



Customer Involvement

Impact Assessment

2008/2009

Introduction

This is Southway Housing Trust's first Customer Involvement Impact Assessment for the period April 2008 – March 2009.

Southway Housing Trust is a stock transfer Registered Social Landlord in south Manchester. Just under 6000 homes were transferred to the Trust from Manchester City Council on 27 November 2007.

Customer Involvement

Southway is committed to involving its customers in the way it delivers its services, and shortly after transfer carried out a robust review of its Customer Involvement Strategy. This has resulted in the introduction of a new menu of opportunities for involvement. Customers can have a real influence on the way services are shaped and improved by choosing a way to get involved that suits them.

Southway Housing Trust has a designated Customer Involvement Team which, for the period of this assessment, consisted of two full time members of staff. An additional full time officer has now transferred into the team. In 2008/09 a budget of £46,342 was spent. This does not include staff salaries. A breakdown into main headings of expenditure is provided later in this report.

Impact Assessment

An Impact Assessment measures and evaluates the effect customer involvement has and the difference it makes to services provided by the trust. The report identifies what has changed as a result of customers getting involved.

This is a regulatory document which all Housing Associations are required to produce.

Equality of Access

Southway Housing Trust is committed to equality and diversity and has an Equality and Diversity Strategy and Statement.

All our customers are encouraged to get involved in helping to shape our services and work is ongoing to engage with 'hard to reach' groups such as younger people, those from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities.

For each of the methods of involvement assessed we have considered the position on equality of access using the Housing Corporation's six strand approach to Equality and Diversity. (The strands are; gender, race, disability,

age, religion and sexual orientation). In most cases there is a weakness and this will be addressed as part of the ongoing work by the Customer Involvement Team to increase representation and involvement of marginalised groups.

In addition to the above, Southway's Corporate Equality and Diversity Group have developed three themed action plans which include some specific tasks for the Customer Involvement Team. These are:

1. Race Action Plan 2009/10

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Action	Outcome
% of BME tenants part of consultation and involvement	Research the barriers to BME communities becoming involved in consultation	Actions put in place to mitigate against barriers to consultation
	Develop action plan to facilitate the engagement of ethnic minority groups	Increased number of ethnic minority respondents to surveys, questionnaires and general consultation
	Promote and encourage involvement in tenant groups amongst BME customers	Tenant groups diversified leading to increased community cohesion and community empowerment
	Identify and develop links with current and new BME communities and encourage involvement	Development of positive relationships between people from diverse backgrounds, with current and new communities working toward a shared vision for the future, based on commonalities and valuing diversity to achieve greater cohesion and sustainable communities

2. Gender Equality Action Plan 2009/10




Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Action	Outcome
% of men involved in consultation and involvement	Diversify the tenant groups by targeting male tenants and residents	Tenant groups are more inclusive, diverse and representative
	Promote consultation and active involvement amongst male tenants	Increased involvement from male tenants

3. Disability Action Plan 2009/10

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Action	Outcome
%of disabled tenants involved in consultation and involvement	Promote consultation and active involvement amongst disabled tenants	Increased involvement from disabled tenants and constructive consultation with disabled tenants
	Diversify the tenant groups by targeting disabled tenants and residents	Tenant groups are more inclusive, diverse and representative

Level of Impact

Each method of involvement has been rated in terms of impact made as a result of the activities. The key below explains the impact ratings.

	<p>Significant impact – a direct change has been made to how services are planned or delivered as a result of the involvement method</p>
	<p>Moderate impact – some influence or minor changes to services have been made as a result of the method of involvement</p>
	<p>Low impact – no change to service has been made as a direct result of the type of involvement but outcomes do contribute towards ongoing reviews of services</p>

Value for Money

Southway aims to achieve good Value for Money (VfM) when delivering its services, including Customer Involvement. However, when considering the cost of activities compared to the outcomes, varying levels of VfM are accomplished. The costs of arranging events, hiring rooms, providing catering and staff time are all taken into account. Below is the key to the different levels of Value for Money.

