

### MINUTES

Date/Time: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 12.00pm to 13.30pm

Venue: Virtual, MS Teams

**Chair:** Callie Lancaster (CL), Customer Engagement Manager

**Customers Present:** Chrystyna Wirdnam (CW)  
Debbie Cammock (DC)  
Emma Raven (ER)  
Gail Redmond (GR)  
Mark Wade (MW)  
Royston Crandley (RoC)  
Sarah-Jane Johnson (SJJ)

**Accent Colleagues** Adam Rickard (AR), Building Services Manager  
Cara Jackon (CJ), Assistant Director of Housing Services  
Gosia Durkalec (GD), Estates Services Manager  
Paula Angold, Community Development Partner  
Richard Adlam (RA), Housing Manager  
Ricky Cronshey (RiC), Maintenance Surveyor

**Apologies** Veronia Wilson  
Jac Boyce

**Minutes:** Callie Lancaster (CL), Customer Engagement Manager

### Action

#### 1. AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APPOLOGIES

CL opened the meeting, welcomed members, and confirmed what was on the agenda. She explained that her hope is this group becomes more customer-led including customers choosing the topics and speakers. Housekeeping was outlined, including muting microphones, raising hands, and the meeting being recorded for minute-taking.

#### 2. AGENDA ITEM 2 – UPDATE ON ACTIONS

CL gave an update on open actions:

1. An action for a surveyor to contact DC regarding damp and mould concerns had been completed, however shared that her experience was poor and explained the surveyor had been dismissive. CJ suggested that RiC follow up directly with DC to review the case, RiC confirmed he would contact her.
2. The action relating to complaints communications remains open. CL explained that due to time constraints it would be picked up at a future meeting and reassured the group that the action had not been lost.
3. CL confirmed that further actions from the previous meeting included deeper discussion on repairs and maintenance, planned works and an

RiC

overview of community development work- all of which were scheduled for today.

### **3. AGENDA ITEM 3 – NATIONAL CUSTOMER GROUP UPDATE**

CL explained the role of the National Customer Group, how it links to the Customer Experience Committee, and how feedback flows between national and regional groups.

Key points from the National Customer Group included:

- Progress with the Customer Influence Framework, which sets out how customer feedback is gathered, used, and reported. The Customer Experience Committee were pleased to see regional meetings established and clear feedback loops in place.
- A deep dive into colleague-related complaints, highlighting inconsistent advice from staff and poor follow-up communication as key themes. Customers welcomed the organisation being open about these issues. Improvements underway, including additional training and the introduction of a new Customer Relationship Management system, intended to improve tracking, follow-up, and consistency of communication. Customers were informed this is a major investment and will allow Accent to better understand individual customer journeys.
- The repairs service continues to be a priority for improvement. While performance data suggests repairs are improving, customer feedback and perception of the service can sometimes tell a different story. As a result, a customer workshop is planned for mid-April to better understand lived experiences of the service.
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and the development of a clear action plan showing what Accent is doing in response to feedback from the annual survey. This plan will be shared publicly, and customers are encouraged to use it to hold Accent to account.

RoC queried where repairs data comes from and whether it relied solely on contractors. RiC explained data comes from multiple sources, including Accent systems and customer satisfaction feedback, and that this would be covered in more detail during the repairs presentation.

CL also explained the National Customer Group are choosing which topic to carry out a scrutiny exercise on, and group members are encouraged to suggest potential scrutiny topics by emailing the engagement team.

### **4. AGENDA ITEM 4 – REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATE**

RiC provided an overview of the repairs service, including staffing changes, the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) project and upcoming legislative changes under Awaab's Law Phase 2, which extends beyond damp and mould to other serious hazards. CL confirmed there will be opportunities for customers to be involved in setting up the new CRM system and invites will be sent out via email nearer to the time.

RiC also outlined performance trends, noting improvements but acknowledging customer dissatisfaction. He set a clear ambition to increase satisfaction levels to 80%.

DC shared extensive feedback about her experiences with repairs service, particularly Ian Williams. She explained that they've turned up to do a 3-hour job

at 4pm so can't complete the job in the same day. RiC acknowledged this shouldn't be happening and will pick this up with Ian Williams. **RiC**

She also fed back operatives often arrive without understanding what job they are attending, resulting in aborted visits, repeated appointments, and frustration — particularly difficult for working households.

She also raised issues with My Account showing repairs as “completed” when no work had taken place, and difficulties contacting the service centre. RiC acknowledged the problem and will investigate. **RiC**

DC suggested greater use of video calls and photos, noting that Grip has worked well when used, but is not applied consistently for simpler issues.

ER asked whether data on first-time fix rates and surveyor inspections could be shared at future meetings, which RiC agreed to share at the next meeting. **RiC**

SJJ echoed DC's concerns, adding that contractors often lack correct information or parts, and queried where customer satisfaction data is collected from. CL explained that surveys are triggered when repairs are marked complete, though customers may not receive every survey to avoid over-surveying.

CW described similar issues more so with gas safety contractors including incorrect attendance, missed appointments, and poor communication. She highlighted the emotional and practical impact on households, particularly when faults remain unresolved despite being recorded as complete.

RoC asked whether Accent spot-checks repairs, which RiC confirmed that Accent carries out post-inspections on approximately 10% of repairs and can recall works if photos or inspection evidence are unsatisfactory.

ER requested if the group could see more information around the outcomes of spot checks on repairs including how many customers you've spoken to. RiC agreed to bring this information to the next meeting. **RiC**

## **5. AGENDA ITEM 5 – PLANNED WORKS UPDATE**

CJ provided an overview of planned and capital works in the South region.

