

CUSTOMER INFLUENCE REPORT

Lettings Policy Feedback

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Background

As part of Accent's three-year policy review cycle, the Lettings Policy (previously known as the Allocations Policy) was reviewed and customers were invited to provide feedback. Applying for a home can be a stressful and uncertain experience, so it is important that our lettings process is clear, fair and easy to understand.

Consultation

The customer consultation took place between 12 November 2025 until 30 November 2025. Members of our Editorial and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Groups were invited to review the policy and share their views. We received valuable feedback from six customers, which has helped to strengthen and refine the document.

Ahead of the consultation, we made several formatting and language improvements to the policy to support accessibility, ease of reading and navigation. These were in anticipated response to feedback already received in previous consultations. These changes focused on making the policy clearer, more customer-facing, and easier to understand, particularly in relation to how it affects customers directly.

'At a Glance' Summary

Customers provided valuable feedback on the Lettings Policy, highlighting opportunities to improve clarity, accessibility and transparency. Feedback focused on explaining key terms and processes in more detail, providing practical examples, signposting customers to relevant guidance and external resources, and ensuring decision-making processes are clearly understood. Customers also suggested improvements to the readability of the document, including amendments to grammar, terminology and overall wording. Most recommendations were accepted and incorporated into the revised policy, helping to make the information clearer, more accessible and easier for customers to understand.

Listening and Acting on Customer Feedback

Customer recommendation	Accent's response	Service lead	Completion date/ notes
Feedback on 'Introductions'			
On the front page or introduction, can you add a line mentioning you are a charity and non-profit organisation.	Declined: We do not usually refer to ourselves as 'not-for-profit' in our policies. This is usually included in the 'about us' information in our various organisational information and on our website.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Include a paragraph along the lines of 'if you have any difficulties in reading or understanding this document, please contact XXXXXXXX'	Accepted: We have added our offer to translate and provide all our documents in other languages and formats and who to contact if this service is required.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Definitions'			
Customers pointed out several grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors.	Accepted: All issues mentioned have been amended.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Can you add more information about what 'Ineligible Service Charges are'	Accepted: We have added new content and examples around ineligible charges.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Can you explain what 'Choice based lettings' is	Accepted: We have added more content to better explain choice-based lettings and our agreements and processes as part of them.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Priority Band - How does this work? Is there an example?	Accepted: We have added more content to better explain priority banding.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Regulator for Social Housing - is there a link to the Social Housing Charter that can be included here?	Accepted: We have added a link to the GovUK website where the charter and other relevant information is published.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'References'			
'We have a duty to work with local councils to help house those with urgent needs.' Is this	Accepted: This has been deleted.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026

sentence necessary in the references section?			
Feedback on 'Exceptions'			
Please can we have greater clarity around how decisions are made, who authorises them, what oversight is in place, and how Accent ensures decisions are fair, consistent and evidence based.	Accepted: We have added some new content around exceptions, explaining how requests are reviewed and approved by appropriate directors through various accountable and stringent processes. There was existing content explaining that we have do not employ medically qualified staff, instead taking supporting evidence from appropriately qualified professionals.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Who can apply for social housing'			
'We assess applicants to understand their circumstances and identify any factors that may affect their ability to start, or keep, a tenancy.' - please give an example or further explanation.	Accepted: We have added some new content to explain how we assess applicants and identify factors that may affect their ability to start or keep a tenancy. We have added examples to the policy to further explain.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
'In the North-East and North-West regions, thresholds of £16,000 apply for savings or asset value. In the South and East regions, the limit is £30,000.' - why? This needs further explanation.	Accepted: We have explained what the thresholds are and how they are set by individual local councils (not Accent) to consider national and regional housing and living costs in more detail. There was existing content to explain, as an example, thresholds may be higher in the South and East of England because housing and living costs are also higher.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Tenancy Fraud'			
Customers pointed out several grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors.	Accepted: All issues mentioned have been amended.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Right to Rent'			
Please direct customers to the 'Right to Rent' guidance	Accepted: We have provided a link to Gov UK's website and 'Right to Rent' information.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Customers pointed out several grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors.	Accepted: All issues mentioned have been amended.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026

