



**Yorkshire  
Housing**

## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

**POLICY:** Reasonable Adjustments Policy

### **1. POLICY INFORMATION**

<b>DATE APPROVED:</b> April 2021
<b>APPROVED BY:</b> Homes and Places Committee
<b>NEXT APPROVAL DEADLINE:</b> April 2023
<b>REPLACING:</b> N/A - this is a new policy
<b>LAST APPROVED DATE:</b> N/A - this is a new policy
<b>CONSULTATION/SCRUTINY:</b> Customer Consultation, Managers, Heads of Service, Governance team.
<b>LEGAL AND/OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS:</b> Regulator for Social Housing Involvement and Engagement Standard, Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, Equality Act 2010
<b>AUTHOR:</b> Customer Insight and Engagement Manager (SG)
<b>OWNER:</b> Executive Director of Customer Experience (CO)
<b>CIRCULATION:</b> Yoho / Yorkshire Housing Website.
<b>THIS POLICY MAY ALSO NEED TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FOLLOWING POLICIES/DOCUMENTS:</b> Complaints and Compliments Policy

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

2.1 Yorkshire Housing is committed to ensuring that no one is disadvantaged due to a disability when accessing our services, this also applies to mental health conditions. This policy does not cover every scenario as they are tailored and personal to the individual, but it is intended as a general statement.

## **3. POLICY AIMS**

3.1 In every scenario our priorities are to:

- Commit to improving accessibility for everyone when accessing any our services.
- Demonstrate how we meet the principles of our commitment to give disabled people reasonable adjustments.
- Clearly define what we consider when dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments.

## **4. THE POLICY**

### **4.1 Definition**

Reasonable adjustments are changes to work practices, either on a temporary or permanent basis, which aim to avoid disadvantaging someone who has a disability and to provide extra support where necessary.

The term disability also relates to mental health conditions which have a long term impact on the individuals day to day activities, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

This policy only covers adjustments that make our services more accessible to customers who may need additional support due to having a disability. This policy does not cover reasonable adjustments that a customer requests to make their home more accessible e.g. the addition of a ramp to a front door or fitting of a walk-in shower We have separate processes in place for customers requesting adaptations. For advice on how to request adaptations to a Yorkshire Housing home, please contact the Customer Experience Centre on 0345 366 4404 or via email [customerservices@yorkshirehousing.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@yorkshirehousing.co.uk).

## 4.2 **Customer Consultation**

In creating this policy, we worked collaboratively with several partner agencies and customers to ensure that it is fit for purpose. This included consultation with our customers and liaison with the Housing Diversity Network who provided guidance and advice. More information on the Housing Diversity Network can be found [here](#).

## 4.3 **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equal opportunities for all. There is also a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments when:

- There is a provision, criterion or practice which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage and not a person who is not disabled.
- Where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to someone who does not have a disability.
- Where a person would, if not for an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

The term substantial disadvantage is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. This definition is taken from the Equality Act 2010 s.212(1).

## 4.4 **Requesting a reasonable adjustment**

Customers can ask for reasonable adjustments to be provided by:

- Email – [customerservices@yorkshirehousing.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@yorkshirehousing.co.uk)
- Call – 0345 366 4404
- Website – <https://www.yorkshirehousing.co.uk/>
- Letter – Yorkshire Housing, Dysons Chambers, 12 – 14 Briggate, Leeds, LS1 6ER
- Face to face via a Yorkshire Housing colleague

If a customer so wishes and where this is reasonable, they can nominate a representative to deal with their request on their behalf. There may be occasions where we will need to request authority to discuss the customer’s request with the representative. An example representative could be a family member, friend, social worker or support worker (this list is not exhaustive).

## 4.5 **Types of reasonable adjustments we offer**

There are many different adjustments that we can offer. There is no set list as each reasonable adjustment is suited to an individual’s needs. For each

request, we will speak to the person concerned to reach an agreement on what may be reasonable in their circumstances. We will never make assumptions about whether someone needs an adjustment or what that adjustment may be.

