charges must be paid on time. If you are having difficulties discuss this with your Case Practitioner as soon as possible.
- There are rules and regulations that all residents must adhere to in order to ensure that all residents are safe and respected. Your safety and the safety of all other YMCA Residents, Staff and visitors are of the utmost importance to us.

This resident pack sets-out all of the information you need to know about:

- Your licence and accommodation;
- Other YMCA Services;
- Rules, regulations and safety information;
- What to do if you need repairs;
- Contact information.

If you have any questions at all just ask your Case Practitioner or the Duty Officer who will be happy to help you.

I hope your stay at YMCA Reading provides you with the support and time you need to progress your goals and ambitions.

Kind regards

Arlene Kersley
Chief Executive

WHO WE ARE

YMCA is the oldest and largest charity working with young people in the world. YMCA Reading first started in 1846 and opened its doors to young people in 1847.

YMCA Reading is a Homes and Communities Agency Registered Provider of safe, supported accommodation for young people aged 16-25. We are committed to helping young people in need, no matter what their race, sex, disability, sexuality or religion. Our housing scheme provides safe, secure and affordable accommodation for young people. Our aim is to help residents get the skills they need to live independently.

YMCA Reading is located at:

34 Parkside Road
Reading
RG30 2DD

Our main phone number is: 0118 575746

Our website is: www.ymcareading.org

Our hours of operation are:

We are open 24/7. Housing and Support Staff are available from 8am to 21:30 7 days a week. From 21.30 to 8.00 a night support staff member is on duty for security and concierge purposes.

In addition to providing supported housing for up to 40 young people YMCA Reading also have the following services:

- Parkside Café – open Monday to Friday 9:00 – 16:00, Saturday 9:30 – 14:30
- Parkside Pre-School – for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
- Milward Sports Centre – Multi-sports gym and sport studio. Residents can use the space for sport related activity provided they book it in advance through their Case Practitioner.
- Workshop – alternative education for young people in danger of exclusion from education. Residents can speak to their Case Practitioner if they are interested in organising Workshop sessions.
- Padworth Outdoor Activity Centre – located on 2.5 acres of woodland in Hampshire, the Padworth centre offers opportunities for young people to explore the countryside, camp and take part in a variety of outdoor activities.

YMCA Reading as part of the wider YMCA England and Global YMCA movement are able to offer young people a variety of opportunities to get involved with their community locally, nationally and even internationally.

Our vision

YMCA Reading aims to be an inclusive Christian movement transforming communities so that all young people can belong, contribute and thrive.

Our values

The way we act at YMCA Reading is characterised by five strong and distinctive values that flow from our Christian ethos.

1. We actively look for opportunities to make a transformative impact on young lives in the communities where we work, and believe that every person is of equal value.
2. We offer people the space they need to feel secure, respected, heard and valued; and we always protect, trust, hope and persevere.
3. We strive to inspire each person we meet to nurture their body, mind and spirit, and to realise their full potential in all they do.
4. We stand up for young people, speak out on issues that affect their lives, and help them to find confidence in their own voice.
5. We are committed to the wellbeing of the communities we serve and believe in the positive benefit of participation, locally and in the wider world.

YOUR LICENCE AGREEMENT

Your contract to live at YMCA Reading is known as a licence agreement. This is the legal contract you sign that gives you the right to live in your home at the YMCA. It tells you your rights and responsibilities. It also tells you what we have to do as your landlord.

As a resident, you have the right:

- to enjoy your home in peace;
- to have repairs done;
- not to be annoyed, upset or frightened by anyone else in your home; and
- to complain if you are not happy with your home.

As a resident, you also have a responsibility:

- to pay your rent;
- not to be violent or aggressive to other people because of their race, age, disability, sex or for any other reason;
- not to cause a nuisance to anyone else in your home, any visitors, support staff or your neighbours;

- not to play music or your TV so loudly that it disturbs other people, including your neighbours; and
- not to cause damage to the furniture and fittings in your home.

The licence agreement also tells you what our responsibilities are as your landlord.

