



**Yorkshire
Housing**

Customer annual report

2023 - 2024



Making it possible to have a place you're **proud to call home**

(that's just how we roll y'know)



Foreword

Welcome to this year's annual report.
This is where we reflect on the past year
and share our plans for the year ahead.

We know that the cost of living crisis has continued to put pressure on people's household budgets.

That's why we've invested in our money and tenancy coaching team to offer help and support. Over the last year, they've worked with **962 customers** to claim over **£1.17m of grants** and unclaimed benefit entitlements.

If you need some help from the team, please fill out our [web form](#) and we'll be in touch.



A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'N. Atkin', positioned to the left of the portrait.

Nick Atkin

Chief Executive of Yorkshire Housing

Foreword

Based on what you've told us, we've made some improvements to the way we manage complaints.

Changes we've made

The complaints team is now centralised, with specialist leaders and we've doubled the number of resolution experts. These changes mean we'll be able to respond to your concerns more quickly, as well as learning from where we've got things wrong and making changes to how our services are delivered.

“ We've responded by bringing our repairs service in-house across Yorkshire ”

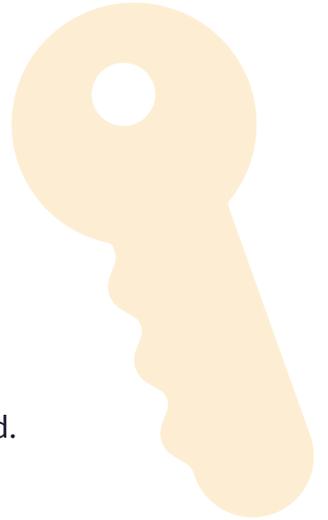
You've also told us we need to complete repairs quicker and that you'd prefer to see Yorkshire Housing colleagues in your home rather than contractors. We've responded by bringing our repairs service in-house across Yorkshire, building on last year's expansion of the team.

Your feedback and the engagement from our customer groups has been key to the changes we've made this year. There are more details in the report but highlights for me include introducing a scrutiny function so customers can have an even greater say in how we deliver our services, as well as the improvements made to our welcome pack for new customers, so they get a great experience from day one.

59,091



Total day-to-day repairs we've worked on during 2023-24



Foreword

Damp and mould has been a big focus this year and we've introduced a new specialist team.

Your home and community

Our first responders are equipped with specialist technology so they can get to the root cause of any issues. You might've also seen the Your Healthy Home campaign and the damp and mould customer promise we now work to.

“ This year customers rated their community at 8.7/10 ”

We know that where you live and how you feel about your home isn't just about the home itself, it's also about what's outside your front door and your neighbourhood. This year customers rated their community at 8.7/10. We've also built 689 new homes to add to these communities in response to the continuing housing crisis and shortage of affordable homes.

We've also awarded eight community project grants and have increased the maximum amount available for each project from £500 to £2,500. If you'd like to find out more about what we can support, our [website](#) and [guide](#) will help you. When you're ready to apply you can [send us an email](#) with the details and we'll be able to help you.



New homes to add to our communities in response to the continuing housing crisis and shortage of affordable homes.

Foreword

We want to be able to provide the response you need from Yorkshire Housing whenever and however you contact us.

Looking ahead

That's why we've extended the training our customer experience colleagues do as part of their role. Looking ahead, we'll be growing this team and introducing a new phone system that'll make sure you get through to the right person more quickly. These improvements should help to reduce our call wait times too.

Another big change this year has been the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) from the Regulator of Social Housing. You might've had a call or email from MEL Research, who are conducting the surveys on our behalf.

TSMs mean that you can compare the performance of Yorkshire Housing against other landlords and social housing providers across the country, as everyone is measured on the same questions.

The surveys will continue to take place across the year. Thank you if you've taken part so far as it really does help us shape our services. We've published our [results for April 2023 – March 2024](#) on our website.

Finally, we mentioned last year that we're focusing on being 'customer obsessed' and a big part of that is making it easier for you to access our services. This starts with getting the basics right. The new phone system and improving our customer portal will mean that when you need us, we're there in a way that works for you.

