



Village Consultation February 2026

Souldern United Charity



Souldern United Charity

SUC was formed in 2001 when several older village charities, some dating back hundreds of years, were brought together with the purpose to provide relief to those in Souldern suffering financial hardship.

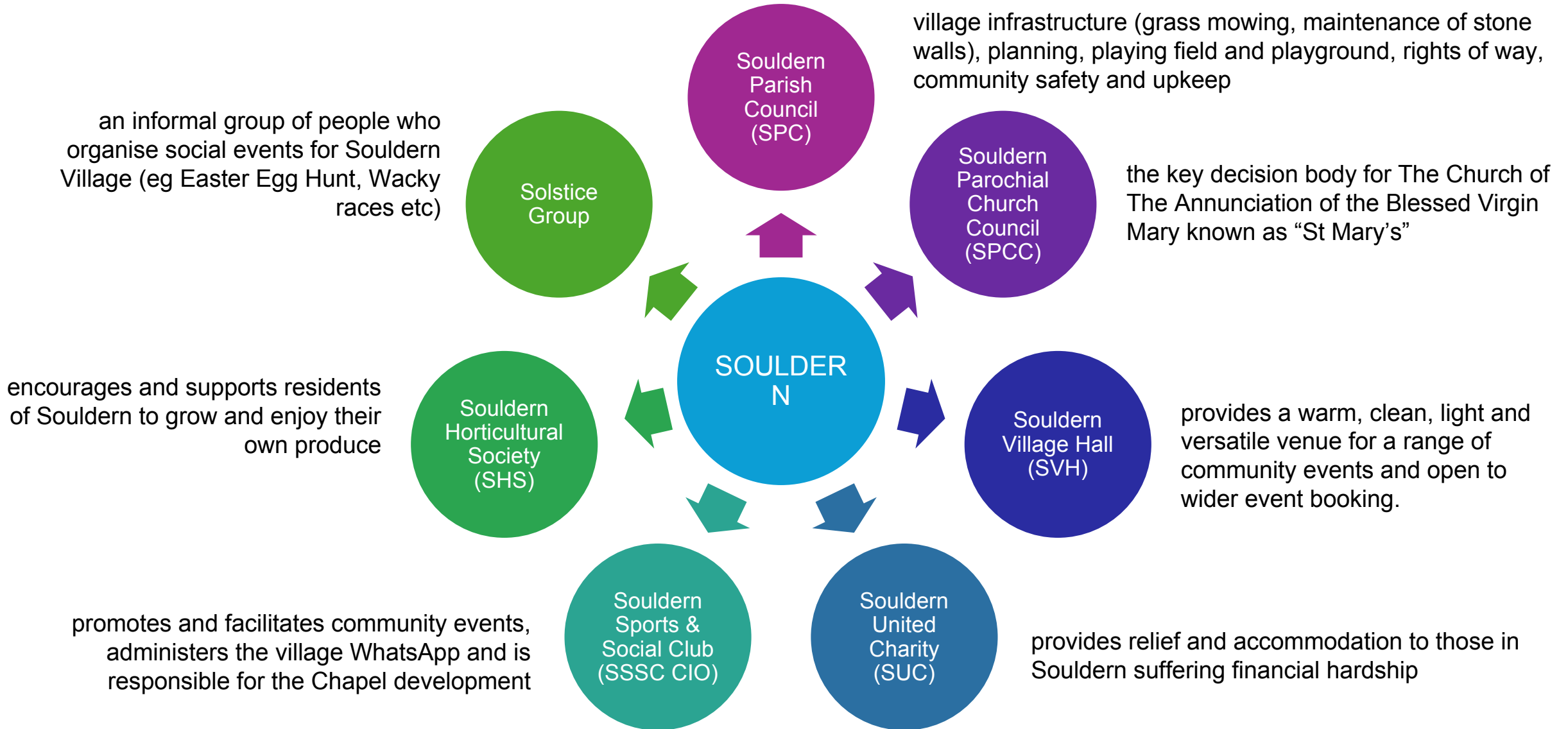
SUC is governed by a constitution (or 'Scheme') that sets out our purpose and is regulated by the Charities Commission. Currently the Charity has three main activities:

- **Housing** – SUC owns two historic one-bedroom cottages in Souldern, designated as almshouses which are let on social housing rates on 'a needs basis'.
- **Land** – SUC owns land in Souldern that is currently used as two allotment plots. It also owns the Pound/Secret Garden used for village recreation.
- **Grants** – SUC makes various charitable donations to individuals and causes in the village.

