

NEWS & VIEWS



Issue 21
Spring 2023

If you need any of our information provided in another format for example Microsoft Word or an audio file please contact us.

A handwritten message in black ink that says "Thank you!" followed by a red heart with a black outline. The heart has a textured, slightly grainy appearance.

A BIG Thank You to everyone who has participated in our customer voice activity in the winter months.

The winner of the £50 Love2Shop vouchers is:
Mr Lukacs-Winn from the East Region – Congratulations

We will be running a £50 prize draw every quarter for Accent 1000 members to say thank you for your contribution. The winner will be announced in this newsletter.




CUSTOMER VOICE ACTIVITY

An overview of what customers have helped us with the last 3 months:

14
customers attended
our 'culture' event
with Matt Beetar,
Diversity & Inclusion
Specialist.

246
customers confirmed
they would still like
to be members of
The Accent 1000,
our Customer Voice
Group.

259
customers responded to
our quarterly perception
survey.
(This is sent to a random sample
of 2500 customers)

87 customers offered us feedback
on our existing website. 

89 customers offered feedback
to help us to start shaping
our new customer
engagement strategy


Customers in the South
& East have been
supporting our Director
of Customer
Experience, Louise
Graham-Smith with
recruitment interviews
for management
positions following
recent restructure.

So far this year,
we've had
20,443
responses to our
transactional
surveys
(This is a survey
received after a
service, such as a
repair)

6 THINGS WE'VE LEARNT FROM CUSTOMER FEEDBACK:

1

So far this year, 81.8% of customers said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service received from us on that occasion. (This is based on the 20,443 surveys sent this year)

2

So far this year, 63.8% of customers who were asked for feedback on a specific repair said they were either satisfied or very satisfied.

3

So far this year, 26% of customers who were asked for feedback on a specific repair said they were 'dissatisfied'.

4

We have explored complaint information in detail and poor or lack of communication is noted frequently with some customers feeling like they are not being listened to.

5

We have explored other feedback information in detail, we note that customers do not see the outcome/s of their feedback.

6

So far this year, 88.2% of customers said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their interaction with the Housing Hub Team.



WHAT'S NEXT?

1

CUSTOMER VOICE LISTENING GROUP

We are discussing plans for a customer voice listening group which will contain staff members from different departments who meet regularly to discuss customer feedback, complaints, and performance. We will explore inviting customers to this group once it is in place and we are keen to do so.

2

COMMUNICATING WITH YOU

We are exploring ways that customer facing roles can update customers more frequently on a local level such as digital newsletters and open invites to estate inspections.

3

YOUR VOICE

We will be offering some customer facing colleagues the opportunity to use our customer engagement platform 'Your Voice'.

4

CULTURE AT ACCENT

We have shared your feedback from the culture event with our Executive Team (anonymously) and a larger project is taking place around the culture of Accent. We know this is a very important subject, specifically around communication and we will continue to update you about this project.

5

WEBSITE ENGAGEMENT

We are using your feedback to design our new website. Two key themes were customers highlighted a need for improvement were around reporting repairs on the website and customers highlighted a lack of information about specific staff member contact details such as their Customer Partner.