Your licence agreement is a separate document which will be given to you and explained in detail along with this handbook when you move in.

OUR HOUSE RULES

We have 'house rules' that we have developed to make sure that living at the YMCA is as positive and enjoyable an experience as possible. Rules are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all residents, staff and visitors to YMCA Reading.

The following list details our house rules:

- Visitors – All of the rules regarding Resident Visitors are outlined in a separate policy which will be given to you along with this handbook.
- There is a separate Residents Policy regarding Drugs, Alcohol and Substance misuse, this will be given to you along with this handbook.
- Violent and/or destructive behaviour will result in immediate sanction and may result in the loss of your licence without notice.
- Residents are not permitted to store or use petrol, paraffin or any other inflammable liquid or materials, or vehicle parts in the building
- Residents are responsible for cleaning their rooms, bathrooms and kitchens. Rubbish is to be taken out at least weekly and placed **in** the bins provided in the car park. No rubbish is ever to be thrown from windows, this included cigarette ends.
- No fixings to be made in any of the walls or furniture, internally or externally.
- Smoking is only permitted in your room or outside of the building in the designated area.
- Bicycles may be left in the bike-shed at the owners' risk, but must not be brought into the building.
- No items of personal furniture are allowed to be brought into the building without prior consent. This includes double beds.
- Gambling is not permitted anywhere in the building.
- **No pets** are allowed, except for guide dogs, into the building.

- Residents must not enter communal areas, including the Café, in a state of undress likely to cause offence to other residents, visitors or staff.
- Possessions/items left without prior arrangement at the end of your stay will be disposed of at staff discretion.
- Never let anyone you do not know into the building.

Breaking any of the rules above and particular rules that apply to drugs and substance misuse and the Visitors policy may result in you losing your right to have visitors, you may risk losing your home here at YMCA Reading and could result in police action.

BOUNDARIES BETWEEN STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND RESIDENTS

Our staff and volunteers are required to maintain a professional boundary between you and them at all times.

Working with young people can be very difficult and sometimes it is hard for staff and volunteers to build working relationships with them without becoming their 'friend'.

With clearly defined boundaries, the young person and the staff member understand where they stand.

The following lists some of the ways in which this boundary should be maintained:

- Staff are not permitted to allow friendships or intimate relationships to develop with you.
- Staff are not permitted to invite you to their home.
- Staff are not to socialise with you outside of work hours i.e. have a drink with you in a pub.
- Staff are not permitted to consume alcohol or illegal substances with you at any time.
- Staff are not permitted to give you cigarettes or tobacco. Staff must abide by the YMCA Reading Smoke Free Workplace Policy.
- Staff are not permitted to lend you money.
- Staff are not permitted to borrow money from you.
- Staff are not permitted to pay you to run errands for them (e.g. go to the shop).
- Staff are expected to be role models to you, this means not swearing in front of you and behaving in a professional manner when working with you.
- Staff are expected to abide with our confidentiality policies at all times, and not to undermine other staff members in front of you.
- Staff are not permitted to buy goods from you at any time.

- Staff are not permitted to sell goods to you, apart from items sold from the Parkside Café in the course of their duties.

SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION FROM ABUSE

We take your protection very seriously. We have a Safeguarding Policy that explains our procedures for keeping you safe from abuse – you can view this at any time by contacting Reception or your Case Practitioner.

If you have any concerns regarding your safety, or the safety of someone else, you can speak to any member of staff, in complete confidence, at any time.

Alternatively, you can contact the Reading Borough Council Single Point of Access Team if you are 18 or younger at:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/concernsaboutachild>

or for adults:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/report-abuse>

FACILITIES

POST

Any post that is received for you will be placed in a pigeon hole for your collection at Reception.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES

There is a laundry room located on the 1st and 2nd floor of the accommodation block. The cost of laundry is incorporated into your service charges, there is no direct charge for the use of the machines.

Please do not leave laundry unattended in the laundry rooms for any period of time. YMCA Reading take no responsibility for lost items where laundry has been left unattended.

Any items left in the laundry room will be bagged up and taken to charity every two weeks.

