



**Yorkshire
Housing**

Responsive repairs and chargeable repairs review

Project report October 2025



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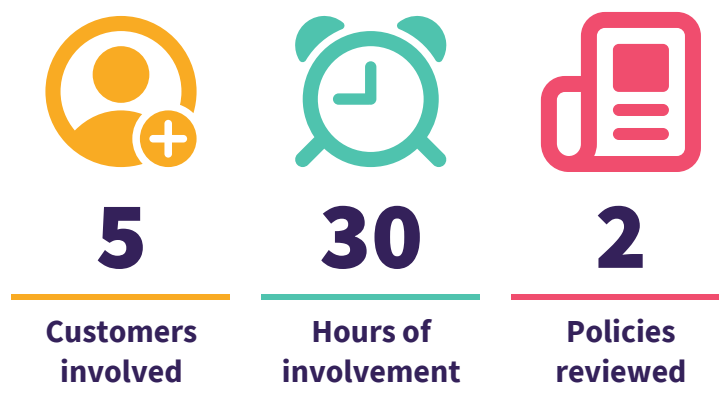
Customer consultation on the policy



Our Aim

Based on feedback given in the Tennant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), our Director of Homes, Adam Hinchliff, wanted to improve our responsive repairs policy and chargeable repairs policy to make them more clear and easy to understand for our customers. To do this, we wanted to include feedback from customers to make sure the changes that were made were positive ones. Adam wanted feedback from customers on the policies in general but also their thoughts on the potential of combining both policies together into one more simple and streamlined policy. We arranged an in person session with five members of the Review Crew to meet with Adam Hinchliff, Adam Littlewood (Head of Repairs and Maintenance) and Gary Jones (Head of Mechanical and Electrical Services) to discuss the policies and give their feedback so that we could have a co-designed policy.

Headline figures of the customer consultation



Focus group

Five members of the Review Crew agreed to take part in the in person focus group. Prior to the session, the customers were provided with the current responsive repairs policy and chargeable repairs policy and also the newly proposed version that combined both of these policies into one policy. This was to allow the customers the chance to digest and understand the information in their own time and make any relevant taking points or notes that they'd like to discuss in the focus group.

During the session they received a presentation outlining the reasons for combining the policies together and the other changes that had been made to the policies to improve them. Colleagues talked through the policies step by step with the customers and they were encouraged to give feedback on each section of the policy as they went. Particular attention was paid to the newly created table of responsibilities that was designed with the intention of making it very clear what was the customers responsibility and what was YHs responsibility.

Customer feedback on the policy



Feedback overview

Overall the customers were happy with the changes that had been made to the policies. In particular they were happy to have the two policies combined into one, making a shorter policy overall. They were also very pleased with the addition of the responsibilities table and felt this would make it much more clear who was responsible for each repair.

“In section 5.3 it states a ‘category one hazard’, what does this mean exactly? You should include information to explain this more clearly for customers.”



“Having a shorter policy is a good idea. Combining the responsive repairs policy and chargeable repairs policy into one and shortening them will make it easier for customers to read.”

“The responsibilities table is a great idea, it makes it very clear who is responsible for each type of repair. It would also be good to have the table available on the customer portal and website for customers to access easily so they don’t have to look through a whole policy to find it.”

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.



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1.1 Could this be changed to, 'Our promise at Yorkshire Housing is to provide customers with homes and places they can be proud of. We aim to deliver the best repairs service in the UK to support our ambition of being the best Social Housing Provider in the UK.'	We've changed this wording in the policy.
2.6 How will customers know to follow this policy? It should be provided to them sign up or they should at least be made aware of it from the start of tenancy.	Our process for tenancy sign up and when a customer decides to leave is currently being reviewed as part of another project. We've passed on this recommendation to the team leading on that project so that it can be reviewed as during the project. The repairs and chargeable repairs policy will go live before the tenancy sign up project has finished. So we'll make sure any necessary updates are added to the policy as an amendment when it's been confirmed.
3.1 'customer obsessed' is not a positive phrase to use, obsession has negative connotations. This should say something like 'customer focussed' instead.	We've passed this feedback on to Brand and Communications. But as customer obsessed is one of our strategic priorities we'll be leaving this in for now.
3.4 It needs to include that the communication will be done via the individual customers preferred method of	We're currently undertaking a customer census so that we can gather each customers preferred method of contact.