Examples of reasonable adjustments could be:

- A portable induction loop for people with hearing aids.
- Alternative formats such as Braille or audio CDs.
- Sending letters or emails in larger print.
- Changing a meeting venue to allow for disabled access.

#### 4.6 **Our response to reasonable adjustments**

In most cases we will be able to agree on delivering the reasonable adjustments with minimum delay. However, there may be some cases when the request needs to be investigated with more detail. This helps us to understand about how best to overcome the difficulty facing the disabled person. In these cases, we may seek advice from expert disability organisations or signpost the person to other forms of support.

#### **How do we decide what is reasonable?**

4.7 We commit to consider all reasonable adjustments requests from customers. Although the Equality Act 2010 does not specifically define what ‘reasonable’ means, the guidance suggests the relevant factors are:

- The effectiveness of the adjustment to prevent or reduce a person who feels disadvantaged due to their disability.
- The practicality of us making the adjustment.
- The availability of our resources.
- Any disruption to services that are as a result of the adjustment.

#### **Effectiveness**

4.8 We will need to consider the effectiveness of the adjustment and ensure it fully addresses the disadvantage it is meant to overcome.

#### **Practicality**

4.9 We will need to consider if we are practically able to provide the reasonable adjustment. For example, if a customer requests additional time to read documents but there is a legislative deadline out of our control that means we cannot provide this time.

## **Resources**

- 4.10 Even if an adjustment is effective, we may not be able to provide it because of our resources. This may not always be because of cost but could also involve the resources and skill of Yorkshire Housing colleagues. The reasonableness of an adjustment will be evaluated against the resources we have available.

## **Potential disruption to services**

- 4.11 Like resources, we need to understand whether the adjustment will impact the effectiveness of our services. For example, it is not practical for one Yorkshire Housing colleague to be working solely on one customer's concerns as others who also need our help and support may suffer. While it may solve the issue for that one customer in a shorter timeframe, the resources it would take could be detrimental to the effectiveness of the services that we deliver to all customers. In this circumstance we could offer the customer extra time to have the issue or concern dealt with.

## **Reasonable adjustments in customer engagement**

- 4.12 When engaging with customers we will take steps to ensure that no-one is excluded from customer engagement opportunities. We recognise that this is increasingly important as we move to more digital and flexible ways of engaging with our customer base. We will take the necessary steps to support all customers to be able to participate in digital engagement opportunities and ensure that no one is excluded due to lack of access or understanding around digital technology.
- 4.13 Proactive and reasonable steps will be taken when this situation arises to allow the individual to take part and remain included in all engagement activities This may include, but is not limited to, the provision of digital training, digital guidance and practical solutions. We will also make provision for customers to provide their input and feedback in an alternative way, such as over the telephone or via email if they prefer.

## **5. REPORTING/MONITORING**

- 5.1 We will monitor and record any reasonable adjustment requests. By recording requests, we can identify the needs of our customers and improve our services. Internally, we will monitor these adjustments through our customer relationship management system (CRM). It is the responsibility of the allocated Yorkshire Housing colleague who is receiving the request for a reasonable adjustment to record the details on the CRM system and to ensure there is a recorded review date. Yorkshire Housing colleagues will be able to identify a reasonable adjustment via the CRM system by means of a

system flag, this is to make them aware of the reasonable adjustment that is in place and inform them of how they can support the customer that it relates to.

We will review this policy after the first 6 months (November 2021) to make sure it is fit for purpose and effective for customers.

6. **DISSATISFACTION WITH A REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT**

- 6.1 We aim to deal with all customers in a fair way and free from discrimination. If a customer is unhappy with an agreed reasonable adjustment, they can make a formal complaint. Details of how to raise a formal complaint are in our Complaints and Compliments Policy, details of which can be found on the Yorkshire Housing website [here](#).

7. **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- 7.1 Citizens Advice have more information about customer rights to ask for reasonable adjustments when accessing services. You can find the link [here](#).

8. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Fairness and accessibility is a key aim of this policy. It is designed to ensure we meet our obligations under the Equality Act. All requests for reasonable adjustments from customers with a disability from any of the diversity strands will be actioned and responded to, with a tailored solution put into place as necessary.