

Reasonable Adjustments Policy Consultation Report

Aims of the consultation.....	3
Approach to the consultation.....	3
Summary of consultation results.....	4
Consultation questions and responses.....	5
Feedback from policy engagement session.....	11
Relevant actions to be taken.....	13

Aims of the consultation

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

This consultation was designed to obtain feedback from residents, tenants, employees and councillors on our Reasonable Adjustments Policy prior to its publication.

This policy explains what, when and how reasonable adjustments will be made by Sandwell Council to ensure equal access to housing services for residents with disabilities or vulnerabilities. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the policy specifies what adjustments are available, the process for requesting them, and how the Council will address requests.

Feedback received in this consultation will inform the final version of the Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

Approach to the Consultation

Policy Engagement Session

The Reasonable Adjustments Policy was shared with residents in a policy engagement session. Residents provided feedback on the proposals of the policy, the accessibility of the document and any missing elements.

Please note that the analysis of feedback found in this report pertains only to survey feedback received in the online public consultation. The final section of this report and following table also presents feedback received from the policy engagement session with residents.

Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities (SNAC) Board

The Reasonable Adjustments Policy was shared with members of the SNAC Policy Working Group, and elected members, for additional feedback and scrutiny.

Online Consultation

Online consultation took place from 9th of May to 13th June 2025. The survey included a combination of qualitative and quantitative questions, allowing respondents to provide feedback on the policy proposals and assess the document's accessibility for residents. Based on the feedback received, revisions will be made to the policy document where necessary before it is finalised and presented to Cabinet for approval.

Summary of consultation results

The consultation findings show mixed support for the Reasonable Adjustments Policy, with just over half of respondents agreeing with its aims. Those in support welcomed the council's commitment to fairness and accessibility, though some noted that the policy felt aspirational and would benefit from clearer examples and more detail on how it will be implemented.

A mixed response was also given on whether the policy clearly outlines how support for reasonable adjustments will be delivered. While some respondents appreciated the broad overview of available support, others felt it lacked practical guidance on how to request adjustments and what steps to follow. Several respondents highlighted the need for clearer timelines and points of contact.

Most respondents felt that residents would be able to understand the policy, praising its structure and accessible language. However, some suggested that the policy could still be too complex in places, and recommended providing additional support such as simplified guides, or visual aids.

There was a general sense that the policy is well intentioned, and if slightly refined, will well serve resident's needs.

Consultation questions and responses

As of June 13th, this policy had **11** responses.

Please tick which best describes your interest in this consultation.

6 (55%) respondents were interested in this consultation as a tenant living in socially rented accommodation.

2 (18%) respondents were interested in this consultation as a member of a voluntary or community partner organisation.

2 (18%) respondents were interested in this consultation as a private rented tenant or person living rent free.

1 (9%) respondent was interested in this consultation as a homeowner.

Please state which type of accommodation you live in.

5 (45%) respondents live in a house.

5 (45%) respondents live in a flat.

1 (9%) respondent lives in a bungalow.

Please state your age group.

4 (36%) respondents were aged 60-64.

3 (27%) respondents were aged 25-35.

3 (27%) respondents were aged 35-59.

1 (9%) respondent was aged 65 and over.

What is your gender?

7 (64%) respondents were female.

4 (36%) respondents were male.

What best describes your ethnicity?

6 (55%) respondents were English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British.

2 (18%) respondents were White and Black Caribbean.

2 (18%) respondents were Indian.

1 (9%) respondent was Bangladeshi.

