

MINUTES

Date/Time: Tuesday 10th March 2026, 12.00pm to 14.00pm

Venue: Virtual, MS Teams

Chair: Stacy Hartley (SH), CEC Member, Customer Champion

Customers Present: Chris Lynn (CLy) Vice Chair of Independent Living Group
Helen Hutchinson (HH) CEC Member, Customer Champion, East Customer Group Member
Jackie Best (JB) CEC Member, Customer Champion
Lyn Nelson (LN) Chair of Independent Living Group
Razina Bostan (RB)
Richard Wilkinson (RW) CIC Member

Accent Colleagues Jo Gallagher (JG) Head of Customer and Community Engagement
John Place (JP) Director of Customer Relations
Peter Hall (LC) Interim Director of Assets and Compliance
Rob Bloom (RB) Director of Housing Servies

Guests Anne-Marie Bancroft (Altair Ltd)

Apologies Mark Waite (Customer)
Edmund England (Customer)

Minutes: Callie Lancaster (CL), Customer Engagement Manager

		Action
1.	AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APPOLIGIES SH opened the meeting, welcomed members, and introduced AnneMarie from Altair who was observing. She reminded members of the purpose of the NCG: shaping Accent’s work through customer insight and involvement. Members were encouraged to ask questions and participate. Housekeeping was outlined, including muting microphones, raising hands, and the meeting being recorded for minute taking.	
2.	AGENDA ITEM 2 – UPDATE ON ACTIONS SH provided a run-through of previous actions. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. JG confirmed she has connected with RB to explore opportunities for benefit take-up campaigns and RB has supported with various activities since last meeting2. SH confirmed all meeting dates for 2026/27 have been set and invites have been sent out	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Members previously recommended early communication to customers affected by rent conversions. Rent Convergence will not come into place until 2027 now, so this action has been paused. 4. A Board-Customer away day has been arranged on Wednesday 18th March, on the back of feedback from customers about having more opportunities to speak to senior leaders and decision makers at Accent. 5. JP will be presenting a deep dive on colleague-related complaints in the meeting. 6. CL and the Data Team agreed to share the most recent KPI snapshot report (the same one provided to the Accent Board) ahead of each meeting. 	
<p>3.</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM 3 – CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE</p> <p>SH shared a high-level summary of what was discussed at the last Customer Experience Committee (CEC) in terms of Customer Voice.</p> <p>The CEC requested assurance Accent were continuing to embed the customer influence framework and significant progress was noted. Regular customer group meetings taking place, with recurring themes of complaints, communication and repairs. Customer group members are shaping discussions and identifying future agenda items for example, the deep dive on colleague complaints scheduled for today’s meeting. Challenges with engagement and participation from customers in the Northeast and Northwest were noted.</p> <p>Examples of customer influence noted in the meeting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer champions video for leadership team • Customer insight from surveys to inform the launch of new tenancy checks • Review of key customer communications including the rent and service charge booklet • Website performance hub co-design • Customer involvement in senior recruitment • Development of the new customer charter and upcoming service standards • Customers are to be involved in co-designing processes for the new CRM system including damp and mould, complaints and safeguarding <p>It was noted that 852 customers have supported community initiatives and national projects. All involved customers will be invited to attend a session scheduled for 31st March, which will provide them with an update on how customers have shaped and influence improvements to services and policies.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM 4 – DEEP DIVE INTO ACCENT COLLEAGUE COMPLAINTS</p> <p>JP presented findings of a deep dive into colleague-related complaints. He highlighted recurring themes of communication failures, delays, lack of follow-through, difficulty accessing staff and inconsistent levels of accountability. He explained that Accent had invested heavily in training, behaviour frameworks, contractor engagement and service redesign to improve consistency. While some positive improvements had been seen in satisfaction measures, complaint volumes relating to incorrect advice and poor complaint handling had increased.</p>	

