

### YOUR VOICE

The launch of our new customer engagement website, Your Voice, has helped us to engage with a greater number and a more diverse group of customers than ever before.

Your Voice is a separate website from the online portal you use to manage your tenancy/lease (MyAccount). The first time you take part in an activity, you will be prompted to 'register'. You can create an account using the same login details as you use for MyAccount if you wish.

If you've not yet used Your Voice – you can get started [here](#). It has been really interesting hearing your views and discussing your ideas.

Here's a reminder of the projects currently up and running:

- [Easy Read](#): How can we make our publications more accessible?
- [Performance Report](#): What would you like to see in our annual report to residents?
- [Heating your Home](#): Would you be happy to swap central heating for a more environmentally-friendly alternative?



### STAR CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you to everyone who has taken part in our surveys and discussions so far. Particular thanks to:

- Pam
- Chris Lynn
- Gillyanne

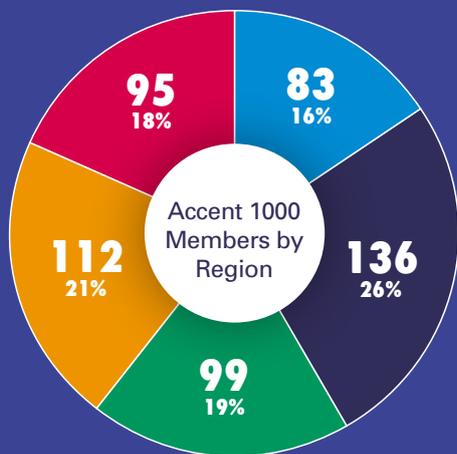
who have taken part in several of the conversations and really got us thinking! We are offering you each £15 in vouchers for your well-considered and detailed responses to our questions, as a token of our appreciation.

### ACCENT 500 HAS EVOLVED!

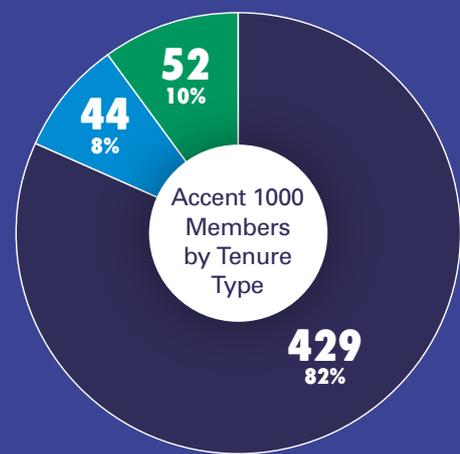
For the first time ever, we now have more than 500 customers in our online community. For this reason we are changing the name of Accent 500, to Accent 1000; to reflect the new target of 1,000 members.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our committed members for their continued help in shaping and improving services. You can find out how your feedback has contributed to service improvements [here](#).

# WHO ARE THE ACCENT 1,000?



● North East 
 ● North West 
 ● Yorkshire 
 ● East 
 ● South



● General Needs 
 ● Housing for Older People 
 ● Homeowners



Accent 1000 Members by Age



## ACCENT CUSTOMERS LEND A HAND TO HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Accent 1000 members in Huntingdonshire were invited to take part in a research activity aimed at developing a new service for their local authority.

Huntingdonshire District Council are hoping to develop a new online tool to help residents find the right advice and support services that match their needs, by understanding more about their individual circumstances.

Huntingdonshire District Council will use feedback from Accent customers to inform the design and development of the new service.



## KEEPING YOU INVOLVED AND INFORMED

Involved customers may receive invitations to take part in surveys or information on how their feedback has made a difference from [engagement@accentgroup.org](mailto:engagement@accentgroup.org).

Some customers have queried whether they should open attachments or access links in emails from this address.

You can never be too careful where online security is concerned – and it is definitely worth checking these things. Please be assured that emails which appear to come from [engagement@accentgroup.org](mailto:engagement@accentgroup.org) are safe, so you can add this address to your 'safe sender' list. In the meantime, please check your 'junk' or 'spam' folders for any communications you might have missed.

# BUILDING A SAFER FUTURE

In the last edition of *News & Views*, we told you about how staff and customers are working collaboratively to promote building safety awareness.

Here are some of the ideas currently being discussed:

- Our fire safety team making a guest appearance at the regular coffee mornings on Independent Living schemes to answer questions or address any concerns about fire safety.
- Explaining the evacuation procedure as part of the '7 Day Settling In Call' that all new customers should receive.
- Using the 4-week visit from the Customer Partner, that all new customers should receive, as an opportunity to remind customers about fire safety.
- Translating existing building safety literature into 'easy-read' format. (Find out more about easy-read [here](#)).
- Exploring the possibility of including homeowners in our gas servicing contract.
- Reminding homeowners who sublet their properties of their responsibilities as a landlord, in terms of health and safety.
- More accurate and detailed recording of customer information to determine which customers may need further assistance from Accent or their local fire service to escape from a fire, if they need to.

These are just ideas at this stage - we'll keep you informed about progress. In the meantime, if you have any thoughts about how Accent can improve building safety awareness, please let us know [here](#).





# LOCAL ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHT

At Accent we're committed to giving customers real choice and influence over how their services are delivered locally. We know that some of you have been disappointed by this in the past, but we're working really hard to turn this around. Here are a couple of examples:



### **Gritting and snow clearance**

We're consulting with customers at seven Independent Living schemes in the North East, to find out whether they are happy with the current gritting and snow clearance service. The cost has increased over the last few years, due to increased periods of colder weather.

We explained the current specification to customers and consulted with them about proposals to help lower the costs. We asked whether they would be in favour of reducing visits from the contractor to days on which the weather was forecast to drop below 0 degrees rather than 1 degree, and whether the whole scheme needed to be gritted or just particular areas. We invited residents to give other suggestions about how the specification could be tailored to help ensure that the scheme is a safe and attractive place to live, whilst keeping service charges affordable.

### **Tailoring our ground maintenance service**

Our aim is to deliver a good standard of grounds maintenance services across all of the regions in which we operate. Most of our contractors deliver a frequency-based specification, meaning they visit your estate on a regular basis to carry out certain tasks.

In other areas, our contractors deliver a specification which is based on output - which means that they do not have to attend your estate at a specified frequency or at an allocated time, as long as they deliver the required standard.

We're consulting with customers on some estates in Bradford, about whether they'd like a specification which gives them the benefit of both: guaranteed weekly visits from the contractor throughout the summer months, with some flexibility as to which tasks are carried out and when.

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