AMDEA
The UK Home Appliance Association

Consumer Insight Report

Autumn 2026

Headline Insights





Executive Summary



This third edition of the AMDEA Quarterly Consumer Insight Report turns to a moment that matters in a household's relationship with its appliances: the point at which one breaks down. Our Spring report set out what consumers say they value in an appliance. Summer examined how far consumers trust the people who repair them. This Autumn we ask a more immediate question: what happens, in practice, when a washing machine, fridge or oven stops working, and why.

This report comes at a moment of real regulatory movement. New EU rules on the right to repair took effect across the EU from July 2026, and the UK's own repairability class for tumble dryers is confirmed for January 2027.

When asked why a consumer has chosen replacement, our data shows the answer is more nuanced than a simple 'throwaway culture'. Nearly two in three UK adults have, at some point, replaced a faulty large appliance rather than repair it, but our research shows that consumers replace when an appliance is near the end of its life, when the cost of repair no longer represents good value, when they lack confidence that a repair will last or when parts are expensive or unavailable. This is an encouraging picture: replacement appears to be a considered judgement about value, not a default response to inconvenience.

That distinction matters, because it tells us where the real opportunity for repair sits. Consumers are open to repairing a large appliance rather than replacing it and, where an appliance is genuinely old and inefficient, replacement may also be the right choice, both for the household budget and for its running costs. But our research also shows that willingness to repair is conditional: the appliance must still be worth saving, the price must represent a clear saving against a new one and the outcome must feel dependable. Where those three conditions are met, the case for repair is a strong one. Where they are not, replacement will remain the probable choice.

Repairability deserves treatment as a practical, everyday issue, not only an environmental or regulatory one: 61.1% of consumers say a repairability score would influence their purchase but only 16.4% currently compare repairability when shopping. Supported by well-known consumer champion and TV personality Alice Beer, this autumn AMDEA will be launching our press campaign, urging more consumers to consider 'Repair before Replace' whenever it is possible.

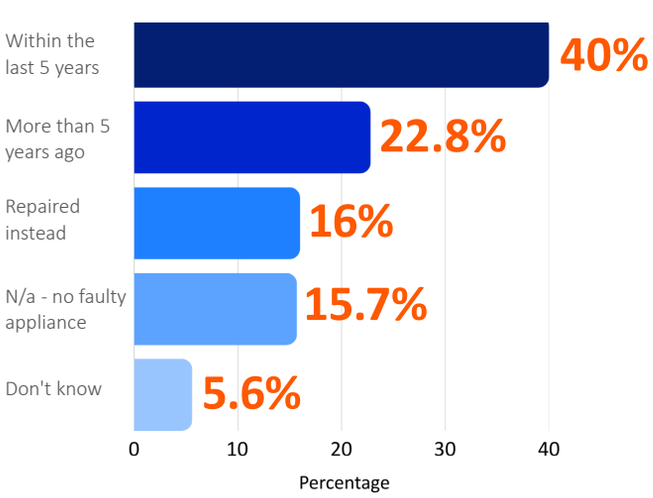
Stefan Hay
Chief Executive Officer
October 2026

1. The Repair-or-Replace Decision



When a large household appliance breaks down, what happens next is a big decision. **Nearly two in three UK adults (62.7%) say they have, at some point, chosen to replace a faulty large appliance rather than repair it**, with 40.0% saying this happened within the last five years. By contrast, **just 16.0% say that when they experienced a fault, the appliance was repaired instead**.

We asked: Have you (or someone on your behalf) ever had a large household appliance develop a fault and chosen to replace it instead of having it repaired?



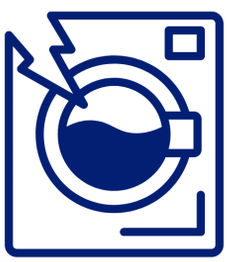
Among those who have had an appliance fault, washing machines are the product most commonly associated with the most recent one (42.7%), followed by fridge-freezers (20.9%) and ovens, cookers or hobs (12.1%). These are not discretionary items. A household without a working washing machine or fridge faces an immediate, practical problem and that urgency shapes the decision that follows as the appliance needs a solution that is affordable, accessible and dependable, fast.

