
Appendix: **YKY19_Our alignment with Ofwat customer engagement principles**



YorkshireWater

Navigating this document



This Appendices document is separate to and supports the main business plan document.

Links outside of this report

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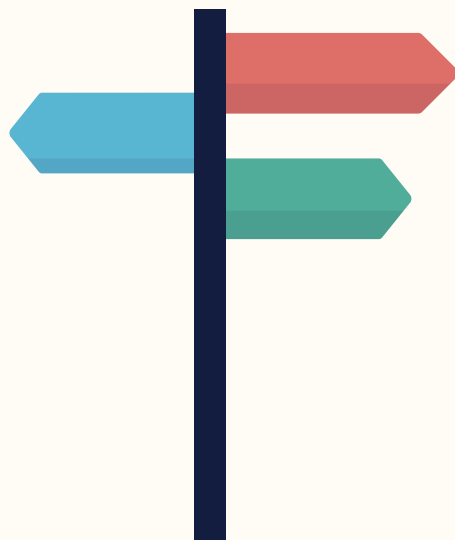
Read more about this at www.ofwat.gov.uk

Business plan links

This icon can be clicked on to go to the main Yorkshire Water Business Plan document where more information can be found.



More detail on this subject can be found in [Chapter 6: Customer and stakeholder engagement](#)



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1. Our alignment with Ofwat customer engagement principles



We have made sure to assess our customer, community and stakeholder engagement programme against the Ofwat published customer engagement principles. These can be found in Ofwat’s customer engagement policy paper.

 [Read more about this at PR24 and beyond: Customer engagement policy](#)


You can see how we meet each of these principles in our summary table below.

1.1 Our alignment to Ofwat customer engagement principles

Principle	How we meet the principle
<p>Principle 1 – the right outcomes at the right price, at the right time</p>	<p>Our research is focused on understanding our customer, community and stakeholder views on our future plans, ensuring they align with their priorities. Critically though, we have undertaken engagement to ensure that those outcomes are delivered at the right time for our customers, and at an affordable and acceptable price. Examples of engagement include our:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billing profile research • Affordability & Acceptability Testing • Valuing water • Willingness to pay <p>You can find further information on these engagement studies in Appendix 1 of Chapter 6.</p> <p> More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 6 - Yorkshire Water customer research as specifically quoted in Chapter 6</p> <p>More information on how we have assessed fairness in bill profile, including how to phase across generations can be found in Chapter 2.</p> <p> More detail on this subject can see in Chapter 2: Bills and affordability</p>
<p>Principle 2 – two-way and ongoing engagement: listening and talking</p>	<p>Our engagement spans beyond just the business planning process. We take pride in talking to our customers, community and stakeholders on an ongoing basis, whether that be through social media listening, using our Customer Voice feedback to drive customer service improvements for customers or understanding their perceptions of us through activity such as our satisfaction surveys or C-MeX feedback.</p> <p>We also don’t simply carry out research studies in isolation, but also have several longitudinal studies. Our inclusive service performance commitment research has been ongoing since 2019 and aims to provide an annual view on how well our priority services capture the needs of those in vulnerable circumstances. You can find out more about this research in Appendix 1 of Chapter 6.</p>