£££	Good value for money – average spend per participant is low
££	Reasonable value for money – average spend per participant is reasonable
£	Poor value for money – average spend per participant is high

Budget

Budget Heading	Expenditure
Grants to Resident Groups	£4,755
Refreshments/Catering	£879
Postage	£147
Tenants' Newsletter	£17,578
Transport	£451
Training	£840
Residents Conference	£1,898
Consultants Fees	£18,162
Other Resident Involvement Activities	£1632
Total	£46,342

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

At the end of the report some baseline KPIs have been set which we can use to monitor progress in future years.

Residents' Consultative Group

What is it/Purpose?

- The Consultative Group is made up of tenants, residents, leaseholders, local members and officers of Southway. It evolved from the Steering Group that was set up by Manchester City Council to oversee the stock transfer.
- The group meets monthly and is consulted on tenant related policies and documents and current issues affecting Southway and its customers.

Activity/Outputs

- Held 12 meetings throughout the year with an average attendance of 11 members representing seven groups.
- Ongoing monitoring of promises made in the Offer Document produced by Manchester City Council pre-transfer plus additional commitments made by Southway
- Involvement in choosing the suppliers and range of choices used in the delivery of the Home Improvement Programme
- Created a sub-group to project manage the Customer Involvement Strategy Review
- Considered and approved the new Customer Involvement Strategy and Implementation Action Plan following recommendations made by the sub-group


Outcomes

- Two Service Improvement Groups (SIGs) established (Home Improvement Programme and Repairs)
- A range of customer leaflets produced which increases information available to customers including Getting Involved, Moving into Your New Home and All You Need to Know About Repairs
- A new Customer Involvement Strategy with action plan for implementation launched with an increased number of ways in which residents can get involved
- A Mystery Shoppers Team developed
- A 'Southway Calendar' Group established

- A number of tenant related policies revised/approved including Mutual Exchange Policy and the Residents Resource Room protocol
- Delegation from the Southway Board for the group to be guardians of the Customer Involvement Strategy
- Agreed branding of Southway Connect (new in-house contact centre)

What Next?

- The Consultative Group will continue to meet every month
- The terms of reference for the group will be reviewed in an attempt to change membership to involve residents who are not tenant group representatives

Level of Impact	Value for Money
	<p>££</p>

Southway Stories

What is it/Purpose?

- Southway Stories is a tenants' newsletter delivered to all Southway homes.
- The newsletter keeps customers informed about the organisation and provides relevant information.

Activity/Outputs


- Three editions produced annually
- Residents events and activities publicised
- Advertises Tenant Board Member opportunities
- Provided advice to residents on important issues such as raising awareness about bogus callers and tips on making savings through energy efficiency
- Informed customers about key issues including the annual rent increase, ways to pay rent, Southway's new rent card, new or improved services provided by the Trust and opportunities for involvement

Outcomes

- 32 customers attended the 2008 Residents Conference
- Created a list of residents who are interested in getting involved in Southway services

What Next?

- The newsletter will continue to be produced
- An Editorial Group will be set up to work with Southway on the production of each issue

Level of Impact	Value for Money
 The image shows two identical logos for Southway Housing Trust. Each logo consists of a stylized house icon with a chimney, the word "Southway" in a bold sans-serif font, and "Housing Trust" in a smaller font below it.	££

Tenant and Resident Groups

What Are They/Purpose?

- Resident groups are a group of local people who form a committee to improve the area in which they live.
- Each group has defined boundaries and everyone living within them is automatically a member of the group.

In 2008/2009 there were seven groups registered with Southway. Some groups were more active than others and some received funding from Southway while others did not.

