

# Customer Involvement & Communities Strategy 2025-2028

## Our context and challenges

In Selwood Housing's vision we state that **"we will listen to our customers and involve them in our work"**. We have a long history of enabling and investing in customer involvement which has given us strong foundations to build on. We need to be in a position where we are ready to face any challenges presented to us; both externally and internally.

As an organisation we recognise that there are high expectations of how we communicate with our customers and empower them to influence our work and service delivery. In our first year of data collection on the TSMs (Tenant Satisfaction Measures), the proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them is 72%. This puts Selwood Housing over 10% higher than the Social Housing Regulator's median score and in the top quartile for both our peer group and across the country. The new Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard sets down required outcomes and specific expectations regarding our engagement with tenants. We take customer recommendations into account and always communicate to all customers how those suggestions have been considered.

Our key strategic challenge remains:

**Bringing clear customer voice and views into service design through inclusive, efficient and effective methods whilst flexibly responding to the needs of the business.**

## Our strengths and advantages

We have had strong foundations to build on, with many years of established customer involvement at Selwood Housing. We have a commitment to customer voice at all levels of the organisation, with three of the nine Board member places being held for customer. We are building on the work of previous teams and over the last eighteen months have developed a rolling programme of customer involvement for most customer-facing policy and strategy renewals.

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We have developed strong working relationships with heads of service and are increasing the understanding of what we do and the importance of hearing and considering the needs and views of those who live in our housing.

In planning for this strategy, we held customer focus groups. We were told our key strength is always having a head of service or decision maker present to respond during customer involvement activities. Our 'you said, we did' reporting back was highlighted for transparency and timely sharing of information.

Our Customer Conversation survey in 2024 showed 80% of respondents are already aware of involvement opportunities. The survey responses resulted in an increase of 37% signing up to receive news from our team, giving us a larger engaged customer base to work with.

As a local housing association, we can connect and consult face-to-face with our customers in their communities, and we plan to build on this. Our work with the Priority Neighbourhoods project gives us a different angle for hearing customers' voices and we are planning further work on this during 2025-2026.

We have built a strong working relationship with the procurement team, agreeing a new way of working to ensure regular social contributions from contractors into our Stronger Communities Fund. This money compliments Selwood Housing's own contribution, increasing the sustainability of the grant and allowing us to continue funding of local initiatives that support our customers and neighbourhoods.

## 4. Strategic principles

- ***'We are customer driven' is a key organisational value; we keep the customer at the heart of what we do and deliver together.***
- ***We provide a variety of involvement opportunities that empowers any customer who wishes to have a voice.***
- ***We are honest and transparent in all feedback, monitoring and recording.***

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- ***We enable and advocate for genuine, simple and positive customer involvement across the organisation. We work with our colleagues to provide an adaptable, value for money service.***
- ***We understand the limits of our resources and recognise expertise and knowledge in community organisations that best serve our customers and neighbourhoods. Through our funding and building of partnerships, we will help support those who are making a difference in our communities.***

## 5. Objectives

### 1. Ensure compliance with new and changing regulation

- We comply with the new Transparency, Influence & Accountability consumer standard.
- Our work and collaboration with other teams will aid in attaining high TSM results, specifically the proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.
- We implement the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants' charter, being held accountable on this by our scrutiny team.
- We keep an awareness of the ever-changing picture of regulation and use this to continuously develop our work, ensuring relevance and improvement.

### 2. Ensure customer involvement is a positive, simple, and beneficial process for all

- We continue to promote our work and achievements internally to increase understanding of customer involvement, our team's remit and the importance of delivery.
- We continue to promote our work externally, showing the change and impact made by customers, monitoring and reporting back on all actions.
- We support colleagues in working with customers, building relationships, opening dialogue, being honest, and managing expectations.

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## **3. Expand on the range of opportunities for involvement and the voices we listen to**

- We have created a full programme of involvement over the last two years, and we will test this to give more variety of opportunity.
- We enable the participation of customers by providing relevant training & support where necessary.
- We act on customers' feedback to adjust involvement activities to attract more attendees.
- We will look at the barriers some customers face and consider what solutions we could provide to help them engage.

## **4. Measure the impact of customer involvement & community support**

- We benchmark quarterly against several measures of both our involvement work and community funding to assess progress.
- We have introduced 6-monthly monitoring on all customer recommendations gained during all involvement activities, we continue to monitor and report on this.

## **5. Strengthen relationships in our neighbourhoods through investing in community projects.**

- We continue to work closely with the procurement team and our contractors to increase the sustainability and profile of the Stronger Communities Fund
- We work with the Marketing & Communications team to follow-up on funded projects to better build on and celebrate partnership working across our communities.
- We promote our fund through partnerships and networks to reach a wider audience for application.
- We continue to monitor spend and related measures to ensure our funding best represents our housing areas, customers and their needs.

## **6. Have the right people who are skilled, motivated and able to deliver for our customers**

- We continue to build the professional capacity of our Customer Involvement & Communities team with opportunities of training, conference attendance and networking.
- We ensure that our more heavily involved customers across our scrutiny team, and customer complaints forum can access relevant,

Strategy owner: Laura Pictor Group customer involvement & communities manager

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quality training, networking and development opportunities to enable them to best represent our wider customer community.

## 6. Activities for delivering this strategy

### Current and ongoing activities:

- Continue to provide a rolling programme of involvement opportunities including in-person and online focus groups, surveys and other formats of consultations to ensure customer-facing policies and strategies have customer involvement.
- Continue to promote and report our involvement work and performance to customers using our communication channels.
- Continue to use the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter and Action Plan as a framework to report on our work to customers.
- Customer Conversation 2027
- Continue to increase our knowledge of customers by working with the EDI project.
- Continue to support & enable the scrutiny team in their work.
- Continue to benchmark measures across our work.
- Continue the current three-year contract funding to Trowbridge Future to deliver agreed work in our largest estates.
- Stronger Communities Funding to enable local project delivery.
- The Involvement & Communities team are members of TPAS (Tenant Participatory & Advisory Service) - as are the Scrutiny team members - and we make use their training offers, forums and join Meetups to learn from colleagues.

### New activities:

- Start to develop a toolkit for assisting colleagues to be more independent in delivering on customer involvement.
- Expand the range of times, venues and digital involvement opportunities.
- Work with customer-facing colleagues to reach a wider customer base.

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- Build relationships with Customer Involvement teams at other Housing Associations and regularly engage with webinars and training sessions online.

## Decision-making record

| Date                      | Meeting/Minute Reference | Version /Amendment |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025 | Board                    | 2025               |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2022 | Board                    | 2022               |
| May 2019                  | Board                    | 2019               |
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