

# IN THE LOOP

*Shared Owner Edition*

**CUSTOMER  
NEWSLETTER**

Find financial  
support with

**LIGHTNING  
REACH**

Updates  
from our

**CUSTOMER  
INFLUENCE  
FRAMEWORK**

Take a look at  
**HOW WE'RE  
PERFORMING**

Find out how we've been

**LISTENING, LEARNING  
AND ACTING**

**Accent**

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## A message from Nick, our CEO

## *Welcome* to our latest customer newsletter for *shared owners*.

Over the past few months, I've continued to visit our communities, and it's been a pleasure to spend time speaking directly with customers. Those one-to-one conversations are incredibly valuable to me. Hearing first-hand about what is working well, and where we need to do better, helps shape the way we improve our services.

Listening to customers is central to everything we do at Accent. Our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are one of the ways we understand your experiences and priorities. In this newsletter, and on our website, you'll find updates on how we are performing for shared ownership customers.

This year's results show a mixed picture. There are some areas where scores have improved, including how we listen to customer views, how we handle complaints and how we deal with anti-social behaviour. These improvements show that positive change is happening. However, overall satisfaction among shared ownership customers remains too low, and we know the service many customers experience today is not where it should be.

That's why we're focused on listening carefully, learning from what you tell us, and taking action. Across Accent, teams are working to improve communication, complaints handling, shared spaces and neighbourhood services, and the way we support shared ownership customers throughout their journey with us.

In this newsletter you'll also find examples of how customers are helping to shape our services – from influencing policies and communications to working with us on service improvements. This involvement is essential as we continue to strengthen trust and deliver the improvements that matter most.

Thank you to everyone who takes time to share feedback with us. Your views are helping us understand where we must do better and how we can improve the services we provide.

Thank you for being part of the Accent community.

Best wishes,

**Nick**

## Help to understand your rent and charges

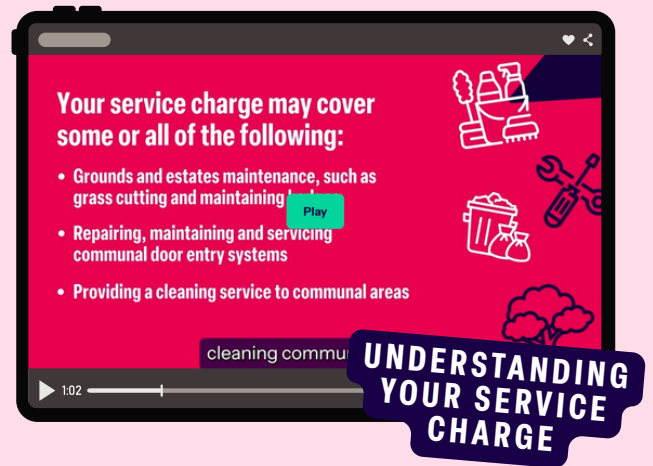
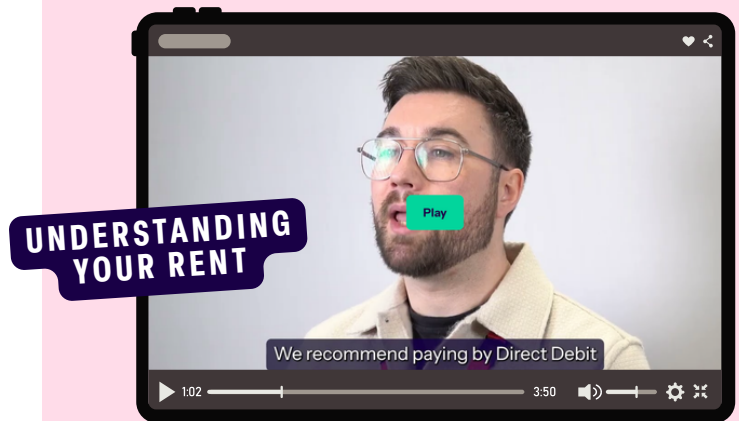
# We know that rent and service charges can sometimes feel complicated or worrying.

We have information on our website that explains rent and service charges in more detail. This year, we've also added new short videos to help explain:

- why paying rent is important, how we calculate rents and why rent increases
- what service charges cover
- where to get help if you're struggling to pay

These are designed to be clear, simple, and easy to follow.

Customer consultation has played a central role in shaping this year's Rent and Service Charge booklet and the new supporting campaign. By listening to feedback from our involved customers through workshops, conversations and a survey, we've made clear, practical changes to improve understanding and accessibility. These include a new, simple opening summary page, more supportive and reassuring language for anyone worried about money, and a new 'Commonly Asked Questions' section. Customers also told us they wanted help beyond the booklet, which has directly informed our new easy-to-follow videos that explain key information and show where to get support.



