



**Yorkshire  
Housing**

# **Customer insight & engagement report**

How you've made a difference  
July – September 2023



**Zara Sutcliffe Baran**

Customer Insight and Engagement Advisor

# What we've been up to this quarter in Customer Engagement



## Customer Voice and Review Committee (CRVC)

We've had quite a busy quarter in the CVRC that has seen some changes to the committee. At the end of this quarter we said goodbye to the Chair of the CVRC Tracey and two members, Samina and Amy. From the recent recruitment campaign we then welcomed four new members to the committee, Ellie, Nashima, Deanne and Carlyne. We also have a new Chair of the committee, Phil.

## A year in the life of

The 'a year in the life of' project has been following the lives of 6 Yorkshire Housing customers since the start of this year. The third customer videos were shown to the Board. The videos had some great feedback from the Board. They've told us that it's "helped to remind us to focus on things that directly impact customer experience."

## Pride of place

We teamed up with the Northern Housing Consortium and five other housing associations to look at what makes us proud to live in the North. There were five workshops held across different areas and seven Yorkshire Housing customers gave their thoughts on what makes it a great place to live and where improvements can be made.

## Performance champion

We've got a champion from the CVRC. Adrian will be focussing on performance and working closely with Yorkshire Housing to make sure that the CVRC has all the performance data it needs to make effective decisions and recommendations.

# Customer Voice and Review Committee



## July meeting

- The CVRC gave some great feedback on the place strategy and how it will work best for customers.
- It was agreed what performance information the CVRC would see at future meetings. We'll be working hard to make sure that the information is easy to understand and supports effective decision making.
- The tenancy policy was reviewed and customer views used to shape the policy. They'll also be a customer version of the policy thanks to CVRC's feedback.



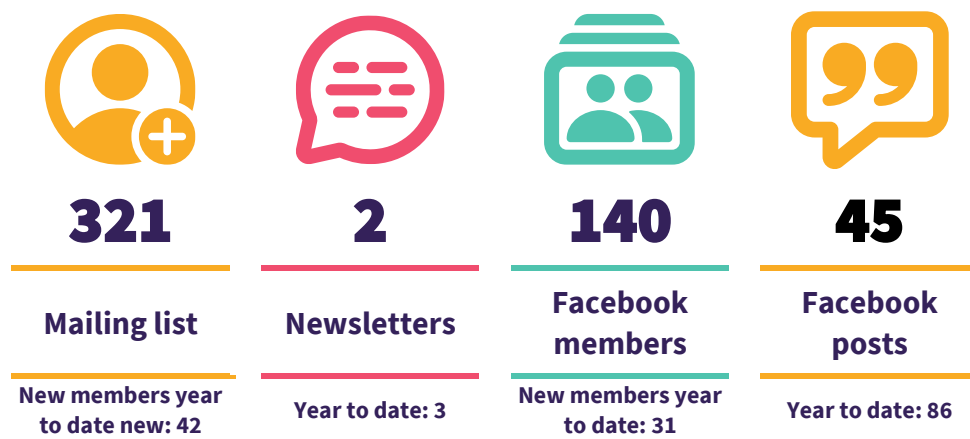
*“The climate change group at Yorkshire Housing have regular contact with all levels of management responsible for sustainability and retrofit, which is to be applauded.”*  
**Steve Mackenzie, Climate Change Champion**

## September meeting

- Disability awareness champion Mary gave a very helpful presentation to the CVRC. This helped them to understand the disabled customers voice and become more aware of the challenges they can face.
- The new centralised complaints team gave an update on the new service. They explained how all stage 1 complaints would be handled in the team giving customer a much better experience. Also resolving more complaints at stage 1.
- The CVRC looked in depth at performance information. They asked that scrutiny projects were done for tenancy management and the customer experience centre. These will start in the new year.

You can find out more about the Customer Voice and Review Committee [here](#)

# Our customer groups



## Your Voice Matters

From July to September we've had 28 customers join Your Voice Matters; 14 of which also joined the Your Voice Matters Facebook group. We held one competition and four surveys.

