



## **Customer involvement and Communities update 2025-2026**

This report gives an overview of what the Customer Involvement and Communities team did in 2025-2026. It shows how customers helped shape services, policies and projects across Selwood Housing, and how this work supports the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard.

### **Summary**

During 2025-2026, we ran 52 involvement activities and recorded 727 customer engagements. Customers helped shape four strategies, seven policies, two scrutiny reviews, senior recruitment, neighbourhood work and community projects. We also improved how we support customers to get involved, made our communications clearer, and continued to invest in communities through the Stronger Communities Fund and local partnerships.

### **Understanding diverse needs**

We used customer information and feedback to better understand people's different needs, including protected characteristics, language and support needs. Customer Conversation data added more than 3,600 new or updated records, improving our understanding of customers by 5.47%. We also collected anonymous EDI data from involved customers to check how representative our involvement work is. This showed we are engaging well with some groups but need to do more to reach younger customers aged 18-39.

*See appendix A*

Later in the year, we gave the scrutiny team tailored Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training to help them think about the needs of people who are not in the room when they review services. We are now building on this with basic training for other involved customers. This work also links to the wider corporate EDI programme and the review of the Customer EDI Policy.

## Opportunities to influence and scrutinise

We gave customers many ways to have their say during 2025-2026. Across the year, 727 customer engagements took place through 52 activities, including focus groups, online sessions, surveys, phone surveys, pop-up events, coffee mornings, interview panels and business meetings. Customer feedback helped shape the Involvement and Communities Strategy, Neighbourhood Management Strategy and Asset Management Strategy, as well as policies on areas such as repairs, hoarding, planned programmes and the Stronger Communities Fund.

*See Appendix B*

Customers also helped shape wider work across Selwood. This included Awaab's Law, values and behaviours, sheltered housing improvements, priority neighbourhood work, and recruitment for the CEO and customer Board members. We worked with teams across the business so customers could speak directly to service managers and hear their response first-hand.



*Pictured two customers in conversation at a customer involvement activity*

## Supporting customer-led activity and scrutiny

We continued to support customer-led activity, especially through the scrutiny team. During the year, the team completed its review of General Needs Caretaking and took its findings to Board, with all recommendations moving forward through an agreed action plan. Later in the year, the team also completed its review of Voids (Empty Homes). The team has strengthened its approach through better project planning, support from TPAS and wider use of the Power BI dashboard.



*Pictured two scrutiny members on a site visit*

We supported new scrutiny members with inductions, training and annual reviews. We also supported recruitment of customers to the Board, which led to 47 expressions of interest, 29 people attending taster sessions, 18 applications, five interviews and two appointments.

Alongside formal involvement, we supported community-based work through the Priority Neighbourhoods Project, coffee mornings and estate improvement activity. We continue to help fund Trowbridge Future's neighbourhood connector. Through the Stronger Communities Fund, we awarded 31 grants during the year, investing £53,412 and helping bring in £581,349 in match funding from partners.



*Pictured two women participating in Arts Together*

*See Appendix C*

### **Accessible support for involvement**

We offer practical support to help customers get involved, including paying expenses, offering incentives, and providing laptops and broadband where needed. We also offered both in-person and online sessions, as well as day and evening options, to make it easier for people to take part.

We introduced a quarterly postal newsletter for non-digital involved customers and continued monthly digital newsletters for our involved customer mailing list. We also started to develop plans for simple customer training on topics such as EDI, plain English and asking challenging questions. We are using more infographics to make information easier and more appealing to customers.

### **Improving and tailoring our approach**

We kept reviewing and improving how we involve customers. We tried new approaches such as door-knocking, community pop-ups and local events, while continuing to offer both face-to-face and online focus groups. In-person sessions were usually better attended, so we are looking at how to better promote online sessions and understand what might stop people from joining them.

We also improved our newsletters and other communications to make them clearer and more welcoming. We have produced a scrutiny film to raise awareness of the team's work. We continue to use learning from national housing events, training and webinars to improve how we work. Customer feedback helped shape how we promote opportunities, run sessions and share outcomes.

## Communicating how customer views have made a difference

We log and track all recommendations from involvement work and ask service leads for progress updates on outstanding actions. We then share progress through 'You said, we did' reports, newsletters, website content and committee updates.

