

# Neighbourhoods Strategy

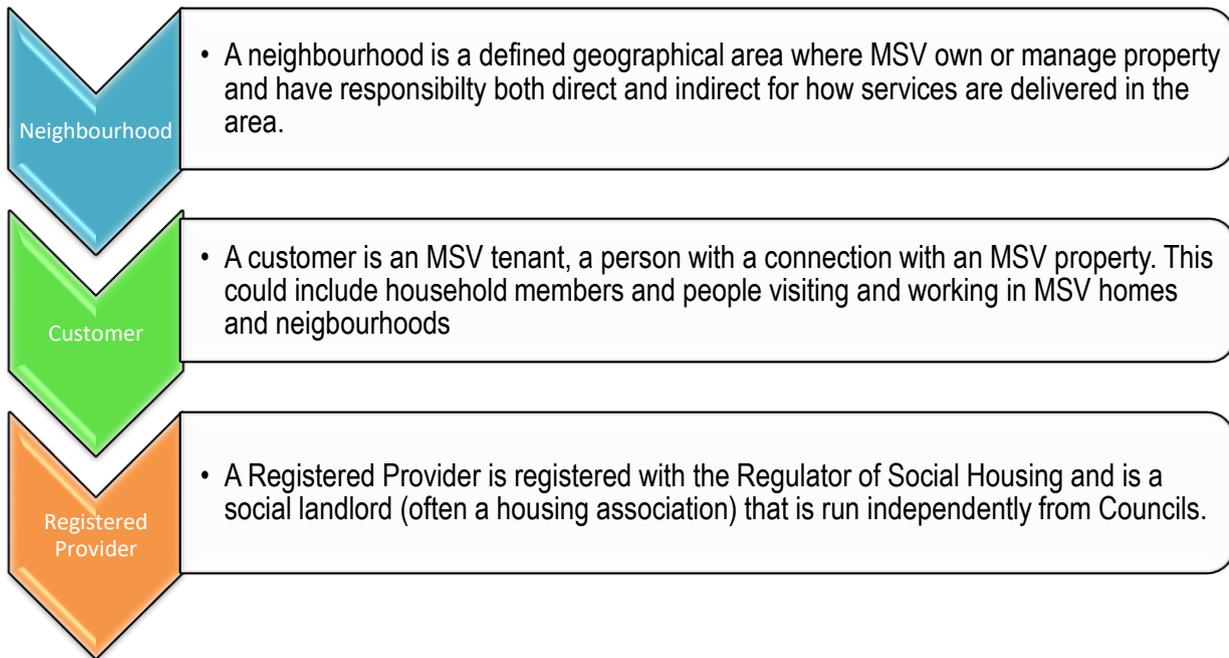
**April 2024 – March 2027**

# Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Strategic Context**
- 3. Neighbourhood Insight**
- 4. Priorities**
- 5. Our Offer in Neighbourhoods**
- 6. Evaluation and Measuring Success**
- 7. Action Plan**
- 8. Appendices**

# 1. Introduction

Welcome to MSV Housing’s Neighbourhood strategy for 2024 – 2027, which sets out our commitment to delivering services in MSV neighbourhoods for customers, colleagues and partners. We have summarised some key terms below so it is clear what is being referred to throughout the document.



This strategy has been developed in conjunction with our corporate strategy - the MSV Way 2024 – 2027. The MSV Way sets out our vision to provide ‘places where everyone can flourish’ delivered through ‘Our promise to customers’ and underpinned by our Values. This is shown below:



As well as aligning the neighbourhood strategy with our wider strategic aims, we have also developed this strategy and the associated neighbourhood offer based on the external operating environment drivers and by using neighbourhood insight data that we and our partners hold. It has also been subject through an extensive co-production exercise with customers.

Within the MSV Way, we have identified three strategic themes - **People, Place & Performance**. Within our **Place** theme one of our strategic priorities states that we will provide “*Warm, Safe and Affordable Homes where people can start well, live well and age well.*” We also state that we will “*Promote Strong Partnerships.*” The new neighbourhood strategy is integral to achieving these aims and is shown below:



## Embedding Value for Money and Risk Assurance

Each of the objectives within the corporate plan and associated strategies are supported by a medium term financial business plan and inter-dependencies between core strategies and corporate cross cutting strategies. This is further supported by a link to the strategic risk framework and MSV’s approach to achieving value for money.

