**Southway: Five Years of Progress and the Road Ahead**

**The ‘Jury’s’ Verdict on Southway’s Transfer Promises**

1. **The Jury**

We are a group of tenants of Southway Housing Trust. We aim to represent the views of some Southway tenants. We have given our time voluntarily as a tenant scrutiny group.

We were formed in July 2012 and there are 9 members of the Jury.

Since August 2012, we have been analysing Southway’s 5 year transfer promises, we have completed 10 full days of staff interviews and document reviews to evidence the promises were met.

1. **Why the Jury got involved**

We wanted to ensure the promises in the offer documents that we voted for were met, both individually and collectively.

It was also a chance to get more involved as tenants and have a say in the future promises which Southway make. We want to ensure Southway continues to improve.

We looked at the promises and evidence of what had been delivered by Southway. This was sometimes hard as there was no data on many services prior to transfer. We relied on our memory of how services were delivered by Manchester City Council.

We have gained a better insight into Southway and how it works and what has gone right and wrong.

We are presenting this work to the senior staff and Board to get their feedback on our work.

On 1st November, we will agree our summary comments for the 5 year report which will go to all tenants in a report which Southway is preparing.

On 27th November, we will present our work to the full Board, we will thank them for their work, ask them to address weaknesses and make an improvement plan for our priorities.

We are here to work as a critical friend to help Southway improve and to improve channels of communication between Southway and tenants and vice versa.

1. **The next task for the Jury**

Our next task is to take a deeper view of each service after some training and to ensure tenants can get value for money for the services we review in detail.

We will develop a plan for our training and development and for service reviews in 2013.

This work will deep dive Southway services where we would like to take a closer look based on what we have seen so far.

During our 2013 scrutiny we want to:

* engage more tenants for their views on services, in particular those who have recently experienced services
* speak to, observe and shadow officers, contractors and the Board
* undertake mystery shopping
* review more documents and observe the way in which records are kept and how the systems are working on the ground
* review good practice from other public and private organisations and bring this back for Southway to consider

We would like to shape Southway strategic planning in the next 5 years, as well as look back at our suggestions in this report and ensure they have been captured for action.

1. **Southway Transfer Promises**

We commend the work Southway have done to deliver the promises, in particular the Home Improvement Programme.

By and large what Southway have said they were going to do, they have done. Southway promises were delivered to best of their ability and though there have been problems, we recognise the effort put in and the enthusiasm of Southway staff to deliver our promises.

Promises on diversity, adaptations and voids were not included in the transfer offer, but we have looked at adaptations and diversity in our work, as equality is important to vulnerable tenants.

1. **Working on the Transfer Promises**

The Jury believe that Southway has a more cohesive identity than the Council.

Some tenants on the Jury voted no to transfer, they had concerns over who would run the organisation and about rises in rent, but we are all now pleased that the transfer took place.

Being on the Jury has given us different views from other peoples perspectives. It has been thought provoking and presented different ideas and challenged our thinking. This sort of activity has been new for many members but we have all enjoyed it and work together as a team.

We have learnt and recognise that Southway has a social mission and is not “just a landlord”.

Southway deliver other services, though this increases expectations of support that can and cannot be delivered.

**6.** **The verdict on the transfer promises:**

**A. The Promise on Customer Involvement**

The Jury feel this promise has been met, though we are sad to see so few Tenant and Resident Associations 5 years on.

**A1. Southway Strengths in Customer Involvement (CI)**

1. The CI strategy has an action plan for delivery, which includes the setting up of our scrutiny group.
2. CI staff have the freedom to innovate and get on with the job which is different from Manchester City Council (MCC) ways of working. The involvement service is delivered to a higher engagement that the former MCC Compact.
3. Large scale tenant surveys are undertaken every 2 years. The most recent one in 2012. Outside this, regular tenant satisfaction surveys are undertaken by individual teams. Texts have been used to publicise the annual Residents Conference.
4. In the recent tenant survey, 75% of tenants are satisfied that their views are listened to and acted upon and 86% said that Southway was good at keeping them informed.
5. A Young Peoples Involvement Officer has worked with young people since 2010. Objectives included setting up a youth forum, providing youth activities and supporting young apprentices. There is a Young People’s area on the website.
6. Staff encourage tenants who approach them to get involved. When tenants show an interest in getting involved, the CI team encourage and invite them to everything which is happening to get them more involved.
7. A Newsletter is sent to all tenants with rent statements to reduce the cost of postage.
8. Staff attend training and seminars to keep up to date with good practices in involvement.
9. The Residents Consultative Group (RCG) were involved in developing the CI strategy soon after transfer and last year when it was reviewed and a new one developed.
10. RCG review policies and performance information prior to Board approval and oversee the annual report.
11. The improvement programme has engaged with many tenants and gave a greater number ofstaff who had little tenant engagement, an opportunity to engage with tenants.
12. Policy and performance, survey results on satisfaction and local offer consultation in communities (east central and west) are reviewed at Service Improvement Groups (SIGS) and RCG.
13. SIGs have been set up for some areas which require special attention for example: Home Improvements, Repairs, Neighbourhoods, which are mainly due to tenants showing interest in those areas**.**
14. Sub groups or focus groups from SIGS and RCG have undertaken tasks and finished work to feed into service development.
15. Information on CI activity is on the Southway intranet for other staff to see
16. Information about opportunities for involvement is on the Internet.
17. The Local Offers allow for some services to be different across the 3 communities. This is good as the areas are different.
18. Anyone within the boundary can be a Tenant &Resident Association (TARA) member, Southway do not exclude anyone. TARAs are supported through the funding of rooms, grants (provided a constitution is met), promotion of activities and photocopying for meetings. CI staff attend to give support occasionally or as required.
19. Tenants and leaseholders are treated equally and invited to meetings and receive Southway Stories and annual reports.
20. The Jury acknowledge that involvement can give tenants a sense of purpose and enjoyment.

**A2. Southway areas for improvement in Customer Involvement**

1. The Jury would like to see tenant engagement in every service which Southway delivers and more proactive door knocking activity by all staff to get more tenants involved.
2. There are not many tenants involved (20 regularly attend meetings).
3. There are other ways to get involved and some more tenants attend one off events, send in feedback surveys etc to make a contribution to service quality at Southway). Many tenants in groups are the same tenants and there is little diversity in those involved. CI staff do not undertake door to door recruitment, but they have been successful in getting some new tenants for scrutiny.
4. Just 2 staff work in Customer involvement and a 3rd as the Young People’s Involvement Officer and their role is also to spend time on the administration related to the circulation of the newsletter and annual report. They also have responsibility for the gardening competition. We feel this could be done cheaper in other ways and free up staff to door knock and get out on estates to achieve more involvement. Use is not made of e mail and other technology to create and deliver publications which, with the gardening competition and the annual report take up £38k of a £64k budget for CI. Tenants feel that Southway stories are too “glossy” and expensive to produce and deliver. Tenants are heavily involved in what goes into Southway stories. The issue is quite long and gets set aside by some tenants who never return to reading it.
5. The Jury would also like to see area based news of no more than 2 sides of paper.
6. Not all services and literature have tenant input/involvement and tenants would like to see involvement in all services.
7. Local Offer monitoring is difficult as there are few tenants involved for the local offers to be monitored.
8. TARAs are no longer promoted but there are other ways for tenants to get involved. To set up TARAs, tenants need help in community development to contact those who are leaseholders and private tenants to get them involved
9. Many of the TARAs from MCC have closed down and now there are few TARAs supported by Southway.
10. The room at Aspen House for tenants is generally used by staff.
11. The CI area of the website in underdeveloped and hard to find. Just 420 tenants have registered to access SW tenant portal. There is no information on tenant management options on the website.
12. Local meetings should be in venues which are accessible for disabled people, not all have been.
13. There has been no survey of the views of non-tenants in the community about how they feel about the work that Southway does. This was a Southway promise, though there was no obligation on Southway to test this.
14. The term customer has replaced the term tenant in involvement and empowerment, so that it is inclusive of all Southway tenants and leaseholders. The Jury prefer the term resident.