The end-of-life calculation

Among those who replaced rather than repaired, the two leading reasons sit close together: 33.7% say the appliance was an older model already near the end of its natural lifespan and a closely matched 32.0% say the cost of repairing it would have been more than, or about the same as, replacing it. Read together, this looks less like a preference for disposability and more like a considered judgement about the appliance's remaining value.

There are times when replacement is preferable to repair. Where an appliance genuinely is old and inefficient (a dated condenser tumble dryer running up energy bills against a modern heat-pump

equivalent, for example) replacing it can be the more sustainable and more economical choice, not just the easier one.



34%

of those who replaced an appliance did so because it was near the end of its life

Barriers to repair also show up clearly in the data: 17.9% of those who replaced say the necessary parts were unavailable or too expensive and a further 17.0% were worried the appliance would simply break again after a repair. These findings add a concrete dimension to the accreditation and trust debate covered in our Summer report: for repair to compete properly with replacement, consumers need confidence in the person doing the work, in the availability of parts and the durability of the outcome. Wanting something new plays only a minor role when it comes to replacement: just 12.0% of those who replaced say they did so because they wanted an updated design or newer features. Appearance mattered to very few (3.9%), though it was more of a factor for younger consumers: 8.3% of 18–34s said the appliance was ugly and they wanted something more aesthetically pleasing, compared with almost none of the over-55s (0.4%).



Just

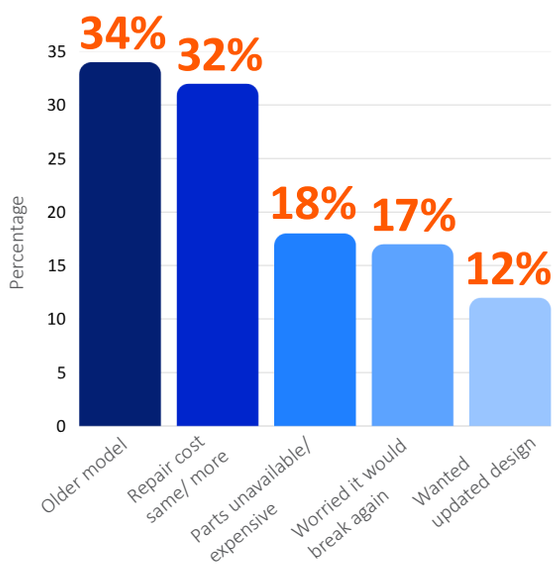
12%

of those who replaced an appliance did so because they wanted an updated design or newer features

A generational divide

Both leading reasons for replacement show a marked age gap. Among over-55s, almost half (44.9%) say the appliance was an older model near the end of its life, compared with a quarter (23.9%) of 18–34 year olds. The cost calculation shows an even wider split: 41.9% of over-55s say repair would have cost more than, or about the same as, replacement, against only 19.3% of 18–34s. **Older consumers, in other words, are considerably more likely than younger ones to conclude an appliance is beyond saving.** They are also the least likely group to value warranty or service cover (just 42.0% of over-55s see it as worthwhile protection against 63.8% of 18–34s). Better warranty awareness among this group could plausibly change some of these replacement decisions.

We asked: What were the main reasons an appliance was replaced rather than repaired? The top five reasons were:



AMDEA Insight:

This data challenges a simplistic throwaway culture narrative. Consumers are not replacing appliances because they don't value repair, they are replacing them when the repair option does not meet a practical test of value, parts access and confidence in the outcome. Age and cost dominate the decision and that judgement sharpens with the consumer's own age: older adults are considerably more decisive than younger ones about when an appliance has reached the end of its useful life. AMDEA's role is to help close the gaps in consumer understanding of, and improve consumer confidence in, repair. But replacing a genuinely old, inefficient appliance with a more efficient model can also be the responsible choice.



2. The Conditions that Make Repair Work

When it comes to repairing rather than replacing, price has a big influence on the outcome. In a hypothetical scenario where a major appliance breaks down and a comparable replacement would cost £600 including installation, 71.1% of consumers named a specific maximum they'd pay for a repair. Their average maximum was £244.51. **Nearly half of all respondents set their maximum at £200** or less, a fraction of the £600 replacement cost, **while only 5.4% would go as high as £500 or above**. A further 10.7% say they would only repair an appliance if it cost nothing at all (for example if it was still under warranty) and 8.0% would not consider repair over replacement under any circumstance.