Groups:

- Burnage North T A
- Burnage South T A
- Didsbury West Estate R A
- Ladybarn Estate (Withington) R A
- Nell Lane T & R A
- Old Moat T & R A
- Parris Wood T & R A

Activity/Outputs


- All groups hold their own regular local community meetings
- Some groups meet regularly with Southway Neighbourhood Services staff about local issues
- Many tenant group committee members are also involved in other groups, such as the Service Improvement Groups
- Regular mail shots sent to groups with relevant and current information from Southway and other agencies
- All groups met with the consultants who carried out the Customer Involvement Review to help to develop the new Customer Involvement Strategy

Outcomes

- The Residents Consultative Group continues to operate and maintains membership due to the existence and activity of tenant and resident groups
- Tenant and Resident Groups provide a voice for customers on local issues that Southway may otherwise not hear about allowing the Trust to respond where necessary
- Groups have helped to organise and coordinate open days where tenants make their choices for Home Improvement Programme works
- Local events organised by tenant groups enhance community spirit and resolve local issues. For example, one group holds an annual Easter Egg Hunt which brings the community together. Other groups hold meetings on specific issues such as Southway's Home Improvement Programme where individual members can obtain information and seek answers to personal queries.

What Next?

- Existing groups will continue to be recognised and supported by Southway staff
- New groups will be established or contacts will be made within areas not currently represented by a tenant association

Level of Impact	Value for Money
	£££

Repairs Service Improvement Group

What Is It/Purpose?

- A group of customers and Southway staff who meet to discuss and monitor performance of the Responsive Repairs and Voids service.
- The group discuss and implement service improvements to the Responsive Repairs and Voids service.

Activity/Outputs


- Bi-monthly meetings held with the Head of Service as Lead Officer and an average attendance of six residents
- Discussed the performance of the contact centre service that was bought in under a Service Level Agreement
- Reviewed customer satisfaction processes and procedures
- Provided feedback on the performance of the contact centre used by Southway
- Reviewed the Responsive Repairs Policy and Repair Priorities
- Reviewed the Emergency Out of Hours Policy
- Reviewed the Void Standard

Outcomes

- The group influenced the decision to establish its own in-house contact centre (Southway Connect) rather than use an external provider
- A new method of obtaining customer satisfaction following a repair has been introduced which is more efficient and effective
- An early evening appointment slot is now available for repairs
- A more efficient and cost effective out of hours and emergency repairs service has been introduced
- Repairs categories and timescales have been revised

What Next?

- The group will continue to meet and impact will be monitored
- Work will be ongoing to increase attendance levels
- A Resident Inspectors Panel will be formed

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Home Improvement Programme Service Improvement Group

What Is It/Purpose?

- A group of customers and officers who meet to monitor, discuss and implement customer service improvements for the Home Improvement Programme.

Activity/Outputs


- Monthly meetings held with the Head of Service and representatives from each of the partner contractors in attendance
- Regularly review the Customer Care Key Performance Indicators
- Report the progress of the Home Improvement Programme
- Discuss complaints and compliments
- Good practice is shared amongst contractors
- Opportunities for customers to discuss issues directly with contractor

Outcomes

- A validation of the completed customer satisfaction questionnaires was carried out in response to customers wishes
- New ways of administering the customer satisfaction questionnaire were introduced to provide customers with options of how they wished to receive and return it
- A Residents Inspection Team has been established to inspect a sample of homes that have had Home Improvement Programme work completed to ensure that the work is to the set standards
- Methods introduced by contractors to ensure that all customer enquiries are recorded and responded
- A combined Complaints Procedure has been put in place to ensure consistency across throughout the delivery of the Home Improvement Programme

What Next?

- The group will continue to meet and impact will be monitored
- Work will be ongoing to increase attendance levels

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Tenant Services Authority (TSA) Consultation – National Conversation

What Was It/Purpose?

- A group of residents who provided information to the TSA to inform and influence the TSA's new standards framework.