MSV measures itself against the Value for Money Metrics set out by the Regulator of Social Housing. Also, in line with the MSV Value for Money strategy, each strategy and business function has targets to make best use of social housing assets and resources available. Regular reporting will be presented to the Board on value for money in delivering this strategy, tested through customer voice, impact and influence, achievement of budgets, appropriate procurement and continuous performance improvement.

This strategy is also aligned with the Strategic Risk framework, setting out how it will be delivered and progress measured, ensuring risk mitigations are in place. This strategy is linked with key aspects of the current strategic risk register, which will be identified within each risk and strategy update report in this area, with triggers in place to signal any risk of non-delivery.

## 2. Strategic Context

The Neighbourhood strategy builds on our long standing and well established presence and services in neighbourhoods dating back over many years. The new regulatory and policy environment requires us to enhance our services across all neighbourhoods and to be very clear on 'our offer' in neighbourhoods.

This strategy will provide a foundation for meeting these emerging challenges alongside a new operating model for neighbourhoods, which will determine how our colleagues work together to deliver services in conjunction with colleagues within MSV and our partners.

As well as an enduring economic crisis in the UK, public sector services are increasingly stretched with levels of homelessness continuing to rise along with demand for housing and health inequalities widening. In many instances social landlords have had to deal with gaps in service provision, whilst also dealing with the consequences of reduced services. This has led to increased mental health complexity, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic, an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour, rising costs of products and services and a cost of living crisis that disproportionately impacts many of our customers.

The sector has rightly been subject to significant scrutiny in the aftermath of the Grenfell tragedy, the shocking death of Awaab Ishak and a raft of high profile cases highlighting unacceptable living conditions in the social rented sector. It is in this context that the government and Regulator for Social Housing have sought to drive an increase in the quality of housing, services and levels of accountability to tenants through the introduction of consumer standards (Social Housing Act 2023) from 1<sup>st</sup> April as well as Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) so tenants can more easily hold landlords to account.

### Neighbourhood and Community Standard

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) sets standards with which we must comply, this includes the recently introduced Consumer Standards (1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.) There are 4 Consumer Standards but the Neighbourhood and Community Standard is most relevant to our work in Neighbourhoods. The standard states that Registered providers should:

- **Safety of shared spaces**- Registered Providers must work co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces.
- **Local Area Cooperation**- Registered Providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in the areas where they provide social housing.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour**- Registered Providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.

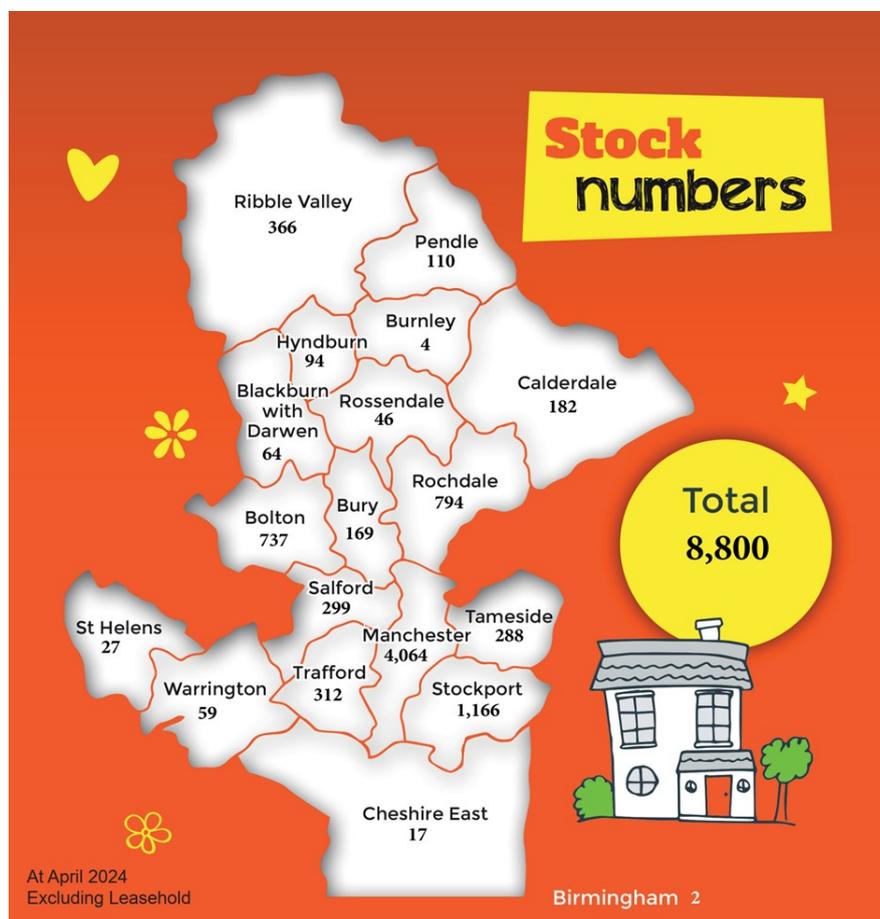
- **Domestic Abuse**- Registered providers must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.

