



staffordshire
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Customer Involvement Impact Assessment January to December 2007

Introduction

2007 was a significant year for Staffordshire Housing Association (SHA) which has seen progress in the implementation of the customer involvement strategy. The strategy sets framework to ensure that customer involvement is embedded within the work carried out by the organisation.

In addition to the strategy, the customer involvement policy was updated to meet Housing Corporation expectations. The policy is more flexible, puts customers first and covers a wider range of customer involvement methods.

This impact assessment reports on customer involvement activity that occurred between January 2007 and December 2007. It also details the future development of customer involvement and how this will influence and improve existing services and strategies.

Involvement Activities

During the period January 2007 to December 2007 a total of 67 customer involvement activities were held. These took a variety of formats ranging from postal surveys to open day events.

The activities carried out had a range of outcomes with varying impacts upon the services provided by SHA. The following summary tables are intended to give an indication of how the involvement work has influenced services, the method of consultation used and which strategic priority the activities were related to.

Summary of Involvement Activities

Consultation Method	No. of activities
Event/Open day	9
Survey/Questionnaire	27
Meeting	27
Other e.g. trips and presentations	4
Total	67

Outcome Summary	No. of Activities
Scheme improvement	27
Increased customer capacity	6
Improvement to service	19
Community development	15
Total	67

Link to SHA's Strategic Priorities	
To provide high quality homes and services which people want.	46
To regenerate neighbourhoods and the environment, invest in the local economy to help support sustainable communities.	25
To make the most of our resources	6
Have effective practices that support our mission and values	13
Total	90*

*The number of links to strategic priorities is higher than the number of involvement activities because some involvement activities can be linked to more than one strategic priority.

The following tables give details of the specific involvement activity and the outcomes that were achieved. The information given each table includes a description of the event and what its purpose was.

Impact rating




The table also shows an impact rating which gives an at a glance indication level of impact we have assessed that the activity has had upon service provision and customers. Not all the activities are directly comparable in that some involvement activities have association-wide implications, whereas others may only affect a small number of customers at a scheme. Nonetheless, the aim of the rating is to assess the relative impact of the involvement, judged by the outcomes.




Value for money assessment

There is also a rating attributed to value for money. This takes into account the financial costs of carrying out the activity and the impact that the activity has had upon the service and customers. It is important to consider the outcome and its relationship to the resource cost rather than just looking at cost alone to judge what has actually been achieved for the investment of time and resources.

To establish a cost for the activities a simple formula was used. This was to take the total cost for the activity (staff time, venue costs, refreshments, travel expenditure and other costs) and divide the total cost by the number of customers that the consultation had an impact upon.

Table explaining ratings

Rating	Impact description
	Significant impact
	Some/moderate impact
	Low impact

Rating	Value for money description
	Good value for money
	Reasonable value for money
	Poor value for money





Service improvements







There were a number of service development groups established during 2007. Customer activity within each group has varied from customers regularly attending the group meetings to being involved in one-off exercises to gain customer opinions on specific issues.

The majority of the groups contain a high proportion of SHA staff working with customers to improve the service.

The main group of customers that review and comment on policies and strategies is the Customer Liaison Panel.

This panel met 6 times during 2007.

Customer Liaison Panel reviews	
Activity and purpose - Six 2 hour meetings per year to discuss policies, strategies and procedures.	Outcome - The following policies were agreed by the panel, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASB policy • Anti harassment policy • Customer involvement policy and strategy • Respect policy • Future governance strategy • In addition the panel also had input in the following areas: ICT services, customer involvement event, complaints policy review and the planned maintenance programme.
	Impact rating 
	VFM rating 
Service Standards survey	
Activity and purpose - Telephone survey of 60 SHA customers to gain opinion on expectations of standards of the telephone service.	Outcome - Results were used to identify strengths and weaknesses of frontline customer services.
	Impact rating 
	VFM rating 









