

Housing Management Policies Consultation Report

Contents

Aims of the consultation.....	3
Approach to the consultation.....	3
Summary of consultation results.....	5
Consultation questions and responses.....	7
Relevant actions to be taken.....	23

Aims of the consultation

It is important that we hear from as many people as possible who live in Sandwell every day when developing our policies.

This consultation was designed and completed to obtain feedback from residents, tenants, employees and councillors on our Housing Management Policies prior to their publication. These include the following four documents:

- Good Neighbourhood Management Policy
- Tenancy Sustainment Policy
- Tenancy Fraud Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy

Feedback received in this consultation will inform the final version of these four Housing Management Policies.

Approach to the consultation

Please note that the analysis of feedback found in this report pertains only to survey feedback received in the public consultation.

Online consultation

The online consultation for the draft policies began on 24th March and was open for five weeks, closing on 27th April 2025, via Citizenspace.

The surveys included a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions, giving respondents the chance to provide feedback on each of the policy proposals. This included whether the document was resident-friendly and if there were any aspects missing from the policy.

In response to the feedback received, comments on each policy were reviewed, and amendments were made to the documents where necessary. The finalised policies will be presented to Cabinet in May 2025.

Policy Engagement Sessions with Stakeholders:

Throughout the drafting of these documents, Sandwell Council have carried out various engagement sessions with stakeholders to ensure we capture as many opinions as possible in order to share this policy. These include the following:

- **Collaboration Across Housing Teams and Partner Services:**
These policies have been developed through collaboration across

various housing teams and other relevant services, including housing management, ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) teams, domestic abuse services (both internally and externally), community partnerships, and more.

- **Resident Engagement Groups:** The Good Neighbourhood Management Policy has gone through several draft versions, with each version being shared for feedback at our Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group (TLSG) meetings to help improve the document. Since the policy is of great importance to residents across the Borough, the current version is the result of collaborative input from this group. In addition, all other three documents have been shared with SCIPS Newsletter.
- **Policy Engagement Session:** On Friday 11th April, we held an engagement session with residents to discuss our Good Neighbourhood Management and Tenancy Sustainment policies. The session was facilitated by our Community Partnerships Team. The purpose of these sessions was to gain a better understanding of how our Housing services currently operate and to help shape the policy approach needed to tackle the Housing Management challenges facing our communities. These engagement sessions include input from Housing Management staff, as well as tenants and leaseholders taking part across the various meetings. During the session, we also distributed paper copies of the Domestic Abuse Policy and Tenancy Fraud Policy, giving residents the opportunity to review the documents and share their feedback either via postal survey or online.

Policy Scrutiny Working Group

The policies were also cascaded to the group consisting of Elected Members, with a brief meeting scheduled on Teams approximately one week after they have received the policies. This meeting included relevant individuals such as the report author, housing colleagues, and any additional participants as necessary. Its purpose was to address any questions that arise and provide an opportunity for officers to seek specific guidance or direction from the scrutiny board. This meeting took place on Monday 14th April.

Summary of consultation results

- **Awareness of Services:**
 - Nearly half (48%) of respondents were aware of the services Sandwell Council offers, including tenancy sustainment, neighbourhood management, tenancy fraud prevention, and support for domestic abuse. However, 39% were unaware of these services. Some respondents stated they were aware of these services but lacked knowledge on how to access them or weren't sure which specific services were available to them. One respondent noted, "I've heard of them but don't know how to access them easily," highlighting a gap in awareness and access.
- **Agreement with Policy Aims:**
 - A majority (51%) agreed with the aims of the policies, with 29% strongly agreeing, but a significant portion (29%) disagreed, suggesting reservations about their effectiveness. Those who disagreed expressed concerns such as the need for more resources, with one comment saying, "While the policies are well-meaning, they lack sufficient funding and practical steps for implementation." Another respondent felt the policies "don't go far enough to address long-term issues in our neighbourhoods," showing that some felt the policies lacked depth in addressing deeper, systemic problems.
- **Effectiveness of Policies in Supporting Tenants:**
 - 61% of respondents believed that the policies would support tenants, especially those facing financial or personal difficulties. Specific policies like tenancy sustainment were praised for offering practical support, with one respondent commenting, "It's great that this policy provides clear steps for tenants in crisis." However, 33% disagreed, citing concerns over the long-term effectiveness, especially for tenants with complex issues. A respondent said, "The policy doesn't account for tenants with ongoing issues like long-term illness or addiction," highlighting a gap in support for vulnerable tenants with more persistent needs.
- **Clarity of Tenant and Leaseholder Responsibilities:**
 - 64% of respondents found the responsibilities of tenants and leaseholders easy to understand, particularly in relation to behaviour expectations and maintaining shared spaces. However, some respondents suggested that more clarity was needed for dealing with specific neighbourhood issues. One respondent noted, "It's clear, but there's not enough

guidance on how to deal with things like noisy neighbours or damage to common areas." Another stated, "There should be more detail on how to involve external help if issues escalate, as not all tenants know how to seek further assistance."