MSV is also required to comply with the **Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) new Complaint's Handling Code** (introduced 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024) The code aims to achieve best practice in complaint handling and ultimately to provide a better service to residents. It is anticipated that a clearly defined offer in neighbourhoods will help with the delivery of an effective complaints policy and process to customers.

**The Better Social Housing Review**, which was published in the aftermath of the Awaab Ishak tragedy provides a very specific focus and clarity for Registered Providers in relation to our focus and activity in neighbourhoods by clearly stating some very important principles around how Registered Providers should operate. These have all been considered in respect of the neighbourhood strategy and checked through the co-production work with customers.

Additional strategic drivers for the strategy include (but are not limited to) the emergence of new Building Safety legislation, the Awaab's law consultation and the Good Landlord Charter for Greater Manchester, which will be applicable to the majority of our housing stock once enacted.

### 3. Neighbourhood Insight



As shown above, MSV owns and manages homes across 18 Local Authority areas with concentrations of homes in 4 areas of Greater Manchester - Manchester, Stockport, Rochdale, and Bolton. Within the numbers for Manchester, we own 1482 properties in Moss Side M14, comprising larger numbers of 1920's terraced housing and a highly diverse customer base with 79% non-white households. We consider the neighbourhoods in Moss Side, Stockport (Bredbury) Rochdale and Bolton to be our 'anchor' neighbourhoods, noting that the high concentrations of stock are limited to 2 neighbourhoods - Moss Side and Bredbury.

With 4 neighbourhoods where we own between 200 and 400 homes (Ribble Valley, Salford. Trafford and Tameside) this leaves 11 neighbourhoods where we own under 200 properties. The dispersed nature of our stock with some relatively small numbers across multiple geographies presents challenges in respect of the creation of a single neighbourhood strategy that is deliverable across all neighbourhoods. However, the intention of the neighbourhood strategy and offer is that it can be applied across our areas of operation and the strategy adopted to inform local neighbourhood plans.

Our emerging neighbourhood and property data is also relevant in respect of informing the strategy and is shown at **Appendix Two** and summarised as follows:

With over 45% of MSV properties in Manchester, Indices of Multiple Deprivation Data (IMD) shows that MSV neighbourhoods overall are in the 25% most deprived nationally. The figure is skewed somewhat by a number of better performing neighbourhoods and the figure is far lower across our anchor neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester. In some areas, we are operating in the top 10% most deprived wards nationally with multiple challenges around entrenched and systemic inequality e.g. in Moss Side M14.

The data also shows that levels of fuel poverty are high at around 20% with again figures much higher in our anchor neighbourhoods at around 30%. Overall satisfaction is far lower than we would aspire for it to be at less than 70% and there are concerning lags in Moss Side where overall satisfaction drops to around 60%.