The SUC has 7 Trustees made up of 1 ex officio trustee (Cherwell Valley Benefice), 3 nominated trustees (by the SPC) and between 1 and 3 co-opted trustees

Current Trustees are Katy Draper (Chair), Richard Sharman (Treasurer), Susan Jones, John Hoodless, James Maw and a non-Trustee Alan Smith (Secretary)

Where does SUC sit within Souldern Organisations



SUC Village Consultation Objective:

The SUC Trustees want to ensure that the Charity's aims remain relevant to Souldern Village life.

The consultation questionnaire was delivered to all 160 household in the village with the aim to ask the residents of Souldern to share their views to help shape the future direction of the charity.

61 questionnaires were returned which is over 35% response rate (given some multiple household returns)

Using the village feedback from the consultation the trustees will be looking to update the Scheme, which is 25 years old, to ensure that the charity is able to meet the changing future requirements of the village.



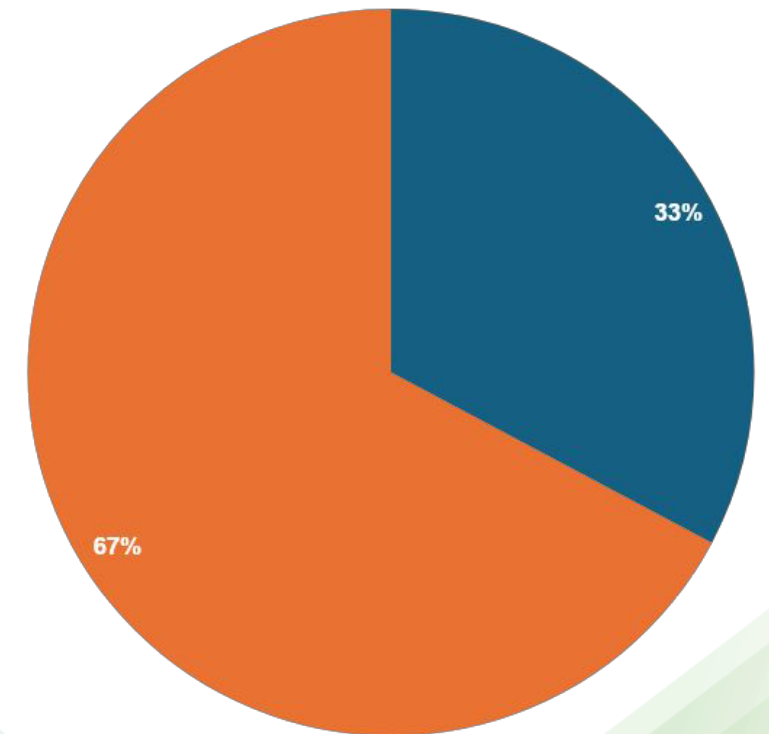
Results: Souldern United Charity Aims

Main takeouts:

- Two thirds think that SUC should NOT be solely about supporting financial hardship
- Community support and development
- Social cohesion to ensure community spirit
- Enhancing of quality of life
- Activities/support for children and elderly