- £20 prize draw for completing the limerick
- Complaints policy survey
- Reasonable adjustments policy survey
- Tenancy agreement survey
- Unreasonable customer behaviour policy follow up survey
- Consumer standards survey

You said	We listened
Create a way to manage complex repairs and ensuring the customer is kept up to date at all stages.	We've had a restructure in our repairs team and introduced some new ways of working. This means that when a customer has a complex repair, they're given a key contact to follow the repair from start to finish.
The unreasonable customer behaviour needs to be easier to understand with less detail.	The policy has been made a lot simpler and easier to understand. We've also added a customer guide to what is unreasonable customer behaviour.
Our chargeable repairs policy needs to have a consistent numbering system and bullet points to make it easier to read.	We'll be adding a numbering system and bullet points throughout to break up any large paragraphs into smaller points making it easier to understand.
For all customers to have clear updates and communication at all stages of a repair.	Our internal repairs team have a new SMS texting service. This gives customers a confirmation text of the appointment and a reminder before the appointment.

You can find out more about Your Voice Matters [here](#)

# Community independence



8

Volunteers



6596

Hours of involvement



17

Agencies involved



3

Community grants

## Big day out

Lots of communities all over Yorkshire took part in the Big Day Out held on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

We worked with partners to find lots of ways that we could improve the areas that our customers live in. We did lots of litter picking and cleaned up broken glass. 'Clean up after your dog' signs were also put up in hot spot areas.

For the Big Day Out, a lovely customer resident offered to bake and donate raffle prizes for the event. The Police & Manningham Housing also came along and spoke to customers about concerns of criminal damage.



*"I've been a tenant of Yorkshire Housing all my adult life, I've lived in 3 different properties during that time. I'd never want to leave Yorkshire Housing."*

**Yorkshire Housing tenant**



We had plenty of games for children at Ingstgarth. Raffles, a bake sale and a tombola was put on by customers. Andy's Man Club also had a stall to help improve awareness of men's mental health. A amazing **£600 was raised** on the day and was all donated to Andy's Man Club.

Neville Crescent celebrated the Big Day Out by making some raised beds and a sensory garden. The dementia group use the space weekly so were really grateful.



*“We’re grateful to be able to use the **Rainbow Lane Centre** which is on the doorstep of many of the families that we’re keen to connect with. The parents who come have found it a safe space to connect with other parents and to find the mutual support and encouragement, helping them to thrive as their children grow and develop.”*  
**OMG Parent and Baby group**



## Little Feet Creche

Little Feet Creche is a vital service at the heart of our Skipton Community. After a few difficult years following the pandemic, our employment & skills specialist has been working with a business development adviser from North Yorkshire Growth Hub. They’ve been developing Little Feet's business plan and improve their social media presence.



*“Without Yorkshire Housing’s support, the creche would’ve without a doubt shut down. Yorkshire Housing heard how much we were struggling and worked with us because they believe that the community needs organisations like ours, led by people like us.”*  
**Little Feet Creche**

## Pellon community garden

A customer asked us to do something to bring the residents in her local area together. The area has a large communal garden that wasn’t being used so it was decided that some raised beds would be made for planting and growing food. The estate has a mixture of older people and younger families who can all get involved with the raised beds as a community.



*“I’m grateful Yorkshire Housing has helped us to help us grow food, everything is so expensive. This happened at the right time.”*

## Charnwood community reassurance

Residents of Charnwood Close were visited by a fraudster who took over £500 from a resident. This left the community feeling very vulnerable and targeted. To help reassure the customers a meeting was arranged with the local police and councillor. The community felt reassured by hearing the crime statistics from the police and realising that their area is actually the safest area in the ward. Hearing directly from the officers left the customers feeling safe and empowered.



## CommuniTEA event



A CommuniTEA event was the idea of one of our customers who felt their community had become closed-off and didn't interact with each other since COVID. The event brought the community together face to face and was a great success.