**A3. Priority improvements from the Jury in Customer involvement**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. Engage tenants through social media in new ways, making better use of website, Facebook and Twitter.
2. Increase the numbers of tenants involved and their diversity, through door knocking.
3. Use contractors and surveyors regularly in tenant homes to promote CI by leaving leaflets and encouraging involvement.
4. Release staff time from administration to involvement.
5. Develop more volunteering opportunities within the involvement team from tenants.
6. Be clear what a Local Offer is or use a different term. Tenants misunderstand whether this relates to service standards or just environmental improvements. Engage tenants in monitoring the standards in their local area.
7. Tenants should monitor the delivery of all plans for service improvement, including plans for CI strategy delivery.
8. Promote local tenant involvement in TARAs and set up SIGS or other groups for every area of Southway work.

**B The Promise in Home Improvements (and Adaptations)**

The Jury feel this promise has been met.

The Jury additionally looked at adaptations performance as we felt this was important though it was not included in the transfer promise.

**B1 Southway strengths in Homes improvements HI**

1. A HIP SIG consulted with tenants throughout the programme every six weeks.
2. Tenant Board Members were part of contractor selection, other tenants helped by choosing materials.
3. A £107m HI programme and £10m Environmental Programme was delivered over 5 years and is on target to deliver by March 2013 and to exceed planned expenditure. HI works started on the first day of transfer.
4. Southway consulted tenants and agreed to do external and internal works separately. Satisfaction with works was 97% with external works and 94% with internal works in a recent survey.
5. A partnering framework established by Manchester City Council has enabled better buying power for materials and contractors. Six contractors were procured with the combined buying power of the four newly established trusts and the Northwards ALMO securing a good price. Southway have taken advantage of the market and saved expenditure on contracts (external insulation) which has enabled an increase the external works completed, including drives, enclosed balconies, protecting external stairwells and boundary work (an additional £11m).
6. Large contracts were delivered with schemes of 300-400 homes each were supervised at the time. Contracts were allocated based on 60% quality and 40% price.
7. Initially contracts were through open book accounting which means that Southway also gain if the contractor can be more efficient on a 50:50 basis on a gain share agreement.
8. The HI team feel there is less bureaucracy under Southway which means they can feed in ideas, be flexible and get better value for money.
9. The contractor team collect lessons learnt and follow up reported problems. Improvement complaints are now being logged.
10. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were set by Southway to achieve a higher standard for the contractors each year.
11. Non-traditional homes got a new skin and insulation which gave them a 30 year life and a new street scene, using coloured tiles.
12. Miscellaneous properties had to be surveyed as individual homes, (more expensive and resource hungry than traditional homes).
13. Some owners who butted up to Southway homes were able to get new guttering as it was viable to do the whole strip rather than try to connect new plastic to old metal guttering.
14. Tenants who had completed improvements to their homes had the right to compensation under the Right to Improve (but no one has asked for this)
15. Respite facilities (usually the show room) were provided but rarely used when work was completed in tenants’ homes.
16. Where there was a serious medical need, tenants might have been decanted to a hotel or to a care home through £350pw grant available from social services. Provision was also made for tenants to go to their family with Southway paying for this. Proof of medical condition was required for this.
17. Future programmes will not be so intense and so will be more manageable.
18. Contractors used some local labour and some Greater Manchester labour and recruited 107 apprentices for various periods of time whilst delivering the HI programme. In the first 2 years, 57 apprentices did qualifications to NVQ 2 and 3.
19. Southway is going to purchase former Right to Buy homes and build new homes (13 flats in Merseybank) when the HI programme is complete. This will help to address the large waiting list for homes in the area.
20. Southway are now picking up on refusals for work and are working closely with the Customer Care and Support Manager to support the tenants through any HI works.

**Southway strengths in Adaptations**

1. The adaptations service used to take at least 18 months to complete an adaptation assessment under MCC.
2. Urgent adaptations are generally completed in 3 months. Southway works with MCC adaptations partnership, (MEAP) who are trying to clear the backlog to complete major adaptations to a 6 month waiting time target, (which is a Southway and MEAP target) which they hope to achieve for January 2013.
3. MEAP completed adaptations to homes in the HIP. Southway paid the difference between the standard bathroom and the required adaption for a shower if this was recommended by MEAP.
4. Southway has funded over £500k of adaptations to help clear the MEAP backlog. In 2010 an agreement was reached city wide for RSLs to contribute to the cost of the adaptation. Southway pay 40% and the Council pays 60%. This has enabled 144 homes to be adapted in the last 2 years.
5. Social Services pays for up to £1000 of minor adaptations, for example - handles and grab rails.
6. Southway recycle adaptations wherever possible.
7. As part of the final phase of HIP all adaptations that are required following an assessment of need by MEAP will be completed by contractors or in the case of special items such as stair lifts, by special contractors.

**B2 Southway areas for improvement in Home Improvements**

1. The Jury are concerned about HI programme planning after 5 years and there is no information on forward programmes after 2013. They would like to see continued improvements in their homes.
2. Complaints to the contractor were not always shared with Southway through any formal or informal complaints procedure. The HI team did not have the resources to supervise all the contract handover inspections on site. Only 1 in 10 homes were supervised and so most properties were signed off by the contractors as completed. Southway was heavily reliant on tenant feedback which was going to the contractor but was not being passed on, leading to unknown dissatisfaction.
3. 10% of post work visits were guided by any formal complaints made. Where issues/complaints were repeated, all 10% of checks would be done by concentrating on that one contract. .All contracts had a minimum of 10% inspections. Where the need arose inspection levels were increased to ensure standards were being achieved.
4. Slate roofs were replaced with tile roofs, which leaked.
5. Some letters were sent out prior to Board approval of the scheme which then build up hopes of tenants and then led to complaints of delays in starting the contract.
6. Contractors had Equality policies but Equality was not monitored as part of the contract (some data was collected on apprenticeships).
7. Apprentices were not always supervised.
8. Trades people were patronising to female tenants.
9. Ginnel insulation is not being effective and has not been fitted everywhere
10. The quality of medical information collected prior to improvements was not being passed on to contractors.
11. Consultation on the kitchen layout was very limited with contractors persuading the tenants to go for a standard layout. Many tenants refused and others were not aware what they were signing for. Tenants had little time to think on the spot. More time should be given for tenants to consider important decisions in future programmes.
12. The only kitchens being replaced were deemed unfit. Tenants who had had a MCC kitchen were not offered any minor work and so did not gain from this programme in the promise.
13. Cavity wall infill will fail over time and cause dampness, we would like Southway to plan to top this up
14. Some of the earlier work on the Southway Programme was not of the standard delivered today

**Southway areas for improvement in Adaptations**

1. The current backlog is 10, all of which have waited an average of 9 months for their adaptation from the referral date. The target time is 6 months.
2. The longest case was 32 months - it was a complex case.