Activity/Outputs


- A 'local conversation' was held on 4 March 2009 where discussions took place amongst Southway customers who are regularly involved in our services about what the standards for landlords should be and what powers the TSA should have
- The TSA questionnaire and freepost return envelope was sent to everybody on the database of customers who have at any time expressed an interest in being involved in Southway services
- Three tenant Board members and three Southway Consultative Group members attended a TSA event organised by HQN (Housing Quality Network) about the TSA and its timetable for consultation

Outcomes

- A number of completed questionnaires were returned to the TSA
- A feedback form about the 'local conversation' was completed at the end of the event by the Customer Involvement Manager and returned to the TSA
- Southway residents have had an input into the TSA's consultation process

What Next?

- Southway will ensure it and its tenants are involved in phase two of the TSA's National Conversation

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Training and Development Opportunities

What Are They/Purpose?

- In-house and external training opportunities available to residents which help them to develop their skills, provide them with information and give them an opportunity to share their views and ideas.

Activity/Outputs


- Six residents and five Southway staff received Mystery Shopping Training
- Six residents attended the annual Housing Conference at Harrogate
- Ad hoc one to one chairing skills provided to residents taking the position of Chair of a Group
- Ad hoc one to one Basic Book Keeping training provided to group treasurers.

Outcomes

- A trained Mystery Shopping Team to carry exercises as and when required
- Staff other than Customer Involvement staff play a part in mystery shopping
- Members of groups provided with relevant skills to help them carry out their role

What Next?

- Further one to one training sessions will be available
- A training programme will be developed
- External training will be subsidised where appropriate

Level of Impact	Value for Money
 The logo for Southway Housing Trust, featuring a stylized house icon with a sun-like shape above it, and the text "Southway Housing Trust" below.	£

Community Benefit Events

What Are They/Purpose?

- Neighbourhood initiatives to raise awareness of Southway Housing Trust's and its partner contractors commitment to community regeneration and local cohesion

Activity/Outputs

- A number of events supported, for example the Parrs Wood Tenants Association annual Christmas meal for the elderly
- Contributions made to the community, for example the replacement kitchen at a Burnage community resource
- Visits to schools made by contractors and Southway staff to offer advice and skills, for example putting together a CV, interview skills, health and safety advice
- The marking of key milestones of the delivery of Southway's Home Improvement Programme by presenting residents of the 500th, 1000th, 2000th and 3000th completed property with, for example a hamper or bouquet of flowers


Outcomes

- Assisted with bringing communities together by making events such as the Parrs Wood Easter Egg Hunt possible
- Improved facilities at a number of community resources providing better services for Southway residents
- Educating prospective future Southway residents
- Provides regular articles for the tenants newsletter, Southway Stories to keep customers informed
- Provided a number of opportunities for customer involvement and/or increased use of community resources (see sample list below) and helped to build up a database of 'interested in getting involved' customers

Date	Event	Details
April 2008	Refurbishment of Kitchen at St. Barnabus Church Hall, Chorlton	Replacement of kitchen units, wall tiles, flooring and décor
May 2008	Refurbishment of Burnage Community Centre	Replacement of existing worn out timber stage staircase with new metal steps
July 2008	500 th Completed Property Handover	Gift presented to the tenant of the 500 th completed property on the Home Improvement Programme
August 2008	Commencement of Ladybarn Estate Home Improvement Programme works	Raffle amongst residents of the Ladybarn Estate. Voucher presented to the winner
September 2008	Fog Lane Park Information Day	Contractor present to provide information, advice and free promotional items to members of the community
October 2008	Refurbishment of Ladybarn Community Centre	Improvements to toilet facilities, upgrade and redecoration
October 2008	Back to School Initiative	Health and safety talk in school with provision of high visibility equipment to pupils. Health and safety poster competition. Halloween theme
November 2008	Refurbishment of Christ Church Community Hall, West Didsbury	Replacement of kitchen units and sink
December 2008	Grove Lane Sheltered Scheme Christmas Party	Donation of hamper as raffle event at Christmas event
December 2008	Parrs Wood Tenants Association Christmas Meal for the Elderly	Contribution to cost of providing a meal for elderly residents
February 2009	Removal of Log, Chorlton – Nell Lane	Removal of considerable sized log from a Chorlton estate

What Next?