6

YOUR IMPACT

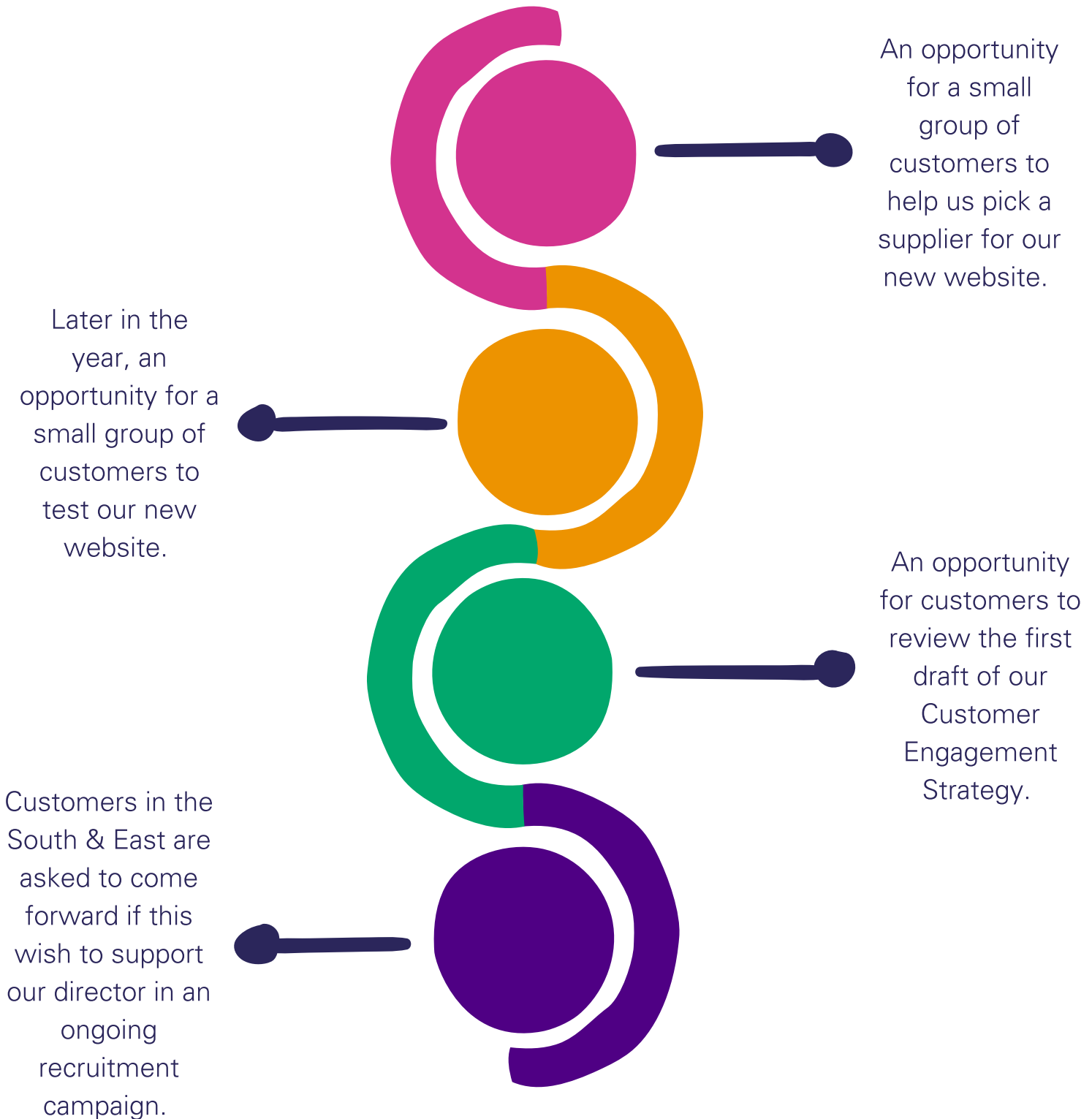
We are exploring ways in which we can update customers about how their feedback has helped us improve outside of this newsletter. We have some ideas such as holding an annual event for Accent 1000 members to meet with leaders at Accent.

Local highlight: Surrey Heath

We'd like to reach out to our Surrey Heath customers to get in touch if they'd like to be involved in a local customer group. This group is operating outside of the Accent 1000 membership and offers the opportunity to get together to discuss performance within the region as well as any other initiatives Accent are doing locally or nationally. This group is ran by staff from the region.

If you are interested, please email us at Engagement@accentgroup.org

An overview of what is happening across the next few months in terms of customer engagement activity:



THE NATIONAL SCRUTINY GROUP UPDATE

The National Scrutiny Group was created in 2018 and is currently made up of 7 Accent customers. The purpose of the group is to carry out 2 or 3 exercises per year which aims to independently scrutinise Accents services.