Supported housing accounts for around 15% of our portfolio illustrating that diversity does not just relate to our geography although for these customers satisfaction tends to be higher. Leaseholders and other tenure types account for 7% of our customer base and there is a significant satisfaction lag for leaseholders at 55%, which needs to be addressed through the lifespan of this strategy.

In terms of demographic data, Black and Asian customers account for 25% of our customer base and there is a concerning gap between levels of satisfaction for Black customers compared to white and Asian counterparts at 60%. This suggests a level of entrenched inequality within some of our housing stock and operating areas. We also note from the analysis that Black households tend to occupy our older pre-1923 housing stock that accounts for 20% of our stock and tends to have a lower SAP C rating at 66%. Furthermore, these homes are more likely to generate higher levels of repairs at an average of 6 repairs per property.

**Appendix Two** shows a more detailed breakdown of some of the insight we have used to inform this strategy. The overall need evidences the need for the neighbourhood strategy and offer to be very clear on the areas where we can have a positive impact in neighbourhoods, delivered in synergy with other key strategies e.g. Asset Management, Growth and Customer Voice.

## 4. Strategic Priorities

Based on our vision of places where people can flourish we have developed four priorities to define our work in neighbourhoods to help us achieve this. These priorities have been derived directly from our understanding of the operating environment, the wider regulatory context, neighbourhood insight and the co-production sessions with customers.

During this process we have engaged directly with over 200 customers from a wide range of areas and demographics. Over 75% of these customers are what we would term 'non-involved' i.e. not people who we have heard from traditionally. As well as the co-production sessions, we have also used feedback from our local Nibbles and Natter events as well as data from surveys including TSM perception surveys to inform the priorities:

Priority One	Priority Two	Priority Three	Priority Four
Ensure services are accessible and available to everybody living in MSV neighbourhoods	Provide clean & well maintained neighbourhoods and schemes working effectively with partners	Ensure customers feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods	Promote customer wellbeing and tenancy sustainment

These priorities are the foundations of the strategy and will form the basis of the action plan. They will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain relevant and reflect what customers tell us is important with progress reported quarterly through the Customer Committee.

## 5. Our offer in Neighbourhoods

One of the key aims of this strategy is to be very clear around the specifics of our service offer so that customers can be clear on what they can expect from us. We see this as a key feature of increasing our levels of accountability to customers, noting that this is integral to new regulatory requirements.

To support this aim, we have developed a neighbourhood offer based on 5 themes (linked to the above priorities) that customers have told us are important. The offer will be published, widely shared and will be reviewed annually. The 5 themes are:

- Local Area Cooperation
- Communication
- Environment/Street Scene
- Wellbeing and Tenancy Sustainment
- Feeling Safe

The neighbourhood offer is shown at **Appendix Three** and we will use this as a summary of the strategy through which customers can hold us to account.

## 6. Evaluation and Measuring Success

Performance against the strategy will be tracked predominantly using key measures that are reported quarterly against the TSM framework.

We recognise that some measures are measured through perception based satisfaction surveys and therefore we would expect there to be a lag between delivering the strategy and offer and perceived improvements.

We also recognise that some measures are influenced by factors that are outside of our direct control and influence e.g. overall satisfaction with the landlord. However, the following TSM metrics will determine whether our work is having an impact. We will use these to evaluate the successful delivery of this strategy reported quarterly to the Customer Committee and the main Board annually.

- **TP01**- Overall satisfaction with the Landlord
- **TP10**- Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained
- **TP11**- Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
- **TP12**- Satisfaction with the landlords approach to tackling anti-social behaviour
- **CH01**- Complaints relative to the size of the landlord
- **KPIs**- Rent indicators and % of properties vacant
- **Management indicators**- Tenancy turnover & % of tenancies successfully sustained.

## 7. Action Plan

The action plan for the strategy is shown below. This will be reviewed annually in conjunction with customers and progress reported quarterly to the Customer Committee and to the Board via an annual assurance report. We will also publish the results of how we are performing against the TSMs quarterly, which will provide assurance to customers in respect of how we are performing against the strategy.