*“Now that I have met my neighbours I will feel more confident to chat when I see them, before we walked past each other in silence.”*

## Community grants

Between July and September our community independence team have secured grants that range between £500-£1,000.

- **Spofforth Cricket Club**  
To support the club's fundraiser to help renovate and improve the clubhouse and grounds. This will help them attract and accommodate new members.
- **Settle Community & Business Hub**  
An idea from a customer to run a series of 'pop-up public living rooms' will offer an early evening family friendly social venue where people of all ages can come together. Alcohol free, the social events will connect people in a safe and friendly environment.
- **The Bentham Pantry Club**  
The grant was essential to keep the group running. They have been able to develop the existing free access food bank into a Pantry Club. Now members will only have to pay a weekly fee of £5 or under. They can then choose up to 15 grocery items and fresh produce from the pantry.

You can find out more about community independence [here](#).

# Schemes



**193**

Number of  
events



**2978**

Hours of  
engagement



**1489**

Event  
attendees

## Rye Court

‘One stop shop’ event for customers have been really successful . So far customers have had chance to speak to the local police, Specsavers and money advisors. Two residents also went along to a level two food safety course and then set up a lunch club for residents every week.

## Sturdy Court, Garth Court and Jubilee Court

One of our money coaches came along to the scheme to chat about benefits and look at where we could help out.

## St Edwin’s Croft

Customers helped organise the Big Day Out event where benches were repainted and the garden was tidied up.

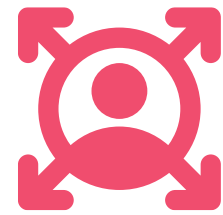
## Francis House

A weekly sing along session gives customers a chance to meet up and sing together. As it’s still a fairly new event, we’re hoping more customers will hear all about the fun that’s had and come join in too.

You can find out more about our [retirement living schemes](#) and [extra care schemes](#).



# What you've been involved in



## Reasonable adjustments policy

We're reviewing our reasonable adjustments policy and customer guide and wanted to make sure our customers get to share their thoughts on the policy, what it looks like and how easy it is to understand.

Surveys - 1  
Questions - 14  
Responses - 27

<b>4.59</b> Rating was given out of 5 for ease of understanding the <u>customer guide</u> . 1 was very difficult and 5 was very easy.	<b>4.33</b> Rating was given out of 5 for ease of understanding the <u>policy</u> . 1 was very difficult and 5 was very easy.
--	--

*“Maybe give a broader list of examples of what reasonable adjustments would be available.”*



*“The reporting/monitoring section is more difficult perhaps to understand due to the acronyms used and it's a little too wordy.”*

*“Front page with the ticks is good and concise and clear. Love the last page it's so helpful and clear and honest/transparent”*

- Customers felt that there should be a more extensive list of examples that are considered as reasonable adjustments.
- Acronyms could be difficult to understand, use plain English instead.
- The policy is a little too wordy.
- Use clear headings to break up sections and make the format easier to read.
- Make sure the guide is accessible for all customers e.g. audio version, braille, different languages.
- It needs to be more clear that the section referencing home adaptations does not fall under reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments are related only to access to services.

<b>29%</b> Wanted the policy and customer guide available on the website.	<b>23%</b> Wanted the policy and customer guide provided at the start of tenancy.
--	--

## Consumer standards

The regulator of social housing is changing the way it regulates housing providers using four Consumer Standards. We consulted customers on what they thought about the standards.

Surveys - 1

Questions - 19

Responses - 43



*“Since the Grenfell Tragedy, the importance of structural Safety and Quality Standards in the social housing sector, has never been so important.”*

There were nine questions asking customer if they agreed or disagreed with the drafts that the regulator has put together relating to:

- Safety and quality standard
- Transparency, influence and accountability standard
- Neighbourhood and community standard
- Tenancy standard
- Code of practice
- Regulatory impact assessment
- Equality impact assessment

The majority of customers agreed that each of the statements in question did set the right expectations of landlords.