<https://acctgrp.org/00f83a>



## Find financial support with Lightning Reach

If you have money worries, we want to *support* you as much as we can. That's why we've teamed up with *Lightning Reach*; a free, secure online portal that helps you find and apply for financial help.



Since we launched this new tool to customers in early February, an incredible **185** of you have already signed up and discovered **new financial support**.

Whether you need help covering energy bills, rent, essential home expenses, or daily essential items, Lightning Reach connects you with the support you need. It simplifies the process of finding and applying for financial help by matching you with relevant support based on your individual circumstances, and can check you are getting any benefits you are entitled to.

### Here's how it works:

- 1. Fill out a simple profile** - In just 10 minutes, answer a few questions on the website, and Lightning Reach will give you a personalised list of money support options. This includes help with energy bills, rent, home items and more.
- 2. Apply for support** - Apply directly through the portal to multiple programs without having to repeatedly enter your information. From grants to local council funding, you'll find everything in one place.
- 3. Get support quickly** - Lightning Reach streamlines the process, gathering all the information needed for organisations to assess your application, so you can get help faster.

Don't miss out on help that's available to you. Sign up with Lightning Reach today and find financial support tailored just for you:

<https://acctngrp.org/38b61f>



## How our Inclusion Partners make a real difference

Supporting our customers means looking *beyond* housing needs to *understand* the wider challenges they may be facing.



**Recently, one of our Inclusion Partners supported a customer who was feeling isolated and struggling to meet essential living costs.**

Immediate help was put in place through food and fuel vouchers, alongside support to access benefits to improve his longer-term financial stability.

Recognising that wellbeing is about more than finances, the customer was also connected with a local community organisation, helping to reduce loneliness and build social connection.

This is a strong example of how our inclusion partners work within our team to provide practical, person-centred support - listening, acting quickly, and helping customers feel supported and valued. Following this support, the customer shared that he was feeling more positive and confident about the future.

Please contact your Leasehold and Homeownership Partner or our Housing Hub team if you feel you would benefit from similar help.

# LISTEN, LEARN AND ACT...

## Customer engagement...in action!



Following the recent refresh of our **Customer Influence Framework**, and recruitment of **involved customers**, we're excited to let you know what they've been working on.

Over recent months, our customer engagement groups have been busy shaping real change across Accent. Across all our groups, customers are not just giving feedback - they're influencing decisions, shaping improvements and helping us deliver better services.

We're listening, learning and acting on feedback.

Check out our new website page to read about how we are taking action based on customer feedback:

<https://acctgrp.org/viw>



### National Customer Group

At the request of members, the group carried out a deep dive into complaints relating to Accent team members, which is currently the second highest complaint category.

**Members wanted greater transparency around the types of complaints received and what we're doing in response.**

As a result, we've developed a new insight dashboard that helps us better track trends, spot common themes and identify where staff may need additional support or training. We've also rolled out specialist complaint-handling training to all our staff, building on existing training that highlights our customer-centric respectful approach.

Our Director of Customer Relations attends all meetings, to listen to members' feedback and provide further information on what Accent are working on. This work is helping us to strengthen learning from complaints, improve consistency and ensure we respond in the right way.



### **East Regional Group**

The East group also focused on complaints, exploring how we learn from them and reduce their volume. Members highlighted the value of a dedicated workshop session, and our Head of Customer Service Improvement will be providing an update at the next meeting.

### **South Regional Group**

In the South, members are keen to co-create our 2026-2027 customer engagement events plan. Working alongside the Community Development Team, they're helping to shape planned activities and events to ensure they reflect what matters most to customers locally.

### **EDI Group & Editorial Panel**

Our EDI Group and Editorial Panel have reviewed a range of policies and communications, focusing on accessibility, language, structure, tone and impact. Their feedback is helping us ensure our communications are clear, inclusive and customer friendly.

### **Northwest and Northeast Groups**

We are looking forward to holding these group sessions soon, but we need more members for these two regional groups so we can hear what matters to customers in these areas. If you'd like to get involved, please visit our webpage here:

<https://acctgrp.org/m9j>



## Listening, learning and acting on customer feedback

Our *involved customers* are involved in a variety of projects and service improvement work.

### Here you can read about two recent examples:

#### Rent and service charge communications

Customer consultation has played a central role in shaping this year's Rent and Service Charge booklet and the new supporting campaign. By listening to feedback from our involved customers through workshops, conversations and a survey, we've made clear, practical changes to improve understanding and accessibility.