Complaints Policy review group	
<p>Activity and purpose - Meetings between customers and staff to review and implement new complaints procedure.</p>	<p>Outcome - New complaints policy and procedure, introduced from Sept 07. The review has also led to the setting up of a customer panel that meets quarterly to monitor complaints and comment on the process and outcomes.</p>
	<p>Impact rating </p>
	<p>VFM rating </p>
Empty homes review group	
<p>Activity and purpose - Customers were involved in the initial meetings where their expectations of a minimum standard for a ready to let property were expressed. These expectations influenced the production of the empty property standard.</p>	<p>Outcome - Currently ongoing so far group has produced a new empty property standard.</p>
	<p>Impact rating </p>
	<p>VFM rating </p>
Customer access to services group	
<p>Activity and purpose - Customers and staff group that meet regularly to review current access to service provision.</p>	<p>Outcomes – Ongoing – so far the group have carried out an exercise to review what SHA currently does well and what can be improved upon. Will look to redesign customer access to services with the objective of an improved service.</p>
	<p>Impact rating </p>
	<p>VFM rating </p>

Service improvements - planned customer involvement for 2008

Activity	Description	Intended Outcomes
Complaints panel	On going quarterly review meetings between customers and staff to monitor the complaints process.	Continuous improvement of service to customers
Service standards	Focus groups to establish priorities and develop service specific standards.	New set of customer focused service specific standards.
Customer satisfaction survey (STATUS survey)	Involve customers in selecting consultants/ agreeing survey forms etc.	A customer friendly survey that prompts a high response rate
Tenancy agreement review	Meeting between customers, staff and lawyer to review the main clauses in new tenancy agreement	New tenancy agreement agreed and approved with customer input
Access to services – Continuous improvement review group	Review of ways that customers access the various services provided by SHA. Meetings with Staff and residents	Improved processes delivering better access to the services provided by SHA
Community Services Advisory Panel	Customer panel that meets with staff to discuss improvements to service.	Customer based improvements to community services practices.
Equality and Diversity Panel	Meetings between staff and customers.	To recommend improvements to Equality and Diversity plans.
Value for Money Panel	Meetings between staff and customers.	To make improvements to SHA's Value for Money strategy.

Communications

During 2007 customers were involved with the associations' rebranding and had a significant input into the redesigning of the associations website and leaflet design and logo choice.







Logo Consultation	
Activity and purpose - three proposed logo designs were made available for customer feedback, comments and preferences. This included a presentation stand in the office reception area and information posted to customers.	Outcome - Customer feedback influenced logo choice.
	Impact rating 
	VFM rating 
Editorial Panel	
Activity and purpose - Regular meetings to gain customer input into SHA Today. Through deciding and writing articles etc...	Outcome - Only one meeting held which resulted in one customer writing article, but then customer left the Association so article not appropriate for publication.
	Impact rating 
	VFM rating 
Revised Tenant Handbook and Information Leaflets	
Activity and purpose - Leaflet and handbook examples and cost information sent to tenants for opinions. Tenants were then asked to select their preferences based on information sent to them.	Outcome - Customer approved leaflet and format for the revised Tenants' Handbook.
	Impact rating 
	VFM rating 
Communications Group	
Activity and purpose - Customers meet regularly to comment on current literature and website and make suggestions on improvements.	Outcome - Have had a major input in to the design, appearance and usability of the new SHA website. The group also influenced the style, layout and language to be used in the new tenants handbook.
	Impact rating 
	VFM rating 





Communications - planned customer involvement for 2008

Activity	Description	Intended Outcomes
New Tenants' handbook	Customers look at the draft version of the handbook and make suggestions before it goes to print	Customer approved handbook is used and valued by customers
New website	Customers review new website and make suggestions before it goes live	Website meets customer requirements as evidenced by high customer use
Website maintenance	Residents asked to review website after 6 months to ensure that it functions properly and has useful content. Customers make suggestions for improvements to content or functionality	Website is improved by providing information that customers want and this leads to greater customer use

Maintenance and Planned Improvements

In addition to the methods detailed in the table below Staffordshire Housing Association also carries out regular maintenance customer satisfaction surveys and receives feedback from customers following the schedule of regular scheme visits that customers are invited to attend.

