



**Yorkshire
Housing**

Domestic abuse policy review

Project report April 2025



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Customer consultation on the policy



Our Aim

Every three years we need to review our domestic abuse policy to make sure that it's up to date with current regulations. Previously, we've produced this policy solely based on regulation and haven't consulted customers on it. However, as this policy will directly influence customers in vulnerable situations, we wanted to make sure that we got their insight and feedback on it to make sure it was easy for them to understand and was fair.

Headline figures of the customer consultation



Survey

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject, we chose not to reach out to customers who were directly effected by domestic abuse as we didn't want to cause them further stress and anxiety. The survey was instead emailed out to the 576 customers in our involved customer group, Your Voice Matters. They were provided with a survey containing 10 questions and a copy of the current domestic abuse policy for them to review.

Questions were asked around:

- The ease of understanding of the policy.
- What versions should be available for customers to access.
- Where the policy should be available for customers to access.

Customer feedback on the policy



Feedback overview

The majority of customers felt the policy was fair and reasonable and highlighted its inclusivity, survivor-centred approach, and alignment with legal standards. They appreciated the policy's sensitivity, clarity, and recognition of diverse relationships and cultures. The majority found the policy easy to understand with only a small number (10%) reporting that they had difficulty understanding specific sections. Usually due to the use of complex language or unclear abbreviations.

Suggestions for improvement were things such as simplifying language, adding real-life examples, and providing more visuals to make it easier to understand. Customers recommended making the policy readily accessible online, offering versions tailored for different needs and ensuring victims are aware of available support.

89%	Of customers felt the policy was fair and reasonable	57%	Of customers wanted the policy to be readily available on the website
4.35	Was the rating out of 5 that the customers gave for how easy the policy was the understand, where 1 = very difficult and 5 = very easy		

"It seems to cover all the issues relating to Domestic Abuse in a sensitive and fully thought through way, with regular staff training in these issues, the rights of the victim with regard to reporting, support options for victims and how this relates to different cultures"

"It's a long drawn out document that is hard to read when attention span is difficult but I understand that it needs to be this way as it's a legal document but maybe provide a simpler more basic type document attached to this to give a more simpler way of showing the same information."



"It seems well balanced and covers all types of relationships as well as promising to be victim lead and taking a believing approach."

"Being on the receiving of domestic abuse in a past life, I found this policy a breath of fresh air and I'm glad that Yorkshire housing is tackling this sensitive subject."

"I think you should use names of organisations in full throughout the policy rather than abbreviations"

The ‘so what’ of our engagement activity



Based on the feedback given by customers during the focus group, we picked out the key elements that needed to be worked on and explained how we'll make those changes. For any changes that we're not currently able to make, we've explained why we're not able to make them and what we're hoping to do going forward.



Domestic abuse policy	
It was hard to locate the essential parts of the policy. These could be marked or sectioned more clearly making them easier to find.	We've added clear headers to make each bit of the policy easier to identify.
Use bullet points to make it more succinct.	We've used bullet points where possible.
Write it in plain English with no abbreviations and if they have to be used, make sure they are explained in a clear and easy way.	We've minimized abbreviations as much as possible and the ones that we've had to use we've explained.
Create an easy read version that is accessible for customers with learning disabilities and communication needs.	This will be part of our ongoing work to make our policies and website more accessible to all, whether that's in separate formats, or different languages.
The policy should be very easy to access, especially for victims. It should be on the YH website for customers to access at any time.	The previous policy is currently listed on our website and will be updated to the new policy once it's been signed off.
In point 1.4 it states that the policy applies to tenants, sole or joint. It should also include info on the possibility that a non YH tenant is causing domestic abuse.	We've changed this to read "The policy will apply to Yorkshire Housing tenants and their household members"
Increase awareness of the policy, it's likely that some customers don't know	We've spoken to our Comms team who will increase awareness of the policy in line with

Domestic abuse policy	
it exists and that they can come to YH for help.	national awareness weeks, such as safeguarding week, 16 days of action.
You should provide the policy to customers when a domestic abuse case is raised.	This is something we will ask customers if they would like when a case is raised going forwards.
The policy should make it very clear how much help victims can get from YH.	Each case is managed on an individual basis so we've had to give a general overview of what support can be offered in this policy. There is more detail on our Domestic Abuse page on the website that we will link to in the policy.
The section on Partnership Working and DAHA Accreditation could be simplified or summarised.	We've simplified this as much as possible, where there were 8 sections about the DAHA Accreditation we've reduced this to 5 bullet points.
Include a flowchart showing the reporting process could help readers understand what to expect when reporting abuse.	We've changed this to bullet points to make it easier for customers to understand, each case is managed on a case by case basis so we've had to include a general overview on what support we can offer.
Make it easy to access the policy from the online customer portal.	We've asked to make this more accessible in the online customer portal.
Provide the policy in a way that suits the customer's needs, whether that be email, text or postal letter.	If a customer requested a copy of the policy, we'd ask how best they'd like to receive it, whether that be email, post or translated.
Include a number that can be used 24/7 for customers reporting or requesting help.	We've added the number for the National Domestic Abuse Helpline which is available 24/7 for people seeking support.
Include this policy in the sign up pack at the start of a customer's tenancy.	We've asked that this can be added to the sign up pack.
Include relevant agency contact numbers that can offer help.	It wouldn't be possible to put every agency across Yorkshire on the policy. We've included the national one for people to get access to 24/7 support and a full list of specialist services is available on our website Other Help and Support Services Yorkshire Housing Once a case is raised our Safeguarding officers will be able to offer referrals to the relevant DA agencies that can help.
Include real-life examples or scenarios of domestic abuse cases. A short case study of how Yorkshire Housing supports victims could make the policy even more relatable.	A case study or real life example would be too long to add to a policy. Instead, as part of safeguarding awareness week and 16 days of action we do share case studies, this has to be anonymised due to the sensitive nature of these cases, an example of this is on our website that customers can access, Making a

Domestic abuse policy	
	<u>fresh start away from domestic abuse – A customer's story</u>
The section that explains what constitutes domestic abuse could be simplified to make it easier to understand.	This is the legal definition of domestic abuse based on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, its key we include all form but we've tried to make it as simple as possible.
Create a customer guide version of the policy that includes just the key points. Include graphics and images to break up the text and help make it easier to read.	This is something that is in the pipeline as part of our DAHA accreditation. We want to make a guide that is easily accessible and shows customers what they can expect from us when they report domestic abuse, without the legislation requirements we need in the policy.
The policy should include examples of punishment that can be encountered by a perpetrator.	We can't punish a perpetrator, we'd encourage survivors of DA to report concerns to the police where action can be taken accordingly. In the policy we've explained what action we can take to address perpetrators and we've also included links to support services for perpetrators on our website if they'd like to acknowledge and work towards changing their behaviour.