As Yorkshire covers such a vast area, we'll be looking to personalise our service offer depending on the needs of our customers in that particular place. We call them 'Place Plans' and they essentially mean we're spending our time and money on the things that will make the biggest difference to you and your neighbours. We'll be piloting these in Skipton and Wakefield first and will keep you posted on these as well as other changes we have planned for the year ahead.

Repairs

You told us you'd prefer a Yorkshire Housing colleague to be the one to do your repair over one of our contractors...

So, we've brought our repairs service in-house across the whole of Yorkshire. If you spot us, give us a wave! We know we don't always get it right and sometimes it takes too long for us to get to you. So to reduce your waiting times, here's how we're investing in our in-house team:

Our new damp and mould customer promise...

Our team of first responders can get to you much quicker, and our surveyors have the latest kit to make sure we get to the root cause of any damp and mould issues.

Restructuring the team

Our new empty homes team are focused on reducing how many empty homes we have at any one time by turning homes around more quickly and efficiently so they can be re-let. And we're not stopping there, as part of our customer obsession strategy we're reviewing our Responsive Repairs Policy in 2024 so our repairs service is aligned with your feedback. These changes should see an increase in customer satisfaction over the next year.

77% 

Customer satisfaction
(83% last year)

£9.0m 

We've spent on repairs during the 2023-24 year
(£7.3m last year)

£6.8m 

Our repairs budget
(£6.5m last year)

59,091 

Day-to-day repairs
(58,782 last year)

100% 

Gas safety certification
(99% last year)

Antisocial behaviour

Your home should be a place you feel safe, without feeling intimidated or scared. But sometimes antisocial behaviour stops this from happening.

1,780 

Antisocial behaviour cases we worked on
(1,715 last year)

45 

Court orders (including 21 Injunction orders)
(46 last year)

13 

Outright possession orders resulting in evictions

Top three reasons for antisocial behaviour cases:

Noise antisocial behaviour

1

Harassment and intimidation

2

Alcohol and drugs

3

Neighbourhood story...

A long standing case of antisocial behaviour came to a head in Sheffield this year, with one person screaming, shouting and causing problems in their community. And it wasn't just noise nuisance, they'd sometimes throw bricks damaging other neighbours' cars and windows.

It was all getting too much and we knew we had to step in and get an injunction, but unfortunately this didn't stop the customer. We were left with no other option but to start the process of eviction. With the help of the police who supported our investigation, we got the result we needed and peace on the street resumed.

If you're experiencing antisocial behaviour please call us on 0345 366 4404



Place

This year we've been working on lots of projects to improve our communities...

£150,000 

Spent on community improvements
(£150,000 last year)

300+ 

Improvement projects
(300 last year)

Over 300 community improvement projects managed by our Place Managers, to improve community spaces, based on customer feedback. This has included developing and improving outdoor spaces for customers to enjoy, including installing a shed and bike sheds, replacing old equipment such as pagodas and fencing, improving spaces so they're safe for children to play in and improving access to areas to help customers with accessibility needs.

Being happy with your community as well as your home is really important. So here's some of the things we've worked with you on this year.

After sorting an environmental problem for a customer who wasn't happy with how their neighbourhood was looking... *"The paths were cleared within days of reporting the issue to you, thank you. All the branches were removed and the whole area's clear and looks much better. Thank you for getting the access cleared so promptly, it's much appreciated by myself and my visitors."*

One customer took to Trustpilot to let us know how happy they were... *"My parking issues were dealt with as promised, it made a refreshing change compared to other organisations who make empty promises! Every time I sent an email it was dealt with promptly and courteously."*

After helping a customer settle into a new home... *"A massive thank you for all the support you gave during viewing the house and then being able to move in so quickly. I really appreciate all the work the team at Yorkshire Housing have done for me. This move has been one of the best things to happen for me."*



Complaints

We like to think we get things right most of the time, but we're human and sometimes we get things wrong.

And when it does, we value your feedback to learn from our mistakes so we can do better in the future. Here's a rundown of our complaints and compliment numbers:



Complaints made
(771 last year)



Complaints upheld
(58% last year)



Average amount of days to resolve a complaint
(9 last year)



Compliments made
(112 last year)

Top three reasons for complaints:

Reason 1: Length of time taken to repair 

Reason 2: Standard of work 

Reason 3: Missed, late or cancelled appointment 



Complaints

The Housing Ombudsman told landlords to expect an increase in complaints, and we've seen complaint numbers nearly double compared to last year.