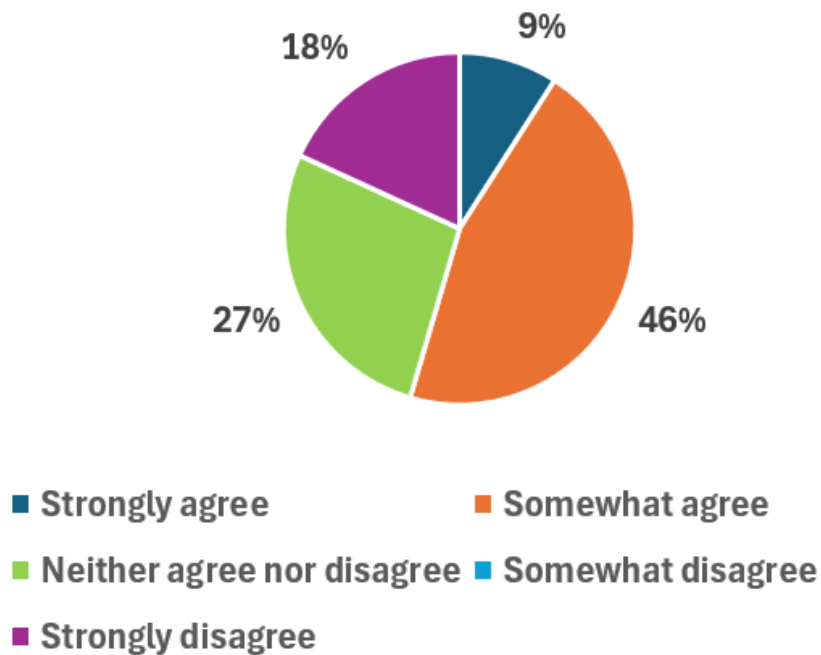
For all questions, respondents could select one of the following answers:

- Strongly agree

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

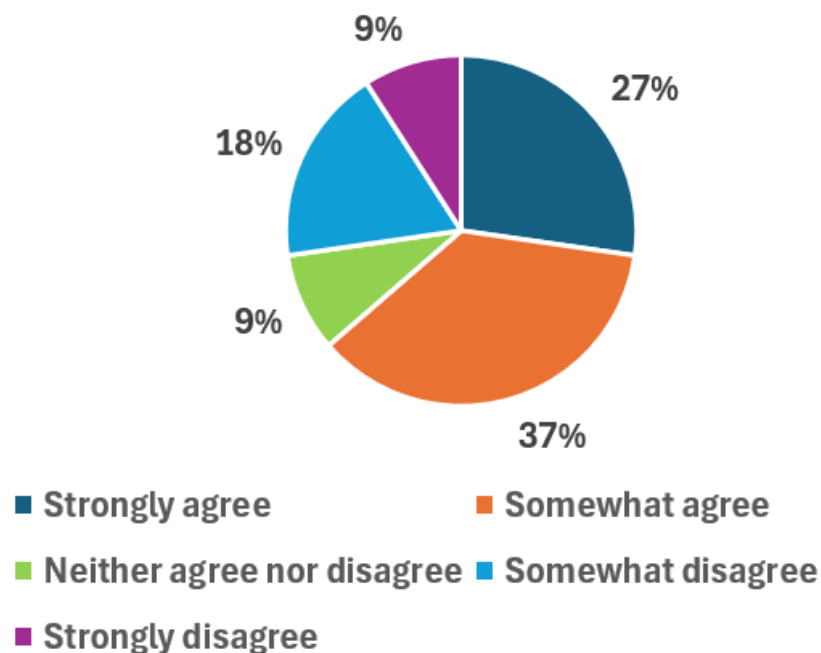
1. **Before reading this policy, I was aware of the services Sandwell Council provide in support of reasonable adjustments.**

The slight majority of respondents, 6 of 11 or 55%, agreed, that they were aware of the services Sandwell Council provide in support of reasonable adjustments. 3 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, and 2 respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.



2. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the purpose of the Reasonable Adjustment Policy?**

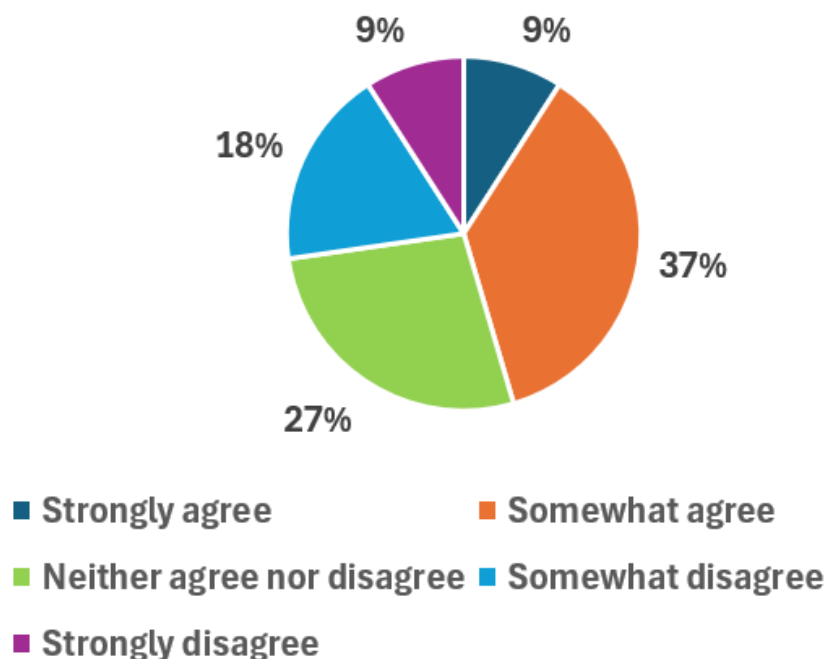
The slight majority of respondents, 6 of 11 or 55%, agreed with the aims of the Reasonable Adjustments Policy.