**B3 Priority improvements from the Jury in Home Improvements and Adaptations**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. The next improvement programme is about 15 years away and included in the 30 year budget of £344 million. The next 15 years will used by Southway to pay off the £80m borrowed to undertake the programme.
2. The Jury would like to see future Home Improvement supervised by Southway staff and not delegated to the contractor and a more visible Southway staff presence on sites to enable issues to be reported.
3. Ensure apprentices are supervised and not left by themselves in homes of tenants.
4. Promote and test equality policies and procedures of future contractors
5. Be more specific about when work is being started to prevent tenants taking unnecessary time off work and offer compensation for non-attendance.
6. Southway should explain how tenants can complain and encourage this during HI programmes.
7. Ensure major adaptations stay on target for completion within 6 months from referral.

**C. The Promise on Environmental Improvements and Communal Gardening**

The Jury feel this promise has been met.

**C1. Southway strengths in Environmental Improvements (EI) and Communal Gardening (CG)**

1. Under MCC there were limited environmental works. Southway promised to invest £10.5 million in its first 5 years. The amount represents 10% of the total HI budget and equates to approx. £1500 per home. Southway are likely to have spent £11.8m by the end of the 5 years.
2. £360k match funding from Highways was secured as a contribution to the contract when Southway undertook improvements to the highway at the same time as they were doing their environmental work. MCC Highways immediately adopted the newly completed carriageways for future maintenance.
3. Southway has almost started its environment improvement programme from nothing. Investment was limited under MCC. They are building walls back up, have restored boundaries, replaced fences and dropped kerbs for safe vehicle access.
4. Contractors commissioned to do EI work had to provide a full resident liaison service and be measured for customer satisfaction performance against a set of key indicators.
5. The narrowest avenues were prioritised in terms of new parking layouts and provision of parking. Southway secured legal parking licences as necessary where hammerheads in narrow cul-de-sacs were opened up and confirmed the new layouts with Land Registry.
6. The latest environmental programme had a 98% satisfaction rate from tenants of 30 homes. Overall Southway have achieved 90% satisfaction against a 95% target. Only 12 stage one formal complaints have been received about the environment works, of these, 4 were upheld. Tenant engagement in the environment work was achieved through the Voice Panel, events on nearby green space and door knocking, to help decide what to improve on all estates. Designs were then changed and planning permission (if necessary) was sought. It was followed by a “you said - we did” letter and plan to each affected resident.
7. The Neighbourhood Services Team Leader has developed an unofficial panel of residents who they can ring each month to see how CG is being delivered. They follow up with the contractor and will ask the contractor to return to complete the works properly.
8. To encourage feedback after CG works, Southway offered a shopping voucher for a returned questionnaire.
9. Training on the area based works and Arrowfield improvements have all been local with 2 young people recruited from Merseybank, 2 young people from Burnage and 6 from the Arrowfield estate. A further 4 full apprenticeships have been provided alongside the highways works.
10. Southway started to assess trees. A tree survey was also carried out in 2009/10 to identify any at that time, which were dead, dying or dangerous and this was acted upon. The new survey goes further as it informs a forward maintenance plan this year and put together a tree plan. A budget of £200k this year has been set aside to draft a plan and for some felling. The remaining work will be completed over the next 3 years.
11. When undertaking CG, contracts are reviewed based on feedback at the time of renewal. Southway acted on feedback and ensured that rubbish is removed prior to grass cutting, which is undertaken 14 times a year (every 2 weeks in growing season).
12. Southway have diversified from grass cutting to planting shrubs and bushes.
13. Southway cut hedges in access ways and keep them clear under the CG contract. On occasions these have been replaced by high security fencing, if they are being breached.
14. Some savings are expected on hedge cutting as due to the nesting season the contractor cannot deliver this more than twice a year, when retendered
15. More work has been completed to clear hedges of homeowners, which grow onto the path.
16. Southway are looking into the provision of friendly raised beds for those with mobility issues who wish to garden.
17. 86% of tenants in a recent tenant survey were happy with Southway as a place to live.

**C2 Southway areas for improvement in Environmental Improvements (EI) and Communal Gardening (CG)**

1. The new specification for grounds maintenance is being drawn up for re-tender but tenants had not been involved in the specification. Tenants were invited to participate (September RCG meeting). Some revisions have already been made to the specification as a result, such as grass to be ‘cut and collected’ instead of the previous ‘cut and drop’, though this has not yet been communicated to those involved.
2. Tenants who did not come to the meeting for the planning the EI did not get to input in the early design stages, until after the planning permission had been requested.
3. The promise was loose on EI and when consulted, tenants expressed what they wanted but they could not generally have everything as there were budget constraints. This was not always clear.
4. The budget was £1500 per home, some homes had £3500 spent on them and some homes had no work.
5. Drive work is appreciated. It was functional not cosmetic. Where a drive just needed resurfacing it was not given block paving.
6. Major works were not completed in avenues where home owners were in a majority. In these avenues Southway homes received a drive where practical. The road was raised to be the same level at the kerb and some cutting back of privets also widened the aspect.
7. Where work has been done, it is now being patched and blocks are not replaced. This will soon become an eyesore.
8. Due to drainage regulations, some driveway replacement had no choice of surface.
9. Tenants are not informed if their tree is being removed which has been a shock to some residents; tenants are merely informed by a standard letter that work is being done to their tree.
10. There are few complaints about CG, so there is an assumption of a good service but this is not monitored in any way.
11. Tree stump removal is expensive at £60-70 so is not done when a tree is removed, but tenants would prefer this to be cleared. In the more recent surveys, trees which are recommended for removal are also having the stump removed, but this is not at the same time as the work is done.
12. Some tenants and owners have fenced off their back gardens before the boundary as they cannot manage their garden and Southway has no plans to address this. Southway has a programme to deal with landlocked parcels of land, including this type. Tenants would like to be engaged in the future of this land.
13. There is a some confusion on ownership of some land when reported for action. Southway is working to resolve any ownership problems in partnership with MCC and the Land Registry. Estate walkabouts are undertaken with TARA’s.
14. Encourage planting creatively for security of tenants.