- The Community Benefit Programme continues to operate
- Responsibility for the project moves to the Customer Involvement Team
- Increased numbers of involvement to be achieved through Community Benefit

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Mystery Shopping Team

What Is It/Purpose?

- A team of customers who go 'undercover' to test our services, measure performance and make recommendations on how services can be improved.

Activity/Outputs


- A Mystery Shopping Team has been trained in the skills required to carry out mystery shopping
- Two exercises carried out, both testing the contact centre before and after the service was brought in-house

Outcomes

- An in-house contact centre (Southway Connect) has been established
- Staff from sections other than Customer Involvement are trained in this area and can be involved in future mystery shopping exercises

What Next?

- Further mystery shopping exercises will be carried out to examine services
- Impact will be monitored

Level of Impact	Value for Money
	££

Surveys

What Are They/Purpose?

- Surveys are a way of obtaining views/feedback from customers about a specific service area or topic or on a range of issues, usually by completing a form and returning it by post or directly to a member of Southway staff.

Activity/Outputs


- A Household Composition Survey sent to all customers
- A major (STATUS) survey of all tenants
- Survey of customers visiting Southway's office reception on how they found the service
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys on the Home Improvement Programme, the Responsive Repairs Service and Anti-Social Behaviour

Outcomes

- Demographics and profiling of customers is progressing
- The STATUS survey enables Southway to compare (benchmark) itself with similar organisations and to identify priority areas for service improvement
- Focus and resources can be targeted to service areas where customer satisfaction was low
- Improved KPI (Key Performance Indicators) information

What Next?

- Pilot one off surveys will be carried out in specific areas
- Customer satisfaction surveys will be produced for other services where none is currently sought
- Online surveys will be researched and introduced

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Residents Conference

What Is It/Purpose?

- An annual event to which all customers are invited where Southway provides information about its services and performance and seeks feedback from attendees. There is usually a theme to the event.

Activity/Outputs


- Southway's first Residents' Conference was held in April 2008 with a theme of Customer Access
- Three workshops held; Customer Access, Anti-Social Behaviour and Repairs
- Information stands set up by contractors and other key agencies to provide information and advice to delegates

Outcomes

- Development and implementation of action plans to make improvements to each of the three service areas discussed at conference workshops
- Engagement of customers who had not previously been involved
- Increased involvement in other activities from attendees wanting to be more involved

What Next?

- Conferences will continue to be held and monitored

Level of Impact	Value for Money
	£

Estate Walkabouts and Litter Picks

What Are They/Purpose?

- Southway staff meet at a publicised location and then walk around the estate with any customers who have met at the meeting point to pick up on environmental issues.
- At the same time as observing the estate a litter pick is carried out by staff

Activity/Outputs


- Fortnightly events
- All levels of Southway staff are involved including the Executive Management Team
- Residents invited via Southway Stories and the Southway website to take part
- Tenants' enquiries responded to on their estate

Outcomes

- Create litter free estates
- Reduce number of overgrown gardens by enforcing tenancy conditions
- Increase opportunities for customers to meet Southway staff without an appointment in their local area
- Increase opportunities for Southway staff to gain informal feedback from customers

What Next?

- Fortnightly events will continue to take place
- Dates will be publicised and residents will be encouraged to attend

Level of Impact	Value for Money
	£

One-Off Events

What Are They?

- A number of one-off events and meetings have taken place during the year to promote initiatives, provide information or carry out specific time limited consultation. The list is not exhaustive and not all of these events were organised by Southway. Impact and Value for Money is unclear so this has not been recorded.

