

Your Voice, Our Plans

How tenant feedback shaped our Tenant Involvement and Community Engagement Strategies 2026–2029

Over the past few months, we've been reviewing how we involve tenants in shaping Arawak Walton, and how we support the communities where you live. This report explains how we listened, who was involved in checking and challenging our thinking, and — most importantly — what's changed as a result.

104 tenants took part (80 postal + 24 online)	5 strategic priorities reshaped by what you told us	81% want regular or occasional updates on impact	21 Jul 2026 — new strategy approved by Board
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Why we did this

The Regulator of Social Housing recently assessed how we're performing against its Consumer Standards and gave us a "C2" grading. One of the things the Regulator wanted to see improve was how widely we hear from tenants — we've relied on a fairly small, familiar group of people getting involved, through our Tenant Experience Committee (TEC) and Tenant Quality Panel (TQP), rather than hearing from a broad cross-section of everyone we house.

We took this seriously. Rather than treat it as a box-ticking exercise, we used it as a reason to properly test our Tenant Involvement Strategy and Community Engagement Strategy with tenants directly, before either went anywhere near final approval.

How we listened

Both strategies went through the same three layers of scrutiny before they reached our Board:

1. Tenant-wide survey Open to all tenants, by post (80 responses) and online (24 responses) — 104 in total, alongside the 2025/26 Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey.	2. Tenant Quality Panel A group of tenants scrutinised and challenged our draft thinking directly, through focus sessions. Now relaunched as Tenant Voice.	3. Tenant Experience Committee Reviewed the findings and draft strategies, testing them against tenant priorities and regulatory expectations.	4. Board approval Arawak Walton's Board gave formal sign-off to both strategies on 21 July 2026.
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This wasn't a single tick-box consultation — it was survey, panel and committee scrutiny feeding into one another, with the Board only approving the final strategy once all three had had their say.

"Every tenant has a voice. Every voice is heard. Every voice makes a difference." — the vision at the heart of our new Tenant Involvement Strategy.

Making sure we heard from a wide range of people

Because the Regulator's concern was specifically about relying on the same small pool of engaged tenants, we didn't just want a high response number — we wanted to know who was responding, and who wasn't. So we compared our survey responses against our full tenant base of 1,106 households, across age, property type, gender, ethnicity and disability.

We're not just collecting demographic information — we're using it to find gaps and act on them. That's the whole point.

Here's what we found, honestly:

- Black British tenants — our largest single tenant group at 46% of our tenant base — made up only 34% of survey responses, a 12-point gap. White tenants, by contrast, were overrepresented (29% of responses vs 22% of the tenant base).
- Female tenants (60% of our tenant base) were also underrepresented in responses (52%), a 9-point gap.
- General Needs tenants — 83% of our tenant base — were underrepresented (75% of responses), an 8-point gap, and tenants aged 25–44 were notably less likely to respond than older age groups.
- On disability, our responses were broadly representative of our tenant base.

As the largest independent Black and Minority Ethnic housing association in the North West, hearing proportionately from Black British tenants specifically matters to who we are — not just as a compliance box to tick. We're not treating this as a one-off finding, and Priority 2 of the Strategy commits us to targeted outreach wherever a gap like this shows up. Here's what we're doing about it over the next two quarters:

- Partnering with community and faith groups who already have strong, trusted relationships with Black British tenants, to promote involvement opportunities through familiar channels rather than only our own.
- Recruiting and supporting tenant ambassadors from underrepresented communities to help spread the word in their own words.
- Taking involvement out into the community — at events like our Windrush celebrations — rather than only asking tenants to come to us.
- Reviewing our survey and involvement materials to make sure they're accessible, culturally appropriate, and available in the languages our tenants need.
- Offering more flexible, digital-first ways to get involved — online forums, quick surveys, social media — aimed at reaching younger and working-age tenants who find evening meetings harder to attend.
- Timing engagement activity around childcare and work schedules, building on the childcare and evening/weekend support already introduced under Priority 3.
- Tracking progress every quarter, not just once, so we can see whether these actions are actually closing the gap — and change course if they're not.