**C3. Priority improvements from the Jury in Environmental Improvements (EI) and Communal Gardening (CG)**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. There is no forward programme of environmental works and many avenues are still tight on space. The Jury would like to see a forward environmental programme.
2. Formalise tenant involvement in contractor selection and the specification and performance for the new CG contract in April 2013.
3. Formalise tenant involvement in CG through willing residents who can give feedback on their environment, but not necessarily attend a meeting and build this into the next contract.
4. Provide and advertise an estate walkabout programme.
5. Encourage tenants to use communal garden space.
6. Consider options for extra gardens which no-one wants for another purpose –allotments or other ideas for neighbours to access them.
7. Address the issues of owners who do not look after their gardens bringing estates down. Support them to access a gardening service.
8. Southway are powerless where the tram tracks are close to the tenant homes. Southway could complete additional planting and environmental enhancement (some have been done).
9. Maintain the block work provided and do not tarmac over missing blocks.

**D. The promise on Concessionary Gardening & Decorating and Mobile Cleaning Services**

The Jury feel this promise has been met, except on the frequency and criteria for decorating and gardening which would have been hard to sustain.

**D1 Southway strengths in concessionary gardening & decorating and Mobile Cleaning**

**Concessionary services – gardening and decorating**

1. The service has continued to be delivered despite the increase in demand for the services, it is now 2 yearly and is more restricted in who it is offered to.
2. The criteria for services is published and clear.
3. The services were reviewed in 2011 and there is in place a 3 year action plan to deliver change, which includes an increased investment from Southway in gardening and decorating services.
4. Southway do not deliver concessionary services to those who owe rent and those who have a history of ASB.
5. Visits for these services have identified other support needs for tenants which have been addressed.

**Concessionary gardening**

1. Satisfaction was surveyed in 2011 (67% response rate).
2. 84% of tenants are happy with the service and 91% felt the workers were polite and helpful. The report on satisfaction is shared with the contractor for improvements to be agreed.
3. The gardening service offered is clear in a published leaflet and consists of 7 visits for grass; 4 visits for hedges; 3 for borders and weeds, which are done concurrently.

**Concessionary decorating**

1. Decoration is delivered by Southway rather than a contractor from 2012. Southway staff have replaced those who were dismissed this year
2. The decorators work includes sanding and painting.

**Mobile Cleaning**

1. The Mobile Cleaning service was set up by Southway 2 years after transfer, in response to issued raised by tenants to clear refuse from estates which MCC took some time to clear.
2. The service is delivered within 24-48 hours.
3. Staff numbers were increased from 2-3 staff in 2010. They have access to a leased vehicle.
4. The service has helped with welfare reform changes already, by supporting tenants to move and downsize to smaller homes.
5. The service enables furniture to be recycled for use by other tenants.
6. If tenants have no access to a skip, then Southway mobile service will pick up and take big items to the tip.

**D2. Southway areas for improvement in concessionary gardening & decorating and Mobile Cleaning**

**Concessionary services – gardening and decorating**

1. The availability of the service is passed on by spreading the word through tenants and is not widely advertised.
2. There is no opportunity to include services to meet the needs of those with mental health and other problems (outside disability and age criteria). This is also a problem when a younger person lives with the tenant who meets the criteria but will not/cannot/is not able to garden/decorate.
3. Thought has been given to offering the service to more able tenants, this is expensive but the Jury would like to see it tested by offering it to see if other tenants would pay for this service.
4. It was not clear if environmentally friendly products are used in decorating and gardening.
5. It was not clear if Criminal Record Bureau checks were done on operatives for the concessionary services.
6. Call cards could be left to assess satisfaction and more calls could be made from the call centre (now only completed for some decorating).
7. There are no rights to appeal if you do not qualify for concessionary services.

**Concessionary gardening**

1. There are no figures for the number of gardens done previously so it was not possible to evidence if the service had been maintained but the numbers completed are rising year on year.
2. Gardening is delivered monthly, action has been undertaken to improve satisfaction with 75% of visits. A new contractor will shortly be sourced and KPIs will be strengthened to allow better measurement.
3. There is no satisfaction review for gardening services. Concessionary gardening recipients are called monthly to ascertain satisfaction feedback.
4. The potential demand for gardening based on a projected aging population is that the service may require additional budget spend, but this has not yet been agreed.

**Concessionary decorating**

1. The number of rooms done (2 yearly to annually) has reduced under Southway, but this is due to the increase in eligibility for this service (an aging population).
2. There are no reported problems, so the supervisor for the decorating does not spot check the work.
3. The first 80 applicants to apply got the work on decorating this year, which may not be based on need. Southway has invested more money in this in 2012, but there is still a 9 months wait for 2 yearly decorating. The backlog with concessionary decorating applications is targeted for eradication by December 2012.
4. The staff who are employed as decorators are on zero hour contracts and have replaced those who were dismissed this year. Southway should give more permanent contracts.
5. The service includes the stripping of walls and this includes removal of woodchip. The service might be delivered to more tenants if woodchip was just painted.
6. The budget was increased in 2012 to tackle backlog and to meet on-going demand.

**Mobile cleaning**

1. Not all tenants are aware of the mobile cleaning service. Some tenants had not heard of the service at all and some knew the service better known as the Estate Team. It should be widely promoted.
2. Some tenants report being told about the service at the call centre and others are asked to phone the council. The role of the team is a bit woolly. Referral to the service from the call centre is unclear.
3. The service is expensive but the staff will go to a site when urgent issues are reported and can target a clean-up immediately. Record keeping on mobile cleaning is daily work sheets, they should have PDAs.
4. Workers are stretched to undertake all the work requested for mobile cleaning.

**D3. Priority improvements from the Jury in concessionary gardening & decorating and Mobile Cleaning**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities.

1. There should be formal customer involvement in these services.
2. Tenant would also like to be offered a handyperson/gardening/decorating service which they could pay for.
3. Southway should offer the service with some payments from tenants for decorating and gardening, and consider building this offer into contract review on gardening.
4. Tenants would like to see a small charge made to enable the service to be spread around more tenants.
5. The staff who undertake mobile cleaning are doing work which the tenants pay for under council tax (£190k). Southway should negotiate a contract with MCC for the removal of large rubbish, etc.
6. Tenants would like to see satisfaction cards or follow up calls for a better sample number of all concessionary services.
7. A further £50k is required to clear the backlog on decorating, all budgets should be reviewed to ensure future needs and promises are being met
8. Clarify for tenants the difference between a Grounds Maintenance service and a Gardening service and what they should expect.

**E. The Promise on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Tenancy Rights & Tenancy Management and Lettings**

The Jury feel this promise has been met, except around the delivery of the local lettings policy.

**E1 Southway strengths in ASB, Tenancy Rights and Management and Lettings**

**Lettings:**

1. Southway has implemented a new policy which is better understood by tenants and staff and enables web access.
2. Tenants can arrange home swaps outside the Manchester Boundary. Southway pay a £15 fee for tenants to access a home swap.
3. Southway have started to acquire former “Right to Buy” homes and homes under mortgage rescue (enabling the occupier to remain in their home).
4. The Choice Based Lettings (CBL) policy is 130 pages long but Southway have reduced it to 20 pages to make it more transparent and understandable.
5. New applicants for a home who have not come from a Southway tenancy are checked for former arrears, a history of ASB and 2 references are sought.
6. New tenants are given a probationary 12 month tenancy with fewer rights until they have proven they are a good tenant.
7. Where a safe house has been given to a new tenant, additional security is provided, for example when the tenant is known to have suffered domestic abuse.
8. An additional priority weighting is given to tenants who want to move within their sub-area (for example Chorlton households will be given an additional priority for Chorlton but not for Didsbury).
9. Transfer tenants are given a home visit to check they have looked after their tenancy.
10. Local lettings policies at Arrowfield have assisted improvement in ASB satisfaction by local tenants, (formerly 65% and now the 85%).
11. Guidance has recently been produced by Southway to advise people who are considering taking in lodgers.