Activity/Outputs

Date	Event	Purpose	Outcome
20.09.2008, 11am – 2pm	Fog Lane Park Fun Day	To promote Southway, network and provide information to residents.	Promotional items and information provided about the Home Improvement Programme and other Southway services.
28.06.2008, 1pm – 4pm	Old Moat Park Fun Day	To promote Southway, network and provide information to residents.	Promotional items and information provided about the Home Improvement Programme and other Southway services.
26.07.2008, 1pm – 4pm	Ladybarn Park Fun Day	To promote Southway, network and provide information to residents.	Promotional items and information provided about the Home Improvement Programme and other Southway services.
27.11.2008, 12pm – 3pm	Valuing Older People (Burnage)	To promote Southway, network and provide information to older customers.	Promotional items and information provided about the Home Improvement Programme and other Southway services. Advice given about bogus callers and asking for id.
17.06.2008, 11.30am – 1.30pm	Open Crime Forum (Burnage)	To promote Southway, network and provide information to customers.	Promotional items and information provided about the Home Improvement Programme and other Southway services. Advice given about bogus callers and asking for id.
07.08.2008,	Crime Safety (Burnage)	To promote Southway, network and	Promotional items and information about the

12pm – 3pm		provide information to customers.	Home Improvement Programme and other Southway services. Advice given about bogus callers and asking for id.
12.02.2009 – 19.03.2009 10am – 12pm every Tuesday (6 sessions)	Information, Advice and Guidance – Chorlton – Nell Lane (South Manchester Regeneration)	To promote Southway, network and provide information to customers.	Some individual tenants advised about Home Improvement Programme works. Two contacts made for future re-launch of Nell Lane Tenant Group.
03.03.2009 – 07.03.2009 10am – 12pm every Tuesday (6 sessions)	Information, Advice and Guidance – Burnage (South Manchester Regeneration)	To promote Southway, network and provide information to customers.	Some individual tenants advised about the Home Improvement Programme works.
29.10.2008, 11am – 12pm, 08.04.2008, 2pm – 3pm	Southway 2010 Calendar Group Meetings	To develop a 2010 Southway Calendar	Theme of ‘Customer Involvement’ agreed
19.11.2008, 10am – 2pm	Training and Careers Day (Burnage)	To provide information and advice on employment and training opportunities. To promote, network and provide information to customers.	A list of interested people added to register and referred to relevant agencies. Some of whom have since been successful in obtaining an apprenticeship.
11.03.2009,	Challenging Stereotypes (Manchester Islamic High School for girls, Chorlton)	To provide information and advice on career opportunities for women. To promote, network and provide information.	Information, advice and tips given on preparing for employment and skills obtained on how to produce a good CV.
15.06.2008, 1.30pm – 4.30pm	Celebrate Old Moat	To provide information and advice on employment and training opportunities. To promote, network and provide information to customers.	A list of interested people added to register and referred to relevant agencies. Some of whom have since been successful in obtaining an apprenticeship.

What Next?

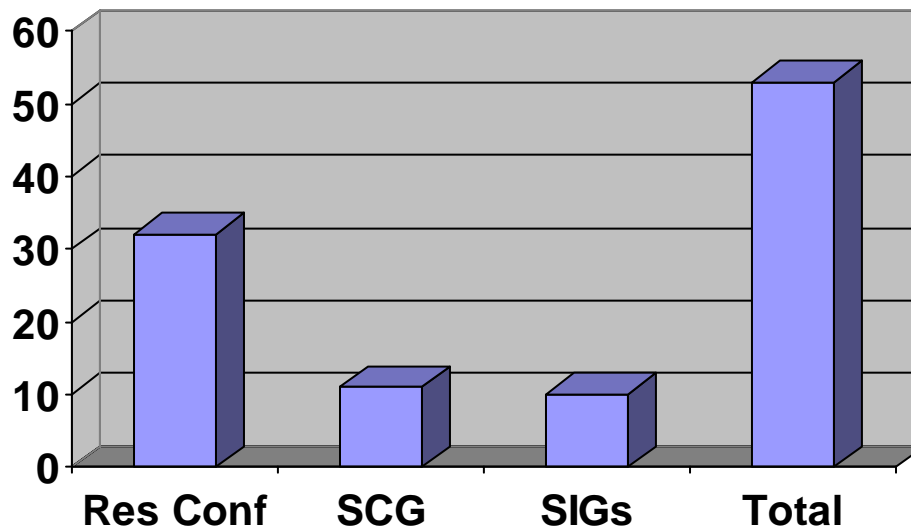
- One off events will continue to be supported
- Additional information will be collected to ensure adequate monitoring and impact assessment can be carried out