TV LICENCE

The law requires that you have your TV licence if view any TV on either a TV, computer, laptop, mobile or other portable device. You are responsible for the purchase of your own TV licence.

WIFI INTERNET ACCESS

Wireless internet is available throughout the building at no extra charge to residents. Broadband service to any residential building can be intermittent, this is due to external fluctuations of service and at times due to residents downloading excessive quantities of data.

Where residents are downloading too much data their access may be cut-off.

Free access to wifi is a privilege and can be cut off at any time at YMCA Reading discretion.

BREAKFAST - CAFÉ ACCESS

The Parkside Café is open Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 4pm and Saturdays from 9.30 to 14.30. Sundays Closed.

Breakfast is available as part of your licence agreement Monday through Saturday between 9am to 10 am. There is a set menu available for residents.

During holiday closures a cold breakfast will be made available.



OTHER YMCA READING FACILITIES

THE MILWARD SPORT CENTRE has a Multi-Purpose Gym and a Sports Studio which can be booked for use by residents. Speak to your Case Practitioner if you would like more information about using our sports facilities. Use of the Sports facilities is free to residents provided they are previously booked and are not in use by other groups.

MILWARD IT SUITE – We also have an IT Training room that can be used under supervision for training and for writing CVs and or job 'education applications. Speak to your Case Practitioner about the use of the IT Suite.

PARKSIDE PRE-SCHOOL – YMCA Reading run a Preschool for 2-4 year olds, we ask all residents to be respectful of our younger users and their parents. Please avoid use of foul language, rubbish, including cigarette ends, must never be thrown from windows, and smoking of illegal substances is strictly forbidden.

THE YMCA WOOD WORKSHOP – located in the courtyard between the Accommodation building and Milward is the Workshop, where alternative education is provided primarily to young people in danger of exclusion from school. If residents are interested in having sessions in the Workshop it must be organised through the Support Team.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

RESIDENT'S CHARTER

YMCA Reading has a comprehensive Resident's Charter that mirrors this handbook. It is available on our website:
<https://www.ymcareading.org/what-you-can-expect-from-us/>

It is also posted on the main display board in the reception area. If you would like a copy, your Case Practitioner will print one for you.

PRIVACY POLICY

Here at YMCA Reading, we are committed to protecting resident's personal information and we want you to feel assured that any personal information you give us is held securely and safely, and only ever shared under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018,

We have a comprehensive Privacy Policy that outlines your rights regarding your personal information, including what personal

information we collect, how we might use it, how long we keep it for, and how we keep it safe.

Your Case Practitioner will provide you with a full copy of the Privacy Policy on request.

CCTV

For the safety of our residents, staff and other visitors, YMCA Reading operates comprehensive CCTV in all of the public areas, both inside and outside, of our buildings. The data collected is explained within our Privacy Policy. CCTV footage is viewed live by duty staff to maintain security and is only reviewed if there is a concern about a legal issue, security breach or, health and well-being concern.

There are only 3 designated officers that have CCTV review permission. Footage is not shared except at the request of the police as a legal requirement.

Data is only maintained for a period of 28 days before deletion.

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

MOVING IN - INDUCTION AND INVENTORY

When you move in a member of YMCA staff will go through an inventory list of all the furniture and fittings in your room.

You will be asked to check that the list is correct and sign it. You will be given a copy of the inventory for your records. Immediately inform staff if there is anything missing or broken from the list. This inventory will be rechecked when you move-out and you will be charged for any missing or damaged items.

You will also be given an electronic key card that will give you access to the accommodation areas of the building. Should you lose or damage the card there will be a charge of **£7.50** for a replacement card.

YMCA READING'S RESPONSIBILITY

We are responsible for keeping the following in reasonable repair and fit for use:

- ✓ The building's structure and its outside appearance.
- ✓ The major infrastructure (for example, central heating, water and sewers).

- ✓ The shared areas (for example, the stairs, hallway and shared lounges).
- ✓ The furniture and fittings we supply, which are on your inventory list when you move-in, except where they are damaged by you.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

You and YMCA Reading are jointly responsible for keeping your home in a good state of repair.