- **Clarity of Sandwell Council's Responsibilities:**
 - 65% of respondents felt the Council's responsibilities were clear, especially in terms of enforcing policies and ensuring safety in housing. One comment praised the clarity of the Council's role in providing immediate support: "The Council's role in offering safe housing for those experiencing domestic abuse is clear and straightforward." However, some felt that more detailed information was needed on how the Council would offer long-term support, particularly for vulnerable tenants. One respondent suggested, "The policy should explain how the Council will engage with tenants before eviction notices are issued and provide proactive help."
- **Additional Comments:**
 - **Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:** Generally supported, but some felt it lacked initiatives to build community engagement beyond rule enforcement. Suggestions included more neighbourly events and clearer consequences for non-compliance.
 - **Tenancy Sustainment Policy:** Praised for preventing evictions, but some felt it should focus more on early intervention and preventing issues, such as rent arrears or rising rents. A call for clearer access to early support, especially for tenants with health issues, was noted.
 - **Tenancy Fraud Policy:** Supported for its aim to tackle fraud, but concerns were raised about severe penalties and fairness. Some suggested more education to help tenants avoid mistakes.
 - **Domestic Abuse Policy:** Widely supported, particularly for offering quick housing for victims. However, some suggested more emphasis on long-term housing and maintaining confidentiality in reporting.

Overall, the policies are largely seen as positive, but there are notable concerns about their long-term effectiveness, clarity, and support for more vulnerable groups. Respondents highlighted the need for clearer guidance, more resources, and a greater focus on community engagement, education, and support for tenants with complex needs.

Consultation questions and responses

As of the end of April 2025, a total of **31** responses had been received across the four policy consultations.

Please tick which best describes your interest in this consultation.

26 respondents (84%) said that they were interested in this consultation as they are a tenant living in socially rented accommodation.

3 respondents (10%) said that they were interested in this consultation as a homeowner.

1 respondent (3%) said that they were interested in this consultation as a private rented tenant.

1 respondent (3%) selected 'prefer not to say'.

Please state which type of accommodation you live in.

13 respondents (42%) live in a flat.

11 respondents (35%) live in a house.

3 respondents (10%) live in a maisonette.

3 respondents (10%) live in a bungalow.

1 respondent (3%) selected 'prefer not to say'.

Please state your age group.

4 respondents (13%) were aged 18–24.

6 respondents (19%) were aged 25–34.

9 respondents (29%) were aged 35–59.

3 respondents (10%) were aged 60–64.

5 respondents (16%) were aged 65 and over.

4 respondents (13%) selected 'prefer not to say'.

What is your gender?

19 respondents (61%) identified as female.

10 respondent (32%) identified as a male.

2 respondents (8%) selected 'prefer not to say'.

What best describes your ethnicity?

19 respondents (61%) are white English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British.

6 respondents (19%) are black Caribbean.

3 respondents (10%) are Indian.

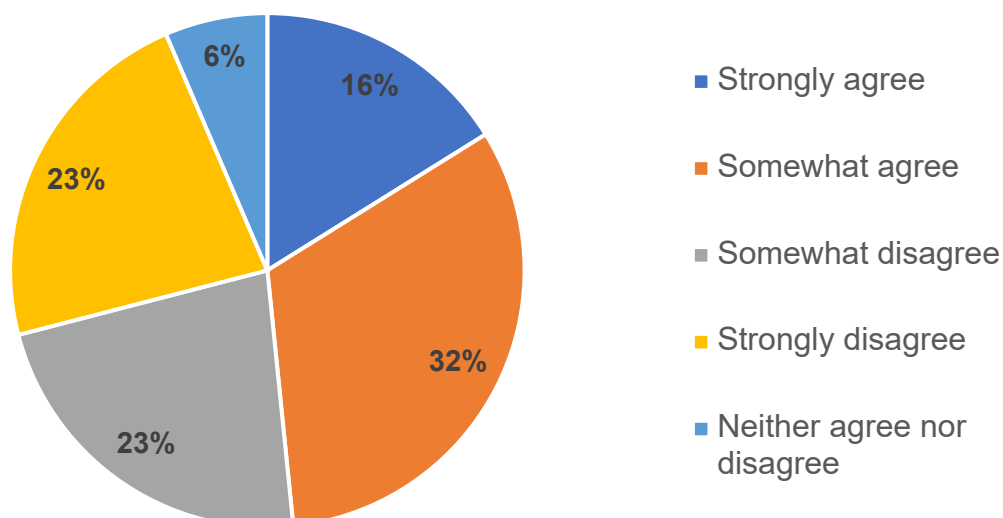
3 respondents (10%) are Pakistani.