The work of The National Scrutiny Group is driven by the group and their overall goal is to hold Accent to account on behalf of all customers.

So far this year, The National Scrutiny Group have carried out two scrutiny exercises, an evaluation of customer care checks which was completed in May 2022 and a review of Accent's website which was completed in March 2023.

The National Scrutiny Group are currently completing a benchmarking exercise which is to explore how other housing provider scrutiny groups (or equivalent) operate. The results from this exercise will be drawn and concluded approximately mid-April.

The National Scrutiny Group meet to agree recommendations for improvement and their recommendations are shared and agreed with Our Executive Team and The Customer Experience Committee.



TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

In September 2023 we will be releasing our Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey to customers.

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures are a new measure introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing. Landlords with more than 1000 properties must submit the results of this survey to the regulator every year.

Fiona MacGregor, Chief Executive of Regulator of Social Housing, said: "The launch of TSMs is an important step in the move to proactive consumer regulation. The new measures will provide a valuable source of data to help ensure social housing landlords provide safe homes of a decent standard and a quality service to tenants.

You can find further information about the TSM's here.

New Accent Structure

In January 2023 our CEO, Paul Dolan announced plans to consult with Customer Experience colleagues in relation to a proposal for a new structure.

The consultation period ended 9th March 2023 which means we can now share details of the new structure. Accents new 'Housing Services' directorate will come into effect on 3rd April 2023.

WHAT DOES THE NEW STRUCTURE LOOK LIKE?

The Housing Services directorate will be made up of the following teams:

- The Allocations team will manage allocations & lettings centrally for all our homes.
- The Community Development team, a new team for Accent, will deliver value-add services:
 - Promoting partnership working, place shaping & social cohesion in line with the social housing white paper.
 - Supporting some of our most vulnerable residents and helping them sustain their tenancies with us.
- The Housing Hub will act as a first point of contact to assist our customers by delivering comprehensive housing management.
- Housing Services teams will deliver generic housing management for our 'General Needs' portfolio. The new 'Housing Partner' role will manage all aspects of tenancy and income management, ASB and estate management.
- The Specialist Housing team, another newly created team, will manage more specialist accommodation, such as our older persons and temporary accommodation.

"The various training and development opportunities available for the Housing Services staff team will ensure we attract and retain staff with the right knowledge and skills to carry out an efficient housing management service. It also means we have more avenues and opportunities to learn from other providers to implement best practices within Accent that will improve services to customers.

Housing managers will be required to hold a qualification in housing studies in the future but we hope to get on the front foot with this and ensure our managers and staff have access to this training before it becomes mandatory."

LOUISE GRAHAM-SMITH
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (EAST AND SOUTH)

"The services we provide, the performance we achieve, and the satisfaction of our customers has been variable around the country. It's vital that we address this so that the services we provide are considered fantastic by all our customers, regardless of tenure and regardless of where they live.

The new housing services team, alongside the refreshed assets and sustainability, property services and homeownership teams, all working in harmony, will help us turn that ambition into a reality. Wherever we work we will all be part of one highly efficient high performing team focussed on delivering excellent services to customers."

SHAUN FINEGAN
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (NORTH)

A FINAL NOTE FROM ASHLEIGH

And on a final note, I'd like to let you know that my journey with Accent is coming to an end.

I have been lucky enough to work for Accent, a genuinely fantastic company for 9.5 years and have met some amazing colleagues and customers along the way.

I have accepted an opportunity to lead a Tenant Voice Team for another housing provider closer to where I live and although sad to leave, I am extremely excited for my new chapter.

I'd like to thank you all for your ongoing commitment to The Accent 1000, for your support to me as an individual and for your open and honest feedback about our services.

I am confident that Accent are continuing to grow and learn, and they can't do it without you and your support.

Thank you!

Ashleigh Hopkins



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