Examples of change during the year include updates to the Stronger Communities Fund criteria, clearer repairs information, website content on rechargeable repairs and hoarding support, changes to clear corridor messages, and customer input into strategies, policies and senior recruitment. We keep customers updated on this detail through our webpage Created with Customers and our newsletters, reaching around 1,400 digital subscribers and 220 postal recipients. Digital newsletter open rates stayed strong, ranging from 48.39% to 58.78%.

*See Appendix D*

## Financial impact

This work was delivered through the existing Customer Involvement and Communities team and planned budgets. During the year, the Stronger Communities Fund also awarded £53,412 in grants from Selwood and our contractors, attracting significant match funding from partners.

## Regulation, legal or compliance

This work supports the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard. The Customer Involvement and Communities team helps teams across the business involve customers in service improvements and policy changes.

## Appendices

EDI data gained from the Customer Conversation survey

Customer involvement activity during 2025-2026

Stronger Communities Fund summary 2025-2026

Newsletter statistics during 2025-2026

### Appendix A: EDI data gained from the Customer Conversation survey

| Protected characteristic | QL data pre-CC2024 | Data collected in CC2024 | Total of new or changed data | Increase in data (numbers) | Increase in data (percentage) |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Age range                | 8684               | 1179                     | 15                           | 8699                       | 0.17%                         |
| Ethnicity                | 8684               | 1179                     | 368                          | 9052                       | 4.07%                         |

|                           |              |             |             |              |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Gender                    | 8684         | 1179        | 68          | 8752         | 0.78%        |
| Preferred language        | 8684         | 1179        | 1132        | 9816         | 11.53%       |
| Religion description      | 8684         | 1179        | 673         | 9357         | 7.19%        |
| Sexual orientation        | 8684         | 1179        | 560         | 9244         | 6.06%        |
| Hearing impairment        | 246          | 115         | 3           | 249          | 1.20%        |
| Speech impairment         | 8            | 8           | 0           | 8            | 0.00%        |
| Visual impairment         | 143          | 41          | 1           | 144          | 0.69%        |
| Learning disability       | 160          | 62          | 1           | 161          | 0.62%        |
| Longterm health condition | 483          | 482         | 14          | 497          | 2.82%        |
| Mental health condition   | 9108         | 1344        | 773         | 9881         | 7.82%        |
| Physical disability       | 195          | 195         | 7           | 202          | 3.47%        |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>62447</b> | <b>9321</b> | <b>3615</b> | <b>66062</b> | <b>5.47%</b> |

## **Appendix B:** Customer involvement activity during 2025-2026

| <b>Customer involvement 2025-2026 Q1</b>                 |                         |                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b>                                           | <b>Involvement type</b> | <b>Number of participants</b> |
| Involvement & Communities Strategy                       | Focus group (in-person) | 13                            |
| Involvement & Communities Strategy                       | Focus group (online)    | 3                             |
| Asset Management Strategy (Repairs Offer)                | Focus group (in-person) | 5                             |
| Asset Management Strategy (Repairs Offer)                | Focus group (online)    | 4                             |
| Neighbourhood Management Strategy                        | Focus group (in-person) | 11                            |
| Cobbett House communal lounge refurbishment              | Focus group (in-person) | 5                             |
| Cobbett House communal lounge refurbishment              | Survey                  | 5                             |
| Stronger Communities Funding Policy                      | Focus group (in-person) | 6                             |
| Stronger Communities Funding Policy                      | Focus group (online)    | 1                             |
| Asset Management Strategy (Contractors' Code of Conduct) | Survey                  | 25                            |

|                                       |                  |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Asset Management Strategy (No Access) | Survey           | 18         |
| Regional TPAS conference              | Conference       | 3          |
| Scrutiny business meeting - April     | Business meeting | 5          |
|                                       |                  |            |
| Focus groups (in-person)              |                  | 5          |
| Focus groups (online)                 |                  | 3          |
| Surveys (Digital/Postal)              |                  | 3          |
| Surveys (Phone)                       |                  | 0          |
| Conference                            |                  | 1          |
| Business meeting                      |                  | 1          |
| Pop-up event                          |                  | 0          |
| Event                                 |                  | 0          |
| Review & Report                       |                  | 0          |
| Coffee Morning                        |                  | 0          |
| Interview Panel                       |                  | 0          |
| Taster Sessions                       |                  | 0          |
| <b>Activities</b>                     |                  | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>Participants</b>                   |                  | <b>104</b> |