For all questions, respondents could select one of the following answers:

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

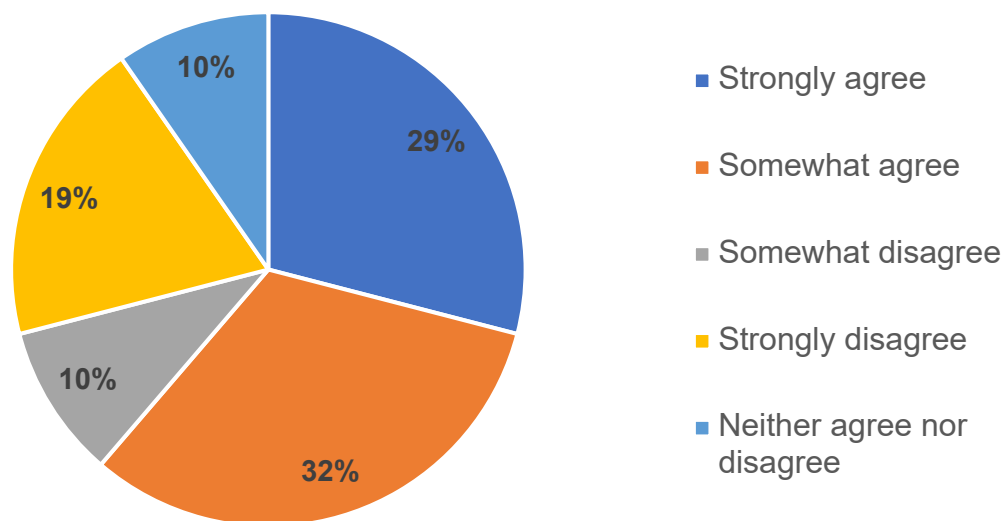
1) Before reading this policy, respondents were aware of the services Sandwell Council offers to tenants and leaseholders, including tenancy sustainment, neighbourhood management, tenancy fraud prevention, and support for domestic abuse.

Of the 15 respondents, almost half (48%) agreed, while 14 respondents (39%) disagreed, showing a balanced response. However, more importantly, this highlights the need to raise awareness of the services Sandwell Council provides in these four key areas.



2) To what extent did respondents agree or disagree with the aims of these policies?

The responses to the question regarding the aims of these policies show a mix of opinions. A total of 19 respondents (51%) expressed agreement with the aims, including 9 (29%) who strongly agreed and 10 (32%) who somewhat agreed, reflecting an overall positive reception to the policies. However, 9 respondents (29%) expressed disagreement with the policies' aims, with 3 somewhat disagreeing and 6 strongly disagreeing, showing some opposition or concerns. Additionally, 3 respondents (10%) were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, suggesting uncertainty or indifference towards the policies.



Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:

One respondent mentioned, "Clear boundaries and respectful behaviour are key to a harmonious community," adding that "this policy sets out clear expectations for everyone." Another respondent said, "This policy will help resolve disputes early, improving the quality of life in the neighbourhood."

However, one respondent stated, "While the policy is a good starting point, tenants need more opportunities to provide input on how neighbourhood issues are handled." Another shared, "It's a positive policy, but more community events and face-to-face interaction would make it even more effective."

One respondent expressed concern, stating, "The policy lacks strong enforcement measures. Without clear consequences for poor behaviour, it won't have the desired impact." Another felt, "While the intention is good, the policy doesn't go far enough to address long-standing issues in our neighbourhood."

Tenancy Sustainment Policy:

A respondent shared, "This policy will help people stay in their homes, which is crucial for their well-being." Another agreed, saying, "Providing support to tenants facing hardship is essential, and this policy lays out clear steps for that."

On the other hand, one respondent noted, "The policy should focus on preventing issues before they arise, not just dealing with them after they occur." Another added, "While I agree with the principles, I think more resources are needed to make this policy effective."

One respondent felt that, "There isn't enough detail about how the policy will be implemented. It feels too vague to have a real impact." Another commented, "The policy should include more support for tenants with long-term mental health issues affecting their tenancy."

Tenancy Fraud Policy:

One respondent stated, "Preventing fraud is crucial to ensuring that housing goes to those who need it most." Another agreed, saying, "The policy's clear guidelines will help address issues like subletting and misrepresentation of circumstances."

However, one respondent mentioned, "While I support the policy, it's important to remember that not all cases of tenancy fraud are intentional. More support and education for tenants would help." Another noted, "The policy is necessary, but the enforcement could be more transparent to gain wider support."

A respondent expressed concern, saying, "This policy feels too harsh, especially for families who may face difficulties but aren't intentionally committing fraud." Another added, "The penalties are too severe and could create fear among tenants, even if they're just struggling to make ends meet."