**ASB**

1. Southway measure success in managing ASB by setting performance targets for how quickly they reply and resolve ASB. Individual officers and teams are measured on this.
2. The ASB satisfaction survey form is completed through a telephone survey from the call centre. Customer satisfaction is measured on case closure and has an 85% satisfaction rate.
3. Southway invest £202,038 pa on staffing of ASB, with a further budget for non-staffing expenditure of £121,416 (which includes mediation £15,000, Crime prevention works £7660, Legal advice £85,000 and Admin of £5262 for leaflets and supporting witnesses).
4. Southway have created an in house legal team, which has taken out 3rd party delays since October 2010. They employ one ASB specialist per Local Offer area and have increased satisfaction.
5. Southway use several external solicitors to create competition and to ensure access to specialists.
6. Officers are keen to be accredited for their work and will go for accreditation for the quality of their service in 2013.
7. ASB cases are now assigned to a Neighbourhood Officer and are prioritised based on a risk assessment matrix which supports what action is taken – for example additional locks to windows or referral to a Family intervention project for perpetrators. Previously Southway did not have a systematic way of assessing a complainants’ vulnerability. This new system helps to give bespoke services and determine cases at high risk.
8. Southway attend regular liaison meetings with Police, MCC and other Housing Associations at which cases of ASB of tenants (and neighbours of tenants) can be discussed to seek solutions.
9. Southway meet with the local Police in their offices with a formal agenda to discuss actions which they can both take.
10. Southway have piloted co-locating the staff and the Police to build even better knowledge of each-others work and they have a protocol to share and receive information with the Police on ASB.
11. CCTV is used on some estates and monitored by an agreement with Willow Park.
12. Southway has used a number of different approaches for ASB including Environmental works at Arrowfield Rd which are secure by design, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Injunctions, Mediation and Eviction.
13. Southway work with Social Services at an early stage if the victim or perpetrator of ASB has mental health problems.
14. Southway take a zero tolerance stance on drugs and drug dealing.

**Tenancy Management**

1. Southway worked in partnership with Police to support victims of burglaries and also to share data for tenancy fraud and tenancy audit.
2. Southway follows up reports of untidy gardens, putting the properties right and then monitoring their future use.
3. Staff feel they are better able to react quickly to tenancy breaches than they were at MCC and can be more systematic with enforcing tenancy conditions
4. Tenants have succession rights at least once (under MCC they might have multiple successions).
5. Occupiers who are under-occupying when they remain after the tenant leaves are asked to downsize.

**E2. Southway areas for improvement in ASB, Tenancy Rights and Management and Lettings**

**Lettings**

1. Southway considered the delivery of the Offer Promise which was a local lettings policy for their area only, but they realised their tenants might have greater opportunities to move. Southway were also able to achieve a lower administration cost by joining the 18 other HAs in Manchester under Choice Based Lettings.
2. More work might be necessary to support tenants to understand the lettings bands. A new Manchester Move lettings process is being implemented as it will include a user friendly website. There are plans for this to ensure web access for tenants.
3. Rights to sublet and to take in lodgers are not widely known but tenants need to know this as they are thinking of their options under welfare reform.

**ASB**

1. Southway now works in close partnership with the Police to resolve serious crime; they cannot deal with illegal activities and gun crime alone.
2. CCTV is monitored 24 hours a day through a contract with Willow Park, another housing provider. Incidents are then referred to the Police and Southway.
3. It can be more problematic to manage cases where the tenant is fearful of giving evidence, Southway can use professional witnesses and CCTV and can make a Community Impact Statement themselves of what they have been told.
4. Statutory Services can be reluctant to intervene as they do not have the resources for new cases and take a lot of persuading to get involved with mental health ASB issues.
5. Tenants feel that low level ASB is not prioritised and some tenants feel disengaged and not listened to.
6. A graph shows 81% of tenants satisfied with ASB complaints handling and slightly less for those satisfied with outcome.
7. Southway staff have not been trained as mediators; they use the services of independent mediation organisations.

**Tenancy management**

1. The majority of tenants at transfer have signed the new Southway tenancy agreement. Some tenants did not sign the agreement. The tenancy rights in both are similar, so this is not a major issue. Southway did not inform tenants the tenancy agreement was voluntary; they did not say it was compulsory either.

**E3. Priority improvements from the Jury in ASB, Tenancy Rights and Management and Lettings**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities.

**Lettings**

1. The MCC choice based lettings scheme is web based, tenants need to be supported to access this. No plan exists for tenant training.
2. Southway will never meet current demand and so a partnership with the private rented sector (PRS) should be broached to help tenants and applicants. Landlords in the PRS would first have to meet specific promises on repairs and rents.
3. A post lettings survey is completed one month after the tenant moves in, which is good, but this is not collected on a survey form, so it is not clear what follow up occurs.

**ASB**

1. The system logging for ASB is on a spread sheet and is not on the usual IT system used by Connect staff and so it is harder to find the actions when tenants call. ASB communications are restricted internally in order to increase confidentiality. Southway should ensure this is understood throughout the organisation so as not to detract from the customer experience.
2. Southway should work with colleges and students locally to address their ASB which impacts on Southway tenants.
3. Tenants should be trained as ASB champions. Tenants could then go to a fellow tenant for support to make an ASB complaint. Many tenants get frustrated and upset and are unable to explain their problem. Champions could help.
4. There needs to be more clarity on the standards and promises on ASB for tenants.
5. The Jury would like to see more work on diversionary activities for young people.
6. The zero tolerance policy on drugs and vandalism should be enforced.

**Tenancy Management**

1. Officers need access to IT out on site through laptops so they can answer queries on site. This would also allow them to spend more time out on estates.

**F. The promise on Repairs & Appointments**

The Jury feel this promise has generally been met, except under the published completions times for major responsive repairs.