Principle	How we meet the principle
	 <p>More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 6 Appendix: Yorkshire Water customer research as specifically quoted in Chapter 6</p>
<p>Principle 3 – meaningful and high-quality engagement</p>	<p>Engaging with our customers, community and stakeholders is critical to ensure our plans meet the expectations of those who are the primary users of our services. However, carrying out that engagement is resource heavy, so we are committed to ensuring that the output delivers meaningful insight. We work with independent consumer research experts to ensure that our studies are non-biased and meet the minimum requirements for high quality research.</p> <p>In addition, throughout the business planning process, we have made sure to continually assess the need for engagement on specific topics and follow up research studies where we felt further information from our customers was required.</p>
<p>Principle 4 – customise and provide context</p>	<p>Our customer base is diverse, so we know our research cannot be a ‘one size fits all’ approach. We involve a diverse range of people in our studies to ensure it is representative of our region, and we adjust our research approach and methodology as necessary. For example, we have used face-to-face and telephone interviews to balance online studies and ensure we are supporting those who may be digitally excluded. We have also had face-to-face in-depth interviews with vulnerable customers in their own homes where they might struggle to attend focus groups or again, are digitally disengaged.</p> <p>Additionally, our research spans a variety of customers and representations – including household customers, non-household customers, retailers, NAVs, future bill payers, digitally excluded customers, vulnerable customers, customers from across our region (North, South, East Riding, West Yorkshire), urban, rural and coastal, mixed socio-economic groups and include multiple ethnic groups.</p> <p>We also ensure our research studies are contextualised with information on our current performance. An example of this can be seen in the testing for our Long-Term Delivery Strategy. Comprehensive stimuli were provided to customers, which showed 2023 performance against each of the performance commitments tagged to our ambition headlines. You can find out more about this research in Appendix 1 of Chapter 6.</p>  <p>More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 6 Appendix: Yorkshire Water customer research as specifically quoted in Chapter 6</p>
<p>Principle 5 – use of multiple sources of customer data</p>	<p>When building a view of our customer, community and stakeholder priorities and expectations of us in the future, we make sure not to rely on one source of data. We have built a triangulation database which holds information on the extensive range of customer research studies. We know that relying on customer research projects in isolation decreases the level of confidence in the results and risks the useability of the output, so we use our database to triangulate across data sources to ensure our conclusions and decisions are based on multiple sources of data including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking projects • Customer contact data • Customer Voice feedback • Social Media • Media • Complaints

Principle	How we meet the principle
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent studies undertaken by external companies/bodies as mentioned above - (CCWater, Ofwat, MOSL etc.) <p> More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 6.</p>
<p>Principle 6 – understanding current and future customers</p>	<p>As indicated in response to Principle 4, we have engaged with a wide range of customers because we know our diverse customer base will have different views. This includes customers in vulnerable circumstances, where we have made sure to adopt an approach that means their voices can be heard. For example, carrying out face-to-face interviews in the comfort of their own home.</p> <p>We’ve also carried out several research studies specific to regional challenges, such as the engagement in Hull for our Living with Water partnership and the research we’ve carried out on our community in Ilkley.</p> <p>In addition, our engagement does not exclude an important group of people – our future bill payers. Many of our research studies include the views of future bill payers. For example, our valuing water study carried out 110 surveys with individuals aged 18-34 with no responsibility for paying the water bill at present, to understand how their priorities differ from household and non-household bill paying customers. You can find out more about this research in Appendix 1 of Chapter 6.</p> <p> More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 6 Appendix: Yorkshire Water customer research as specifically quoted in Chapter 6</p> <p>We’ve also done a lot of work on intergenerational fairness of bill increases to understand how customers would like to phase improvements over the years. More information on this can be found in Chapter 2.</p> <p> More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 2: Bills and affordability</p>
<p>Principle 7 – consistency and comparability</p>	<p>We have been mindful to adopt the views gathered on customer preferences from the Ofwat / CWater customer preferences research, which provides a cross sector view on priorities customers find most important in the water industry.</p> <p> Read more about this at www.ofwat.gov.uk/publication/preferences-research-full-yonder-report/</p> <p>In line with the principle to use multiple data sources, we’ve triangulated this with our own research, but we’ve tried to adopt consistent language and service areas for testing to allow for effective comparison of findings.</p>
<p>Principle 8 – protecting customers’ interests</p>	<p>We invite challenge from our customers, community and stakeholders, not only about our business plan, but our current performance and our longer-term strategies.</p> <p>We have several mechanisms in place to ensure that we protect the interests of our customers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing customers with a view of current performance to contextualise our research Providing opportunities for customers to feedback on their experience of us, through our ongoing Customer Voice and C-MeX / D-MeX and R-MeX surveys, as well as through our ‘Your Water, Your Say’ customer challenge sessions.

Principle	How we meet the principle
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inviting our customers to provide specific challenge on aspects of our business plan and Long-Term Delivery Strategy• Working with our Yorkshire Forum for Water Customers ('The Forum') who provide independent challenge on behalf of customers <p>For more information on how we ensure our business plans are appropriately scrutinised, see Chapter 6.</p> <p> More detail on this subject can be found in Chapter 6</p>