



National Scrutiny Group Annual Report

April 2021

Background



The National Scrutiny Group is made up of tenants and homeowners who represent a broad cross-section of Accent's wider customer base. They investigate particular aspects of Accent's service delivery and collect evidence from a range of sources to support their recommendations. This may involve:

- Interviews with staff, contractors and suppliers.
- Interpretation of data from our housing management system.
- Analysis of secondary source information.
- Surveys and consultations involving the wider customer base.

Topics previously investigated:

- [Repairs Satisfaction Review](#)
- [Fire Safety Communications](#)
- [Grounds Maintenance](#)

Members



Mick Alston (Chair) - Chorley

Special skills:

- Leadership
- Interviewing



Abdul Bachani - Peterborough

Special skills:

- Data analysis
- IT and communications



Ayala Marshall - Huntingdon

Special skills:

- Data analysis
- Vulnerability awareness

Members



Eleanor Condron - Colne

Special skills:

- Data analysis
- Vulnerability awareness



Jan Ryles - Middlesbrough

Special skills:

- Community involvement
- Interviewing



Jenny Turner - Leeds

Special skills:

- Customer engagement
- Interviewing

Members



Lyn Nelson - Camberley

Special skills:

- Interviewing
- Report writing



Rosa Hutchings - Camberley

Special skills:

- Data analysis
- Community involvement

2020-21 Achievements



recommendations
implemented

2020-21 Scrutiny Investigations



Tenancy Terminations

Why do customers end their tenancies within the first twelve months and could Accent do more to retain customers?

MyAccount

Why are customers not using Accent's online portal, MyAccount, to its full potential?

Grass Roots Engagement

How does Accent facilitate opportunities for customers to shape and influence service delivery at a 'grass roots' or local level?

Outcomes

Fire Safety (carried out 2019/20)



- Updated fire safety signage in communal areas.
- All customers living in flats with a communal entrance received a leaflet, explaining the fire evacuation procedure.
- Evacuation procedures for all buildings listed on the [website](#).
- New [video](#) describing the measures customers can take to stay safe in their homes or evacuate safely if they need to.
- Follow-up customer survey to evaluate the success of these measures.



Outcomes

Tenancy Terminations (carried out 2020/21)



- New Rant & Rave 'exit survey' for customers who have ended their tenancy to understand their reasons.
- Training delivered to Contact Centre staff aimed at enhancing the 'end of tenancy' customer experience.
- Component lifecycles (kitchens and bathrooms) reduced by 5 years.
- More robust application process, aimed at assessing affordability, eligibility and sustainability.
- Investing in social media and search engine optimisation to promote 'hard-to let' properties.

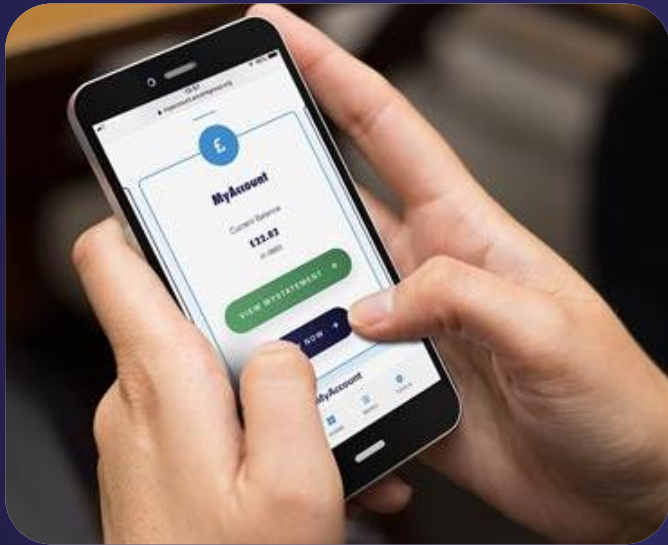


Outcomes

MyAccount (carried out 2020/21)



- Email to customers who are 'locked out' of their accounts with instructions to gain access. 120/740 customers successfully unlocked their accounts.
- New [video](#) helping customers to create an account.
- Customers no longer need to wait 10 minutes for new passwords to work.
- Online booking system integrated with repairs and gas contractors. This means that Accent can make appointments at the first point of contact when customers report repairs over the phone. Aim to replicate this facility for customers who would like to report repairs online.



Overcoming Barriers



Barrier	How did we overcome it?
<p>Due to the pandemic, we were no longer able to meet face-to-face.</p>	<p>We quickly adapted to meeting on Zoom and using SharePoint to circulate documents. We are able to meet more frequently using Zoom. Meetings are recorded so there is no need to take minutes. If members cannot attend meetings, they can catch up in their own time.</p>
<p>We have found it difficult to find a meeting time that suits all members, due to various work/family commitments.</p>	<p>We have varied the timing of our meetings, including evenings and weekends, to promote the best possible rate of attendance.</p>
<p>Virtual meetings have not replaced the need for face-to-face contact.</p>	<p>We have started to think about resuming face-to-face meetings. Face-to-face meetings will be coupled with other opportunities which may include training, site visits or social activities.</p>



Future ways of working:

- Due to the backlog of outstanding scrutiny recommendations, the NSG agreed to shift their focus from carrying out new investigations to supporting service areas to deliver on existing recommendations.
- Members will support the delivery of outstanding projects including:
 - Repairs and Maintenance Transformation
 - Building a Safer Future
 - Complaints Learning Lab