| Customer involvement 2025-2026 Q2                                |                  |                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Subject                                                          | Involvement type | Number of participants |
| Priority Neighbourhoods – Charlotte Square door-knocking         | Survey           | 17                     |
| Customer Involvement - Wells door-knocking                       | Survey           | 7                      |
| Community event Melksham                                         | Pop-up event     | 3                      |
| Longhedge community pantry                                       | Pop-up event     | 1                      |
| Asset Management Strategy (Damp & Mould & Energy tenancy audits) | Survey           | 24                     |
| Volunteers' week thank-you event                                 | Event            | 22                     |

|                                                      |                         |            |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Volunteers' week thank-you event – post event review | Focus group (in-person) | 5          |
| Awaab's Law                                          | Survey                  | 10         |
| Awaab's Law                                          | Focus group (in-person) | 8          |
| Awaab's Law                                          | Focus group (online)    | 4          |
| Scrutiny caretaking review                           | Survey                  | 21         |
| Scrutiny caretaking review                           | Survey (phone)          | 13         |
| Claims & Goodwill Policy                             | Focus group (in-person) | 9          |
| TPAS tenant conference                               | Conference              | 1          |
| Scrutiny business meeting - July                     | Business meeting        | 7          |
|                                                      |                         |            |
| Focus groups (in-person)                             |                         | 3          |
| Focus groups (online)                                |                         | 1          |
| Surveys (Digital/Postal)                             |                         | 5          |
| Surveys (Phone)                                      |                         | 1          |
| Conference                                           |                         | 1          |
| Business meeting                                     |                         | 1          |
| Pop-up event                                         |                         | 2          |
| Event                                                |                         | 1          |
| Review & Report                                      |                         | 0          |
| Coffee Morning                                       |                         | 0          |
| Interview Panel                                      |                         | 0          |
| Taster Sessions                                      |                         | 0          |
| <b>Activities</b>                                    |                         | <b>15</b>  |
| <b>Participants</b>                                  |                         | <b>152</b> |

| Customer involvement 2025-2026 Q3 |                  |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Subject                           | Involvement type | Number of participants |

|                                                     |                 |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----|
| Scrutiny caretaking review                          | Review & Report | 9   |
| Asset Management Strategy (Final strategy document) | Survey          | 193 |

|                                                     |                         |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Asset Management Strategy (Final strategy document) | Focus group (in-person) | 6          |
| Clear Communal Areas Policy                         | Focus group (in-person) | 5          |
| Communal areas Policy                               | Focus group (online)    | 0          |
| Hoarding policy                                     | Focus group (in-person) | 7          |
| Hoarding policy                                     | Focus group (online)    | 2          |
| Cobbett House communal lounge refurbishment         | Coffee morning          | 7          |
| Priority Neighbourhoods – The Homestead lounge      | Coffee morning          | 10         |
| Priority Neighbourhoods – The Giffords lounge       | Coffee morning          | 8          |
| TPAS annual conference                              | Conference              | 1          |
| Scrutiny business meeting - October                 | Business meeting        | 8          |
| Customer panel for CEO interviews                   | Interview panel         | 5          |
| Scrutiny voids review                               | Survey                  | 21         |
| Scrutiny voids review                               | Survey (phone)          | 15         |
| Stronger Communities Funding                        | Survey                  | 10         |
|                                                     |                         |            |
| Focus groups (in-person)                            |                         | <b>3</b>   |
| Focus groups (online)                               |                         | <b>2</b>   |
| Surveys (Digital/Postal)                            |                         | <b>3</b>   |
| Surveys (Phone)                                     |                         | <b>1</b>   |
| Conference                                          |                         | <b>1</b>   |
| Business meeting                                    |                         | <b>1</b>   |
| Pop-up event                                        |                         | <b>0</b>   |
| Event                                               |                         | <b>0</b>   |
| Review & Report                                     |                         | <b>1</b>   |
| Coffee Morning                                      |                         | <b>3</b>   |
| Interview Panel                                     |                         | <b>1</b>   |
| Taster Sessions                                     |                         | <b>0</b>   |
| <b>Activities</b>                                   |                         | <b>16</b>  |
| <b>Participants</b>                                 |                         | <b>307</b> |