Those that agreed did so because ‘the policy’s intent to ensure fair and accessible services for all residents, especially those with specific needs, is important and well-placed’, and because ‘the policy gives a general idea of support for reasonable adjustments’. Another respondent added that the policy’s commitment to ‘ensuring fair and inclusive access to services through reasonable adjustments is crucial’. One respondent stated that ‘it is important that all people have the right access for their needs’. Those that agreed did however also suggest that ‘some of the policy language feels a bit aspirational’, that the ‘practical details could be explained more clearly’, and that ‘clearer examples and implementation steps would help residents understand how it applies to them.’ 3 respondents disagreed with the aims of the Reasonable Adjustments Policy but did not state why.

3. Does the policy make it clear how Sandwell Council will support residents in delivering reasonable adjustments?

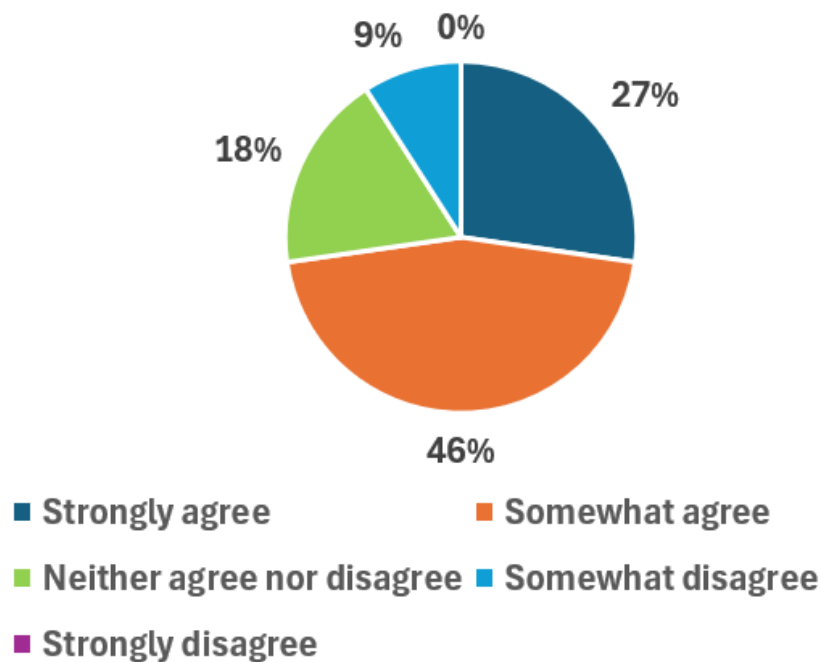
5 respondents (45%) agreed, 3 respondents (27%) disagreed and 3 respondents (27%) neither agreed nor disagreed.



Those that agreed did so because 'The policy covers the support available in broad terms', and because 'the policy outlines the main ways the council supports residents'. Those that agreed also stated however that 'it could be improved by including clearer instructions on how residents can request adjustments and what they can expect throughout the process', and that the policy 'could include more specifics on timelines, responsible contacts, and escalation procedures to ensure residents feel supported throughout'. One respondent who neither agreed nor disagreed stated that 'the policy could do with a few tweaks to make it plainer'. A respondent who disagreed, did so because 'certain sections feel vague about the actual support provided, making it difficult for residents to know what to expect. There is a need for more detailed information on how support is practically delivered and how residents can engage with the council for adjustments.

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the majority of residents will understand this policy?

8 of 11 respondents (73%) agreed that the majority of residents will understand the policy. Just 1 respondent (9%) disagreed.