Baseline Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Attendance at events/meetings

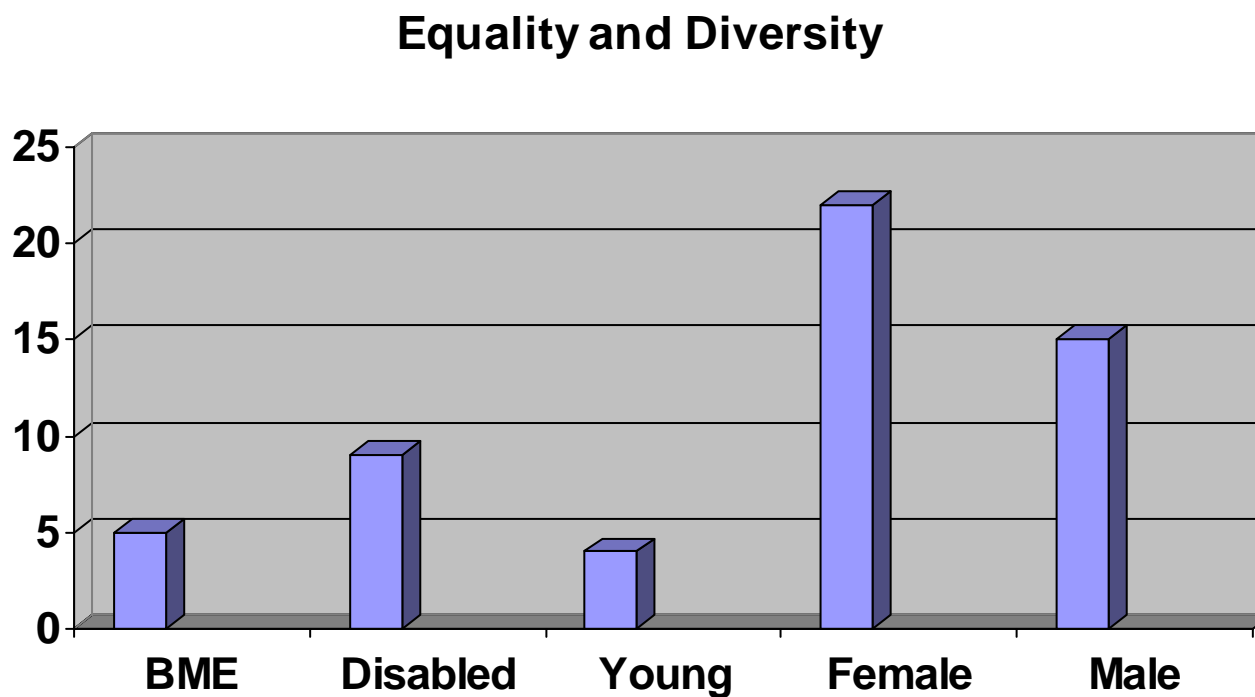
The table below shows the total number of residents attending the Residents' Conference, the Consultative Group meetings and the Service Improvement Groups and then a total of all three. Some residents attend more than one event/meeting.

Attendance



Equality and Diversity E & D

The table below shows the number of people who have been involved throughout the last 12 months by attending the conference, taking part in the Mystery Shopping, attending the SIGs or being a member of the Consultative Group, by E & D category.



Area Represented by a Tenant Group

Seven tenant groups were active during all or part of the period to which this Impact Assessment relates. Between them they represent a total of 7600 properties which includes all homes (not just Southway owned) within their boundaries.