However, you must keep your room clean and tidy and if you or your visitors damage the property in any way, you will be responsible for paying for any repair costs.

You must immediately report any damage, faults or breakages to reception.

You must give YMCA employees or contractors access at all reasonable times of the day to inspect damage and make repairs.

Only YMCA employees or contractors are authorised to carry-out repairs, maintenance or alterations to your home or our fixtures, fittings and furnishings.

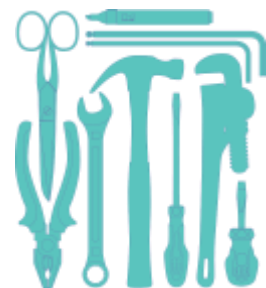
Insuring your property - you are responsible for insuring the contents of your room. We strongly recommend that you insure your personal belongings and that you consider getting third-party cover to protect you in the event that you damage your neighbour's property. YMCA Reading is responsible for insuring the structure of the building against fire, flood and storm damage.

REPAIRS

If any part of the fixtures and fittings of your room or the communal areas get broken or need repairing, it is important that you tell YMCA staff at reception straight away so that they can complete a job sheet and ensure the problem is fixed as soon as possible.

Don't just mention it in passing to a YMCA Staff member, make sure the problem is registered with Reception so that it can be given a 'priority'.

We are committed to dealing quickly with any repairs and we have a clear policy in terms of priorities and times within which we deal with them.



The YMCA Maintenance Team will contact you giving you the priority of repair and informing you of when the repair will be made. Unless you

say otherwise, YMCA staff will assume that you give permission to enter your room in order to carry out the repair even if you are not there. If you want to be there while the repair is made, please make arrangements with reception.

PRIORITY 1 – EMERGENCIES

Repairs needed to avoid an immediate danger to health or that present a risk to the safety of residents and/or staff, or serious damage to the building, (for example a major flood from a burst pipe, burst water tank or electrical fault).

The YMCA aims to carry-out these repairs within 24 hours. This may mean making the area safe in the first instance until the next working day to when a full repair can be made.

If you have an emergency repair, you must report it immediately to reception or dial 555 on the internal phone.

PRIORITY 2 – URGENT

These are repairs that are not considered an emergency but which affect your comfort and convenience. The YMCA aims to carry-out these repairs within 5 working days. Examples of urgent repairs are; blocked or leaky waste pipe, faulty plug sockets, leaking overflow pipes and radiators that won't heat up.

These repairs must be reported and logged at reception.

PRIORITY 3 – ROUTINE

Routine repairs are not emergencies or urgent but are necessary to maintain the quality of the building. The YMCA aims to carry-out these repairs within 28 days. Example as of routine repairs are; plaster work, easing doors and windows and guttering repairs.

Once a repair has been made the YMCA Maintenance Staff will leave you with a Repairs Satisfaction Form to complete. Return the form to Reception once you have completed it.

We want to know:

- If you were happy with how the repair was carried out;

- If the maintenance worker was polite and respectful;
- If the maintenance worker did a good job.

This information is important to us. It helps us to improve our service to you.

ANNUAL INSPECTIONS & PLANNED MAINTENANCE

Once a year, we carry out an inspection of the whole building. If we find any repairs that need doing, we will add them to either the day-to-day repairs schedule or the programme of planned maintenance.

We have to plan ahead to maintain some parts of the building, including your home. We call this planned maintenance. This includes:

- Cyclical repairs – work that is carried out on a regular planned basis, like servicing gas appliances or painting.
- Major repairs programme – where we plan to replace major items throughout the building like: windows, kitchen units, bathrooms, roofs etc.

PAT TESTING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Included in our planned maintenance is an annual test of all of the electrical appliances that the YMCA provides to ensure they are safe. This includes items such as fridges and washing machines. Any equipment that fails will be removed and replaced.

You are responsible for the electrical safety of any appliance that you bring in for your own use.