America Gardens and Madison Street Resident Meeting		
Activity and purpose - Consultation held regarding the design of the future window replacements. A follow up postal survey was held to gain opinion on window colours	Outcome - Window replacement scheme implemented in accordance with resident preferences	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Contractor Group		
Activity and purpose - Meetings arranged with residents to gain customer input in to new contractor agreement. New contracts will be drawn up between SHA and companies carrying out responsive and programmed works that will contain elements tailored around customers' needs and expectations.	Outcome - Initial comments received with more follow up work required. This group is currently ongoing.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Allenby Court – Kitchen renewals		
Activity and purpose - Consultation event held via a demonstration kitchen at the Allenby Court scheme which customers visited and discussed process with staff and the kitchen fitter who would be carrying out the work in their homes.	Outcome - Residents gave input on the style and design of their future kitchens and programme was implemented successfully with high levels of satisfaction.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	













Bradeley Village upgrades		
Activity and purpose - Consultation on design and new initiatives in relation to improvements to games room, main concourse flooring design and colour scheme choice.	Outcome - Customers selected refurbishment design from a range of options and have influenced the look and feel of their scheme.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Kensington Court additional lighting		
Activity and purpose - Following a residents meeting at which several residents suggested extra lighting a survey was sent to gather opinion regarding extra lighting at the scheme.	Outcome - Residents approved additional lighting and suggestion was implemented.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	









Maintenance and planned improvements - customer involvement for 2008

Activity	Description	Intended Outcomes
Contractor group	Task groups to gain customer input into new maintenance contracts	Terms of new maintenance contracts agreed by customers
Planned programme consultation work	Show flats used to give customer choice and feedback. These events will give customers greater input and reduce problems during the contract period.	Customers to given choice and information at: The Hollies (windows), Foster Court, Allenby Court and Grindley Hill (kitchens), Bromley Court (bathrooms).

Blue Mountain Housing Association (BMHA)

BMHA have conducted a number of customer involvement activities and attended a range of events with partners. Tenants of BMHA have assisted partner organisations with their consultation and have increased their own understanding and capacity.

Bursley Road development workshop		
Activity and purpose - Half day discussion event at Cobridge Community Centre to gain customer input into design of specialist housing scheme.	Outcome - Informed house designs for new scheme of family houses.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Normacot Lunch Club		
Activity and purpose - The funding of a halal lunch club for BME elders. Reduce social isolation and build trust and capacity of local BME group	Outcome - Improved relationships between BMHA and local community. Group now has an additional £5,000 for future provision.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Review of BMHA opening times		
Activity and purpose - BMHA tenants surveyed on current opening times and suggestions for new ones.	Outcome - Revised opening times	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
BMHA /BME Forum Launch Event		
Activity and purpose - 6 tenants accompanied BMHA staff to launch of BME forum.	Outcome - Helping tenants to create social networks.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
BMHA 'Seeing is Believing' Trip to Ashram Scheme, Birmingham		
Activity and purpose - Scheme visit with BME community members to help with the development of design principles for Normacot BME elders scheme.	Outcome - Local residents increased their capacity and given a first hand experience of a BME elders housing scheme.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
BMHA Open Evening		
Activity and purpose - Held open evening at BMHA to carry out Supporting People service satisfaction survey.	Outcome – Positive feedback on satisfaction with service gathered.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	

Focus Group of BMHA tenants for Salford University research		
Activity and purpose - BMHA tenants attended focus group to inform Salford University Supporting People Research.	Outcome - Helped inform research report on services for the BME community. Customers experience able to influence research findings.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
BMHA - Normacot Mosque Event		
Activity and purpose - Design consultation attended to share initial designs for Normacot scheme and make contacts.	Outcome - Design of Normacot elders' scheme discussed.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
BMHA - Fire Service Presentation		
Activity and purpose - Attended Fire Service in Hanley with customers to learn about fire safety in the home.	Outcome - Referrals made for fire safety visits and raised customer awareness of fire risks in the home.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Stoke on Trent City Council Equality Panel		
Activity and purpose - BME tenants met to discuss Bursley Road development.	Outcome - Opinions gathered fed into design brief for project.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	

BMHA planned customer involvement during 2008





Activity	Description	Intended Outcomes
Normacot Elders Scheme	Various consultation methods including surveys and discussion groups.	To further develop and gain customer input into specialist housing scheme.
Supporting people panel	Discussion groups	Improvements to the floating support service provided by BMHA.

