



ACCENT EAST PERFORMANCE REPORT

2017-18



ACCENTGROUP.ORG

DEAR RESIDENT

2017/18 WAS A BIG YEAR FOR ACCENT. WE WELCOMED PAUL DOLAN, OUR NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE, LAUNCHED OUR NEW VISION AND VALUES, AND WORKED CLOSELY WITH OVER 500 OF YOU TO DEVELOP THE ACCENT PARTNERSHIP. WE'VE GOT BIG AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE, AND THEY INCLUDE WANTING YOU TO BE LIVING WITH THE NUMBER ONE HOUSING ASSOCIATION IN THE COUNTRY. WE KNOW THERE'S LOTS OF WORK FOR US TO DO TO ACHIEVE THIS, BUT WE KNOW WE WILL. WE WANT OUR SERVICES TO BE EXCEPTIONAL AND FOR YOU TO BE PROUD TO LIVE IN AN ACCENT HOME. BUT, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE WANT YOU, OUR RESIDENTS TO BE HAPPY.

CONTENTS

**LAUNCHING OUR
VISION AND VALUES**

04

**INTRODUCING...
DAMIAN ROCHE**

06

**INVESTING IN
OUR HOMES**

07

**ESTATE
IMPROVEMENTS**

08

**UNIVERSAL
CREDIT UPDATE**

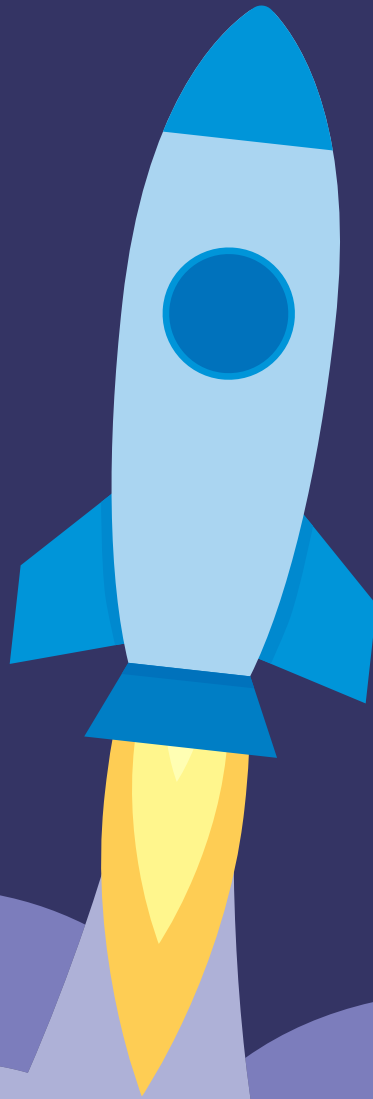
09

**MYACCOUNT
IS HERE**

10

**SUPPORTING PEOPLE
IN THEIR TENANCIES**

11



LAUNCHING OUR NEW VISION AND VALUES

2018 saw the launch of our new vision and values. Our new service offer, the Accent Partnership, is also on its way and we will be talking to you about that very soon.

With our new vision and values we will provide you with high quality, affordable homes and services and support you throughout your tenancy on your journey with us as our resident.

OUR VISION

WITH YOU FOR YOUR JOURNEY

OUR VALUES

Our new values shape everything we do –
and every home and service we provide for you:



**WE
ARE** **ENERGETIC**

We strive for the **BEST** every time

**WE
ARE** **DRIVEN**

We do whatever it takes to get it **RIGHT**



**WE
ARE** **SMART**

We challenge ourselves to **IMPROVE** every day

**WE
ARE** **CARING**

We are genuine people who **CARE**



INTRODUCING...

...OUR NEW CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DIRECTOR



Damian Roche, as your director, is responsible for making sure you get the very best from your experience of living with us.

Damian has been with Accent for quite a few years now, so he is no stranger to understanding exactly what it takes to make our services the best they can be, and he will work with his teams to make sure they are.

...THE ACCENT PARTNERSHIP

The way we deliver our services is about to dramatically change for the better, and it's all thanks to your input. We talked to over 500 residents through surveys and focus groups, to help us develop our new service offer, that we're calling the Accent Partnership.