#### Changes made include:

- A new introduction page at the start of the booklet, with clear information
- A new breakdown of rents and service charges for the new year ahead, showing the difference in cost
- A new 'FAQ' page to help answer concerns or questions
- More support offered throughout, including weblinks, QR codes and contact details for our Housing Hub
- A new set of videos explaining rent, service charge and financial support

#### Coming Soon

##### Repairs workshop with Executive Director Peter Hall

Involved customers, and customers who've recently made a complaint, have been invited to spend dedicated time with senior leaders to share experiences and views on repairs, helping us shape improvements at the highest level. We'll update you soon!

##### New MyAccount functionality

We'll be gathering feedback on the functionality of our new MyAccount platform to ensure it works effectively for customers.

##### In-depth service discussions

Following customer requests, we'll be holding more detailed conversations on fencing and tree management to continue our journey of service improvement in these areas.

If you are interested in getting involved, and helping us shape our services, sign up here:

<https://acctngrp.org/rby>





**Getting to know our involved customers – we're sharing and learning**

For this year's *'Getting to Know Your Customers Day'* in January we shared the stories of four of our involved customers: *David, Chris, Piotr* and *Katarzyna*, who've already helped shape what we do as part of our new Customer Influence Framework.

We posted their stories on our website and social media, letting you know who they are and how they're helping us here at Accent.

You can read their stories in full here: <https://acctgrp.org/s9i>



## Even though their stories are all different, there were common themes:

### Home is about more than four walls

David talked about how quickly you notice the little things when you move somewhere new – neighbourliness, shared spaces, and that feeling of safety when you come home. Katarzyna shared that same idea, describing how important it is to feel settled, safe, and respected – and to know your voice will be heard.

### Clear communication is not a 'nice to have'

David's involvement focuses on making customer communications easier to understand, short and simple. Katarzyna raised something many customers will recognise – when updates are unclear or missing it can be stressful, and clear communication helps people feel reassured and valued.

### Inclusion and accessibility must be built in from the start

Chris spoke about community and safety, shaped by lived experience of serious antisocial behaviour, and why feeling safe and respected is essential. He also championed digital inclusion – as services move online, we need to make sure customers have fair access, confidence, and support. Piotr talked about disability and accessibility through his family's experiences, and why fair treatment sometimes means offering extra help when it's needed.

### People get involved when it feels possible

All four stories reminded us that involvement works best when it's flexible and supportive. Piotr highlighted how much it helps when meetings are scheduled in advance and the commitment feels manageable.

### What we're taking forward

Posting these stories was a celebration of our involved customers, but it was also a reminder of what matters most to our customers day to day – safety, community, accessibility, and communication that is clear and respectful.

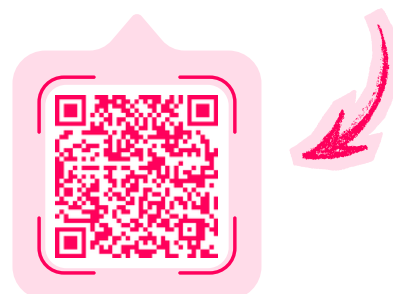
It also showed us that customer involvement is not one-size-fits-all. Some people want to join a group. Others prefer surveys, polls, and quick feedback. The important part is that there are options, and that every voice has a route in. That's why our Customer Influence Framework has lots of different ways customers can get involved, and have a say.

### Want to get involved too?

If reading these stories made you think, "I could do that", you can! You do not need special experience – just a sense of community and a willingness to share what life is really like where you live.

Get involved, and sign up here:

<https://acctgrp.org/Ofda28>



# LISTEN, LEARN AND ACT...

## Improving how we handle complaints



We always aim to get things right first time. But when we don't, we're *committed* to putting things right quickly – and *learning* from it. Every complaint *matters*. It helps us understand what we can do better.

**Over the past year, we've made improvements to how we handle complaints. We want it to be easier for you to raise concerns and feel confident that we'll act quickly, fairly, and consistently.**

We've been working hard with our involved customers, including our National Customer Group, to continue getting better at handling complaints. (you can read more about this on page 7.) We're listening to customer feedback, learning and taking action.

### Updating our Complaints Policy

We're now refreshing our Complaints Policy to make sure it's clear, easy to understand, and reflects the latest guidance. We're working with customers to:

- Make the policy simpler and more transparent
- Respond to recent internal audit recommendations
- Review our compensation process in line with updated guidance from the Housing Ombudsman

We held a workshop on 6th March to seek detailed feedback. Customers told us the updated policy is clearer and better aligned with national guidance, especially around reasonable adjustments and compensation. They also stressed that a good policy is only part of the picture – what really matters is how it's used day to day, how we learn from complaints, and how customers are involved in shaping improvements. We've taken this on board and are strengthening the way customer feedback and scrutiny are built into our processes.