<b>1. Ensure MSV Services are accessible and are understood by everybody living in MSV neighbourhoods</b>			
<b>Specific Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>		
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
Improve our use of data and insight to enable us to understand areas of under-performance and anticipate customer needs, identify vulnerabilities and shape services in neighbourhoods appropriately.			
Review and analyse customer data to identify and address any barriers to accessing services and make changes as required.			
Ensure customers from diverse backgrounds & vulnerable customers have awareness of services and key contacts.			
Ensure customer and property data is used to identify “no access” priorities so that			

these can be actioned appropriately and risks mitigated.			
Ensure our Hubs and community buildings are accessible for all.			
Relaunch our hubs, colleagues contacts and our service offer in neighborhoods.			
Implement the new operating model for neighbourhood services in conjunction with Property based colleagues.			
Ensure that our activities and presence in neighbourhoods is clearly communicated alongside our work with partners.			
Review all mechanisms for hearing customer voices and ensure there is a wide range of options in each neighborhood.			
Ensure there is synergy between the neighborhood strategy and other key strategies both internal and in respect of partners.			
Launch the Neighbourhood Strategy and Offer and promote with customers.			
Ensure our communication channels are diverse and meet a range of customer needs.			

## 2. Provide clean and well maintained neighbourhoods and schemes by working effectively with partners to address issues impacting on the environment

Specific Action	Timescale		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Review all arrangements including grounds maintenance contacts and SLA's in conjunction with partners			
Review our tree maintenance programme and publish the schedule with customers.			
Implement a programme of quarterly scheme inspections which is published with outcomes published to customers.			
Implement a programme of quarterly walkabouts across anchor neighbourhoods involving customers and partners.			
Ensure all schedules for clean neighbourhoods & schemes are published,			
Implement monthly scheme surgeries across all schemes.			
Work with LA partners to ensure arrangements for clean and safe schemes and neighbourhoods are clear and can be understood.			

<b>3. Ensure customers feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods by tackling ASB effectively</b>			
<b>Specific Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>		
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
Review our ASB policy and service offer in conjunction with customers.			
Increase collaboration with regional and national partners to champion ASB good practice and improve outcomes.			
Challenge and lobby policy makers to help improve lives of those experiencing ASB or hate behaviour.			
Ensure our suppliers and contractors are able to demonstrate their commitment to safe homes and neighbourhoods.			
Review our domestic abuse policy, response and offer to ensure that it is appropriate for customers and meets their support needs.			
Ensure that an anti-discrimination response to hate crime is embedded across neighbourhoods and is widely understood by customers and partners.			
Review ASB metrics in conjunction with customers.			
Review arrangements for community mediation and publish outcome.			
Ensure our ASB response and service offer including range of interventions is published and understood.			
Complete a whole service review of our Domestic Abuse response and implement the outcome.			
Review our membership of programmes and forums which may aid in championing community safety and tackling hate crime and domestic abuse.			

<b>4. Promote Customer Wellbeing and high levels of tenancy sustainment</b>			
<b>Specific Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>		
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
Use customer data to better anticipate and understand those experiencing challenges in respect of support and tenancy sustainment.			
Review our tenancy sustainment and vulnerability policy ensuring it meets customer needs.			
Implement tenancy MOTs every two years so that support needs can be identified and addressed.			
Review the cause for concern and associated safeguarding arrangements ensuring it is fully embedded with colleagues and across all teams.			

Review our support and wellbeing offer ensuring greater levels of synergy with our ASB service as part of an integrated approach to 'Safe and Well.'			
Review referral pathways to support earlier identification of those with support needs			
Review our money management and hardship offer to ensure it is maximising impact in respect of reducing rent arrears and supporting tenancy sustainment.			
Source other Wellbeing and support partners to help support MSV's delivery of priorities and goals.			
Review our membership of programmes and forums which may aid in championing Wellbeing and Tenancy Sustainment.			