This is because the Housing Ombudsman has been advertising on TV and radio to encourage customers to complain if they have an issue.

The introduction of the Complaint Handling Code on April 1st 2024 also affected the number of complaints as customers now don't have to say "I want to complain" for a complaint to be raised. They only have to show "an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by a landlord."

To support the increase in complaints, we've increased the number of colleagues working in the Complaints Team and are putting a new team structure in place.



Highlights from this year:

- With the help of our customers we've reviewed our complaints policy and have refreshed the self-assessment against The Housing Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code. This means the way we handle complaints follows the legal requirements, and we can keep providing an even better service for you.
- In September 2023, we brought our complaints team under one roof, welcomed specialist leaders and doubled the number of resolution experts. This helps us have a more customer obsessed approach, and it's easier to learn from complaints going forward too. These changes have helped us give a more consistent approach to our complaint responses. All colleagues use a similar layout and tone in their letters, giving us more consistent outcomes.

Customer experience centre

Our customer experience advisors are your go-to team when you need to speak to us.

This year we've stepped up our team training so everyone has the skills and knowledge to get you the answers you need. This means we can deal with more queries at the first point of contact, reducing those wait times!

We've also been looking at how our calls are handled and will be welcoming a new telephony system this year.



Calls answered out of the the 129,796 you made to us (122, 575 last year)

112,956



The average time it takes us to answer your call

00:02:38



Quality score - this is us identifying what matters most to you when you get in touch (89.2% last year)

90.4%



Independence

Making sure you've a place you're proud to call home goes beyond what happens within your four walls.

We've been working closely with customers and our community partners to put on activities and events to bring people together.

Safeguarding

We raised 491 safeguarding concerns (459 last year). The top three concerns were customers in need of care and support, domestic abuse and suicide risk.

Grants

We know £500 isn't always enough to get a project up and running, so we've upped our community grant offer to £2,500. And this year we've awarded eight community grants to projects like children's sports clubs, surplus food pantries and wellbeing support groups.

Digital skills sessions!

Tech!

Police drop-ins!

Wellbeing cafes!

Safe!

£2,500!

Parent and child groups!

Arts and craft sessions!

491 safeguarding concerns have been raised



Let's get together...

When Settle Community and Business Hub applied for a grant to run a series of pop-up 'urban living rooms' in venues across the town, we knew it sounded like a great idea.

Organised by David, one of our fantastic customers and volunteers, the living rooms offer an early evening space for everyone to socialise without alcohol and away from the pub.

David said they allow him to get out on a Saturday evening to meet people in the area because he can bring his daughter along. The more the merrier!

urban living rooms!



Independence

While volunteering is something you do by giving up some of your time, there's a misconception that you get nothing in return. And that's simply not true!

Volunteering

There's opportunities for anyone to volunteer, and the benefits of gaining new skills and confidence are a plenty.

Our colleague volunteering scheme's been in full swing with our people giving back to their communities by trying their hand at things like tree planting, improving woodland paths, building community theatre sets and lots more!

Not to mention our Big Day Out on Yorkshire Day where 129 of our colleagues headed out to 25 locations across Yorkshire. Time volunteered totalled 672 hours! We did all sorts like litter picking, fun days, gardening and refreshing communal spaces!

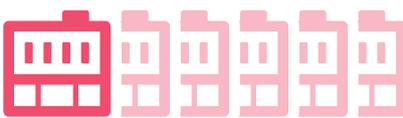
Colleague volunteering outside of our Big Day Out:

168 

Number of colleagues hours given through volunteering

19 

Number of colleagues taking part

15 

Organisations or charities we've supported through volunteering

Money and tenancy coaching

Our coaches are on hand to help customers who are finding it tough with issues like hoarding, finding employment and the increasing price of gas and electric bills.

This year we've worked with over 600 customers and over 500 told us they'd reached personal goals!