**F1. Southway strengths in Repairs & Appointments**

1. 86% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs service and 83% are happy with the general condition of their property according to a recent tenant survey.
2. The call centre contact 10% of tenants post repair to get satisfaction data.
3. Call Centre Advisors have accompanied operatives to site to better understand the repair jobs which are being reported.
4. Repair appointments and satisfaction surveys can be done by text or by the call centre follow up call. Appointments can now be offered on a Saturday morning.
5. Housecall is coming soon in 2012/13 which will display the repair parts on a website and enable tenants to be more specific when ordering a repair.
6. The repair team and call centre sit together so can resolve some issues immediately.
7. Southway took the service over in April 2008 and place more emphasis on the quality of works. It manages approx. 28,000 repairs a year and 300 empty homes through 55 staff and 35-40 operatives and engineers, which is a big operation. The service is available 24/7 and a core service is delivered to 6pm. 60% of calls received are about repairs.
8. The roles within the team are split into operations (who undertake the work) and business support (who procure and manage the contracts and the quality). Managers have easy access to management information to review progress and performance.
9. Managers know where their operatives are using technology and works orders are transmitted electronically.
10. 8 KPIs go to Board and about 50 are collected for repairs.
11. Operatives have PDAs and are qualified to undertake the work they are asked to do.
12. Operatives attend monthly toolbox talks and each team member gets a 6 weekly 121 with their manager to discuss how the team and individual are performing.
13. The vehicle fleet is new and modern.
14. The type of boilers fitted has been reduced to 2, so parts are easy to access.
15. 4 local apprenticeships from Southway postcodes are employed. 100% completions have been achieved for gas servicing.
16. Southway reports good relationships with drainage and glazing contractors
17. A flooring contractor was dismissed for poor workmanship.
18. New contractors get monthly supervision to ensure they perform and then go to quarterly.
19. The in house team saves 20% VAT costs at Southway. They are not subsidised and have to make a small profit to survive.
20. Tenant satisfaction has increased performance this year on repairs.

**F2. Southway areas for improvement in Repairs & Appointments**

1. Some tenants had follow up satisfaction texts to answer and others have not, the strategy for repair feedback in this way was unclear. Repair satisfaction texts have now been discontinued and all repair satisfaction data is now obtained via outbound calls from Connect Team Advisors.
2. Questions on satisfaction were reduced to 4 by officers. Tenants were not consulted on the important questions to ask.
3. The main complaints are about communications. Southway only has a 5% pre inspect target.
4. Right first time repairs performance is improving, but could be much better.
5. Operatives sometimes come first to every job, even when it is clear that a surveyor should be calling first. Southway Operatives cannot order a new bath, this has to be called into the call centre and the tenant is disturbed a second time and experiences a delay. At the point of a repair report, an appointment can be made for a ‘technical inspection’ which a Southway surveyor will attend. (5.9% of repair calls have resulted in ‘technical inspections’ being ordered since April 2012).
6. The promises made in the offer document are not the same as Southway policy on repairs, some are better and some are worse. Changes were agreed at RCG and SIG who moved Routine Repairs from 15 days to 10 days and the Major Repairs from 30 to 45 days. Routine repairs make up the largest proportion of repairs (75.9% year to date this year), therefore customers have seen an improvement in response times in the largest category of repairs. Major repairs targets have been changed from 30 days to 45 days (16% of repairs); these customers have seen a lower commitment than that promised in the offer document.
7. Some operatives do not show identification.
8. Tenants sign to say a job is completed but not the arrival or departure times.
9. The 10% target for repairs to be post inspected is not met (6.9%).
10. Not all service failures are picked up, unless a complaint is made. Tenants would like Southway to learn from all service failures.
11. A 10% administrative charge is made on top of rechargeable repairs for lock outs etc. Whilst understandable, tenants feel that they should be encouraged to opt for a solution which meets Southway specification and not their own cheaper option.
12. Rechargeable repairs collected were £37,853 in 2011/12 and rechargeable orders raised amounted to £112,200 in the same time period.
13. Door furniture replacements are poor. Tenants do not know they could provide their own door furniture for Southway to fit.

**F3. Priority improvements from the Jury in Repairs and Appointments**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. Engage tenants in a new survey and agree how information will be collected on completed repairs.
2. Damp is a big problem and often dismissed with advice. We heard that all reports of dampness can be investigated by a surveyor and appropriate remedial action is ordered and/or advice issued. A 3 stage mould growth treatment is possible.
3. Introduce a handyperson service to do minor works for tenants and make a small charge for this.
4. Offer a payment to a tenant for a failed appointment. This is covered within the existing customer compensation policy which provides a £10 payment for a service failure including a missed repair appointment, which is not widely publicised.
5. Develop a planned and cyclical maintenance plan with involved tenants. Ensure scheduling of repairs limits the time wasted in travel.
6. Improve performance on right first time repairs.

**G. The promise on Rents, Rent Arrears & Charges**

The Jury feel this promise has been met.

**G1. Southway strengths in Rents, Rent Arrears and Charges**

1. 81% of tenants are satisfied with their rent providing value for money.
2. Welfare Rights services were offered by Manchester Advice, Southway do a full benefit checks with new tenants for one hour. Southway fund “S line” to support tenants in debt. This is managed independently by the CAB on behalf of Southway.
3. Three (soon to be four) staff have been recruited solely as a result of Welfare Reform. All Income Management Team staff work on Welfare Reform issues when speaking to tenants affected. Neighbourhood Officers will be carry out the bulk of the under occupancy visits. Financial inclusion work enables tenants to understand budgeting and get advice on a range of benefits they might be entitled to.
4. Rents and charges are sent out to tenants on a quarterly rent statement and include service charges.
5. Southway aim for successful early intervention if a tenant falls into arrears, within 2 weeks of this happening.
6. 69 evictions were requested last year, all for arrears. 29 went ahead. The remaining 40 were stopped because either the tenant cleared the arrears, or the tenant applied to the court and the judge stopped the eviction on terms, or the tenant made an arrangement with Southway that allowed Officers to stop the eviction from going ahead.
7. Court action is taken for arrears over £300, court costs of about £100 are passed on for payment by the tenant.
8. 4136 homes are at target rent; 709 are less than £2 from target rent and 44 are over target rent by no more than £2. Southway expects to achieve target rents by 2012/13. Officers have little flexibility in the rent charged as a formula is set by government.
9. Southway is to start to give advice on taking in lodgers to address under-occupation. This is just one of the options available to tenants affected by under occupancy. Southway has produced a leaflet advising tenants of their rights and offering practical advice. The decision to take in a lodger remains with the tenant. Southway is not involved in the arrangement.
10. The furniture charges are very expensive and may not be covered by Universal Credit. Southway has stopped offering furnished tenancies and is now able to recycle using their mobile task force. 200 homes are affected. Southway have indicated it will offer a “one off” buy back of the furniture it rents.
11. Southway has procedures for managing arrears and evicting leaseholders.
12. The income service is under review. A meeting with a selected group of tenants fed into the service review.
13. Southway is advising tenants on welfare reform, Information has been in Southway Stories and discussed at RCG. Letters have been sent out to tenants and follow-up visits made. Support offered includes budgeting and debt advice, downsizing, and support with learning and gaining employment.

**G2. Southway areas for improvement in Rents, Rent Arrears & Charges**

1. Surveys have been tried to test customer satisfaction with arrears services but they were limited in their success as were calls from Connect.
2. Friendly and non-aggressive letters could be sent to tenants, which are less confrontational. We understand they are being re written but tenants have not been consulted.
3. Southway is paid in arrears by MCC Housing Benefit team.
4. Officers would like to see a re-alignment of patches to cater for the number of tenants in arrears, under-occupation and those on benefits rather than the number of homes in an area. This would ensure all tenants get equal access to support.
5. MCC insurance is better than Southway home contents insurance. Some tenants still buy MCC insurance. Only 97 Southway tenants have Southway home contents insurance. Information is not currently available from Northwards who administer the Councils scheme on how many Southway tenants have MCC insurance.
6. Tenants need help to get on line and report changes of their circumstances to the benefits team.
7. It is not clear how tenants have been involved in rent setting, except for the tenants on the Board. Southway are not making use of their flexibility in rent setting (+/- 5%).

