

MEETING SUMMARY

Independent Living Group



**Tuesday 22
July 2025**



**1.00pm
to 2.30pm**



**Microsoft
Teams**

Attendees	<p>Andrew Gilmartin – Specialist Housing Team Leader Babs Trainer – Customer Tanya Scott – Head of Specialist Housing (Chair) Callie Lancaster - Customer Engagement Manager Chris Lynn – Customer Jo Gallagher – Head of Customer and Community Engagement Kim Tinneney – Specialist Housing Manager Lyn Nelson – Customer Marie Strike – Customer Pauline MacGregor – Customer</p>
Apologies	<p>Donna Muir – Customer Lynne Nicolson – Customer Michael Crook – Customer</p>
Agenda Item	Led by
Welcome and Introductions	Tanya Scott
<p><u>Tanya</u> opened the meeting and lead the introductions around the virtual room</p>	
Accent Update	Tanya Scott
<p><u>Tanya</u> gave an update on Specialist Housing explaining that each region (North East, North West, Yorkshire, East and South) now have a team leader. She touched on the introduction of Academy days, where colleagues come together nationally to promote collaborative working and consistency across all schemes. She mentioned Lizzy Robinson will be joining us as Specialist Housing Manager next month and will be working alongside Kim Tinneney.</p> <p><u>Tanya</u> gave an update about Accent explaining there’s a few interim positions at Exec level whilst Nick (CEO) decides on permanent arrangements. She mentioned the Colleague conference, which was held in June, and how Accent are looking to invite more customers next year.</p> <p><u>Tanya</u> gave an update on what is happening externally in the housing sector and touched on the spending review, and Awaabs law which looks at stricter timescales for social landlords to deal with damp and mould and is coming into force in October.</p>	
Proposed Service Standards	Andrew Gilmartin
<p><u>Andrew</u> went through the proposed service standards including resident engagement meetings, communications, health and wellbeing, daily calls, compliance and a resident-first approach.</p>	

Pauline raised concerns about the practicality of increasing daily or regular conversations between scheme managers and residents, especially in large schemes.

Andrew acknowledged the progress made since the restructure and emphasized that it's now time to raise the bar in service delivery and resident engagement. He mentioned not all residents want the same level of interaction and managers should adapt their approach accordingly. Andrew said daily interactions should be meaningful, not just brief check-ins and the goal is to build relationships, not tick boxes. He confirmed the Health & Wellbeing Plans are now treated as living documents, updated as needed rather than fully redone annually. While the ambition is high, Andrew stressed the importance of planning and prioritising to make the expectations achievable.

Babs emphasized that residents should have the freedom to choose their level of engagement, even if it's just one weekly check-in. She expressed concern that the push to "raise the bar" may place excessive pressure on scheme managers, especially with new systems in place.

Andrew confirmed that the new form is a working document, updated as needed rather than fully redone annually.

Kim explained that future rollouts will be staggered over time, reducing workload. She highlighted the positive impact of the plans, including identifying residents in need of support who hadn't previously come forward. She also noted that residents' situations evolve over time (e.g., retirement, health changes), making regular reviews essential to ensure they receive appropriate support.

Tanya reinforced that every resident is different—some prefer minimal contact, others want to be more involved and building strong relationships is essential to understanding and supporting residents effectively. She reiterated the fact the service standards show the bare minimum of what customers should receive.

Update on Customer Influence

Jo Gallagher and Callie Lancaster

Callie introduced the Customer Influence Framework, which is a way to structure customer engagement, noting that while the term may sound formal, the core purpose is to listen to customers, act on their feedback, and ensure meaningful outcomes.

Jo confirmed the framework is about listening to customers and delivering meaningful outcomes—not overcomplicating things. She explained "Influence" is used instead of "engagement" to align with regulatory language and reflect a stronger customer role. She touched on how the sector have been led by lessons from Grenfell, the framework ensures residents are heard, involved, and able to hold Accent accountable. Jo explained how the framework connects resident feedback to board level, with formal tracking and action plans which all supports compliance with the new consumer standards.

Callie gave a brief overview of the journey so far, starting from October 2024 when the Customer Engagement Strategy was launched, leading to a new Customer Influence Framework which supports the delivery of the strategy. She talked about the two new posts to support the delivery, her own post and Jo as the Head of the team. She touched on the successful recruitment campaign which took place in June and over 130 customers have signed up to become a member of a new customer involvement group.

Callie then explained the Customer Influence Framework itself, where at the base level customers can engage in light-touch ways and the middle section highlighted the formal customer involvement groups which she has been focusing on recruitment for the past couple of months. She mentioned the Independent Living Group feeds into the National Customer Group, which then feeds into the Customer Experience Committee—creating a clear feedback loop to ensure customer voices influence decision-making at the highest levels.

Babs asked whether the National Customer Group could block feedback from progressing to the Customer Experience Committee or the Accent Board.

Callie and Jo confirmed if a recommendation is declined or paused, the reason will be clearly communicated to ensure transparency.

Tanya asked if customers could join more than one customer involvement group.

Callie confirmed customers could join more than one group but to take into consideration time commitments across the various groups.

Babs asked about progress of putting posters up to stop abuse in relation to EDI.

Kim confirmed this is currently being looked at as part of a 'No excuse for abuse' campaign and will link into the customer charter.

Callie did not have time to go through a summary of the groups role profile and meeting guidelines due to limited time but asked customers to have a read once the slides were shared and provide feedback directly to her.

Callie invited expressions of interest for Chair and Vice Chair positions in the Independent Living Group and explained support and training are available for those interested but unsure. She asked customers to message by the end of next week (1 August).

Callie mentioned the meeting in October will go ahead as planned but the date in January may have to be moved forward to align with the Customer Experience Committee taking place on 3rd February.

Callie mentioned Accent are members of TPAS so involved customers have access to free training and webinars and encourages group members to sign up.

Callie invited group members to attend some upcoming scrutiny workshops and confirmed dates will be shared with the group after the meeting.

AOB	Tanya Scott
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Tanya confirmed the Specialist Housing Managers, Kim Tinneney and Lizzy Robinson, will be attending this group going forward and she was taking a step back.

Callie confirmed she would send invites to the meetings going forward.

Tanya thanked current members for their time and commitment to the group so far and thanked the new customers for joining.

Actions	Action Owner
Work with the Independent Living Group and wider customers to gather feedback on the proposed Service Standards. Update on progress to be provided at next meeting.	Andrew Gilmartin
Provide feedback on the role profile and meeting guidelines on slide 12 and 13 of the presentation by emailing Callie directly. (callie.lancaster@accentgroup.org)	Group Members
Email Callie directly with expressions of interest for the chair and vice-chair roles.	Group Members
Send out invites for future meetings.	Callie Lancaster