Domestic Abuse Policy:

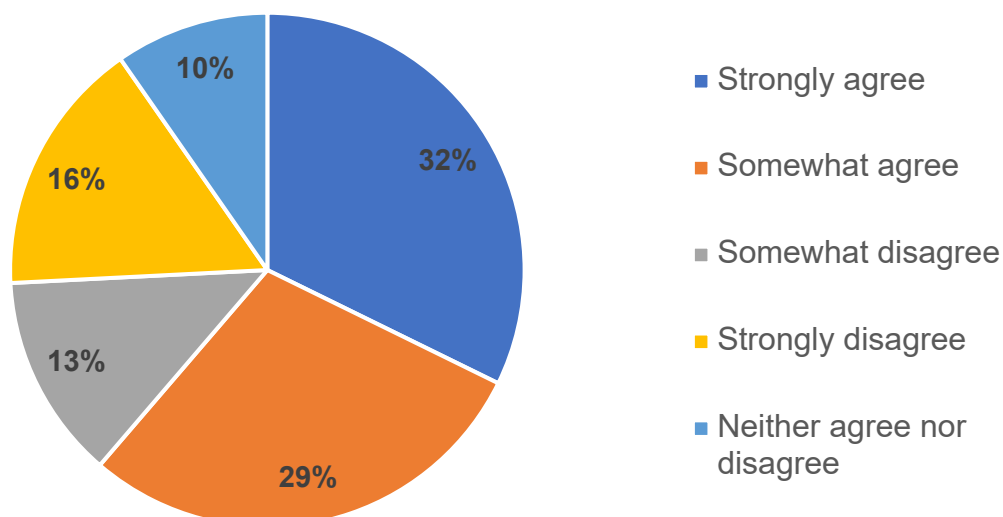
One respondent said, "This policy provides much-needed protection for those in abusive situations, ensuring they have access to a safe home." Another felt that, "It's essential that victims of domestic abuse feel supported, and this policy is a strong step in the right direction."

However, a respondent noted, "While the policy addresses the issue of domestic abuse, there should be more focus on ongoing support for the victim after they've been placed in safe housing." Another mentioned, "The policy is important, but more awareness needs to be raised among tenants about how to access help."

One respondent felt, "The policy does not go far enough in addressing the emotional and psychological impact of domestic abuse, which is just as important as physical safety." Another said, "There needs to be more clarity on how tenants can report issues without fear of retaliation."

3) To what extent do respondents believe these policies will assist tenants with tenancy sustainment, neighbourhood management, preventing tenancy fraud, and supporting those affected by domestic abuse?

The responses to the question regarding the effectiveness of the policies in supporting tenants show a range of opinions. A total of 19 respondents (61%) expressed agreement with the policies' potential to support tenants, including 10 (32%) who strongly agreed and 9 (29%) who somewhat agreed, indicating a generally positive view of the policies. However, 10 respondents (33%) expressed disagreement, with 5 somewhat disagreeing and 5 strongly disagreeing, reflecting some concerns or opposition to the policies. Additionally, 2 respondents (10%) were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, suggesting uncertainty or indifference towards the policies.



Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:

One respondent noted, "Clear expectations for tenant behaviour will help create a more harmonious and respectful environment." Another commented, "This policy encourages tenants to take responsibility for both their own actions and the wellbeing of the neighbourhood."

However, some felt, "The policy could be more effective if it encouraged more direct community involvement, like neighbourly gatherings or events, rather than just setting rules." One respondent said, "While the policy promotes respect, it doesn't seem to address underlying issues such as a lack of community facilities or opportunities for social interaction."

Concerns were raised by others, with one stating, "Without strong enforcement, the policy risks being ineffective. There needs to be clear consequences for tenants who don't adhere to the guidelines." Another suggested, "The policy could better support tenants who might struggle with communication, such as those with language barriers or disabilities."

Tenancy Sustainment Policy:

One respondent stated, "This policy offers much-needed stability for tenants, ensuring that those who face temporary setbacks can get the help they need to keep their homes." Another commented, "It's great that

this policy focuses on preventing eviction by providing support for tenants during financial or personal crises."

Some respondents felt that, "The policy could be stronger in its preventative measures, especially for tenants facing issues such as rising rents or rent arrears." Another added, "It could be more effective with a better framework for early intervention, particularly for those with multiple vulnerabilities."

One respondent pointed out, "While the policy offers support, it lacks clarity on how to assist tenants with complex, ongoing problems like long-term disability or chronic illness." Another said, "It would be helpful to provide tenants with a clearer path for accessing support if they encounter multiple challenges that threaten their tenancy."

Tenancy Fraud Policy:

One respondent remarked, "This policy helps safeguard housing resources for those in genuine need and ensures fair access for all." Another noted, "By providing clear guidelines and definitions, the policy is a good tool for tackling tenancy fraud, such as subletting or misrepresentation."