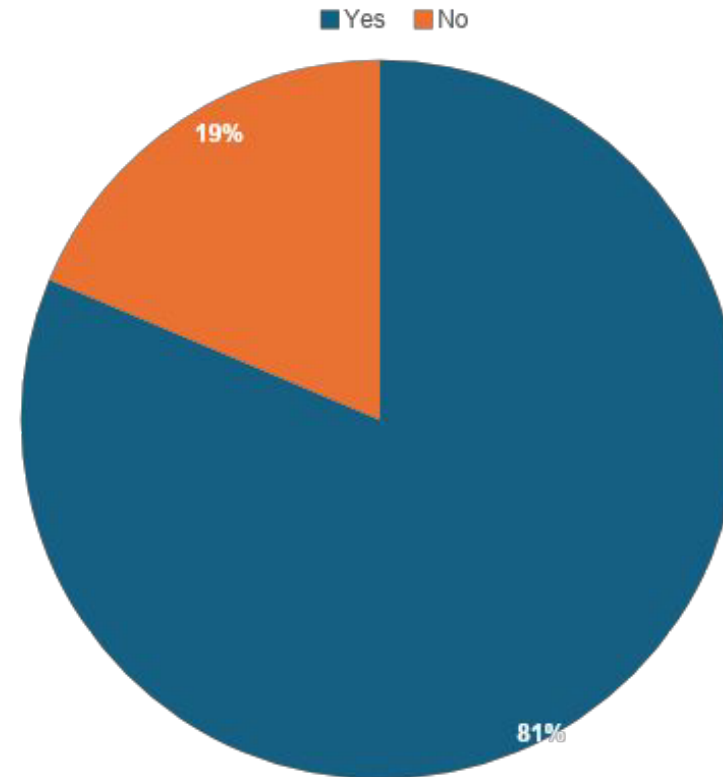
Should SUC's aim only be to support financial hardship

■ Yes ■ No



Results: Souldern United Charity Aims

Should SUC contribute to community events



Main takeouts:

- 4 out 5 think SUC should support/contribute to community events
- Events to engender community spirit
- Open to all villagers whatever the age
- Promote community well being

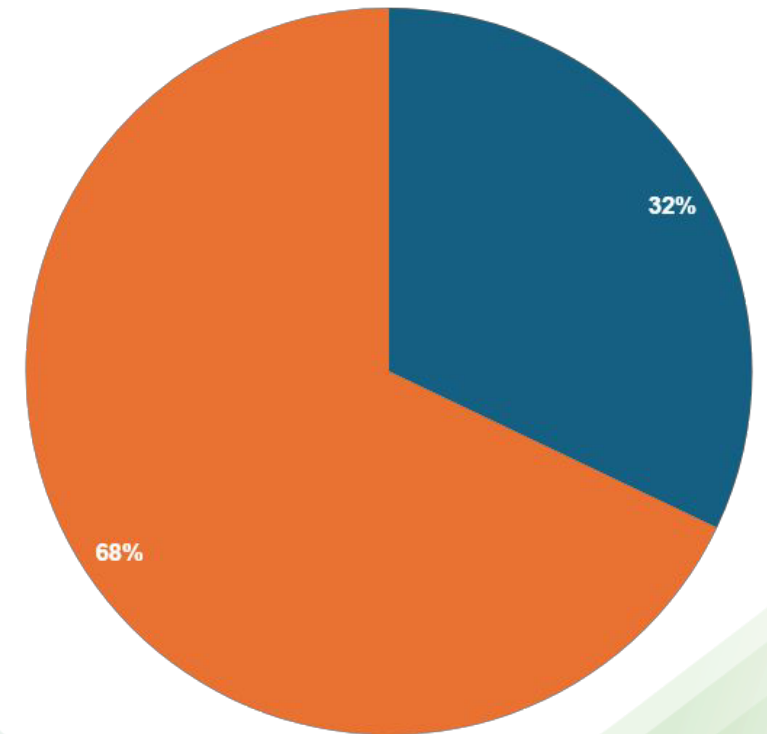
Results: Souldern United Charity Housing

Main takeouts:

- Two thirds think that SUC does NOT need to provide more low cost housing
- 2 houses is the right number
- Housing for young people unable to rent
- Connection to the village