For repair providers, the message is clear: anything less than a clear, solid discount struggles to compete with the simplicity of buying new.

There is a pronounced age gap in this ceiling, however. **Among 18–34 year olds, 39.3% would pay £300 or more for a repair, compared with just 12.9% of over-55s**, who cluster heavily at the lower end. Over-55s are also more than twice as likely to say they wouldn't consider repair over replacement at all (12.4% vs 4.6% of 18–34s). In short, older consumers aren't just quicker to write an appliance off; when they do consider repair, it has to be considerably cheaper to win them over.

Repair protects value

Among those who chose to repair rather than replace their most recent faulty appliance, the leading motivations were that repairing was cheaper than replacing (37.4%), that discarding a fixable appliance felt wasteful (36.8%) and that the appliance was otherwise in good condition (35.7%). These three reasons sit close together and point to a consistent underlying logic: consumers repair when they judge that there is still household value left in the appliance and disposal would mean losing that value unnecessarily.

Warranty cover and a trusted technician help, but neither is essential to choosing repair. Among those who repaired, 21.2% said being under warranty or covered by insurance was a main reason and 18.5% said knowing a technician they trusted was, but most cited neither so these are an advantage, not a requirement.

There is, however, real appetite for warranty cover: 54.1% of all adults think an extended warranty or service plan is a sensible way to guard against repair costs. That appetite is strongest among younger consumers (63.8% of 18–34s) and weakest among over-55s (42.0%), the opposite of what you'd perhaps expect, since over-55s are also the group quickest to write an appliance off and least willing to pay for repair.

Reasons for repair over replace include:



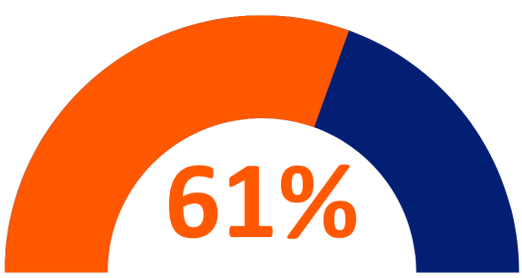
AMDEA Insight:

This section gives repair providers and AMDEA a real benchmark. Set against a £600 replacement, nearly half of consumers cap their repair spend at £150–£200 and only a small minority will go much beyond £300. This survey only tested one price point so we can't say whether that same ratio would hold for a cheaper or more expensive appliance, but it does suggest that consumers are weighing repair cost as a proportion of what a replacement would cost them and that a repair quote that lands close to half the replacement cost is competing on very difficult terms. That ceiling drops even further for over-55s, who are also the quickest to conclude an appliance isn't worth saving. Reaching this group means being upfront and specific about likely cost as early as possible; a general message that 'repair is worth it' won't change a judgement that's being made on a fairly hard price line. Where an appliance is old enough, or inefficient enough, replacing it with a more efficient model remains the sensible exception rather than the rule.

3. Repairability Information

If repair is going to compete with replacement, consumers need to know how repairable an appliance is before they buy it. We asked how much a repairability score would influence that choice and found a gap between what consumers say they want and how they currently shop.

When presented with a description of a repairability index (a score rating how easy and affordable an appliance is to repair, based on factors like spare-parts availability and ease of disassembly) **61.1% of consumers say a high score would influence their choice**. This includes 16.7% for whom it would be a major influence or a deciding factor and a further 44.4% who say it would factor in alongside other considerations such as price and brand. This is broadly consistent across age and gender, suggesting a repairability score has genuinely wide appeal rather than resonating with a narrow segment of consumers.



of consumers say a high repairability score would influence their purchasing decision

Set against that stated interest, **only 16.4% of consumers currently say they actively compare ease of repair or spare-parts availability when choosing between new large appliances**, well behind upfront purchase price (57.3%), reliability and brand reputation (51.4%) and energy efficiency rating (47.1%). Further down the scale, 34.7% actively compare warranty length and aftercare support and 28.8% compare estimated annual running costs or electricity usage, both also ahead of repairability. This isn't a fair like-for-like comparison though. Price, energy rating and warranty are all either printed on the label or readily available at the point of sale and running costs can be calculated. A repairability score is not available here at all.