**G3. Priority improvements from the Jury on Rents, Rent Arrears & Charges**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. New tenants are charged for their rent a few days after their tenancy is viewed and accepted. The tenant is liable for rent from the tenancy start date. The time allowed to move in can be unreasonable (in the case of late offers) and leaves tenants in rent arrears on occupation or in the home they are leaving. This is unfair, more flexibility shown and more time given to tenants.
2. Involve tenants in welfare reform planning and keep rents as low as possible in these difficult times.

**H. The promise on Customer Service, Contact Centre, Complaints, Website (and Equalities)**

The Jury feel this promise has been met.

The Jury additionally looked at equalities performance as we felt this was important though it was not included in the transfer promise.

**H1. Southway strengths in Customer Service, Contact Centre, Complaints (and Equalities)**

**Customer Service and the Contact Centre**

1. Officers reported that the service has improved from the previous outsourced service. Calls are now more speedily answered, fewer phone calls are lost and the advice given has improved since transfer.
2. Southway staff can give a more personal service than the one shared with MCC prior to April 2009. They do not use a script and treat tenants as individuals. Calls are targeted for one call resolution.
3. Rents can be paid and rent statements can be viewed on line.
4. The repair orders are by e mail requests now, but will soon be through a diagnostic tool, the website is being reviewed with the IT strategy for improved functionality.
5. General e mails come in to the call centre and are answered quickly.
6. Staff are looking to further develop the call centre following 4 years of operation. Southway intend to develop some specialists within the centre.
7. The call centre is currently reviewing letters on environmental services and rehousing to improve communication with tenants.
8. The office will remain at Aspen House for 2 years. When the next break clause comes up in the 10 year lease, Southway may look for opportunities that might lead to more localised working.
9. The Call Centre completes calls to follow up service delivery. The manager analyses complaints and feedback by service area. The manager is able to analyse how many calls are returned within 24 hours and which staff and team members fall short of this target. Key messages are pulled out and addressed at one to ones and team meetings, where a customer care champion in each team presents findings and leads the discussion.
10. Southway tries to ensure that all leaflets are presented to RCG for approval and carry the Tenant Approved tick/logo.
11. A tenant panel meets to review a sample of complaint responses on a quarterly basis.

**Complaints**

1. Complaints are administered by the call centre manager and progress chased if replies are slow from team managers. As a result replies are now more specific. The call centre manager reviews reply letters and focusses on Plain English and whether the issues raised by the tenant are fully addressed.
2. Call centre staff feel they are proactive and approach managers when there are regular service problems.
3. Tenants are informed if their complaint is going to take longer than the 10 day target to resolve.
4. Learning from complaints has been completed - for example, bathroom light fittings have been changed.
5. Policies are reviewed roughly every 2 years. Some policies changes as a result of complaints received.

**Website**

1. A small group of tenants worked on the website when it was developed.
2. Southway has never been hacked. Data is secure through Allpay when payments are made. Southway do not share tenant data except with the benefits team, where a protocol exists to share under-occupation information.
3. There is a strategy under development to enhance the website and develop social media services as well as making better use of technology. A consultant is currently working with Southway to develop a Digital Access Strategy. This forms part of that work.
4. Southway updates its website regularly. Southway recognise the limitations of the current complicated website, including its design and content feed.
5. Of those who replied to the tenant survey question related to the website, 85% stated the website was easy to use, 83% rated it as useful and 83% rated it as informative.

**Equalities:**

1. Officers report this is part and parcel of what they do. There is an equalities section in each manager’s quarterly performance statement.
2. Equalities group including 10 Officers representing various departments and is chaired by the CEO. The Board has recently appointed an equality and diversity (E&D) Champion who will join the equalities group. The equalities group review dissatisfaction from surveys for any diversity trends.
3. A consultant has reviewed the website to ensure it is suitable for those with a range of disabilities and problems are now been addressed.
4. Southway Stories and other literature are available in a number of languages and formats. A new provider has proved to be more efficient and cheaper in delivery of translations than the previous supplier.
5. Some staff have been trained and use British Sign Language on reception
6. Braille is now included on the Officer identity cards.
7. Contractors have to sign up to Southway equalities policies if they don’t have their own.
8. Customer profiling data has been shared with police during festival seasons, so they are able to patrol areas where Indian gold might be targeted by burglars.
9. On an annual basis the Board receive and approve the annual equalities plan which sets out the plan for both employment and service delivery.

**H2. Southway areas for improvement in Customer Service, Contact Centre, Complaints and Website (and Equalities)**

**Customer Service and the Contact Centre**

1. The call centre has recently experienced a high turnover of staff.
2. Tenants were not involved in the design of the large tenant survey.
3. Some tenants feel talked down to by call centre staff who promise to call back and then do not.
4. Information to tenants should be brief and entice in the reader, have relevant headings and meet the needs of a diverse readership.
5. Some tenants have strong opinions about the Southway cat which they feel is out of date and makes the operation of Southway look immature.

**Complaints**

1. Informal complaints and service failure information has been collected for 12 months, but is only being considered for reporting now.
2. Tenants are not involved at any stage of the decision making on complaints.
3. A tenant buddy is allowed only at stage one of a complaint.
4. Nuisance is dealt with under different procedures than complaints, but this is not always understood by tenants. Tenants also do not understand that the complaint policies can still be used if nuisance standards are not met.

**Website**

1. The website was launched 2 years ago but it is very much behind other local Housing Associations. Approx. 4956 visits per month have been made to the site since January 2012, of which 53% were new visitors and 688 per month were through mobile devices. The most popular pages are the Home page, jobs and careers pages and home search. Just 420 tenants have registered to access SW tenant portal.
2. Tenants liked the Parkway Green website. Tenants find the Southway website hard to navigate and search. The 11 headings make the website look overcrowded.
3. In communicating with tenants through leaflets, the internet and newsletter, Southway should work with an Editorial group of tenants to ensure information is written to tenant interests and in a language they understand. Some of the documents on the web are internal documents. Some are long and not written for tenants or the public.
4. Southway should be on Facebook and Twitter and do a blog.

**Equalities**

1. The Equality Employment Policy covers staff, but there is no similar policy for protecting tenants.
2. As a result of the Equality Act 2010, Southway developed a Single Equality Scheme (SES) to replace the previous equality documents. Southway needed to ‘get its own house in order’ so that excellent services could be developed and delivered. Consequently there is a slant towards staff development within the document. The SES has a two year life span and is due to be reviewed in 2013. Southway will include more of a customer focus in the revised document.
3. There are priorities set out in the SES, for example, priorities 1, 2 and 3 which relate to when each action needs to be undertaken. There are no dates when the priorities will each be delivered by. The Equality action plan is not clear on expected impact. Many of the actions are administrative, some issues relate to voids management.
4. There are no tenants on the Equality working group. The Jury accepts it would be hard for one tenant to represent the diverse customer base, but feels some tenants could be recruited.