Do you feel Souldern needs more low cost housing

■ Yes ■ No



Results: Souldern United Charity Land

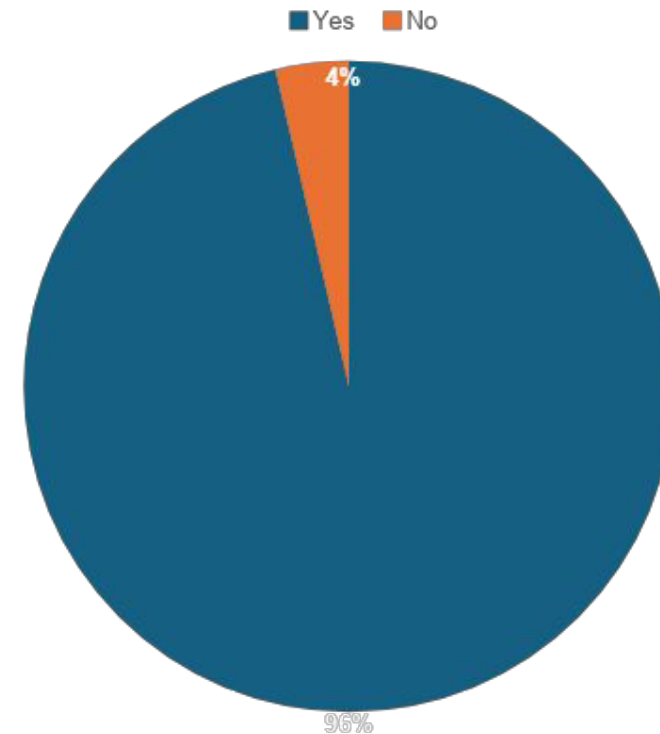
Main takeouts:

- Overwhelming support to leave land as allotments

The Pound/Secret Garden:

- Leave as a quiet space
- Give it a facelift with better seating/table
- Wild flower beds for peaceful sanctuary

Do you think the land is best used as allotments

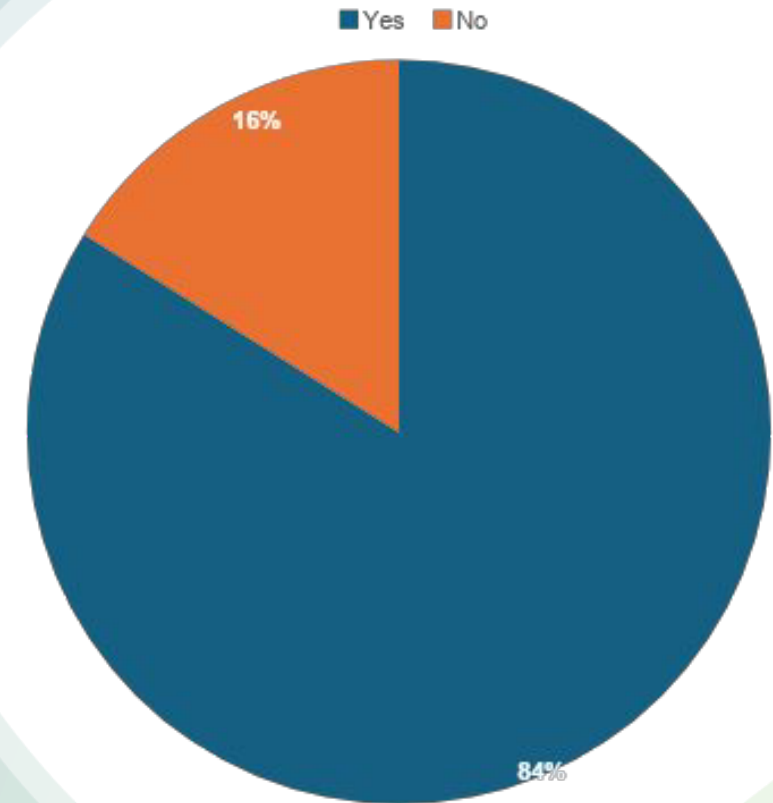


Results: Souldern United Charity Grants

Main takeouts:

- Over 80% think grants should be on a needs basis
- Grant on a case by case basis
- To those at key points in their lives
- Time in the village