However, some respondents mentioned, "Fraud isn't always intentional, and there could be more focus on offering support to tenants who find themselves in difficult situations due to misunderstanding or hardship." One respondent said, "The policy might benefit from a clearer process to ensure tenants can self-report issues without fear of being penalised harshly."

A concern was raised by one respondent, stating, "While the policy addresses fraud, there is a need for more proactive measures to help tenants stay informed about the rules to avoid unintentional violations." Another added, "The policy seems to focus heavily on penalties rather than preventative education or guidance."

Domestic Abuse Policy:

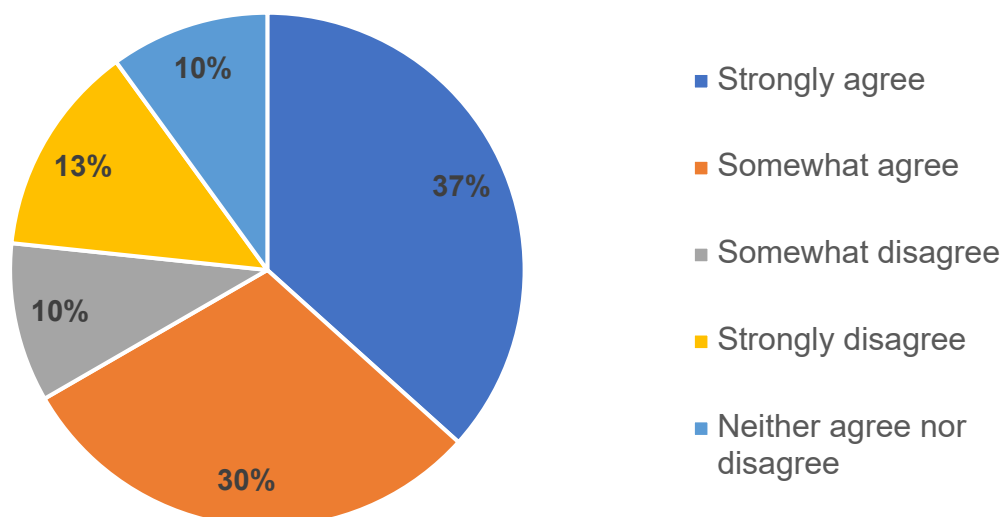
One respondent highlighted, "This policy provides essential protection for victims of domestic abuse by ensuring they have immediate access to safe housing and resources." Another said, "It's a good step in ensuring that victims are prioritised and that they don't have to go through a lengthy process to access support."

However, some felt that, "The policy could be stronger in its approach to offering ongoing housing support for those fleeing domestic abuse, particularly in finding long-term accommodation." One respondent suggested, "There needs to be more integration with local domestic abuse services, to ensure that housing support is part of a wider network of care."

One concern raised was, "There should be more focus on how to prevent the risk of homelessness for victims of abuse before they reach crisis point." Another added, "The policy could do more to highlight how tenants can access help in a confidential and discreet way, particularly in shared accommodation."

4) The responsibilities for tenants, leaseholders and residents outlined in these policies are easy to understand.

The responses to the question regarding the clarity of responsibilities outlined in these policies reveal a variety of opinions. A total of 20 respondents (64%) expressed agreement that the responsibilities were easy to understand, with 11 (35%) strongly agreeing and 9 (29%) somewhat agreeing, indicating a generally positive view of the clarity provided in the policies. However, 8 respondents (26%) expressed disagreement, with 4 somewhat disagreeing and 4 strongly disagreeing, suggesting that some found the responsibilities unclear or difficult to follow. Additionally, 3 respondents (10%) were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, which could imply uncertainty or a lack of strong opinion on the matter.



Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:

One respondent said, "The responsibilities for tenants in this policy are clear, especially when it comes to respecting neighbours and maintaining shared spaces." Another mentioned, "The policy makes it easy to understand what is expected of us in terms of behaviour and resolving disputes."

However, some felt that, "While the policy is generally clear, there could be more detail about how tenants should handle specific situations, such as noisy neighbours or damage to common areas." One respondent pointed out, "The responsibility for managing conflict is clear, but the policy doesn't provide enough guidance for tenants on how to involve external support if issues escalate."

Concerns were raised by others, with one saying, "The responsibilities for tenants are easy to understand, but it's less clear who takes responsibility for managing complaints or enforcing the rules." Another mentioned, "The policy could offer more support for residents who are not familiar with how these responsibilities are implemented, particularly for new tenants."

Tenancy Sustainment Policy:

One respondent stated, "The responsibilities outlined in the policy are straightforward, especially when it comes to keeping up with rent payments and notifying housing authorities if there are any financial issues." Another shared, "I think the policy does a good job explaining

the roles tenants should play in ensuring their tenancy is sustained, such as engaging with support services early."