KNOW WHERE EQUIPMENT IS

Whenever you rent out a property you should be aware of a few basic maintenance issues. You need to know where your mains stopcock is to prevent flooding and should always know where your fuse box or in this case electricity circuit breaker is. The location of these items in your flat is noted below:

Item	Location
Stopcock (main water supply tap)	Room risers – contact staff urgently if there is a leak or flood problem.
Electricity circuit breaker (main electricity supply to your room).	Main wall in your room.

DISABLED ADAPTATIONS

If you have a disability that makes day-to-day living in your home difficult, we may be able to help you by adapting your home to make it easier for you. For example, by fitting handrails, etc. Before we consider making adaptations we will need a recommendation from your doctor or occupational therapist.

SAFETY

FIRE SAFETY

Our housing scheme is covered by a modern electronic fire alarm system. We also provide fire extinguishers and fire blankets where appropriate. We service all of the fire equipment 4 times a year to make sure it is working properly and safe to use.

Please familiarise yourself with the location of fire exits as soon as you move-in.

If you come across a fire:

- 1. DO NOT attempt to put out the fire yourself.**
- 2. Activate the nearest red fire alarm call point.**
- 3. Leave the area immediately by the nearest fire escape.**
- 4. DO NOT attempt to collect personal belongings.**
- 5. Leave the building and muster (meet) at the designated fire evacuation assembly point (Main Car Park at the back of YMCA Reading's building)**

If the fire alarm sounds:

- 1. Do not assume it is a drill.**
- 2. Leave the area immediately by the nearest fire escape.**
- 3. DO NOT attempt to collect personal belongings.**
- 4. Leave the building and muster (meet) at the designated fire evacuation assembly point (Main Car Park at the back of YMCA Reading's building)**

Smoke detectors are fitted in every room. **They are there for your safety and the safety of other residents.** Tampering with the smoke detectors puts lives at risk and is illegal. This includes removing them, covering them up or damaging them in anyway. You will be charged for any damage done to the smoke detectors in your living space, and you put your housing at risk if you tamper with them.

Fire doors should be kept closed at all times. Do not prop the fire doors open. Ensure that doors are not blocked.

Fire extinguishers and other fire safety equipment must not be removed or tampered with.

Other Safety Information:

- Doorways should never be blocked, if you see a blocked doorway tell a YMCA staff member
- If you see something that you think is unsafe in the building, tell a YMCA staff member.
- Do not leave things on the floor that people could trip on.
- Do not interfere with firefighting and fire safety equipment such as extinguishers and smoke detectors.

The YMCA is responsible for your safety and the safety of other residents, staff and visitors. You are equally responsible to make sure that you stick to the health and safety rules.

YOU, YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND THE PEOPLE YOU LIVE WITH

Sometimes it can be difficult to get along with neighbours, however in all areas of life we need to learn to live together in a respectful and considerate manner.

If you have a problem, talk with your support worker or another member of staff and ask them to help you sort it out.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

YMCA Reading will not tolerate any of the following behaviours:

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – this can take many forms. It may be aimed at one person or a group of people. It may include:

- Bullying
- Playing loud music
- Banging and slamming doors (kicking doors in is a criminal offence and will result in police notification and damage charges)

- Dumping rubbish
- Giving unknown people access to any part of the building.

HATE CRIMES – behaviour that deliberately intends to harm or intimidate a particular person or group of people. It is often motivated by prejudice because of someone's race, colour, religion, ethnic background, sex, age disability or sexual orientation or medical condition. You must not harass your neighbours, their visitors or YMCA employees, contractors or visitors. Harassment may include:

- Verbal abuse;
- Using or threatening to use violence;
- Using abusive, racist or insulting words or behaviour;
- Threatening or abusive letters, phone calls, emails or the use of social media (like Instagram and YouTube).
- Physical assaults or damage to property, including graffiti; and
- Doing anything that interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of other people.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE – threatened or actual violence carried out by one person against another in the home. This may include:

- Violence from a partner or ex-partner of one of our residents.
- Violence between siblings (brothers and/or sisters)
- Violence between parents; or
- Violence between people who share a home

COERCIVE BEHAVIOUR - a continuing act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to control, harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Domestic violence and coercive behaviour can be physical, verbal or emotional. It can be against men or women, adults or children. If you commit, cause or threaten domestic violence or coercive behaviour against anyone who lives at the YMCA we might end your licence.