We saw the cost of living result in an increase in customers coming to us who are in work but struggling financially. We've worked with customers who've moved into new tenancies, split from partners, were fleeing domestic abuse, had changes to their benefits or were moving onto Universal Credit, those that are close to pension age and looking at retirement and more – each customer has a unique money and tenancy story.

If you ever feel pressure because of your finances please get in touch with us on [0345 366 4404](tel:03453664404) or visit our [website](#) so we can help.

929 

Customers referred for coaching

£1.5m 

Total customers were better off financially

312 

Customers improved wellbeing

274 

Increased their money management skills

76 

Customers had urgent needs resolved

103 

Customers sustained their tenancies

Money and tenancy coaching



Hear from one of our customers who completed money coaching...



“Thank you for reviewing my finances with me, it helps to know that I am keeping on top of things the best way I can.

I have already referred to the budgeting document, thank you. It’s been very helpful to know that Yorkshire Housing has people to help with the issues I have been facing over the winter.”



A fresh start...

Our repairs team spotted that a customer wasn’t doing that well; his home was a bit of a mess, he was struggling with his mental health and on top of it all, he’d just been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

So once he’d been referred to our tenancy coaching service, we went out to meet him and came up with a plan to get him back on his feet. We lined up a local charity to help put things straight at home, encouraged him to see someone about his mental health and speak to his GP about ways to manage his diabetes.

And what a difference it’s made! His home’s now in great condition and he’s making his health a priority by enjoying regular exercise. With his improved mental health, he’s now got the confidence to visit the West End to see his favourite show!

We’ve worked with over 600 customers and over 500 told us they’d reached personal goals!



How we spend your rent

We've collected over **£103m** in rent payments, here's how we spend that it...



Investment in customer homes
(34% last year)



Cost of providing our services
(31% last year)



Interest on loans
(21% last year)



Service charge costs
(7% last year)



Surplus for reinvestment
(5% last year)



Improvement projects
(2% last year)



Bad debt*
(0% last year)

We've collected over **£103m** in rent payments



*This is money owed to Yorkshire Housing but is unlikely to be paid, for example if a person owed Yorkshire Housing money was declared bankrupt, this would be bad debt as we couldn't expect to be paid the balance owed to us.

Customer engagement

We've loved getting to know customers at our community independence and scheme events this year, as well as listening to what you've had to say about Yorkshire Housing's services. Here's what we've done with your feedback:

16,831 

Customers engaged with during 2023-24

21 

Surveys sent out to our customers

10 

Policies co-designed with customers

434 

Extra care schemes events we've held

These numbers also include when you've taken part in surveys, external consultations and focus groups that fed back to the regulator, to help shape things like Consumer Standards and Awaab's Law.

They also include customers who've engaged with activities run by our community independence team too. It's all about the bigger picture!

Get involved with helping us make changes for the better

★ ★ ★



Customer engagement

Our engagement survey's helped us understand how you want to get involved, and we've used the insights as part of our new customer strategy.

Not only that, but we've taken your feedback on board for lots of our policies too including accessible services, customer feedback, unreasonable customer behaviour, allocations and tenancy. And we've gone one step further to create an easier version of our tenancy agreement document, all thanks to your input.



A year in the life of... a Yorkshire Housing customer

Our 'Year in the life of' videos followed the lives of six customers throughout the year; the highs, the lows and the honest truth. The videos were shown to the Board to help them make informed decisions about the future, keeping customers in mind.

Getting involved

Want to get involved with helping us make changes for the better? Send us an [email](#) to join the Your Voice Matters group and get started today.

Homes and environment

Last year we launched our Active Asset Management Strategy which focuses on four key areas:



Creating a **customer obsessed** approach.

1



Getting more **data savvy** and improving the information we have.

2



Upping the **energy efficiency** of our homes through retrofit, and reducing our environmental impact.

3



Making sure our homes are **fit for the future** with targeted investment programmes and improved standards.

4



Homes and environment

We've installed more solar panels on our homes than ever before, and it's now standard in our roofing programme. And we're sticking to our commitment to install more electric car chargers year-on-year too.

This year we've been focusing on improved home standards with our [Homes & Environment Group](#), and recruited customer-liaison skills specific to energy efficiency and retrofit.