Feedback on 'High Risk Tenancies'			
What is a 'high risk applicant' Please explain.	Accepted: We have added content to the policy to further explain high-risk applicants.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
'We will expect any nominating council to share all relevant recent medical'. How are Accent evidencing their decision-making process here, who is medically qualified to make an opinion? Who has ultimate responsibility for decisions based on medical grounds?	Accepted: clarity and detail to the policy. There was existing content explaining that we have do not employ medically qualified staff, instead taking supporting evidence from appropriately qualified professionals.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Our right to refuse applications'			
'This does not necessarily mean we will not accept applicants in or with such circumstances, but we will not prioritise them over other applicants who do not.' Please can you make this clearer.	Accepted: We have re-written the right to refuse section to explain the process more clearly.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Could we add a sentence along the lines of - 'Arriving and departing tenants must provide that all debts related to the payment of utilities- gas, electricity, water, council tax- to their property they are vacating have been settled.'	Declined: Proof that arriving tenants have cleared all debts is not something we are able to insist on having, as it is not our data. We can only ask for this information, not insist on having it. As a result, we cannot add this as a requirement for incoming tenants.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Debt'			
'This will be done with the approval of the Director of Housing Services.' Can we look at changing the word 'done' to 'overseen'.	Accepted: We have changed this to read as 'overseen.'	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'How we priortise and let our homes'			
Are customers allowed to apply to Accent directly? Or do they have to go through their local council on all occasions?	Accepted: We have added extra content to explain that we can accept direct applications once we have met the local nomination agreements we have with councils. This does not, however, really answer that question so we have added additional content to	Serria Ashraf	January 2026

	explain that we advertise any homes which can be applied for directly on our website.		
Customers pointed out several grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors.	Accepted: All issues mentioned have been amended.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Transfers and Mutual Exchanges'			
'You must also have maintained your current home to an acceptable standard,' Can more information be added on how this is accessed.	Accepted: We have added content to say that the Housing Partner/Specialist Housing Partner carries out a detailed property inspection which carries set checks for general wear and tear, any damage or negligence caused by the customer and any outstanding repairs.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
'If you share your tenancy with someone else, everyone named on the tenancy must agree to the swap and all swaps are subject to conditions which we will explain to you.' - where can I find this information? Who do I contact? How will it be explained?	Accepted: This is explained in more detail in our Mutual Exchange Policy, and we have added content to explain that we have a separate policy for this process.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Downsizing'			
'More affordable - a smaller home may mean lower rent and less cost due to, for example, the bedroom tax.' – 'Can a link to find more information on bedroom tax be added.	Accepted: We have added a link to a further online explanation of the Bedroom Tax for clarity.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Specialist Housing'			
Please provide explanation of what specialist housing is.	Accepted: We have added extra content to further explain what Specialist Housing is and our service provision for these homes.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
Feedback on 'Rent on time'			
'This information is used to determine the most appropriate initial rent payment on the date of their welcome meeting in line with the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement. 'Please add an example of what this might look like?	Accepted: We have added more content on this and a calculation example to explain this in clearer terms.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026

Feedback on 'Special Considerations'			
Pregnancy- 'We are committed to supporting expectant parents with sensitivity, in line with our responsibilities under equality and safeguarding legislation.' Can a link to find more information be added.	Accepted: We have linked to the relevant legislation on the Gov Uk website for further clarity.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
'Exceptions to this policy may apply in these cases.' Not sure this final sentence is required.	Accepted: Sentence has been removed.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026
'Sometimes we may need to make exceptions to this policy based on someone's individual situation. Our colleagues will be mindful of customers' vulnerabilities and specific needs in line with our Customer Inclusion & Support Policy.' How are decisions standardised? What is the process? Is there a panel? Does someone have oversight?	Accepted: This is explained in detail in our new Customer Inclusion & Support Policy. This policy is still in the approval process, but we add a direct link once it is published.	Serria Ashraf	January 2026

Next steps

Once finalised, the report will be shared on the 'You Said, We Did' page of the Accent website and provided to the Customer Experience Committee for information.

The Customer Engagement Team is responsible for monitoring the progress of the agreed recommendations and ensuring actions are completed within the agreed timescales.

All of Accent's policies follow a robust governance process and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain up to date and effective. Most policies are reviewed every three years, and this policy is due for review in January 2029.