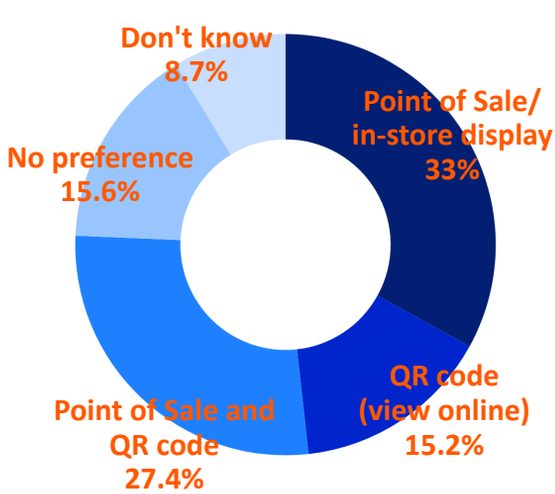
When it comes to gender, women are consistently more likely than men to actively compare most of these factors. Reliability and brand reputation (55.6% vs 47.0%), energy efficiency (51.0% vs 42.9%) and product dimensions (47.3% vs 37.4%) all show a meaningful gap. Repairability is the one exception: men are marginally more likely to already factor it in (17.5% vs 15.2%).

Point-of-sale access is preferred

When asked how they would prefer to access repairability information, consumers are clear that it should sit where the decision is being made. **One-third (33.0%) would want it displayed in-store or at the point of sale and a further 27.4% would want both point-of-sale information and a QR code**. Together, 60.4% would want point-of-sale access in some form; only 15.2% would be satisfied with a QR-code-only route.

This, too, splits by age. Over-55s show the strongest preference for in-store display alone (41.4%, against 23.1% of 18–34s) while 18–34s are the only group with meaningful appetite for a QR-code-only approach (24.9%, more than three times the 7.6% among over-55s). The message for members and policymakers holds across both groups, however: digital, detailed information has a role to play, particularly for younger shoppers, but it should sit alongside a simple, visible display that works for every generation of buyer, not replace it.

We asked: If repairability information were available when buying, how would you prefer to access it?



A preference for clarity

The preference for clarity, not more information, has held steady since the Spring report. Spring found 50.5% felt there was already too much appliance information to process, and 67.0% said new labels should only be added if they replace an existing one. Summer recorded closely comparable figures (48.8% and 64.3% respectively) alongside 61.0% preferring plain language over icons and symbols.

The regulatory context

Two separate developments are worth addressing here. The repairability index tested in this section is a generic concept, not a reference to an existing scheme. The only repairability class confirmed for energy labels in Great Britain is for household tumble dryers, under the Ecodesign for Energy-Related Products and Energy Information (Household Tumble Dryers) Regulations 2026, and it becomes mandatory on labels from 19 January 2027.

Separately, new EU rules on the right to repair took effect across the EU from 31 July 2026, covering household and electronic products including washing machines. These give EU consumers the right to request a repair from manufacturers for free or at a reasonable price, extend the legal guarantee by at least 12 months where a consumer chooses to repair rather than replace and require manufacturers to make repair-service information and reasonably priced spare parts more accessible. A new EU-wide repair platform is expected to launch in 2027. As an EU measure, these rules do not automatically apply in Great Britain and this report makes no assumption about whether or when the UK will adopt equivalent provisions.

Taken together, this data shouldn't be read as evidence of a wider 2026 rollout of repairability labelling across all appliance categories in the UK but it does sit within a clear direction of travel, in both Great Britain and the EU, toward giving consumers stronger rights and clearer information on repair.

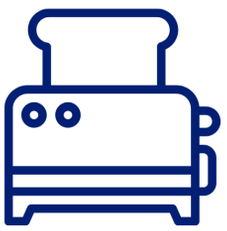
AMDEA Insight:

Our research shows that consumers are receptive to repairability information (61.1% say a high score would influence their choice) and want to see it where they shop: 60.4% want it at the point of sale in some form against 15.2% who would be content with a QR code alone. Detailed digital information has a role to play, particularly for younger consumers, a quarter of whom (24.9%) would be happy with a QR code alone, but it should complement point-of-sale information rather than replace it, especially given how strongly older consumers favour a simple in-store display (41.4%). AMDEA's view is that, to be useful, repairability information should be simple and easy to compare with the factors shoppers already weigh up: price, reliability, warranty, running costs and energy efficiency.



