



# **ACCENT SOUTH 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.**

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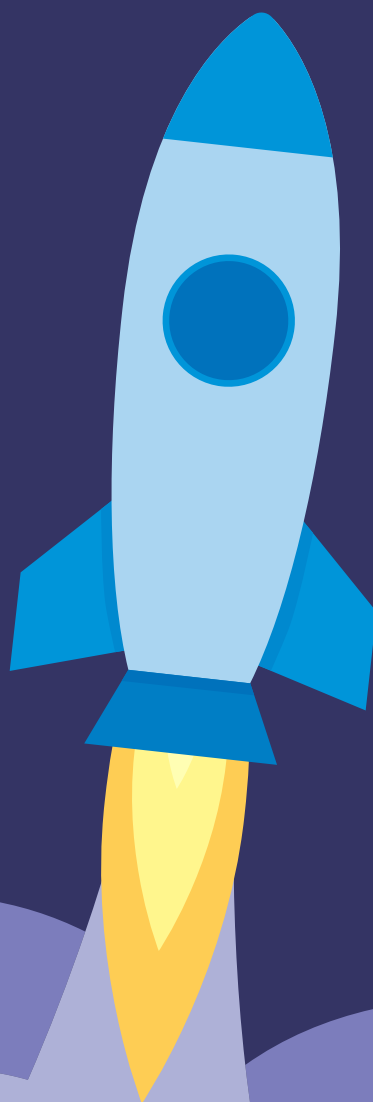
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## **LAUNCHING OUR NEW VISION AND VALUES**

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



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

Rob 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 team 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!





# INVESTING IN...

## ...NEW HOMES

We provided homes for 275 households last year across our region, and helped another 67 swap their home for something more suitable. This is good news, but there are still many people in desperate need of homes, so we need to build many more.

Across a number of sites in Surrey Heath, we are replacing over 120 of our garages with 19 affordable new homes for rent, (the photos on these pages are from the official 'start on site' event we held in July). They will be a mixture of one, two and three bedroom flats, houses and bungalows, and be ready in March 2019.

## ...EXISTING HOMES

Last year we invested over £1.7million in improving your homes by fitting over 400 new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers, heating systems etc. We are making more improvements this year and we will let you know if your home is due for one.

## ...GARAGES

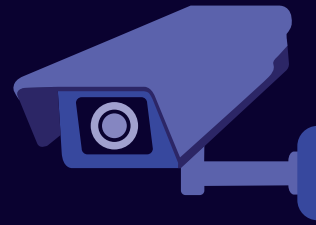
Where we can't re-develop our garage sites, we have invested in them. We worked with Secure Parking and Storage (SPS) and GPS Facilities, spending £700k on over 500 garages in Surrey Heath. We removed asbestos roofing and fitted new anti-condensation roofing sheets, painted and replaced doors, and fitted solar lighting and new parking bollards. The garages look great and they are providing precious storage space.

If you would like to rent a garage – from just £18 a week – please get in touch:

Tel: 01494 744 730

Email: [accent.garages@secureparkingandstorage.co.uk](mailto:accent.garages@secureparkingandstorage.co.uk)

We installed CCTV  
at Wimbledon Road  
and Mitcham Road  
in Camberley



**WE INVESTED OVER...**

£20,000

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

- CCTV at Wimbledon Road and Mitcham Road, Camberley (we've since seen a reduction in fly tipping and anti-social behaviour).
- Parking bays re painted and numbered in Ashford, Kent.
- New carpet at Imperial Court, Camberley following a leak.
- Tree work on overgrown trees impacting on communal areas.
- Our communal gardens in Ansell Road and Middlemoor Road in Frimley.
- New patio doors at Ballard Court, Camberley.

If you have any suggestions for improvements on your estate, or you'd like help to manage your garden, please contact us. The Surrey Choices Growth Team might also be able to help.

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## **ESTATE SERVICES**

We introduced new grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts. After a challenging start, the grounds maintenance has improved, and some schemes have been deep cleaned. You've generally been happy with the service.



# UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE

People are moving onto digital Universal Credit (UC) when they have a change in circumstances, or make a new claim for one of the benefits UC replaces. (Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit).

The digital service is managed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Claimants have a work coach assigned at the Job Centre to help them make their claim online. To receive payments, you must have an email address and a suitable bank, building society or credit union account. Some post office accounts are also suitable, as long as they have an 8-digit account number.

Residents in Bracknell Forest, Ashford and Mid-Sussex councils are already making claims online. Reigate & Banstead,

Woking, Waverley, Hart and Rushmoor councils will be directing people to the new system from 24 October 2018, and Surrey Heath and Runnymede councils from 28 November 2018.

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.

Residents in temporary accommodation, households with three or more children, or those of pension credit age and above will stay on Housing Benefit.