However, some suggested, "The policy could provide clearer responsibilities for tenants when it comes to accessing early support or when dealing with specific circumstances, like long-term illness or job loss." One respondent mentioned, "While the responsibilities are mostly clear, it could be helpful to have more detailed instructions for tenants on how to manage debt or rent arrears effectively."

A concern was raised by one respondent, saying, "The policy outlines tenant responsibilities, but it doesn't always clearly state what happens if these responsibilities are not met or how tenants can get the help they need in such cases." Another said, "The policy could offer more clarity on how tenants can access long-term support for challenges like mental health, which might be affecting their ability to sustain their tenancy."

Tenancy Fraud Policy:

One respondent highlighted, "The responsibilities in this policy are easy to understand, particularly when it comes to ensuring that tenants do not misrepresent their circumstances or engage in subletting." Another remarked, "Clear guidelines on what constitutes tenancy fraud make it easier for tenants to understand their responsibilities."

However, some expressed that, "While the policy defines tenancy fraud well, there could be more clarity on what tenants should do if they suspect fraud or need to report it anonymously." One respondent pointed out, "The policy's responsibility on preventing fraud is clear, but it would be helpful to have additional guidance on how tenants can access education about the rules before making a mistake."

A concern was raised by one respondent, stating, "The policy is clear about penalties for fraud, but there's little about what tenants should do if they inadvertently make a mistake. More clarity on this would be helpful." Another suggested, "The responsibility for tenants to avoid fraud is clear, but the policy should explain how tenants can seek help if they are unsure about the rules."

Domestic Abuse Policy:

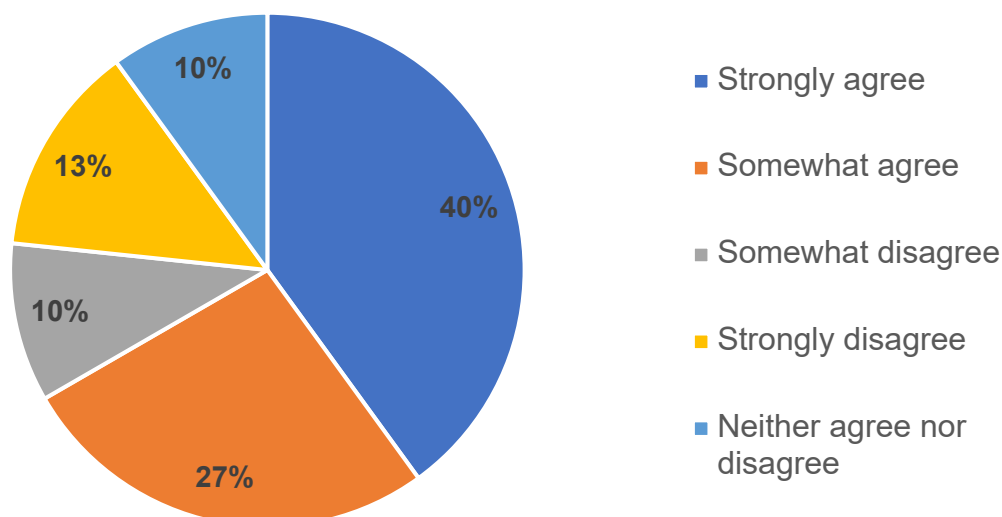
One respondent commented, "The policy outlines the responsibilities of tenants in accessing support if they are experiencing domestic abuse in a straightforward manner." Another mentioned, "It's clear what tenants need to do to report abuse and access immediate housing support if needed."

However, some felt that, "The responsibilities for tenants are clear in terms of reporting abuse, but it's less clear how they can continue to access long-term support or housing stability after being placed in safe accommodation." One respondent said, "The policy should better explain what ongoing responsibilities tenants have once they have been relocated to a safe place, particularly if they need ongoing assistance."

A concern was raised by one respondent, stating, "The policy doesn't provide enough clarity on what tenants need to do if they fear retaliation after reporting abuse. It would be helpful to have more explicit guidance on ensuring confidentiality." Another added, "While the responsibilities around reporting abuse are clear, it's not as clear how tenants can seek help if they face emotional or psychological challenges due to their experience."

5) The responsibilities for Sandwell Council in these policies are easy to understand.

The responses to the question regarding the clarity of Sandwell Council's responsibilities in these policies show a variety of opinions. A total of 20 respondents (65%) expressed agreement with the clarity of the Council's responsibilities, including 12 (39%) who strongly agreed and 8 (26%) who somewhat agreed, indicating a generally positive view of the policies. However, 8 respondents (26%) expressed disagreement, with 3 somewhat disagreeing and 5 strongly disagreeing, suggesting some concerns or areas for improvement. Additionally, 3 respondents (9%) were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, reflecting uncertainty or indifference towards the clarity of the Council's responsibilities.



Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:

One respondent noted, "The Council's responsibilities are clearly outlined, particularly in terms of enforcing the rules and ensuring a peaceful environment for all tenants." Another mentioned, "It's easy to understand that the Council's role is to manage disputes and take appropriate action when tenants don't follow the guidelines."

However, some felt that, "While the Council's responsibilities are mentioned, there could be more detail on how they will support tenants who need assistance with understanding or following the rules." One respondent pointed out, "The policy explains that the Council should take action, but there's little clarity on how they will engage tenants in addressing neighbourhood issues."

Concerns were raised by others, with one stating, "The Council's role in enforcing the rules is clear, but there isn't enough information on how they will support tenants who face barriers in understanding the expectations, such as those with language issues or disabilities." Another suggested, "The Council should take more responsibility for creating community-building initiatives, not just enforcing rules."

Tenancy Sustainment Policy:

One respondent shared, "The Council's responsibilities are clear, especially in terms of providing support and guidance to tenants facing financial difficulties." Another commented, "It's easy to understand that the Council is responsible for ensuring that tenants have access to help,

whether it's through financial assistance or connecting them with services."

However, some suggested, "The Council's role in providing early intervention support is clear, but there could be more clarity on how they will proactively engage tenants before issues like arrears escalate." One respondent mentioned, "While it's clear that the Council is responsible for helping tenants who are at risk of eviction, it would be helpful if the policy explained how the Council will ensure long-term support."

A concern was raised by one respondent, stating, "The Council's role in offering support to tenants could be clearer, especially when it comes to addressing the needs of those with complex situations, like long-term health issues or addiction." Another added, "While the Council is responsible for offering assistance, there's little explanation of how they will make sure that tenants know where and how to access that support."

Tenancy Fraud Policy:

One respondent commented, "The Council's responsibilities are straightforward, particularly when it comes to ensuring that tenants who violate the rules are held accountable." Another shared, "It's clear that the Council has a responsibility to enforce rules around fraud and make sure that the resources are available for investigation."

However, some felt that, "The policy could explain more about how the Council will help tenants avoid unintentional violations, rather than just focusing on penalties." One respondent said, "While it's clear that the Council should investigate fraud, it would be useful to know how they will educate tenants about the rules and prevent fraud from occurring in the first place."

A concern was raised by one respondent, stating, "There is a lack of detail on how the Council will handle cases where tenants may be falsely accused of fraud or need assistance in rectifying situations." Another suggested, "The policy should explain how the Council will ensure that tenants understand the procedures for reporting fraud and what support they can access if they are affected."

Domestic Abuse Policy:

One respondent shared, "The Council's role in providing safe housing and resources for victims of domestic abuse is very clear, particularly in terms of ensuring immediate access to shelter." Another said, "It's easy to understand that the Council is responsible for making sure victims have access to safe accommodation and necessary services."

However, some respondents felt that, "While the Council's role in housing victims is clear, there could be more detail about how they will provide ongoing support after the victim is housed." One respondent mentioned, "The Council's responsibilities are outlined in terms of providing immediate housing, but there's not enough detail on how they will help victims with long-term stability, like finding permanent accommodation."

A concern was raised by one respondent, saying, "The Council's responsibilities in this area could be clearer, particularly regarding how they will handle confidentiality and protect the identity of those seeking refuge." Another suggested, "The policy should clarify how the Council will integrate with local domestic abuse services to ensure comprehensive support for tenants."

6) Any other comments

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:

Additional comments included:

- "The policy is clear about the Council's role in keeping the neighbourhood peaceful, but it would be helpful if there was more about how the Council will support tenants who struggle to follow the rules, especially those with language issues or disabilities."
- "While the policy explains enforcement, it doesn't say much about how the Council will help tenants understand the rules better. It would be good to see more focus on building a sense of community."
- "It would be useful if the policy explained how the Council will actively work with tenants to solve problems in the neighbourhood, not just react when issues come up."

Tenancy Sustainment Policy:

Additional comments included:

- "The policy makes it clear that the Council helps tenants with financial problems, but it could explain more about how the Council will step in early to prevent issues like rent arrears."
 - "The policy says the Council will help tenants at risk of eviction, but it would be better if it gave more details on long-term support, especially for people with complex issues."
 - "It would be helpful if the policy explained how tenants will know about the support available and how they can easily access it."
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Tenancy Fraud Policy:

Additional comments included:

- "The policy clearly states the Council's role in tackling fraud, but it could explain how the Council will help tenants avoid making mistakes or unintentionally breaking the rules."
 - "The policy doesn't say much about what happens if someone is wrongly accused of fraud or needs help sorting it out."
 - "It would be good if the policy included clearer information on how tenants can report fraud and what support they can get if they're affected."
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Domestic Abuse Policy:

Additional comments included:

- "The policy clearly explains that the Council will provide safe housing for people affected by domestic abuse, but it could explain more about what happens after someone is given temporary accommodation."
- "The policy talks about providing safe housing, but it doesn't say enough about how the Council will help victims find permanent housing or provide ongoing support."
- "It would be useful if the policy explained how the Council will protect privacy and work with other local services to give better support to victims."