Do you think grants should only be awarded on a needs basis

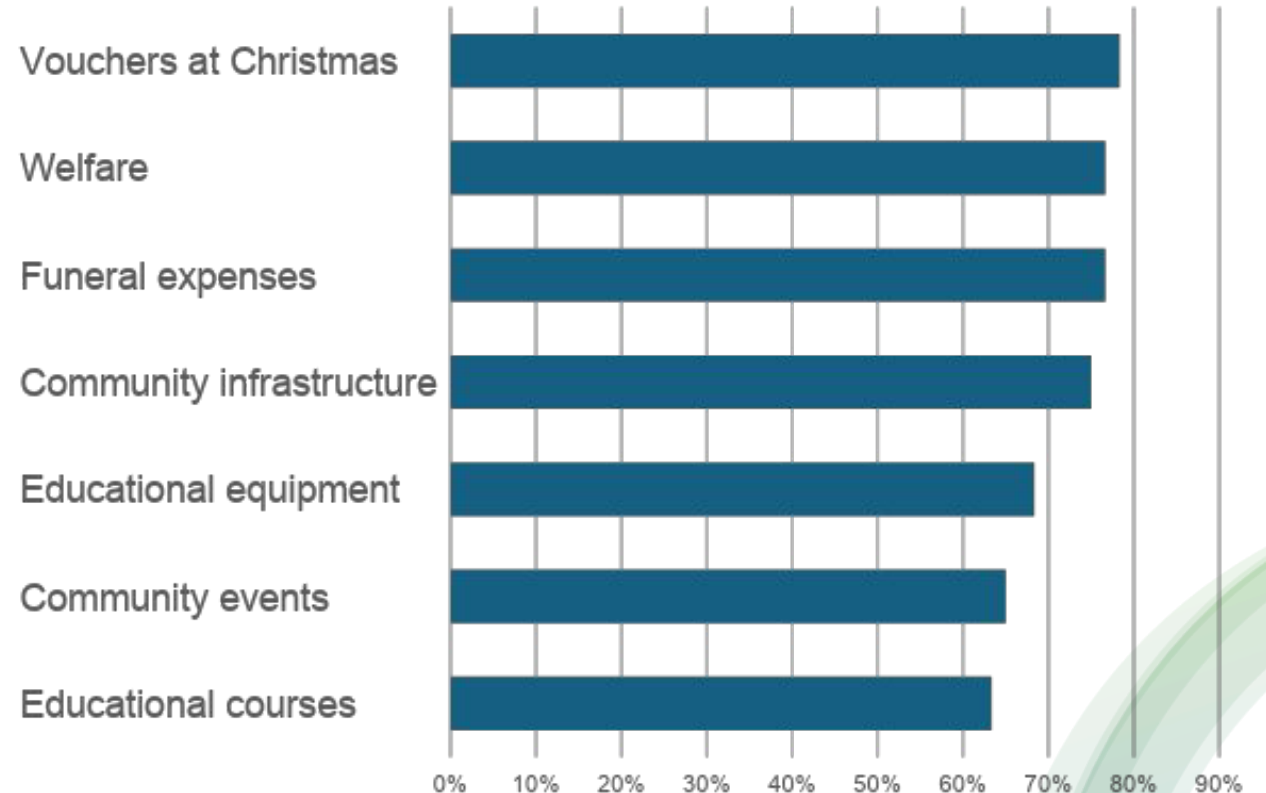


Results: Souldern United Charity Grants

Main takeouts:

- All are important but Christmas Vouchers, Welfare and Funeral are top 3
- Guidelines needed on how to apply for grants
- Support for elderly at home, clubs
- Community transport scheme
- Souldern is relatively affluent