If you are a victim of domestic violence or coercive behaviour, it is important that you speak to your support worker or get independent advice to ensure you know all of your options.

If you are experiencing unacceptable behaviour report it to YMCA staff immediately. They will investigate your complaint and tell you about any action we can take.

You may be advised to report criminal incidents to the police, we will support you to do this if you would like us to.

If any incident has taken place you should take a photo of anything that could be used as evidence and make a note of:

- The time and place;
- Details of what has happened;
- Names of any witnesses;
- The effect it has had on you;
- The name and number of the police officer you spoke to if you reported it.

We will not tolerate any antisocial behaviour, hate crimes or violence of any kind against an individual or group of people at the YMCA. We will take any reports of such behaviour very seriously, and will support those people who are suffering from such behaviour. If a criminal act has taken place, we **may** notify the police.

We will work closely with you to investigate any reports of anti-social behaviour, hate crimes or domestic violence. We will remove any racist graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported.

We will work with you to collect the evidence to:

- Take legal action if necessary.
- Terminate the licence of any resident that is found to have been responsible for this behaviour
- Place a visitor ban on anyone that is involved in this behaviour to prevent them entry into the YMCA.

We will work closely with the police and local authorities if they are considering taking any action.

You are responsible for your behaviour and the behaviour of your visitors in your flat, in the shared areas and anywhere else within the YMCA buildings. You risk losing your home if you, or your visitors, have caused antisocial behaviour, or commit hate crimes or domestic violence. We will investigate all incidents reported.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We take complaints very seriously and we have a formal complaints procedure that we follow. The complaints procedure:

1. Gives people who are not satisfied with our service (residents or their visitors) a way of getting things put right.
2. Gives us a way of monitoring and checking our own performance and getting feedback to see how we can improve and maintain our services and relationship with residents and the public.

If you are not happy with something tell us. You should complain if you feel we have:

- Not done something we should have done;
- Treated you unfairly or impolitely;
- Done something we should not have done; or
- Done something badly.

You don't have to be one of our residents to complain about our service. You may want someone to help you make your complaint, this may be a friend, relative or a support worker.

INFORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Some people don't want to make a formal complaint. They prefer to tell staff by phone or face-to-face, or in an email. If you prefer to keep your complaint informal, YMCA staff will still listen to you and try to put right whatever it is that you are not happy about.

Only YMCA Housing and Support staff can deal with complaints, not volunteers or temporary staff.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

If you are not happy with the way YMCA staff dealt with an informal complaint, or you wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by following either of the following procedures:

1. Follow the YMCA Formal Complaints procedure set-out below; or
2. Refer your complaint directly to Reading Borough, details follow.

Stage 1: How to make a formal complaint

Complete a complaints form, they are available from reception.

You should address your complaint to the General Manager.

The General Manager will consider your written complaint and send you a reply in writing within 5 working days of receiving it.

If your complaint is related to any staff related safeguarding issue, we are obligated to notify the Local Authority Designated Officer at Reading Borough Council.

Stage 2: What to do if you are not happy

If you are not satisfied with the written reply, you can write to the Chief Executive of YMCA Reading and mark your letter 'Private'.

He or she will send you a written reply within 10 working days of receiving your complaint.

Stage 3: If you are still not happy

If you are still not happy you can write to the Chairman of YMCA Reading. Mark your letter 'Private'.

He or she will respond to you in writing within 15 working days of receiving your complaint.

Stage 4: Other actions

If you have been through the entire complaints procedure with a housing or support related complaint and you are still not satisfied with the way, we have dealt with your complaint you can complain to either Reading Borough Council or to the Housing Ombudsman:

Reading Borough Council

Customer Relations Manager

Customer Relations Team

FREEPOST RTLS-CKGK-RKLL

Bridge Street

Reading

RG1 2LU

Tel: 01189 373787

Email: Customer.RelationsTeam@reading.gov.uk

The Housing Ombudsman Service

The Housing Ombudsman will only consider complaints that have been through all stages of the Formal Complaints Process.