**Customer involvement 2025-2026 Q4**

| Subject | Involvement type | Number of participants |
|---------|------------------|------------------------|
|---------|------------------|------------------------|

|                                      |                            |            |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Repairs Policy                       | Focus group (in-person)    | 11         |
| Competency Policy                    | Focus group (in-person)    | 12         |
| Competency Policy                    | Focus group (online)       | 0          |
| Planned programmes Policy            | Survey                     | 96         |
| Customer Board recruitment           | Taster session (in-person) | 18         |
| Customer Board recruitment           | Taster session (online)    | 11         |
| Scrutiny business meeting - February | Business meeting           | 8          |
| Scrutiny voids review                | Review & Report            | 8          |
|                                      |                            |            |
| Focus groups (in-person)             |                            | 2          |
| Focus groups (online)                |                            | 1          |
| Surveys (Digital/Postal)             |                            | 1          |
| Surveys (Phone)                      |                            | 0          |
| Conference                           |                            | 0          |
| Business meeting                     |                            | 1          |
| Pop-up event                         |                            | 0          |
| Event                                |                            | 0          |
| Review & Report                      |                            | 1          |
| Coffee Morning                       |                            | 0          |
| Interview Panel                      |                            | 0          |
| Taster Sessions                      |                            | 2          |
| <b>Activities</b>                    |                            | <b>8</b>   |
| <b>Participants</b>                  |                            | <b>164</b> |

#### Annual summary:

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Focus groups (in-person)</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Focus groups (online)</b>    | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Surveys (Digital/Postal)</b> | <b>12</b> |

|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>Surveys (Phone)</b>     | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Conference</b>          | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>Business meeting</b>    | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>Pop-up event</b>        | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Event</b>               | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Review &amp; Report</b> | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Coffee Morning</b>      | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>Interview Panel</b>     | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Taster Sessions</b>     | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>2025-2026 Total</b>     | <b>52</b>  |
| <b>Participants</b>        | <b>727</b> |

**Appendix C:** Stronger Communities Fund summary 2025-2026

|                                                  | <b>Q1 FY26</b> | <b>Q2 FY26</b> | <b>Q3 FY26</b> | <b>Q4 FY26</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Monies received into SCF budget from procurement | £0             | £3,992         | £12,472        | £23,043        | £39,508      |
| Number of SCF grant applications received        | 10             | 15             | 9              | 27             | 61           |
| Number of SCF grants given out                   | 5              | 6              | 9              | 11             | 31           |
| Locations                                        | 4              | 4              | 7              | 5              | 12 different |
| Total amount given out in grants                 | £7,227         | £6,000         | £12,529        | £27,655        | £53,412      |
| Total amount of match funding from partners      | £3,018         | £74,832        | £380,694       | £122,804       | £581,349     |

**Appendix D:** Newsletter statistics during 2025-2026

|                                                                     | <b>Q1 FY26</b> | <b>Q2 FY26</b> | <b>Q3 FY26</b> | <b>Q4 FY26</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Number of people on the email warm list (at end of quarter)</b>  | 1411           | 1388           | 1374           | 1406           |               |
| <b>Number of people on the postal warm list (at end of quarter)</b> | 226            | 213            | 224            | 220            |               |
| <b>Number of people unsubscribing from email mailout</b>            | 3              | 1              | 0              | 2              | 6             |

|                                                                              |        |        |        |        |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|
| <b>Number of digital involvement email mailouts created</b>                  | 3      | 3      | 3      | 3      | 12  |
| <b>Total numbers of digital involvement email mailouts sent to customers</b> | 4261   | 4161   | 4127   | 4226   |     |
| <b>Total number of digital involvement mailouts opened</b>                   | 2315   | 2446   | 2302   | 2045   |     |
| <b>Percentage of involvement mailouts opened</b>                             | 54.32% | 58.78% | 55.77% | 48.39% |     |
| <b>Number of 'call to action' click throughs on mailout</b>                  | 17     | 24     | 25     | 24     | 90  |
| <b>Number of unique clicks</b>                                               | 106    | 70     | 59     | 69     | 304 |
| <b>Number of postal involvement mailouts created</b>                         | 1      | 1      | 1      | 1      | 4   |
| <b>Total numbers of postal involvement mailouts sent to customers</b>        | 226    | 213    | 224    | 220    | 883 |