Since December 2022, we've done almost 10,000 stock condition surveys to help us better understand the condition of our customers' homes; doing any urgent remedial work as we go, and planning for future investment. We're also future proofing our investment plans, by supplementing what we know with new data to make decisions. Like using our damp and mould profiling and energy performance information.

We submitted successful bids under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund which allowed us to do retrofit work to almost 50 homes in North Yorkshire, that's an investment of over £2m!

£21.5m 

Invested into our customers' homes

100% 

Meet the Decent Homes Standard

We've done retrofit work to almost 50 homes



What's new and improving

Knowing what you think about our policies and processes is so important, and means we can make changes that'll have the biggest impact for you.

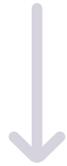
A fresh take on our policies

We've worked with customers to review the allocations policy, and have created a version to explain it in plain English. We'll be doing this with more of our policies as we know they can sometimes be tricky to understand.



Systems to make things easier for you

We're looking at bringing all our systems together and improving our customer portal so it's easier for you to get in touch with us and for us to help you quickly when you do. One of the first steps you'll notice will be the new phone system. That'll be introduced along with increasing the number of colleagues in our customer experience centre so your calls will be answered faster and we'll be able to help you the first time you call!

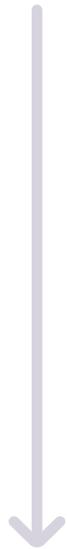


Welcome home!

You told us that the process for moving into a new home could do with some attention. Sometimes you felt that there were delays between being offered a home and being able to sign up, or that you were being rushed when signing up. So we're going to be looking at how we can make this process better for new customers.

- **98%** thought that accessing a home with us was fair and clear
- **87%** said the service was accessible for them
- **78%** were happy with the time it took from applying to signing up for their new home
- **92%** were happy with how our new customer team supported them

We asked customers how they rate the community they've moved into on a scale of 1-10 (one being I don't like it, and 10 being I love it) and we scored **8.71!**



Customer Voice and Review Committee highlights

Hi, I'm Phil, Chair of the Customer Voice and Review Committee (CVRC) at Yorkshire Housing.

I've been a Yorkshire Housing customer since 2017 and joined as Chair in 2023. I'm keen to ensure the customer voice is represented at all levels of Yorkshire Housing, using my skills and other professional experiences, including chairing a governing body to good use.

I've hit the ground running over the last few months, getting to know the other CVRC members and colleagues from across Yorkshire Housing.

It's great to see so many passionate customers and colleagues that want to make improvements – I'm really excited for CVRC to get their teeth into some of the big topics affecting customers over the next 12 months.



What've we been up to this year?

- Welcomed a new chair and three new members to the committee.
- Joined a 'We are Yorkshire' session to find out what the future of Yorkshire Housing looks like.
- We joined some sessions with Yorkshire Housing managers to lift the lid on what it's really like to be a Yorkshire Housing customer.
- Scrutinised performance and satisfaction data from across YH.
- Helped develop the new customer strategy.
- Contributed to Place Plans.
- Challenging Yorkshire Housing on making key customer facing policies accessible to a wide range of customers, including the use of easy read.
- Review customer insight and engagement plans and progress.

Customer Voice and Review Committee highlights

We've got some really fantastic champions on CVRC too...



Their areas of interest range from service charges to antisocial behaviour (ASB), equality and diversity and our impact on the environment.

Meet our ASB champion...

Kris is our ASB champion on CVRC – he took on the role in 2023 when we completed a scrutiny project with involved customers looking at our ASB service. A number of recommendations were made at the end of the project with the aim to make the ASB service better for customers.

Kris then worked closely with the ASB team to follow up on the recommendations to make sure we were staying on track. He's since worked closely with the service to review the ASB policy and helped them produce an easy read customer guide too!

Our plans for the year ahead

-  We're hitting the road to find out what it's like on the Yorkshire Housing frontline, and how we can improve the services.
-  We'll be working on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, increasing our understanding of customer experiences.
-  Helping Yorkshire Housing embed regulation changes – such as the updated Consumer Standards and how they translate to customer satisfaction.

Fancy joining the CVRC?

Our CVRC is open to all our customers to get involved. If you'd like to find out more or join the committee, [click here](#).





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