Resident Policy Engagement Session

On Friday 11th April, we hosted an engagement session with residents to discuss our *Good Neighbourhood Management* and *Tenancy Sustainment* policies, led by our Community Partnerships Team. These sessions are part of our ongoing efforts to better understand how Housing services are currently delivered and to shape policies that effectively respond to the challenges faced in our communities.

Residents, along with Housing Management staff, tenants, and leaseholders, contributed valuable insights during these discussions.

Below, you'll find a summary of the comments received and Sandwell Council's responses to the feedback provided.

Policy	What Respondents Told Us	Our Response	Relevant Actions	Timescale
Good Neighbourhood Management Policy	The proposal is acceptable, but it must apply to tenants, residents, and leaseholders. It requires collaboration from everyone, including non-tenants (private renters and homeowners).	We agree that the policy should be inclusive and encompass all types of residents, not just tenants. Collaboration from all parties is essential for success.	Review the policy wording and ensure inclusivity for tenants, residents, leaseholders, private renters, and homeowners. Add specific language to clarify the collaborative nature of the policy.	April 2025

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy	The "One Council" approach should be more effective, especially between departments like housing and highways.	We will review the target audience to ensure it includes all relevant groups (tenants, residents, private renters). The "One Council" approach will be strengthened.	Clarify the policy's target audience. Improve coordination between departments (housing, highways).	October 2025
Good Neighbourhood Management Policy	The policy should be available in multiple languages to accommodate all residents.	We need to assess our corporate priorities regarding this as this is a prevalent issue across . While there are online tools available to help with language barriers on the website, there are still noticeable gaps.	Conduct a review of corporate priorities regarding language barriers online, in person, and in policy documents. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current online tools available for language support. • Identify gaps in language accessibility for digital, in-person interactions, and policy documents. • Prioritise areas for improvement across all these areas. 	December 2025

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan to implement additional resources or tools to address these gaps. 	
Good Neighbourhood Management Policy	While the policy outlines the council's role, some feel it lacks follow-through, describing it as "lip service." The policy needs to be accessible in multiple formats.	This action log will create a clear implementation plan with specific actions, timelines, and accountability measures to ensure the policy is actionable. This provides a clear action plan in response to the concerns raised and specifies a timescale for addressing these issues.		
Good Neighbourhood Management Policy	More specific actions are needed to clearly outline tenant and resident responsibilities.	We agree that more detailed actions should be included to ensure clarity. The policy will be revised to offer more specific guidance on good neighbour actions.	Revise the policy to include clear, specific actions for tenants and residents to be responsible neighbours.	April 2025
Good Neighbourhood Management Policy	One resident suggested that the	We don't believe it is appropriate to include		

	policy should also target businesses as part of good neighbourhood management.	businesses in the Good Neighbourhood Management Policy. The policy is specifically aimed at residents, tenants, and leaseholders. Businesses are already regulated through separate frameworks, such as local business regulations and planning policies. The policy will continue to focus on the responsibilities of residents, tenants, and leaseholders.		
Tenancy Sustainment Policy	Overall agree with what is being proposed. However, there is a need for further clarity on property changes that can be made.	We will refer you to the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy for clarification on property changes, including any approval processes for installations like sheds. The Policy outlines what modifications are allowed and the necessary approval procedures.		
Tenancy Sustainment Policy	The policy makes it clear that support will	The policy clarifies the steps that will be taken if tenants		

	be provided, but concerns about how it will be implemented and what happens if support isn't taken up.	do not engage with support services and specify the consequences.		
Tenancy Sustainment Policy	The policy needs to ensure the information is relevant and available for vulnerable residents, particularly in terms of welfare rights and floating support.	This policy has been reviewed to ensure the support services available for vulnerable residents and ensure the policy is up-to-date with the latest services available.		
Tenancy Sustainment Policy	The policy needs to address the tension between supporting tenancy sustainment and the potential for eviction in severe cases.	We acknowledge the importance of this and have reviewed the balance between support and enforcement actions to ensure the policy is fair and clear.		
Tenancy Sustainment Policy	The Noise Act 1996 should be included in here.	We acknowledge the importance of the Noise Act 1996, and we will ensure it is addressed appropriately within the Tenancy Sustainment Policy. This will help reinforce our	Add the Noise Act 1996 to the Legislation section of this policy.	April 2025

		commitment to tackling noise nuisance and supporting tenants to maintain their tenancies responsibly.		
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