BMHA will also continue with its involvement in community, cultural and religious events to further the capacity of both staff and customers – see dates and events in 2008 multicultural calendar.

General customer involvement events

SHA held two large customer events during 2007. The aim of both events was to engage a large number of residents in fun activities whilst carrying out surveys and other consultation exercises. The biggest success of the two events was establishing the customer forum. This is a database of customers who are willing to be contacted to take part in consultation exercises. The challenge for 2008 is to increase the number of residents who join the forum as customers who are willing to become more involved.

The two events achieved the aim of residents of having fun however the consultation carried out at the Fun and Fitness event was limited due to a low turnout of customers. SHA learnt a great deal from staging the events not just through the information gathered via the consultation that took place but also through the things done well and not so well in relation to organising a large customer event.

Customer Involvement Day 15 th February 2008	
<p>Activity and purpose - Launch day of customer involvement opportunities. 50 customers attended the event that was facilitated by 17 members of staff. A number of service stalls and workshops took place to consult on a wide range of housing issues.</p>	<p>Outcome - The customer forum database was set up recruiting a number of customers who attended the event. Quick consultation exercises also gave an indication of what residents thought on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday morning opening • Green improvements • home improvements • 'sign up' leaflets • the office reception improvements and kitchen handle design for older persons housing.
	<p>Impact rating </p>
	<p>VFM rating </p>
Fun and Fitness Day 21 st July 2007	
<p>Activity and purpose - A family fun day held at the YMCA in Hanley. The emphasis of the day was based around healthy living. The day was attended by 21 customers, 20 members of the general public and facilitated by 27 staff.</p>	<p>Outcome - Information on rent payment methods gathered. Due to the low attendance only 2 customers joined the Customer Forum.</p>
	<p>Impact rating </p>
	<p>VFM rating </p>

Resident Associations and Resident Meetings





At present the Hollies scheme is the only scheme that has a constituted residents' association. At a number of other schemes housing officers hold quarterly meetings to which residents are invited to attend. These resident meetings currently take place at Sandpiper Court, Bishops Court, Wolstanton and Porthill schemes and America Gardens/Madison Street. At the resident associations and resident meetings, residents can raise issues that are scheme specific and discuss these with housing officers and other invited staff or guests.













In addition, Housing Officers have attended area based resident association meetings that cover a variety of tenures, not just SHA properties. This has enabled those tenants to report issues to the officers at the meeting and for the officer to gain a wider perspective on neighbourhood issues.













Bradeley Village has a group of Neighbourhood Representatives who meet regularly to address issues that affect the scheme as well as organising activities and events for the scheme. During 2007 the group worked alongside SHA staff to put on a Neighbour Day. This event involved a range of fun activities that were designed to educate residents on differing cultures and backgrounds and improve relationships with local residents.









The Hollies resident association put on a coffee morning with the assistance of SHA staff to raise the profile of the group and to raise funds through raffles and auctions. SHA currently pays the cost of hiring a premise for open meetings on behalf of the group.

Scheme developments

CCTV consultation at Burnwood Court		
Activity and purpose - Residents invited to pass comment on CCTV proposals following agreement to project. 14 residents attended the workshop.	Outcome - Installation of CCTV as requested by customers.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Vehicle clamping survey at America Gardens and Madison Street		
Activity and purpose - Questionnaire sent to all residents asking whether they want a vehicle clamping scheme implementing.	Outcome - Scheme not implemented following resident consultation.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	