# 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.

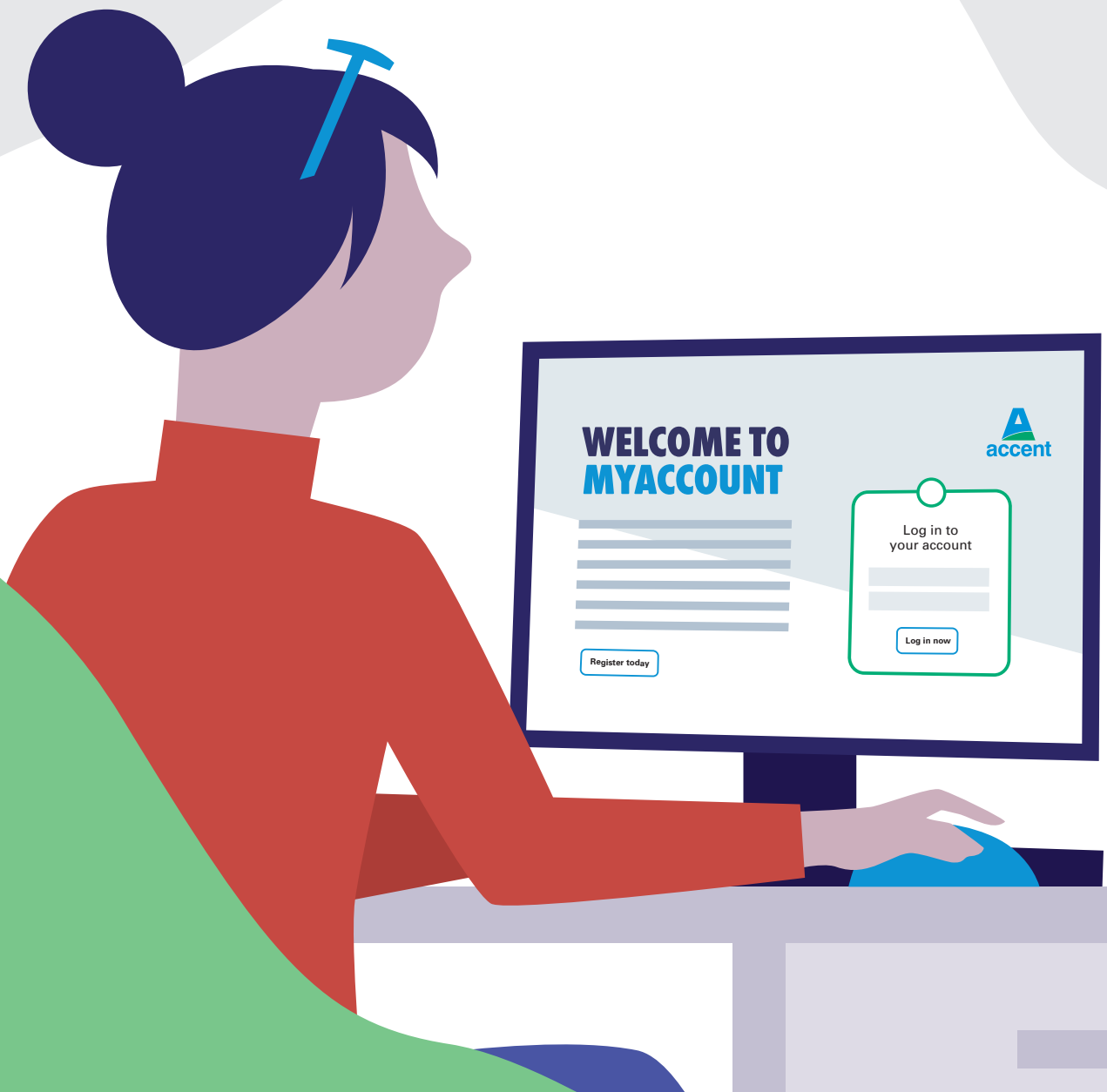
## Over 3,200 of you have signed up so far!

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.





## TENANCY SUPPORT

Our tenancy support service helps residents who are struggling with their rent, budget, benefits or simply just getting used to their tenancy.

Last year, we helped 230 residents, and generated over £85,000 in extra benefits.

There are many ways we can help, and every resident we did help was grateful for our support.

You could be referred as a new resident because you haven't had a tenancy before, or because things happen you just don't expect. Poor health, relationship breakdowns or losing our job can all affect us all, and it may mean we have to look at where you live to see if you can still manage that lifestyle. We can help you get your life back on track.

Did you know that our support officers can offer regulated debt counselling? This means advice on how to pay off a debt linked to a credit agreement or negotiations on your behalf with companies you owe money to, to reduce what you have to pay.

Jenny, from Camberley, suffered a relationship breakdown. She was left with multiple debts and didn't know how to sort them. We were able to help her with her finances and separate out her priority debts. We wrote to her creditors and negotiated new re-payment plans, and applied for a Discretionary Housing Payment to help with her rent arrears. We also helped Jenny look for a smaller, more affordable home, closer to her family for support.

If you think you could use some support, please speak to your housing officer.





**ACCENT HOUSING**

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 @accenthousing

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