## Complaints policy

We're reviewing our complaints policy and wanted to make sure our customers get to share their thoughts on how easy the policy is to understand and how they can access it.

Surveys - 1

Questions - 7

Responses - 16



*“When you run through step by step process this makes sense and is clear.”*

- Customers struggled to understand jargon words, plain English should be used.
- Customers felt the policy was a little long and “wordy” in places.
- Make sure there’s an easy read version that uses visuals rather than just text.
- Customers were evenly divided on three options for how they should be able to access the policy.

<b>25%</b>	<b>Available on the website.</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>Provided when a complaint has been raised.</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>Provided at the start of tenancy.</b>
------------	----------------------------------	------------	---	------------	--

**4.13** Rating was given out of 5 for ease of understanding the policy. 1 was very difficult and 5 was very easy.

## Tenancy Agreement

The tenancy agreement is a legal document that has to be written in a particular way with some specific legal terms. We understand this can make it more difficult for some customers to understand so we wanted to create a customer guide. We asked customers what sections from the tenancy agreement needed to be included in the customer guide and if the customer guide was easy to understand.

Surveys - 1

Questions - 9

Responses - 21

*“Where the guide refers to other policies like ASB, could a link to this policy be provided or at least where can this be found.”*



*“Make linking the accessible user guide to the more involved tenancy agreement much easier. It may be worth looking at coloured backgrounds for each related topic to link topics. This could help the two become a quick reference at a later date.”*

*“I would put a few more visuals on it and add colour but besides that, it's short and snappy which is good.”*

- The word ‘clause’ may not be understood by all customers, could a more user friendly word be used instead.
- Provide links to other policies that are referenced in the customer guide.
- In the customer guide, provide a link directly to the tenancy agreement.
- Include more visuals on the customer guide and keep it short and to the point.
- The customer guide should be available in various access options, however the customer needs to access it e.g. translated, braille, email, paper.
- Link the topics in the tenancy agreement to the customer guide more obviously, e.g. using coloured backgrounds or symbols.
- Use plain English and simple sentences.
- What do if you circumstances change, e.g. health declines making you less able to carry out day to day tasks.

---

**38%** Wanted to receive the customer guide via email.

**23%** Wanted to receive a paper copy of the customer guide.

---

**4.62** Rating was given out of 5 for ease of understanding the policy. 1 was very difficult and 5 was very easy.

---

# Customer champions

---



## Disability awareness – Mary Bottomley

Mary completed the social housing quality resident panel online for community topics. These were about repairs maintenance and Awaabs law. She also completed her first module for the Four Million Homes project on knowing your rights as a social housing customer.

## Anti-social behaviour – Kris Eastwood

Some errors were spotted with the anti-social behaviour policy. Kris worked with the team to make sure these were updated.

## Repairs – Ray Marfell

Ray has been having regular meetings with Cath Mustafa (Head of Repairs and Investment Delivery) and Liz O’Conner (Director of Homes) to discuss day to day repairs. He gets regular repairs performance reports so that this can be compared to the recommendations from the repairs scrutiny project.

## Equality diversity and inclusion – Nasir Hussain

Nasir helped a tenant who needed adaptations due to mobility issues. He made sure they were able to contact the correct department and that they were happy with the response.

## Climate change – Steve Mackenzie

Steve spoke at the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). He went along to the Tenants and Resident summit; there was an increase in tenant attendance which was great. He also attended an Unlock Net Zero advisory panel to discuss future speakers at conferences. He had the chance to visit Duggleby in North Yorkshire which is due to have retrofit works starting at the end of 2023. He took the opportunity to chat with some of the customer about the retrofit project and one customer even joined our homes and environment group.

## Your Voice Matters – Jo Foster

Jo met with Gavin Hoban (Director of Customer Success) to discuss the upcoming customer census. She’s also been working on creating a welcome video for new members of Your Voice Matters to give them all the info they need about the group and the difference they can make.

## Performance Champion – Adrian Gordon

Adrian is working with us to make sure the right data comes to CVRC so that effective decisions can be made.