Bench at Churchbank Terrace		
Activity and purpose - Request received for a hardstanding to be provided for a residents' bench. Survey sent to residents requesting agreement.	Outcome - No residents objected. Awaiting work to be completed by gardening team.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Allenby Court – Recycling bins		
Activity and purpose - Letter sent to all residents at Allenby Court to request their opinion on installing paperbanks on the scheme as the current recycling boxes were not sufficient.	Outcome - 30 out of 45 residents responded - 22 were not in favour of the paperbanks being installed and therefore it did not go ahead. Currently looking at other recycling options for Allenby Court	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Disabled bay at Oliver Lodge		
Activity and purpose - Letter sent to all residents at Oliver Lodge proposing provision of disabled parking bays, requesting feedback if disagree with proposals.	Outcome - Residents agreed with proposals. Disabled parking bays provided.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
College courses at Bishops Court/Castle Grove		
Activity and purpose - Letter sent to residents at Bishops Court and Castle Grove to establish interest in attending college courses.	Outcome - 14 out of 36 households responded. 10 not interested in attending resulting in proposal not going ahead.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Allenby Court - Garden Consultation		
Activity and purpose - Letter sent to residents at Allenby Court to establish if any residents had objections to the communal gardens being altered.	Outcome - 22 out of 45 residents responded, out of these 19 residents had no objections; therefore works have been scheduled into the gardener's winter program.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Hedges at Abbots Court		
Activity and purpose - Survey sent to residents to consult on the removal of hedges.	Outcome - Residents agreed with proposals. Hedges removed.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	





Poly tunnel at Bishop Court		
Activity and purpose - Questionnaire sent to all residents at Bishops Court regarding the provision and location of poly tunnel.	Outcome - Residents did not agree with proposed location and most said would not use it. Researching alternatives.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Bench at Trafalgar Court		
Activity and purpose - Request via petition for a seating area to be provided in the communal garden. Survey sent to residents to gather opinions.	Outcome - 3 residents responded but did not agree on a final location for the seating area.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Burnwood Court Disabled Parking		
Activity and purpose - Letter sent to all households proposing provision of disabled parking spaces.	Outcome - Some residents objected to proposals and stated no need for specific parking spaces as majority of residents disabled, so not introduced.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Allenby Court - Tree Consultation		
Activity and purpose - Original request was made at scheme visit. Letters were sent to all residents at Allenby Court to establish if they have any objection to certain trees around the complex being lopped and cut back.	Outcome - 18 out of 45 residents responded and of these 17 residents had no objections to the trees being lopped. The gardeners have now cut back the trees.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Abbots Court Security Measures		
Activity and purpose - Residents invited to meeting discuss proposals for providing extra security at the scheme in response to complaints of ASB and suggestions made at scheme visits.	Outcome - SHA agreed to provide improved security gates and fencing.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
St John's Court Refuse Collection		
Activity and purpose - Residents requested provision of recycling facilities. Consultation carried out.	Outcome - All residents agreed. Recycling facilities provided by SMDC.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	

Bluebell Close - Gate consultation		
<p>Activity and purpose - A resident requested a gate to be fitted to the alley way as local children were using it as an area to 'hang around'. Letter sent to all residents at Bluebell Close to establish if anyone had an objection to a lockable gate being fitted to the communal alley.</p>	All residents responded and all residents were in favour of the gate being installed. Gate ordered and is awaiting installation.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Stoneyfields Court – Consultation over gardening area		
<p>Activity and purpose - Following a request from a resident to maintain an area of garden space surveys were sent out to all residents.</p>	<p>Outcome - 30 residents responded and of those 27 were in favour of the resident maintaining the garden area. The resident now maintains the garden.</p>	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Hanover House consultation over TV in lounge		
<p>Activity and purpose - Letter sent to residents regarding installation of TV and licence. Cost of licence to be included in future service charge.</p>	<p>Outcome - 20 responses out of 27 received. All responses received in favour. TV installed and current licence purchased.</p>	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Sandpiper Court redesign of raised beds.		
<p>Activity and purpose - Residents surveyed on suggestion that raised beds be redesigned.</p>	<p>Outcome - Changes being implemented currently by gardening team.</p>	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	

Regeneration and development

The consultation carried out by the Regeneration and Development team is extremely varied and can range from door knocking exercises to large open events put on in conjunction with their partners. The team do not consult specifically with the tenants of SHA or BMHA but with residents in the areas of which SHA developments are taking place. The table reflects the type of consultation methods that have been used but are not representative of the number of activities carried out with many exercises carried out several times due to the high number of residents involved.