Between April 2025 and January 2026, £6.27m was invested, delivering significant improvements including new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers, heating systems, windows, doors, fire doors, and roofing works.

Additional funding savings allowed a further 50 boilers to be installed. Looking ahead, subject to Board approval, a further £5.5m investment for the South is planned for 2026/27, with around 934 component replacements anticipated.

CJ addressed a query raised at the last meeting about the perception of the low number of planned works relative to the stock size. She confirmed for the last three financial years, the South has received the highest level of investment compared to other regions and where we have identified any additional savings, they have been directed to the South region.

CJ addressed another query raised at the last meeting about the quality of our stock data. She explained last year we identified the stock condition data was one year further out of date than we originally anticipated. Since we found this out, we invested in re-surveying all the affected properties by using two external surveying companies to get the data where it needed to be. We aim that our stock condition data set will reach around 96% completeness by September 2026.

DC asked whether there is a set lifecycle for kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and windows, and whether this information could be made available to customers. CJ and RiC confirmed that lifespans are used as guidance, but decisions are also informed by condition, voids, and customer impact.

ER suggested it would be helpful for customers to see when items were last replaced via the customer portal. CL confirmed this feedback would be submitted to the current project looking at customer portal development.

CL

The group welcomed the transparency, and CJ acknowledged the importance of clearer communication around planned works and expectations.

## 6. AGENDA ITEM 6 – TREE MANAGEMENT

GD summarised the paper circulated in advance and explained how tree management is handled: Communal trees are proactively inspected by arborists on scheduled cycles, with works planned seasonally. Trees in private gardens are managed reactively, with Accent intervening based on risk, vulnerability, and specific circumstances.

SJJ shared a distressing experience involving a tree failure from a neighbouring garden, describing delayed action, conflicting messages, and prolonged disruption. She sought clarity on Accent’s responsibilities.

GD explained that while trees in private gardens are generally the customer’s responsibility, Accent will intervene where risk, safety, or vulnerability criteria are met. She acknowledged that SJJ experience was clearly not handled well and described improvements made in the last 12 months, including clearer frameworks and vulnerability considerations.

ER thanked GD for the paper but raised around the term “capacity,” and suggested reviewing the policy earlier than scheduled in 2027. GD welcomed the feedback and agreed wording could be revised.

GD

CJ shared discussion about being more proactive at lettings stage and discouraging tree planting in gardens and customers agreed this was a good idea. GD confirmed it does mention in the good neighbourhood management policy that we ask customers not to plant trees in their gardens, but we need to improve how we get that message to colleagues and therefore customers at ‘Sign-up’ stage.

GD

ER expressed her severe concerns about Accent’s approach to tree management given customers cannot refuse properties and therefore do not have a choice on whether they have a tree in their garden or not. She also raised its Accent’s home, and ‘you look after the home’ so why would you not look after the garden which is also Accent’s.

GD clarified Accent do look at trees in private gardens when the property is ‘void’ and remove any trees which are over 6 foot so for new customers moving into our homes, they should not be left with a tree which is unmanageable.

GD acknowledge the feedback raised confirmed improvements will be made, however Accent’s approach to tree management will remain as is and will be reviewed in accordance with Good Neighbourhood Management Policy review period.

GD to complete a paper update at the next meeting to confirm actions taken and improvements made based on customer feedback **GD**

## 7. **AGENDA ITEM 7 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS**

PA shared an overview of community development work and upcoming projects, including digital inclusion, health and wellbeing activities, financial wellbeing, sustainability initiatives, and community events.

She explained how data and insight are used to target activity and how social value is measured. Customers were encouraged to propose ideas, regardless of the size of their community by emailing:  
communitydevelopment@Accentgroup.org

SJJ raised concerns that smaller communities can feel overlooked. PA reassured the group that smaller schemes are equally important and encouraged suggestions.

## 8. **AGENDA ITEM 8 – FOCUS FOR NEXT QUARTER**

CL opened the discussion for customers to come forward with suggestions of what the groups focus should be for the next quarter.

RC requested if PA could support his community with tackling fly tipping. PA confirmed his Housing Partner, Tash, has been doing a lot of work on fly tipping recently so hopefully this should improve.

RC also raised if Accent could support with organising community events supporting sporting events this year. PA confirmed she would contact RC to discuss this further. **PA**

CJ mentioned the 'new park' project close to where RC lives and promised to invite customers in the community at appropriate stages of the project. **CJ**

ER shared her positive experience with Wheeldon's, the new Estates Management Company, and acknowledged the improvement she's seen on her scheme. SJJ also confirmed she's seen a big improvement on the estates management recently. GD thanked the customers for sharing the feedback and promised to pass it to the contractor. **GD**

DC asked if contractors stop grounds maintenance in the winter. GD confirmed it doesn't stop, but it does reduce. Between March and September, the frequency is bi-weekly, and October till sort of February, it is once a month visit. GD confirmed in this 1 month visit they should pick up litter, leaves and carry out winter activities such as moss treatment.

DC mentioned at her scheme, Lightwater, the contractor visited yesterday and didn't do a full job because it wasn't 'on his portfolio'. GD confirmed she would pick this up with contractor. **GD**

CW raised an issue with a shrub on her scheme which needs to be removed. GD confirmed she would pick this up outside the meeting. **GD**

CW also raised a query around allocation of service charges on her scheme. She mentioned she had queried this with Tash Latimer, her Housing Partner. CJ confirmed she would pick this up with Tash. **CJ**

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date: Friday 19 June 2026 at 12.00pm

Venue: Virtual, MS Teams