



Involvement & Communities Strategy 22 - 25

1. Our context and challenges

Selwood Housing has always invested in and supported customer involvement which means we are well placed to respond to the challenges the sector faces over the next three years.

As a service, we are ready to face the challenges presented to us; both externally and internally and to build on and strengthen customer involvement.

The ripples of the 2017 Grenfell tragedy are still being felt, and the Social Housing White Paper is likely to be implemented through the next three years. Our sector now recognises that we must embrace customer involvement in a more meaningful and impactful way.

The pandemic saw us adopting digital-based ways of involving our customers more flexibly. As we move through the end of the pandemic, we need to ensure that we maintain a robust and adaptable service.

Our role as a community enabler, working in partnership as a highly localised grant funder and capacity builder of well-placed community groups and organisations, is recognised and offers a solid foundation for further development.

Selwood Housing is currently implementing our ambitious digital transformation programme, Horizon, which aims to re-design the way we deliver our services. We must ensure that our customers' needs are at the heart of this. Digital involvement is set to change massively over the next three years, and we must ensure we're utilising new technology and digital ways of working to capture our customers' input.

Our Customer Conversation 21 project has offered new momentum across the business around customer involvement, new customers to work alongside and an assurance that customer priorities are still focused on repairs, maintenance, and safe homes.

Customer involvement across the business is stronger than ever and we need to be able to keep pace; reflecting the changing needs and demands of the business and the rising expectations of our customers.



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Our key strategic challenge is clear: *bringing clear customer voices and views into service design through inclusive, efficient, and effective methods whilst flexibly responding to the needs of the business.*

2. Our strategic fit

Selwood Housing's key principles set out in our strategy are:

- To ensure we have people who are motivated, skilled, and able to deliver for our customers.
- Deliver excellent value for money services.
- To respond quickly and effectively to our customers' needs and the changing environment we operate in.

Customer involvement feeds into and underpins each of these key principles because:

- we will not know whether we are investing in the right skills and knowledge
- we will not know if our service provides value (efficiency and effectiveness)
- and we will not know if we are easy to do business with

... without customer feedback and interaction and without customers inputting into service development and improvement.

With reference to the actions of our corporate strategy '22:

Coordinate and prioritise our work.

We pro-actively design and coordinate a programme of projects to ensure that our workflow is feasible, and capacity and resources are managed to ensure an agile and 'can do' response to business priorities.

Create the right culture.

We join up the dots across the business and aim to involve the right people in the work to deliver the right outcomes and don't create new demand on others unless necessary.



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Work in the right way.

We aim to enable customers to be at the very heart of what we do; we involve them appropriately and get their feedback quickly in a meaningful and impactful way.

Build partnerships.

Internally and externally, we recognise expertise and work closely with others to deliver powerful outcomes for our customers, communities, and our business. We support others who are better placed to provide solutions to do more by combining resources and taking opportunities together.

Be flexible by design.

We offer and develop a range of ways customers can get involved from customer board and scrutiny team membership, to focus groups, online surveys, co-design projects and a range of other methods.

3. Leveraging our advantage

Since 2021 we've introduced an internal consultant and client model which is underpinned by a planned programme of projects and a project assessment method. This has been aimed at clarifying roles and responsibilities whilst enabling continuous service improvement.

Our approach supports compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH's) Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard, ensuring that customers have a wide range of opportunities to influence, be involved with the business by helping to shape our service offers, and build on what we have seen in the white paper and other regulatory expectations.

We work in a way which is consistent with the seven key activities contained in the framework of TPAS' National Engagement Standards. Maintaining these standards leads to positive outcomes for residents.

We have adopted the National Housing Federation's (NHF's) Together with Tenants charter, which was established in response to the Social Housing Green Paper. Adopting Together with Tenants shows our commitment to ensuring we continue to enhance and build the relationship with residents and ensure they are engaged at all levels of the business, as we look to improve in advance of the greater expectations that will be put on us through the launch of the Social Housing White Paper.



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Our approach to community development sees us focus on purposeful community investment and enablement. We aim to achieve this through strategic working with customers, community partners and stronger community grant funding.

We're building on strong foundations. We have three customer board members influencing our strategic direction and up to 10 scrutiny team members re-shaping our services through a well-established model that delivers powerful reviews and associated recommendations that are adopted and acted upon.

Our new Horizon customer team and customer complaints forum strengthen the offer our heavily involved customers make to how our business operates. With over 2,000 customers expressing a wish to get involved, over 2,400 customers actually getting involved through 21/22 and our Customer Conversation project next scheduled for 2024, which will offer the business an opportunity for wide-scale involvement, we have a deep customer base to invite into involvement projects and processes.

4. Strategic principles and objectives

Strategic principles

1: It's not about expanding our offer, it's about improving the quality of customer involvement

We initiate and enjoy a healthy pipeline of projects that aim to deliver business and social impacts. Our focus is on where 'less is more meets quality over quantity' to ensure the best value for money return to the business.

2: We're the experts, and we need to model the way for involvement across the business

We take our role as consultants seriously and welcome shaping meaningful and interesting projects with our internal clients across the business. We understand the limitations to colleagues adopting customer involvement methods into their work plans and need to be 'on tap' to provide our expertise and capacity to enable them to achieve their goals.



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3: We need to be adaptable and accommodating to change

We appreciate the context within which we operate and are both accustomed to 'failing fast' should we need to, pivoting to find new solutions and taking the long view should initial plans be delayed. We understand the pressures our customers are under who want to invest our time with us and will be proactive in supporting their involvement.

4: We're a community enabler through partnership building

We understand the limits of our community investment aspirations and resources and recognise excellence in community organisations that serve our customers and neighbourhoods. Forging powerful partnerships aimed at building community infrastructure and supporting customers wanting to make a difference in our communities is an approach we celebrate.

Strategic objectives

1: Ensure we meet all regulatory and legal requirements for involvement

We will be held to account by our scrutiny team on delivering against the Together with Tenants customer commitments. We will stay abreast of and deliver to the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper. We will monitor the expectations of the regulator to ensure we're compliant.

2: Establish a well-recognised, consistent, and impactful customer involvement infrastructure

We will co-create an internal system of customer groups and teams required to enable our business to function, offering a clear, ambitious, and supportive customer journey through involvement.

3: Facilitate quality involvement at the heart of our business

We will proactively ensure that customer involvement is built into service improvement plans and strategies across the business, that its value is understood and that as expert consultants, we will ensure customers shape and influence decision-making and service design appropriately and in a variety of different ways.



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4: Evidence the business and social value and impact of the work of involvement and communities

We will build on our solid foundation of reporting our performance by establishing new methods to offer ever stronger evidence that our work adds business and social value and impact to our organisation and wider community.

5: Be recognised as 'being in the business of doing business' in our communities

We will relaunch our stronger communities fund to ensure more community groups and organisations benefit from our negotiated investment whilst creating opportunities for customers to implement highly localised community-led solutions.

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

We will build the professional capacity of our Involvement & Communities team whilst ensuring that our more heavily involved customers across our scrutiny team, horizon customer team and customer complaints forum are able to access quality training, development, and support opportunities to enable them to represent our wider customer community.