4. Small Appliances, Sustainability & Everyday Value

Large appliances dominate the headline debate about repair, replacement and cost, but this section widens the lens. Small appliances rarely make the news when they fail but the data shows they sit at the centre of daily life in a way that has real implications for how consumers think about sustainability, value and disposal. Consumers also approach them differently: Spring found that 69.9% say it's easier to replace a small appliance than repair it, a sharp contrast to how people think about a washing machine or fridge.



70%

say it's easier to replace a small appliance than repair it*

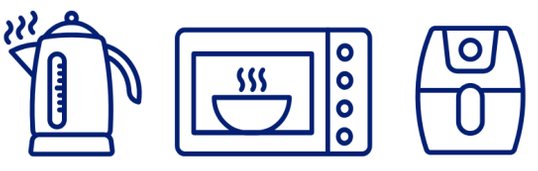
*Spring data

Everyday reliance is high

Asked which small appliances they would find most difficult to live without, consumers put the electric kettle clearly at the top (52.2%), followed by the microwave (47.8%) and the air fryer (33.2%). Hair dryers (20.4%), electric toothbrushes (18.6%), cooling fans (13.5%), coffee makers (12.0%) and electric shavers (11.9%) all feature too. These are modestly priced items individually, but the findings show they are woven into daily routines in a way that outweighs their price tag.

The kettle and microwave are relied on by both men and women (kettle: 55.6% of women, 48.9% of men; microwave: 48.0% vs 47.6%) but reliance on personal-care appliances divides sharply: 32.0% of women say the hair dryer is the appliance they'd struggle most without, against just 7.9% of men, while the pattern reverses for the electric shaver (18.9% of men vs 5.4% of women).

We asked: Which small appliances would you find most difficult to live without? The top three responses were:



Kettle	Microwave	Air fryer
52%	48%	33%

Sustainability considerations

When it comes to choosing a small appliance, **47.6% of consumers say it matters that the manufacturer has strong sustainability credentials**, with a commitment to reducing environmental impact, sustainable materials or ethical business practices. But this isn't a universal or overwhelming demand: 27.8% are neutral and 19.4% say it's unimportant to them. Sustainability credentials matter to a meaningful minority of consumers but it isn't a majority expectation.

AMDEA Insight:

Small appliances sit at the centre of daily life in a way their price tags don't reflect. The kettle and microwave top the list of appliances consumers say they couldn't do without and over a third of all consumers named the air fryer, which is notable for a product that's a relatively recent addition to UK kitchens. Sustainability doesn't carry the same purchasing weight as it does for large appliances though: fewer than half of consumers (47.6%) see a manufacturer's sustainability credentials as important for a small appliance, against 71.3% who rated sustainability credentials as important when buying a large one in Spring. The questions were worded differently, so this is a guide rather than a like-for-like comparison, but it is a category difference worth planning around: a sustainability message that works for a fridge or washing machine range may need a different approach to persuade someone to buy a kettle or toaster.

5. The 2026 Consumer Picture So Far



Three waves of research now give AMDEA a rounded view of how UK consumers are thinking and acting on household appliances in 2026. Across all three reports, the same priorities keep surfacing: durability, reliability, running costs, affordability and information that is simple to use rather than simply plentiful. What Autumn adds is an account of how these established priorities operate when a product breaks down.

Repair needs support

Spring showed strong support for repairable appliances. Summer highlighted that consumers need confidence in the professional carrying out the repair before that translates into action. Autumn completes the picture by identifying the immediate, practical conditions that determine whether repair happens at all: the price of the repair relative to replacement, the condition and remaining life of the appliance, whether parts are available and confidence that the repair will last.

The age pattern

The repair pattern by age is not new to Autumn. Summer found the same generational divide in DIY repair: over-55s were nearly three times as likely as 18–34s to say they would 'never or almost never' attempt a repair themselves (53.3% vs 18.3%) and two in three over-55s (67.5%) said they were unlikely to try one at all. **Seen together, the three waves show a strong pattern: older consumers are consistently the most cautious about repair**, whether that caution shows up in DIY confidence, price sensitivity or judgement about an appliance's remaining life.
The three waves point to one consistent pattern: consumers don't reject repair outright but their willingness is conditional on repair being practical, affordable and easy to access, whether that's parts, a trustworthy technician or both.