## 8. Appendices

**Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment**

**Appendix 2 – Neighbourhood Insight Tables**

**Appendix 3 - Our Offer in Neighbourhoods**

### **Associated Documents**

**Asset Management Strategy**

**EDI Strategy**

**Customer Voice Strategy**

**Complaints Policy & HOS complaints code**

**Better Social Housing Review (December 2022)**

**Consumer Standards RSH Guidance (March 24)**

**Awaab's Law (consultation Feb 24)**

## Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

<b>Name of Strategy</b>	Neighbourhood Strategy
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	15/03/24
<b>Name &amp; Role of Assessors</b>	Matt Jones, ED Customers
<b>What are the desired outcomes of the strategy?</b>	The desired outcomes of the strategy are to deliver a highly effective and visible neighbourhood service across MSV neighbourhoods that contributes to the vision of providing places where everybody can flourish and the customer promise of healthy homes and fair and friendly services. There is also a direct link to the TSMs and delivering optimum levels of performance against targets
<b>Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function?</b>	Customers, colleagues, partners and stakeholders including local authorities and elected representatives
<b>Who will be consulted and what types of consultation will be carried out?</b>	Customers, partners and colleagues ran multiple co-production sessions with over 200 attendees and supplemented with 6 Nibbles and Natter events locally and surveys. Over 400 customers have attended N&N events in the last 2 years. From the co-production activity 75% of contributors were people we haven't heard from previously.
<b>Summarise any evidence considered</b>	Customers have in particular told us what is important to them. These can be summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locally visible and accessible services</li> <li>• Named contacts and knowing who you can contact.</li> <li>• Better communications tailored locally to meet local circumstances.</li> <li>• Contribution to clean and safe neighbourhoods and schemes recognising this is not just an MSV responsibility.</li> <li>• Tackling ASB effectively particularly hate crime and domestic abuse.</li> <li>• A robust support and wellbeing offer to mitigate operating</li> </ul>

	environment and societal challenges.	
<b>Could the function have a differential impact on:</b>	<b>What evidence exists to support your analysis?</b>	
	<b>Yes / No</b>	
<b>Race</b> Consider language and cultural factors	YES	<p>The neighbourhood strategy document refers to the context in which the strategy was developed.</p> <p>As part of the drafting, various demographics, data, reports – both internal and external have been considered and help to shape our action plan to address some of the inequalities that exist.</p> <p>We know that these entrenched inequalities are particularly prevalent in respect of certain neighbourhoods and with specific demographics.</p> <p>There are also variations relative to age, tenure and age of property.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b> Consider people proposing to or have undergone a process of having their sex reassigned.		
<b>Disability</b> Consider physical, visual, aural impairment, mental, learning difficulties		
<b>Age</b> Consider Elderly or young people		
<b>Sexuality</b> Either know or perceived		
<b>Gender</b>		
<b>Religion or belief</b> Consider religious or cultural observance including non-belief, practices of worship		
<b>Other protected or vulnerable characteristics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marriage or civil partnerships</li> <li>• pregnancy or maternity?</li> </ul>		
<p><b>If the answer is NO to <u>all</u> questions and no differential treatment has been found there is no requirement for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Please go back regularly and review the cycle.</b></p> <p><b>If the answer is YES to any of the questions please complete the rest of the form.</b></p>		
<b>In what areas could the differential identified be considered to have an adverse impact in this function and what solutions will be introduced to overcome these adverse impacts?</b>	<p>Access to services - we will offer services in various ways both face to face via hubs, at customers' homes and via digital channels where appropriate. We will ensure that our services are accessible for all and that people can interact with us in a way that suits them. Tackling enduring inequality will be a key objective in this strategy recognising the current position and some of the inherent limitations in terms of the extent to which we can address this as one Registered Provider.</p>	

<p><b>In what areas could the differential identified be considered a positive impact in this function and what strategies will be introduced to safeguard and spread these positive impacts?</b></p>	<p>We consider the diversity of our areas of operation, demographics, portfolio and tenure to be a positive and our emerging data that we hold gives us the opportunity to hone and tailor services.</p>
<p><b>Which Action Plans have these solutions/strategies been transferred into?</b></p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Strategy Action plan 2024-27.</p>
<p><b>Who will be responsible for monitoring these Action Plans?</b></p>	<p>Executive Director Customers reporting to the Customers and Communities Committee</p>

**Ratified by: Committee/ Board / Delegated Approval**  
 (Highlight as appropriate)

**Date: 10/04/24**