Which of the following grants should SUC support

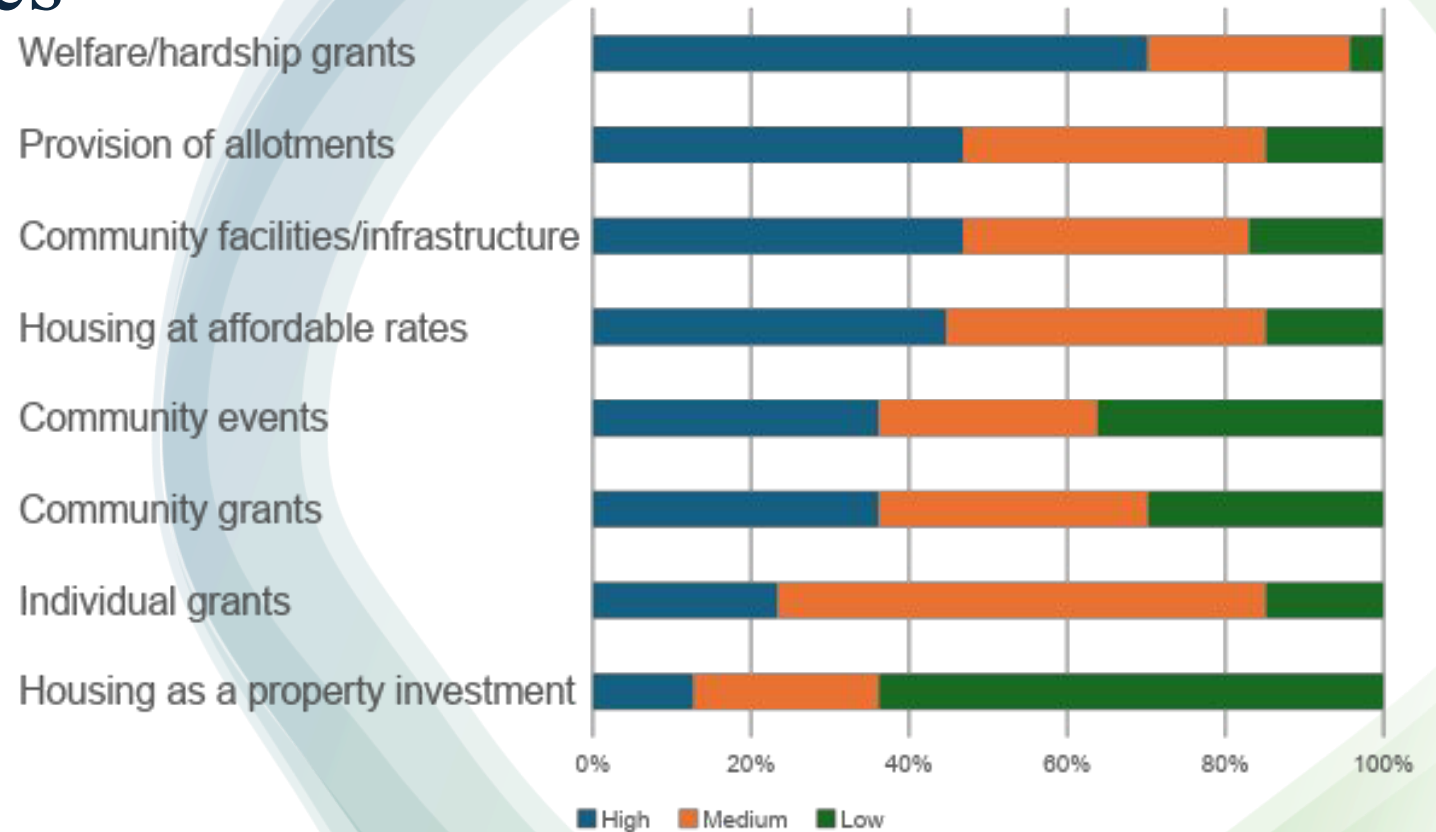


Results: Souldern United Charity Priorities

Main takeouts:

- Welfare/hardship grants highest
- Property investment lowest

Rank following areas by importance (H/M/L)