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contact. ‘Communication will be clear and timely and via the customer’s preferred method of contact.’	Even after the census had been conducted we may not have this data for all our customers. So where possible we’ll be able to do this, and the wording will reflect this, ‘Communication will be clear and timely and where possible, via the customer’s preferred method of contact.’ Some compromises may be needed dependent on the urgency of the communication required.
3.6 What does this mean in practice for customers? Can we elaborate on this to explain it more for customers.	We’re enhancing how we use data and introducing smart technology to take a more pre-emptive approach to repairs, aiming to prevent issues before they arise. This is the start of our journey to replace items, where ever possible, before they become faulty preventing the need for customers to report responsive repairs.
5.3 ‘Emergency responsive repairs - we will aim attend your home within 4 hours to make everything safe, and where possible we will complete the work within 24 hours.’ It’s reassuring to state that the aim is 4 hours, this shows that you’re trying to do better than industry standard and will make customers happy. However, it needs to be more clear that it’s from when YH are notified, ‘once reported to us, we’ll aim to attend your home within 4 hours...’ The phrasing could be used in 7.1 too.	We’ve changed the wording to make sure it’s clear for customers that it’s 4 hours from the time it’s reported to us, ‘Once reported we will aim attend your home within 4 hours to make everything safe, and where possible we will complete the work within 24 hours.’
5.3 ‘category one hazard’, what does this mean? Info needs to be included to explain this.	We’ve elaborated on this to give more clarity to customers, ‘A Category One Hazard, which is an immediate risk to a person’s safety within their home, that is determined within Awaabs Law, may be identified at the point of call or an attendance to the emergency repair.’
5.3 Routine responsive repairs should be completed quicker than 28 days.	We’ve adjusted the wording in this section to emphasise that it will be done as quickly as possible, but that some repairs will always be more complex and take more time,

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	‘We will make an appointment for the work to be completed as quickly as reasonably practicable, but within 28 days. Some routine repairs may take longer due to the scale and complexity of the work. Our aim will always be to complete asap but with varying priorities of work taking precedent this isn’t always possible and we may need to use the 28 day target to manage expectations.’
7.2 If the appointment can’t be arranged at the first point of contact and it will be done during a follow up call, YH should confirm a time line for when the follow up call will take place.	We’ve updated this and included information about it, ‘Ideally this will be at the first point of contact, where this isn’t possible for whatever reason, YH will contact you within an agreed timescale, dependent on demand, to arrange this.’
16.1 make sure there is a hyperlink to the Defects Policy so that customers can access it easily.	We’re investigating with our Communications Team to see if this is possible.
17.3 is the ‘customer scrutiny group’ in reference to the Review Crew and the session held on July 30 th ? If yes, should it specifically reference the Review Crew?	We’ve updated this to state the Review Crew.
Having a shorter policy is good. Combining the responsive repairs policy and chargeable repairs policy into one policy and shortening them will make it easier for customers to read.	We’ll keep this change and combine the policies into one.
The policy could be more customer friendly. Although combining and shortening the policies is a great step, could it be made even easier for customers to understand. Could the table of responsibilities be made more customer friendly (nicely designed) and this could be used as the customer guide version for customers who don’t have time to read a full policy?	We’ll be working with our Brand and Communications Team to create a page on the website that gives customers an easy to read key points version. We’ll also be looking to showcase the customer friendly version on the app once it’s been developed and in the sign up process for new customers.
A contents page would be useful so that customers are able to find the correct page of information they need easily.	A contents page won’t be added at this stage but we’ll evaluate this for our policies and if we’re able to we’ll introduce it at a later date. A shorter customer friendly page will be available