The best way to make a complaint to the Housing Ombudsmen is directly online at:

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/>

Or you can contact them at:

P.O. Box 152

Liverpool

L33 7WQ

Tel: 0300 111 3000

ENGAGEMENT – GETTING INVOLVED

At YMCA Reading we seek to actively empower young people to realise their full potential in the community. It is our ambition to have residents as involved in their Housing and Support as possible. You can get involved in the following ways:

- Quarterly Resident Forums take place to allow all residents the opportunity to meet and discuss any problems they may be having.
- There is a suggestion box located on the wall in the main Reception Lobby. This is checked several times a week.
- There is a regular Activities Programme that includes a variety of activities including skills training, health and fitness, mental health workshops, cookery etc. We will consider alternatives if there is enough interest.

MOVING HOME

Set out below are the two ways your occupancy arrangements with YMCA can end.

We would always prefer that it was under option A.

A. Giving up your licence

You need to tell staff at your local YMCA, in writing, when you are ready to move out of your home. You must normally give us four weeks' notice in writing, starting on a Monday. Before you leave you will need

to remove all your personal belongings and leave your flat or room clean and tidy.

We do not have storage space available and cannot be responsible for storage of personal items.

B. What if we end your tenancy or licence?

Your residency at YMCA Reading is under licence not tenancy, therefore no court order is required to ask you to leave.

Depending on the reasons why we are ending your licence, YMCA Reading will usually give you four weeks' notice in writing if we intend to end your licence.

The following are examples of why we might end your tenancy or licence.

- **You owe rent and are not making efforts to pay it.**
- **You have broken one of the conditions of your tenancy or licence agreement.**
- **You have caused serious damage to your home.**
- **You have threatened other people living in our properties.**

If you have consistently broken house rules and fail to engage with the Support Team you may be put on a 7-day licence which means we may revoke your licence giving you only 7 days' notice.

Any behaviour that poses a risk to other residents, staff or visitors may result in immediate termination of licence. This includes violence supply of drugs or other illegal substances, or criminal damage.

YMCA SUPPORT SERVICES

When you move into one of our properties, you will be allocated a Case Practitioner who will assess any support needs that you may have. These could be anything from help claiming Housing Benefit to help with more personal problems. If you need specialist help (for example, help with reading, writing or maths) your case practitioner will discuss this with you and, if you agree, refer you to the relevant agency.

We will work with you in designing a support plan agreed between you and your case practitioner. We aim to complete your initial support plan within 5 working days of you moving in.

Case practitioners are there to deal with any issues that you may have, including:

- difficulties getting used to living in a community;
- help with claiming benefits or dealing with associated problems;
- personal and health worries; and
- anything else you may want to discuss.

If, for whatever reason, you are unable to work with your allocated worker, every effort will be made to transfer you to someone else.

Case Practitioners are available at most times between 9am and 9pm. Just call into the office or reception to make an appointment.

YMCA Reading

34 Parkside Road
Reading
RG30 2DD
Phone: 01189 588684
Internal Phone: 555

Reading Borough Council

Civic Centre
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

Departments:

Housing Advice:
Telephone: 0118 937 2165
E-mail: housing.advice@reading.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.reading.gov.uk/housing>
<http://www.reading.gov.uk/article/11394/Homeless-or-at-risk-of-losing-your-home>

Council Tax: <http://www.reading.gov.uk/counciltax>

EMERGENCY SERVICES

999 – only in an absolute emergency (life threatening)

112 – from a mobile

101 – Non-urgent Police

111 – NHS Direct for non-urgent medical advice

Local Doctors Surgery:

Western Elms Surgery

317 Oxford Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG30 1AT

Phone: [0118 959 0257](tel:01189590257)

Circuit Lane Surgery

53 Circuit Lane
Reading
Berkshire
RG30 3AN

Phone: [0118 958 2537](tel:01189582537)