**H3. Priority improvements in Customer Service, Contact Centre, Complaints, and Website (and Equalities)**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. There are no plans yet to introduce changes to complaints which reduce the number stages or to consider tenant involvement.
2. The complaints service is very long winded and needs to be reviewed to see if a different response at the early stages could lead to the complaint being resolved faster.
3. The compensation policy has been provided to the Jury, but is not available generally to tenants.
4. Encourage tenants to champion and support other tenants as advocates.
5. Involve tenants in the IT strategy review and in the development of the website and social media and use social media to collect and act on service failure.
6. Promote the benefits of the Southway tenant log on, on the website.
7. Provide a structure chart of all staff on its website with photos.
8. The Jury would like a page on the website and a blog.

**I. The promises on Regeneration, Donations & Community Benefits** The Jury feel this promise has been met.

**I1 Southway strengths in Regeneration, Donations & Community Benefits**

1. 82% are satisfied with Southway as a good place to live.
2. Southway opened the Westcroft Community Centre in Burnage. This community resource has been the key to bringing much needed new service providers to the Southway area for the first time, and in its first year of operation 2929 people visited the centre. Whilst the services offered from the centre have primarily been employment and training related, the basic ethos of the facility is to help everyone who visits or enrols to gain the support or the advice they need.
3. Two other Centres (learning hubs) in Chorlton Park and Old Moat are being supported by Southway to ensure that tenants and residents have access to resources to help them into employment, training and volunteering.
4. Each learning hub (tenants do not like this word) will establish links with a range of local partners to offer a wide variety of course provision in areas, such as information technology, basic numeracy and literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and employability skills.
5. Targets have been set for 200 tenants to access learning through the hubs and for 30 tenants to be supported into full time employment.
6. When a partner contractor closed down, five apprentices who had been working for them were provided with alternative placements.
7. Opportunities, training and jobs were created through the HI programme. The Diatomite and Corolite improvements have provided work experience for local people to study NVQs, with 2 people achieving permanent jobs.
8. Southway and contractor partner jobs are advertised in the Job Centre, Southway Website and Diversity Jobs.
9. 36 apprentices acheived level NVQ1, some more got NVQ2 and 3. Southway helped apprentices become employable and 2 were successful in obtaining a permanent job with Southway or contractors. 109 opportunities were created in total. Posts were zoned and offered first to Southway residents via local colleges, then to Manchester and then to Greater Manchester
10. Skills solutions and local colleges supported Southway to employ local labour. The Southway’s Youth Officer has supported those tenants who became apprentices and chased immediately if they did not come in to work. This approach led to a 90% retention rate.
11. 2 training places were created for every £1m contract.
12. Southway is involved in an initiative with the Manchester United Foundation to introduce young people to entrepreneurial skills and allow them to achieve credits towards national qualifications in Business and Enterprise, Employability and Leadership.
13. Community Cohesion work has been done with youths aged between 8 and 19 years, whose circumstances have included a lack of stability at home, under achievement at school or college or being surrounded by unemployment and poverty. Activities have included football coaching sessions, music production and healthy living workshops.
14. Southway together with Action for Sustainable Living is delivering a Tenant Energy Champions course which will see tenant volunteers trained to raise awareness of energy efficiency in their communities. Currently 24 from a target of 84 tenants have been trained.
15. Southway has used finance from other companies for re-blowing cavity wall insulation (British Gas). This contract also enabled benefit advice from the British Gas benefit advisor to older and disabled people.
16. Southway has recently developed an employment and training strategy which was approved by the Board in September 2012.
17. Southway has encouraged contractors to donate to tenant conferences and local charities like Francis House.
18. The “you said - we did” approach enabled some tenant initiated environmental programmes.
19. Southway has developed an older persons' strategy.
20. Southway has joined South West Manchester Regeneration Forum and partnered with businesses and Housing Associations to deliver services in and secure better value for money for contracts, including appointing apprentices. The Chief Executive chairs the South Manchester Local Area Cooperation meeting. The attendees are senior officers from other stock-holding Housing Associations in South Manchester. This forum provides an opportunity to share good practice and work together on specific projects for the benefit of local communities.
21. Southway supports tenant led social enterprises with advice (not money).
22. Southway intend to link to local businesses and explore joint working with Manchester Chamber of Commerce.
23. Southway attends a bogus callers forum and leads on tenancy fraud for Manchester
24. A partnership with Action for Sustainable Living has planted a community ‘wood’ to celebrate Southway’s 5th birthday.
25. Southway formerly appointed a funding officer who brought in monies for local initiatives. Southway kept a record of all the money generated in the area as a result of their work, which totalled £140,348.60 at April 2012.
26. Southway is part of a buying consortium with other Housing Associations which holds £1.5 billion buying power together.
27. Actual spend on contracts after 5 years is likely to show £128m spent which exceeds the expected £117 million.
28. Southway has to balance a request from tenants for safety against erecting high walls and fences and CCTV everywhere.
29. Secure by Design (SBD) and crime prevention have been a feature of the HIP and EIP works and where necessary planning permission has been sought for security works. Tenants and Officers have worked with the SBD architect to design out crime.

**I2. Southway areas for improvement in Regeneration, Donations & Community Benefits**

1. Support into work should be smooth and help tenants emotionally as well as through training.
2. Southway should secure a more robust agreement with contractors on local labour, training and employment prospects, much of the current contracts are based on trust.
3. Small organisations are supported but unlikely to win big contracts as they cannot compete with the large contractors. Tenants would like to see more support given to small local contractors.
4. No satisfaction data is collected about the views of the community of Southway, though this was intimated in the offer document.

**I3. Priority improvements in Regeneration, Donations & Community Benefits**

We would like Southway to address the areas for improvement above and suggest the following priorities:

1. Offer higher level training. Not all tenants are looking for a basic low skilled job. Some have become unemployed recently and are trying to get back into work.
2. Southway should work with local large companies like Siemens to see what skills they need and to ensure residents are aware of and equipped to apply for local vacancies.
3. Undertake more outreach to community organisations. Ask staff to get out more and work with fresh and different organisations in the community.
4. The word regeneration could mean anything and might be promising too much. Clarify the promises which Southway are making on regeneration.
5. Speed up the provision of an internet café and learning hub for access to IT in the head office. Libraries limit access to an hour and so there is a need for this service, or another in the community, as soon as possible.

**7. Conclusion**

We would like to thank Southway for their time, their supply of documents and the enthusiasm of officers in supporting the Jury through this exercise.

In the next 5 years, we would really like to see Southway news and staff being out more visible on estates, knocking doors and being proactive in spreading the messages we have heard about the services which Southway deliver.

We want Southway to be an exemplary and pioneering landlord, the best in the country, where tenants can be active on the Board and in involvement groups which make a real difference to the lives of tenants in Southway Homes.

We look forward to Southway’s openness and transparency was we delve deeper into Southway services in 2013.