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	that should cover only the key points and without the need for a contents page.
It would be good to have the responsibilities table available on the customer portal and website for customers to access easily.	This will be available in a customer friendly version on the website, the customer app when built and considered as part of the documentation during the sign up process for new customers.
There are minor grammar and punctuation mistakes throughout the policy, make sure it's proof read thoroughly and checked.	The final version will be thoroughly checked for minor grammar and punctuation mistakes.
It can be worrying as a customer to call up about what you believe to be an emergency repair. If you state that it's an emergency but then the work operative arrives and states it not, you'll then get charged. It needs to be made more clear what is classed as an emergency repair.	The responsibility for deciding if something classes as an emergency or not is held with the Customer Experience Centre (CEC), not the customer. The customer won't be charged for a decision made on an emergency by the CEC.
A quick read customer guide version should be produced to highlight the key points that customers need to know without having to read through the full policy. This could be some key points and then the responsibilities table (Appendix A).	We'll be creating a customer friendly version that will be available on the website. It'll also be available on the customer app once it's been developed and it's being considered to be provided as part of the document pack in the sign up process for new customers.
There is nothing mentioned in the policy about keeping pets out of the way when repairs operatives are undertaking work.	We've added in some information about this under section 2.7, Responsibilities.
There's no mention of clearing guttering or the removal of moss on roofs. This should be added as a yearly check as preventative that can lead to DMC issues.	We've explained the process for gutters in Appendix A. Cyclical moss clearances from roofs is not being considered at this time, if moss is causing damage to a roof that is causing ingress of water this will be rectified as part of the repair.
Rechargeable repairs section – this covers how the customer will be held accountable but not how YH will be held accountable. There should be something included to show how the customer can hold YH to account.	This is explained in '13, complaints and appeals'.
Regulation and legislation – do customers really need to know this information? Could it be removed as it's just making the policy longer.	We've moved this section to the appendices.

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Regulations and legislations, YH should look at improving these standards beyond what is set down by the government.	We aim to be better than what's set out by the regulator, e.g. attending emergencies in 4 hours where possible.
Appointments, this should also include information about missed appointments and what the next steps are. This should be explained from both sides, if YH misses an appointment or if the customer misses an appointment.	We've added to the appointments section to explain the responsibilities and processes in more detail.
Appendix B – This flow chart needs to be much more clear and easy to read. Could it be designed to be YH branded?	This will be better designed and easier for customers to read in the final version of the policy.
Appendix A - Could the responsibilities table be at the start of the policy as this is most likely what customers will be looking for when they read through the policy.	We've added in notes on the front page of the policy that direct customers to Appendix A so they can skip to that section earlier on if they wish.
Appendix A – 'Pests', should this clarify what is classed as a pest?	We've added in some extra examples of what classes as a pests, 'Pest (vermin, insects, ants, bees / wasps)'
Appendix A – 'Plumbing', 'blocked toilets, sinks...' It's correct that this should be a rechargeable repair of the customer has caused the blockage and it was avoidable.	We'll keep this update in the new version.
Appendix A – 'Kitchen', 'Cookers', should this not include all white goods, not just cookers?	We've updated this to state white goods so that customers won't think that it's only cookers.
Appendix A – 'Pests', 'infestation at a single property', can info be added in here about who they can contact to get help e.g. local council.	We've added in extra details to this section.
Appendix A – 'communal areas', where does the asterisk on 'driveways' link to? It's not clear.	We've made sure this is separated to 'point of tenancy' and 'customer installed'.
Appendix A – 'Property walls', 'Skirting boards, picture rails and battens', customers may not know what a batten is, can we be more clear?	We've changed the batten to wooden fixture to make it more clear for customers.
Appendix A – 'Kitchen', 'Any surface that has been painted or wrapped', customers may not know what 'wrapped' is, can we explain this more?	We've changed the wording to make it more clear, 'Any surface that has been painted, wrapped or amended in any way.'
Appendix A – make the indicators ticks instead of crosses, this will be more clear to understand for customers.	We've changed this so that 'ticks' are used in the boxes to indicate who is responsible for each repair.

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Appendix A – The vulnerable customer column should only be available for internal YH use. For the customer facing version just include the YH and customer responsibility columns. However, make sure that you link to the vulnerable customer policy so that customers who feel they are vulnerable can reach out to YH to discuss if we're able to help further.

We'll only make the vulnerable customer column available internally for colleagues to use. It won't be visible on the customer version but we will make sure that vulnerable customers know how they can reach out to us if they have reasonable adjustments or questions about other ways we can help.