CUSTOMER INFLUENCE REPORT

Feedback on the Decant Policy

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Background

The Decant Policy is being reviewed as part of the policy review cycle. Customers were invited to look at the draft policy and share feedback on how clear, accessible, and customer-friendly it is.

Method

The EDI Group and Editorial Panel were invited to provide feedback on the Decant Policy. The feedback period opened on 4 June and closed on 15 June, remaining open for 11 days. A total of 6 out of 24 customers responded.

Comments were recorded and grouped into themes so they can be considered by the policy owner. The report should support a discussion on which recommendations are accepted, partially accepted, or declined.

Key Themes of Customer Feedback

The table below documents the customer comments into themes. No customer comments have been removed; similar points have been grouped together to make the report easier to read and use.

	Customer Comments	Customer Recommendation	Accent Response
Consistency of language	Customers noticed the policy uses “customers,” “tenants” and “residents” interchangeably, which makes it unclear those to whom each section applies.	Decide one main term for the document and use it consistently.	Declined - Different descriptions may be required in certain circumstances, such as to distinguish between different responsible parties or types of customers.

Leaseholders and shared owners	Customers asked whether leaseholders and shared owners are covered, and how their position differs from tenants.	Add a brief explanation of how the policy applies to leaseholders, shared owners, and freeholders, including any case-by-case arrangements.	Accepted – There is a sentence in the policy which states Accent leaseholders will not be eligible for a decant.
Definitions	Customers felt the definition of decanting is repeated and some definitions could be clearer, including “permanent move,” “principal home” and “licence to occupy.”	Remove unnecessary repetition and rewrite definitions in plain English. Clarify that a permanent move means there is no intention of returning to that property.	Accepted – Definitions reviewed to make clearer.
Scope	Customers said the scope section could be confusing because one sentence repeats what is explained in the next section.	Review and simplify the scope so the reader can quickly understand those to whom the policy applies.	Accepted – Scope has been reviewed and repetitive text has been removed.
Third parties and support	Customers asked for examples of “third parties” and wanted more clarity about who may advise Accent during a decant.	Add examples such as contractors, surveyors, local authorities, emergency services, or specialist advisors, where appropriate.	Accepted –Local authority added as a key party who would advise.
Named contact	Customers were concerned that “as soon as possible” is subjective when saying when a named contact will be provided.	Replace “as soon as possible” with a clearer commitment or timescale if the service can support one.	Accepted – removed this sentence. Due to the nature of an emergency decant, we cannot be clearer of when a named contact will be provided.
Internal management	Customers asked what “priority for internal management moves” means.	Rewrite this section in clearer language and explain any technical terms or internal processes.	Declined –We aim to keep our policies clear, concise, and easy to understand. Where customers would like more detailed information, we encourage them to explore additional resources available online.
Alternative accommodation	Customers asked how alternative accommodation would be found and what other considerations are made.	Add a brief explanation of the factors Accent considers, including location, caring responsibilities,	Accepted – More information added.

	"We may make an offer of accommodation that does not meet the requirements outlined in our Lettings Policy.'	schools, work, and household needs. Also explain why you may offer accommodation that does not meet the requirements in the Lettings Policy.	
Offers and exceptions	Customers felt the wording about exceptional circumstances and offers outside the Lettings Policy could feel broad or unclear.	Make the exception clearer, including when it might apply and how decisions will be made to customers.	Partially Accepted – More information added, however not all circumstances can be included. More information can be found in the Lettings Policy.
Payments, expenses and compensation	Customers felt the expenses wording was not plain English." Expenses will only be paid if…"	Rewrite the expenses sentence in a clearer way, such as: "We will only pay expenses that have been agreed with Accent before the cost is incurred. Customers will need to provide receipts."	Accepted - The sentence has been rewritten so it is easier to understand.
Insurance and damage to belongings	Customers requested a link to the Damage to Personal Possessions Policy.	Add the relevant policy link.	Accepted – we are currently reviewing the template guidance for policies all policies referenced should be easily accessible by the reader.
Complaints and appeals	Customers asked for a link to the Complaints Policy and clearer information about how to challenge or appeal a decision.	Add the complaints link and include a plain English explanation of how customers can raise concerns.	Declined – The complaints policy can be found on the Accent website and here customers can find more information about how to appeal.
Essential information to highlight	Customers asked if key information about rent, service charges, utilities, alternative accommodation charges, a nd possible legal action is made more visible.	Use a clearly labelled "Important to know" box so customers do not miss key responsibilities or consequences.	Partially accepted– We will not be adding an important to know section in the policies due to the template and structure, however we will be adding a summary for customers on Accents website which summaries the valuable information for customers.

Grammar and punctuation	Customers asked for consistency on capital letters e.g., “Shared Owners, leaseholders, freeholders” and “…complete a Decant Needs assessment.” They also feedback apostrophes are not needed for tenants and residents as already plural and to make bullet points start with capital letters.	Complete a full proofread and apply one consistent style across capital letters, bullet points, and apostrophes.	Accepted – A full proofread of the document has taken place and amends made where necessary.
Spelling	Customers asked for “Minimalise” to be changed to minimise. Customers asked for “negligible” to be changed to negligent.	Check spelling throughout document focusing on the two examples given by customers.	Accepted – Spelling errors have been corrected.

Next Steps

This report will be shared with customers to demonstrate how their feedback has influenced the final policy and to provide transparency around the decisions made. Sharing this information helps customers see the impact of their involvement and reinforces our commitment to listening and responding to customer views.

Following completion of the consultation and review process, the policy will progress through Accent’s internal approval and sign-off routes. Once approved, the final version will be published on Accent’s website, ensuring customers and colleagues have access to the most up-to-date policy and can see how customer feedback has helped shape its content.