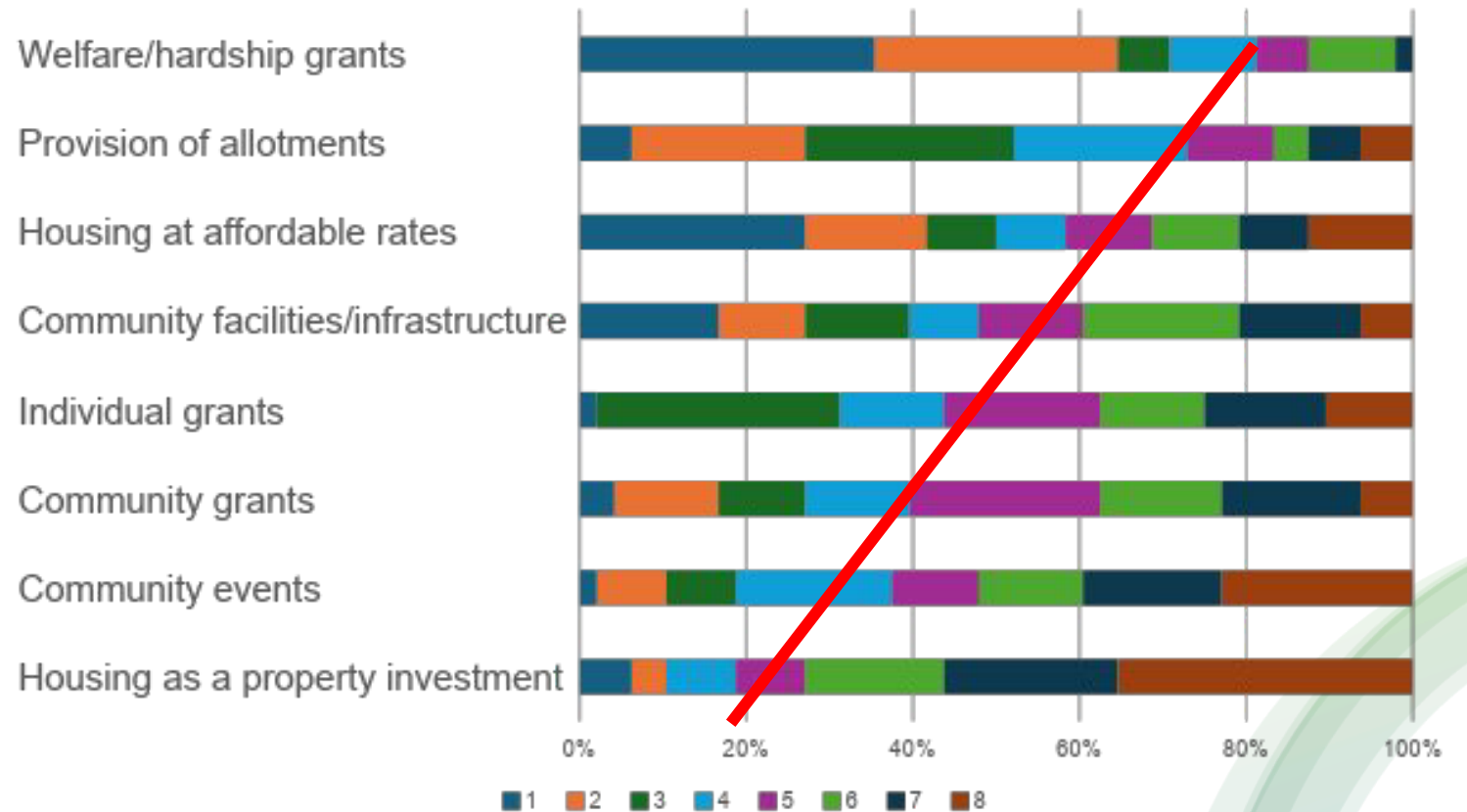


Results: Souldern United Charity Priorities

Main takeouts:

- Welfare, Allotments and Housing seen as top priorities
- Community events seen as lower priority although previous questions show support

Rank following areas by priority (1 - High to 8 – Low)



Results: Souldern United Charity Additional Comments

Main takeouts:

- Clarification on who and what the various Souldern organisations do; SPC, SUC, SSSC, Solstice group etc
- SUC well placed to create community spirit
- Remit should be to enhance village life
- More visibility on how to ask for help, process, guidelines and forms for grant application
- Village skip for items too big for bin but not able or worthy of tip trip
- Support the Fox as a vital village hub



Initial reflections from the trustees

We took clear feedback from the survey that the Charity needs to change to reflect today's needs. In particular it should:

- widen remit to cover community support and social cohesion to enhance village life
- continue with, but not make our sole purpose, the provision of financial hardship support and charity housing
- keep the allotments as they are but enhance pound/ secret garden
- provide better communication on what the charity has and can provide, including creating clear guidelines on applying for grants
- work more effectively with other Souldern organisations - help clarify and communicate who does what in the village.

There will need to be amendments to the SUC Scheme to allow changes to the charity's purpose or use of funds. The trustees will need to take this as a next step based on the survey and today's consultation





Open discussion