Those that agreed, said that ‘the majority of residents should find the policy straightforward due to its clear structure and use of simple language in key sections’. Those that agreed did however state that the policy ‘may be too complex and dense for many residents to fully understand without additional support such as workshops, guidance notes, or visual aids’. One respondent who agreed added that ‘the policy is mostly understandable for many residents, but some might require assistance or further explanation, especially around legal rights and procedural steps’. One respondent who neither agreed nor disagreed, stated that ‘different modes of communication may be needed’.

5.) Any other comments

When asked for additional comments on the policy, respondents told us that:

- 'The policy is structured logically with straightforward language, making it easy for most residents to follow and understand their rights and the support available to them'.
- 'The policy's intentions are commendable, and with continued refinement, it will better serve residents' needs'.
- 'The language and structure are mostly clear, but occasional jargon and complex sentences may require simplification to ensure full comprehension'.
- 'The council's efforts to clarify reasonable adjustments are appreciated; ongoing review will help ensure clarity and accessibility for all residents'.

The feedback presented below was provided by residents of Sandwell in a policy engagement session.

1. Before reading the policy, were you aware of what reasonable adjustments Sandwell Council's Housing Service can provide to residents?

- Awareness was mixed—some residents were aware, others were not.
- Those familiar often had personal experience or knew someone who had accessed adjustments.
- Raising awareness is important. Suggested methods include using the *Sandwell Herald*, noticeboards in communal areas, libraries, and other community spaces.
- Some residents asked how much flexibility there is to change or influence the policy.

2. Does the policy make it clear how Sandwell Council will support residents through making reasonable adjustments?

- The policy outlines what should happen but lacks clarity on how it works in practice.
- Residents questioned how outcomes are tracked and communicated.
- There is a need to promote the policy more widely and accessibly.
- Suggestions included:
 - Adding a tile to the MySandwell dashboard.
 - Using infographics to improve visibility and understanding.
 - Strengthening partnerships with professionals such as occupational health and visual support officers, to streamline support.
 - Holding regular surgeries with housing officers to increase engagement.
- The term "reasonable" is too open to interpretation, and as such needs a clearer definition.

- Examples should be grouped together in a clear, easy-to-read format using simple language.

3. Is there any information missing from this policy document regarding reasonable adjustments that should be included?

- Most felt the core information is present, but the policy would benefit from improvements in clarity and accessibility.
- More real-life examples of reasonable adjustments should be included, especially for conditions like anxiety, depression, neurological disorders, sensory impairments, language and cultural barriers, and isolation.
- The policy language is currently too technical; it should be simplified to ensure wider understanding.
- Further promotion suggested via WhatsApp groups, local newsletters, noticeboards, and at councillor or MP surgeries.
- Infographics and digital enhancements such as a MySandwell tile would help residents with different accessibility needs.

Actions taken in response to consultation feedback

During the consultation, respondents were given the opportunity to elaborate on the reasoning behind their answers to the multiple choice questions. Question 5 also asked for any additional feedback on the policy not otherwise stated. Feedback received from respondents can be found in the table below, in addition to our response and any actions we are taking.

What respondents told us	Our Response	Relevant Actions	Timescale
While the policy outlines broad intentions, it lacks specific guidance on how reasonable adjustments are delivered in practice, including timelines and responsible contacts.	Sandwell Council acknowledge the need for clearer operational guidance and commit to making the policy more actionable.	Establish and communicate a clear process for delivering reasonable adjustments in practice, specifying implementation timelines and identifying responsible contacts.	June 2025
To raise awareness of the policy, it could be promoted on the Sandwell Herald, local noticeboards, libraries, community spaces, WhatsApp groups, and council surgeries.	The Council agree that broader promotion is essential to improve accessibility and awareness.	Develop and implement a communications plan that makes use of all recommended local and digital channels. This will incorporate the planned resident engagement as part of our Tenant Engagement Strategy, which is due to be produced later this year.	December 2025
Visual tools, infographics and guides could make the policy more accessible and reader friendly. Plain English should always be used.	The Council will revise the policy using plain English and develop supporting visual materials.	Commission or develop infographics and Easy Read versions of the policy. Conduct a plain English review.	December 2025
Examples of what reasonable adjustments might look like could be included in the policy.	Including real-world examples will make the policy more practical and relatable.	Add a section with case studies and example scenarios demonstrating reasonable adjustments.	June 2025

The term "reasonable" is open to interpretation. As such, a clearer definition could be provided.	We recognise this ambiguity and will provide a clearer definition aligned with legal guidance and practical considerations.	Define "reasonable" with reference to case law and best practice.	June 2025
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