Bilton works Development		
Activity and purpose - Consulting residents who live in the immediate vicinity of the former Portmeirion pottery site on the demolition procedure and our plans for the site.	Outcome - Resident opinion gained on demolition and development, the colour of coping stones and party wall issues. This opinion has influenced decisions on the development specification.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Elsby Place parking scheme		
Activity and purpose - Door knocking exercise to acquire resident opinion on proposed parking scheme.	Outcome - Off road parking scheme now being completed following successful consultations	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Deakin Road parking scheme		
Activity and purpose - Door knocking exercise to acquire resident opinion on proposed parking scheme.	Outcome - Off road parking scheme now being completed following successful consultations	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
General Renewal Area schemes		
Activity and purpose - Door knock and questionnaire finding out if residents would like new doors windows and boundary walls.	Outcome - Relevant action taken where appropriate.	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	N/A

Glitter bins project		
Activity and purpose - Display boards explaining our involvement; council gave presentation explaining the dangers of litter; school Eco Committee entered a colouring competition & the 4 winning designs were displayed on the sides of 2 Glitter Bins in Chell Heath.	Outcome - Successful litter awareness campaign; established link with school and community (via children discussing the project with friends and family)	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	
Elephant and Castle Consultation Event		
Activity and purpose - Open day resident consultation regarding the potential development of the former Elephant and Castle site at Fegg Hayes. Display board, example plans and questionnaire.	Outcome - Consultation results fed in to the Fegg Hayes & Chell heath master plan steering group	
	Impact rating	
	VFM rating	

Regeneration and development planned customer involvement

Activity	Description	Intended Outcomes
Satisfaction Surveys	Survey to be carried out on new BMHA provided properties in Floyd Street, Stoke	To assess customer satisfaction levels with properties and facilities provided to influence future delivery
Satisfaction Surveys	Surveys carried out regarding the 'facelift scheme' carried out in the general renewal areas	To assess satisfaction levels with service delivery and learn for future schemes
Range of consultation methods	Surveys and activities carried out in relation to scheme delivery as outlined in the master plan of Chell Heath.	To deliver improvements based upon customer expectations, to include parking spaces and improved shop fronts.

Value for Money

Information on the financial cost of consultation activities has been produced, but for 2007 some of these calculations had to be done retrospectively. This is an improvement issue and a cost assessment will be included within the involvement recording system to be implemented early 2008. This recording system will take into account room hire, refreshments, travel costs and staff time in attendance and preparation time. It will also value the time of customers attending involvement events.

Partnership activity and events

In addition to the partnerships already mentioned in this report SHA has also taken part in a number of events organised by local authorities, the Police and Primary Care Trusts. These have taken the form of action days which involve addressing problems on estates in one united effort and providing an opportunity through well publicised events for residents to pass on information about the area in which they live. SHA staff have attended 6 of these events that have taken place in Fegg Hayes, Tunstall and Stone.

Future Plans

- To improve the Customer Involvement database that will allow staff to record customer involvement activities and register those customers that are interested in taking part in involvement activities. The database will include a costs section which will allow assessment of activities from a value for money perspective.
- The database will also provide a function to allow the development of customer involvement performance indicators. These indicators will be developed with customers and staff and will be reported quarterly along with a summary of involvement activities.
- The quarterly publication of the performance indicators and activity summary will demonstrate involvement outcomes more clearly to staff and customers.
- The association will set up a number of customer service panels. These will be made up of customers and look specifically at service provision within the areas of tenancy services, maintenance, communications, tenancy support and customer involvement.

- Work to recruit more customers to the existing panels will also take place. Customers need to be recruited to the Equality and Diversity and Value for Money panels. It is hoped that once these and other customers are recruited they will encourage new customers to become involved and provide them with support.

A new involvement survey that includes descriptions of activities and opportunities to get involved was sent out to all customers in early 2008. This has resulted in the recruitment of more customers to the customer forum. In addition a booklet that gives customers more in depth information is planned for 2008, plus a resource pack for all staff to assist in the selection of appropriate involvement methods.