Information where it's needed

This wave adds a related but distinct finding to a preference that has held steady since Spring: consumers do not want more information, they want the right information delivered where they can use it. Spring and Summer established a stable preference for clarity, integration of labels rather than accumulation and plain language over icons and symbols. Autumn tested a related but different question: not whether consumers want more labels, but how they'd prefer to access repairability information if it existed. The answer points the same way: 60.4% want it available physically at the point of sale, either on its own or alongside a QR code, rather than accessed only online.

AMDEA Insight:

Across three waves, one gap stands out as the clearest opportunity for members: consumers consistently say they want the things this research measures (durability, repairability, clear information) but far fewer currently say they factor those things into a purchase decision.
Only 16.4% currently compare repairability when buying a large appliance, against the 61.1% who say a repairability score would influence their choice. That gap isn't apathy; it's a lack of accessible, comparable information at the point of purchase.
Closing it doesn't mean adding to the label. Consumers have told us twice now, in Spring and Summer, that they resist new, additional labelling (67.0% and 64.3% respectively said new labels should only be added if they replace an existing one) and nothing in this wave suggests repairability should be the exception. The clearer route is to build repairability into what's already there: the price tag, the energy label, existing point-of-sale information. Realistic repair pricing and a repair offer consumers can trust would give consumers the practical means to act on a preference they already hold.



Conclusion: Autumn 2026

This third wave of research adds to the picture of how UK consumers relate to their appliances and tells a story about a market where consumers are willing to repair but where repair has not yet been made compelling or easy enough to compete properly with replacement.

When an appliance fails, replacement remains the more common outcome, but this report shows this option is not chosen carelessly. Consumers replace when an appliance has reached the end of its useful life, when repair doesn't offer a meaningful saving, when parts are hard to access or when they are not confident a repair will hold. Each of these is a solvable, practical barrier rather than evidence of consumer indifference.

Making repairability real means ensuring spare parts remain easily available and affordably priced. AMDEA has long called for VAT on spare parts to be removed. Supporting a professional repair service consumers can trust with confidence, e.g. introducing a repairer accreditation scheme, and presenting the information consumers need at the moment they are choosing what to buy, are also important.

This last point really matters. A repairability score can be powerful and our data shows genuine appetite for one. But a score only works if consumers can see it, understand it at a glance and weigh it alongside the same practical factors they already use to judge an appliance. Presented at the point of sale, in plain language, repairability information has the potential to tip the balance between repair and replacement. Buried behind a QR code or introduced as one more label among many, it risks becoming exactly the kind of information overload that both Spring and Summer found consumers actively resist.

One further thread is worth drawing out. This Autumn wave shows over-55s are the least willing to pay for a repair (only 12.9% would pay £300 or more, against 39.3% of 18–34s) and are the quickest to judge an appliance beyond saving (44.9% cite an ageing appliance as their reason for replacing vs 23.9% of 18–34s). Yet Summer found that an AMDEA-accredited badge increased trust most among over-55s (59.4% against 51.0% among 18–34s). Put together, this means the group whose price threshold for repair is lowest is also the group most responsive to accreditation. This is a real opportunity for AMDEA: build trust in accredited repair among older consumers, who are also the hardest to persuade on price.

Looking ahead, the Winter wave will continue to track how these themes and consumer attitudes to household appliances evolve. AMDEA remains committed to ensuring that consumer evidence, not assumption, continues to guide that conversation.

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on nationally representative research conducted by Opinium on behalf of AMDEA in Q3 2026. The research methodology employed a detailed online questionnaire developed in close collaboration with AMDEA.

The sample consists of 2,000 UK adults, weighted to ensure accurate representation across age, gender, geographic region and socio-economic status. This large sample size provides a high degree of statistical confidence and allows for granular analysis of demographic variations. Where relevant, this report highlights key differences in sentiment between the 18-34, 35-54 and 55+ age cohorts, as these distinctions carry important implications for both product strategy and communications.