This analysis compared 102 unique survey respondents — from 104 total submissions, after removing duplicates from tenants who completed both the postal and online survey — against our full tenant base.

What tenants told us, and what we've done about it

104 tenants took part in our 2026 tenant-wide survey — 80 by post and 24 online — alongside the 2025/26 Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey and follow-up focus sessions with the Tenant Quality Panel and Tenant Experience Committee. Together, they gave us a clear, evidenced picture of what needed to change. Every one of the five strategic priorities in the new Tenant Involvement Strategy responds directly to something tenants told us.

What we heard	What we've done
56% of tenants told us they weren't aware of either strategy before receiving the survey.	● New Priority 1: reach every tenant with simple, clear messaging across multiple channels — post, staff visits, newsletters and community promotion — not just tenants who are already engaged.
Time (41%), health or mobility (35%), childcare (28%) and transport (26%) were the biggest barriers to getting involved. These are practical barriers, not a lack of interest.	● New Priority 3: evening and weekend sessions, childcare provision or reimbursement, travel expense reimbursement, digital training and device loans, and fully accessible venues with interpretation support.

What we heard	What we've done
Walkabouts (51%), community events (38%), online engagement (34%), TQP/panels (30%) and mystery shopping (30%) were the most popular ways to get involved — informal, practical activity valued as much as formal meetings.	● New Priority 4: the Tenant Quality Panel has evolved into a flexible, blended model combining formal panel meetings with informal, activity-based engagement and tenant-chosen "consumer deep dives". Mystery shopping and expanded online engagement have been added to the core offer.
Tenants who get involved don't always reflect the wider tenant population.	● New Priority 2: actively reaching underrepresented tenants through topic-focused groups, digital forums and neighbourhood-based activity, with ongoing monitoring of who takes part and targeted action where gaps are found.
81% of tenants want regular or occasional updates on how their feedback has made a difference; only 10% said they didn't want updates at all.	● New Priority 5: quarterly "You Said, We Did" updates across all channels. Every involvement activity will now open with a summary of what's changed as a result of tenant input.
Tenants also want to see how community investment money is spent and what it achieves.	● Quarterly reporting on Donations Fund applications, approvals and outcomes. ● Case studies, tenant ambassador stories and video content sharing the impact of community projects we've supported.

Figures above are drawn from the 2026 tenant-wide survey (postal and online, 104 responses combined). The two surveys told a consistent story throughout — where they differ slightly, we've used the larger postal sample as the headline figure.

How you told us you'd like to hear from us

No single channel reaches everyone, so we asked. Here's what tenants told us:

- Post (61%), email (59%) and text (54%) were the most popular ways to receive updates.
- Newsletters (48%), app notifications (34%) and social media (33%) were also valued by a significant number of tenants.

This is exactly why Priority 1 commits to reaching tenants through multiple channels together, rather than picking just one and hoping it works for everyone.

On digital access specifically: most tenants (72%) told us they wouldn't need extra digital support to take part, but for those who would, home visits or phone support, device loans and digital skills training are all now part of what we offer.

What matters most to you

We also asked what issues tenants most want us to focus on. The clear priorities were:

- Health & wellbeing (63%)
- Financial inclusion / cost of living (60%)
- Community facilities (55%)
- Employment, skills & training (53%)
- Environment (46%)

These priorities are directly shaping how we target our Community Investment Donations Fund and the community-led initiatives we choose to support — so the issues tenants told us matter most are the ones we're putting resource behind.

What's happening next

This isn't a one-off exercise — the same approach is already running on our next priority area:

- A second "deep dive" review is underway, this time on Estate Management and Home Visits, with Tenant Voice already involved in shaping it.
- A further tenant-wide survey (online and by post) will go out shortly, with findings reported back to Tenant Voice.
- Further deep dives on other service areas are planned through the rest of 2026/27, each following the same survey-panel-committee-Board process.
- Every quarter, we'll publish an updated performance dashboard so tenants can see progress for themselves.

Want to get involved?

We're always looking for more tenants to take part — through Tenant Voice, our surveys, or one of the new lower-commitment ways to get involved we're piloting from autumn 2026.

To find out more or register your interest, contact [insert contact details] or visit [insert webpage link].

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