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**Inspired by our Communities**

**Our Customer Involvement Strategy**  
**2021-2025**

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## 1 Strategy Background

This Strategy sets out our commitment to involve and work together with our customers.

The Strategy contributes to our overall vision set out in the Southway Futures Strategy 2020-2025 which is to create “**Thriving Communities**”.

We are Caring, Committed and we will be Successful Together. Our tenants and other customers will be at the heart of our services. We will be flexible, treat people as individuals and communicate effectively.

## 2 Strategy Aim

We are **Inspired by our Communities**

Our aim in this Strategy is that all of our customers have an effective and influential voice and that we are inspired to listen and act.

To achieve this, we will continue to build a relationship based on mutual respect and trust that means services are shaped in the way our customers want, where customers have a voice to influence our priorities, our services and how we make choices on spending our money.

## 3 Strategy Objectives

Our Strategy objectives are framed around the National Housing Federation (NHF) Together with Tenants Charter.

The following six commitments from the Charter will underpin our approach to working with our Customers:

- **Relationships:** Southway will treat all residents with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between us and our residents will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.
- **Communication:** Residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from Southway on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues.
- **Voice and influence:** Southway will seek and value the views of residents, and will use this information to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by us on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

- **Accountability:** Collectively, residents will work in partnership with us to independently scrutinise and hold us to account for the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services.
- **Quality:** Residents can expect their homes to be of good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.
- **When things go wrong:** Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

#### 4 Strategy Delivery

On an annual basis actions will be set that help us to meet the commitments in the Strategy. These will be developed in discussion with our tenants and residents.

The main activities that we have already identified, and that will be the focus for 2021 are:

##### 1. Relationships – We Will

- Use our Inspired by Communities consultation project to find out more about our tenants and our neighbourhoods and the things that matter as we recover from Covid restrictions.
- Carry out the first sessions of a planned biannual customer services training programme so that all frontline staff carry out their roles showing care and respect
- Provide more information about how we prioritise our services and the ways in which we spend our money so that our customers can be involved in decisions on these.
- Publish a monthly Chief Execs blog that tells customers what we are doing and how they can work with us to achieve more.

##### 2. Communication – We Will

- Develop an Inspired by our Communities brand that will be used across all of our engagement work.
- Develop our local offer sites and build on our social media presence to have conversations about Southway services and local news.
- Make sure we have an up to date website that provides clear information and advice to customers.
- Listen to our customers and provide the information they want to see in formats that are accessible
- Be innovative in the way we engage using new methods including, for example, webinars and web chat

**3. Voice and Influence – We Will**

- Carry out the biannual STAR survey to find out what our tenants think about our services and the way we work, identifying areas where we need to improve
- Use our Inspired by our Communities consultation to hear from our tenants about their priorities for how we spend our money and the services we deliver so that they can influence future plans.
- Involve customers in the development of Key Performance Indicators on Customer Services and find new ways of sharing this performance information, including using case studies.
- Get feedback from our Community Champions and Tenants Groups

**4. Accountability – We Will**

- Provide customers with an Annual Report on our performance, what we spend our money on and evidence value for money for rent.
- Support the Scrutiny Panel to review key areas of the business and focus these on things our customers have told us about in their feedback.
- Publish our suite of policies and strategies covering all aspects of the business. These set out how and what we do, and are a measure to hold us to account with if something goes wrong.

**5. Quality- We Will**

- Hold Service Improvement Groups, on areas including ASB, Repairs and Complaints, so that tenants and residents can find out more about how we deliver our services and hold us to account.
- Collect regular feedback on our standards of customer service managing and maintaining our homes. Listen to this and make changes if they are needed.
- Provide assurance about our management of health and safety by publishing our standards and details of how we comply with legislation.

**6. When things go wrong – We Will**

- Say we are sorry, acknowledge what has gone wrong and put things in place to make things right.
- Carry out a regular review of Customer Satisfaction feedback, making contact with anyone who reports low satisfaction so that we continuously improve and learn from mistakes.
- Use our Complaints Service Improvement Group as the forum through which customers can review our performance and advise of areas for improvement.

## 5 Measuring Our Success

On an annual basis we will:

1. Measure and report on services we change or develop as a direct result of customer feedback;
2. Report on the number of engagement activities we deliver and the different technologies we have used to do this;
3. Use the HouseMark customer involvement KPI:  
  
“Number of resident’s / service users involved in formal / informal consultation groups (including digital)”
4. Agree a new set of Strategy actions with our tenants and residents so that it remains focussed on what they want us to do.

Our performance will be published in Southway Stories and on our Local Offer and social media sites. We will report to our People and Places Committee on an annual basis.

On a biannual basis we will ask our Customers whether or not they feel they have a voice through our STAR survey.

## 6 Related Strategies

- Futures Strategy 2020 to 2025
- Age Friendly Strategy
- Digital Inclusion Strategy
- Single Equality Scheme
- Value for Money Strategy
- Community Investment Strategy
- Our Manchester, The Manchester Strategy (MCC)