We'll be sending you more information on the Accent Partnership either by email, or in the post over the next few weeks, so watch this space!



In July this year, we took ourselves out on tour. In total we visited 18 different estates across the country, here's the team after we stopped off in Paston, Peterborough.



INVESTING IN...

...NEW HOMES

We provided 41 new homes to rent for people in need in our region. This is great for the families we helped, but we know that many more homes are needed, and we are working closely with our local authority partners to build them. We are currently converting our old offices in Peterborough into 25 new homes, and we will work with Peterborough City Council to make sure they are all offered to people who need them. We will build more new homes across our region over the next few years. If you would like to rent or buy a home, please keep in touch with us.

We welcomed 265 new families into the homes which became vacant last year, and we helped another 41 carry out mutual exchanges.

...EXISTING HOMES

Last year we invested over £850,000 in improving your homes, by fitting over 200 new kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, windows and doors. We are making more improvements this year and we will let you know if your home is due for one. We also spent £3M on repairing your homes.

WE INVESTED OVER...

£ **20,000**

**ON OUR ESTATES,
ON THINGS LIKE:**

- A new bin store area at Howell Drive to tackle fly-tipping.
- New buggy stores at Century Square, Cook Avenue and Elton House to provide storage for families.
- A new scooter store at Cook Avenue so a wheelchair user could store his electric wheelchair safely

If you have any suggestions for improvements on your estate, please contact us.

ESTATES CONTRACTORS

We introduced new grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts, which you have generally been happy with. Even so, we will continue to work closely with the contractors to make sure you stay happy with those standards.



UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE

Many residents have moved onto digital Universal Credit, a new benefit introduced by the Government, to replace Housing Benefit and other benefits.

The digital service is managed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Claimants see a work coach at the Job Centre who helps them make their claim online. To receive payments, you must have an email address and a suitable account, such as a bank, building society or credit union account. Some post office accounts are also accepted as long as they have an 8-digit account number.

If you know you are moving onto Universal Credit, please tell us. We can help you if you struggle with the changeover. We will need to know your email address and National Insurance number, as this is how the DWP identifies you.

You can wait up to six weeks for your first monthly payment, which could put you in rent arrears. If you receive full Housing Benefit, please start making payments on to your rent account now so you don't get into debt when you are moved across.



MYACCOUNT IS HERE

After months of design, testing and talking to residents, we are delighted to announce that MyAccount, our new customer portal is here.