	<p>JP also reported that communication issues remained the top driver of dissatisfaction and that a concerning number of complaints involved customer vulnerabilities not being considered. He outlined ongoing and planned improvements, including better data sharing, incorporating complaint themes into customer voice reporting, introducing a new CRM system to improve visibility and follow-up, strengthening the ‘promised action’ process, and launching both the customer charter and the customer inclusion and support policy. He also presented data on positive feedback from customers, which showed strong satisfaction with politeness, professionalism and responsiveness.</p> <p>RW commended the transparency of the review and acknowledged that while Accent had many excellent colleagues, consistency remained an issue. He stressed the importance of customers feeling improvements “on the doorstep” and highlighted the impact of timely apologies.</p> <p>JB asked how Accent ensures that feedback reflects diverse customer groups, including shared owners, disabled customers and those with language barriers. She also asked whether complaints themes differed across groups. JP and JG confirmed that segmentation and EDI-linked monitoring were being strengthened as part of wider improvements.</p> <p>RB asked about staff morale and the pressures staff face, particularly when dealing with persistent issues such as repairs. She also sought clarity on what constitutes incorrect advice. JP explained that incorrect advice could involve repair expectations, tenancy information or inconsistent messages between staff members and reassured the group that improvements in training, systems and support were ongoing. The group agreed they would like to understand more about this category at the next meeting – JP agreed to bring findings to next meeting.</p> <p>LN asked about the timeline for launching the customer charter. JP confirmed it was being introduced internally immediately, with final sign-off expected from the Board on 19 March and a public launch planned for April.</p> <p>CLy raised concerns about cases where promised actions after complaints had not been completed, particularly when contractors were involved, however it was noted his experience is from a historical complaint. JP outlined improvements in how promised actions were now logged, monitored and escalated.</p> <p>SH highlighted customer frustrations about difficulty reaching specific staff and the impact of staff giving inconsistent advice, and JP explained how the new CRM would help ensure visibility and accountability across teams. He also explained there’s ongoing improvements with the telephone system, support tools, knowledge access and future use of AI will assist staff in giving accurate advice first time.</p>	JP
<p>5.</p>	<p>BREAK</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM 6 – REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATE</p> <p>PH gave an update on repairs and maintenance. He began by noting that while data shows generally positive performance on timeliness and satisfaction, repairs and maintenance remains the biggest driver of customer dissatisfaction. He shared insights from an in-depth Word Nerds sentiment analysis of around 50,000 pieces of feedback. The analysis showed that while</p>	

	<p>individual aspects of repairs—such as the appointment, quality of work and operative behaviour—received largely positive sentiment, the overall perception of repairs was more negative.</p> <p>PH suggested this may indicate that dissatisfaction stems from wider issues such as property condition, ageing stock or the complexity of certain repairs, rather than the repairs service itself. He also shared findings from a complaints root cause analysis that highlighted contractor no-shows, poor communication, repeat visits, damp and mould, and unresolved follow-on work as prominent issues. Members responded strongly to these insights.</p> <p>RB spoke about how poverty, mental health and the age of stock in areas like Bradford amplify frustrations around repairs.</p> <p>JB raised concerns about how vulnerable customers experience repairs and whether sufficient checks are being made to ensure equity in outcomes.</p> <p>HH questioned whether Accent already had enough insight into property conditions. PH explained that although condition surveys were largely up-to-date, asset data tends to be based on lifecycle expectations of components rather than a holistic assessment of the home.</p> <p>Several members expressed interest in taking part in a deeper session focused specifically on repairs and property condition, and PH welcomed this involvement.</p>	PH
7.	<p>AGENDA ITEM 7 – UPDATE ON TSM ACTION PLAN</p> <p>RB presented Accent’s draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) action plan. He explained that while TSMs are a regulatory requirement, they also offer valuable insight into what matters most to customers. Accent plans to publish the action plan on the website in April, showing customers how their feedback links to practical improvements. The plan includes long-term projects, such as the new CRM, alongside shorter-term actions.</p> <p>Members gave feedback on the plan’s clarity. RW emphasised that customers relate more to service experiences than to TSM scores themselves, and he encouraged Accent to focus on meaningful improvements rather than treating TSMs as a scorecard.</p> <p>JB raised the importance of considering EDI impacts within the plan.</p> <p>SH welcomed the commitment to publish the plan publicly.</p> <p>RB acknowledged the feedback from customers and agreed the plan would be further reviewed to make sure it’s clear to customers.</p>	RB
8.	<p>AGENDA ITEM 8 – FOCUS FOR NEXT QUARTER</p> <p>SH explained that O’Halloran’s support was available due to a pre-existing contract. Some members, including RW and LN, questioned the value of consultant involvement when Accent has strong internal expertise. JG and JP clarified the consultant owes Accent time from a project that was formed before the Engagement Team was formed.</p> <p>Members agreed that scrutiny should be chosen by customers and not set solely by Accent. Common themes raised included repairs, property condition, complaints, ASB, communication and whether resources across Accent are being allocated effectively.</p> <p>RB emphasised that property condition underpins many of the issues discussed throughout the meeting. SH proposed sending a questionnaire to all</p>	SH

	NCG members so that the chosen scrutiny topic reflects the full group's views, which members supported.	
9.	<p>AGENDA ITEM 9 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>SH gave LN and CLy the opportunity to share positive news about winning the bid for the Social Housing Innovation Fund. They were awarded £120,000 to carry forward their project called Belonging Begins Here. Contracts are being finalised, with a planned public announcement around 1st April. The project includes installing interactive screens in Independent Living schemes, initially in the East and South, then expanding North. Screens will allow customers to report repairs, message scheme managers, access community updates, and receive Accent information more effectively than paper leaflets. Members expressed strong support, noting it would benefit customers with low digital confidence and improve communication.</p> <p>Members suggested including future meeting dates at the back of meeting packs.</p> <p>SH reminded members about TPAS membership and CL agreed to circulate joining instructions.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>CL</p>
10.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Date: Tuesday 19 May 2026 at 12.00pm</p> <p>Venue: Virtual, MS Teams</p>	