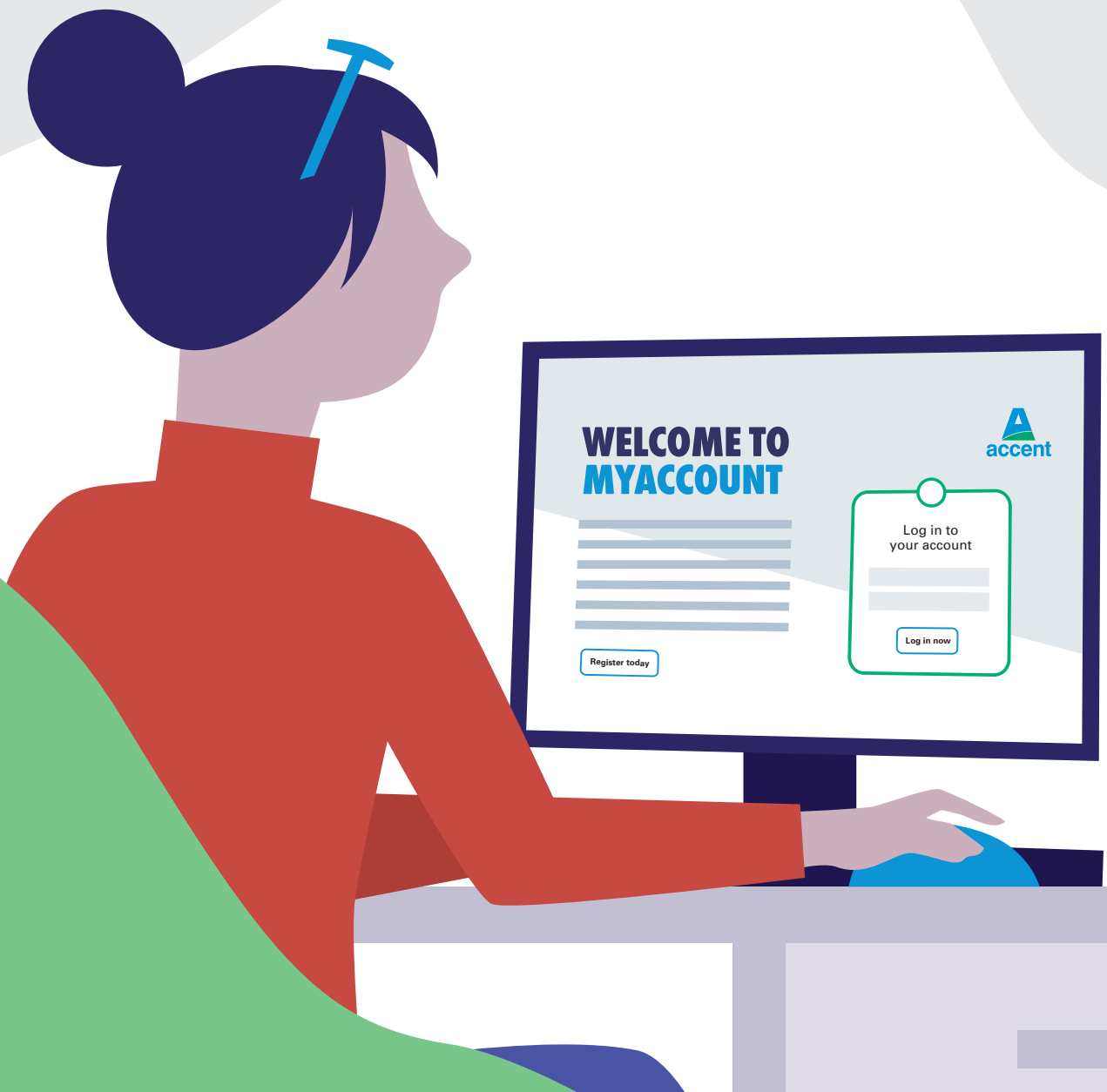
Over 3,200 of you have signed up so far!

The new portal has been re-designed from top to bottom, so reporting a repair, updating your details or contacting us is even more convenient and much simpler than before. It looks and feels different and it doesn't matter what device you use to access it – MyAccount will look equally as good.

Paying your rent on-line is easier too as MyAccount securely stores and automatically adds your account

number, so you won't need to add it manually when you want to make a payment via Allpay.

We're really confident that MyAccount is a huge improvement on our previous system – why not activate your account [here](#) today.





SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN THEIR TENANCIES

Our tenancy sustainability officers (TSOs) are a very busy crew. They provide support and advice to people who are struggling to manage their rent and other aspects of their tenancy. Here are a couple of examples of where we have helped:

Mr G, a single elderly man, has been an Accent tenant for 35 years. We recently noticed that his rent account had fallen into arrears, and we soon realised he was struggling to cope. Ian, one of our TSOs, picked up the case.

Mr G had been misled into buying various insurance policies – totalling a staggering £250 a week. Ian also discovered Mr G was not receiving all the benefits he was entitled to, and was sitting on a matured insurance policy worth £26,000.

We helped Mr G get his bank account back into a healthy position and his rent account in credit. We also helped him make contact with his family, who now support him, and referred him to a GP for help with some medical issues.

Not all cases are so extreme, but we can have a similarly significant impact on our residents' lives.

A young resident was referred to us with high rent arrears. He had part time work, but an error on his benefit claim meant his rent was not being paid. We worked with the local DWP and his social worker, and were able to get his benefits fully reinstated and an arrears payment plan in place. Our support has stopped this young resident becoming homeless, and from possibly losing his job as well.

If you think you are going to struggle to manage your home, or pay your rent, please let us know. We can help.





ACCENT HOUSING

Charlestown House
Acorn Park Industrial Estate
Charlestown, Shipley
BD17 7SW

Tel: 0345 678 0555

Email: customerservices@accentgroup.org

 @accenthousing

 /accenthousing