Customers also raised important points about accessibility and clarity. This included making sure policies are easy to find on our website, simple to read on mobile devices, and available in alternative formats if needed. We've committed to improving this, offering more choice in how customers access information and make complaints, and using clearer explanations and visuals around compensation. We're also introducing stronger systems to track actions promised through complaints, so we follow through on what we say and continue to improve services based on what customers tell us.

## Making sure we follow through

When we agree actions as part of a complaint resolution, we make sure they happen.

This might include:

- A call with your Leasehold and Homeownership Partner
- A visit from your Leasehold and Homeownership Partner to walk around your estate
- Arranging follow-up communal repairs

We've strengthened our systems and processes so that agreed actions are tracked and completed. Our staff and contractors are clear about what needs to be done - and we follow up to make sure it's delivered.

## What customers have told us

Here's some recent feedback from customers about their experience:



He was very understanding and very professional and very understanding of my distress. He handled things very well and was very satisfied with the outcome. Kevin is an asset to you.



"I found Chrystal was very helpful and understanding when dealing with my complaint. Very polite and professional and kept communications with myself with updates over the duration of the procedure. I felt that my complaint was handled very well and resolved through Chrystal's work and professionalism and I appreciate everything she has done for me to help me resolve my issues."

For more information on how we handle complaints visit our webpage here:

<https://acctgrp.org/O8bd2f>



## How to share your feedback

Whether it's a *compliment* or a *complaint*, here's how you can reach us.



**Complain via our online form:**

<https://acctgrp.org/b51f17>



**Email:**

[customerservices@accentgroup.org](mailto:customerservices@accentgroup.org)



**Tell a member of Accent staff in person**



**Call us:**

0345 678 0555 from 8am to 6pm  
Monday to Friday



**Post your complaint to:**

Accent Housing, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor,  
Scorex House, 1 Bolton Road,  
Bradford, BD1 4AS

# AFTERCARE AND DEFECTS:

## What you need to know

Buying a new home is an exciting milestone, and we want you to feel *supported* long after you've collected your keys. That's where *aftercare* comes in.

**Understanding how this process works will help you keep your home in great condition and get issues resolved as quickly as possible.**

### What is the Aftercare Period?

The aftercare period is the time after you move into your new home when the builder remains responsible for fixing certain issues, called defects. This period usually lasts for 12 months from your build completion date, and you can find this information in your home user guide.

During this time, you should report any problems with the construction or finish of your home to us so they can be assessed and, where appropriate, repaired.

### What counts as a defect?

A defect is generally something that hasn't been built or installed correctly. Common examples include:

- Doors or windows that don't open or close properly
- Leaks, faulty plumbing, or electrical issues
- Problems with heating or ventilation systems

Some changes to your home in the first year are completely normal. For example, small hairline cracks can appear as your home settles, and these are usually not considered defects.

### What is not covered?

Not everything is classed as a defect. The following are typically not covered under aftercare:

- General wear and tear
- Damage caused by day-to-day living or accidental damage
- Issues resulting from alterations or DIY works
- Routine maintenance, such as adjusting doors or replacing light bulbs

Your homeowner guide or handover pack will explain this in more detail.



## How to report a defect

If you notice an issue, report it as soon as possible to our team by emailing **[Aftercare@accentgroup.org](mailto:Aftercare@accentgroup.org)**. When reporting a defect, it helps to include:

- A clear description of the issue
- Photos of the issue
- The location of the problem in your home
- Your name, address and contact information

Once reported, the issue will be reviewed and passed to the developer if deemed a defect, if not the team will explain why this doesn't meet the defect criteria.

## After the first year

Once the aftercare period ends, most new homes are still covered by a structural warranty. This typically lasts up to 8 years and covers major structural issues, although everyday repairs and maintenance then become the homeowner's responsibility.

## We're here to help

We understand that moving into a new home can come with questions, and we're committed to supporting our shared owners throughout the process. If you're unsure whether something is a defect or need advice on next steps, please get in touch - it's always better to ask.

Send us an email on **[Aftercare@accentgroup.org](mailto:Aftercare@accentgroup.org)** or call **0345 678 0555**.

## Did You Know?

If you're a shared owner, your lease will usually require you to get permission from Accent before:

- Keeping a pet in your home
- Making changes or improvements to your property

This helps us make sure any changes are safe and in line with your lease agreement.

If you're thinking about applying, you can find more information and submit a request on our website here:

### Home improvements:

<https://acctgrp.org/8kp>



### Pets:

<https://acctgrp.org/9c8fe4>



**If you're unsure or would like to talk it through first, please get in touch with your **Leasehold and Homeownership Partner** - we're happy to help.**

## RESTORING PEACE:

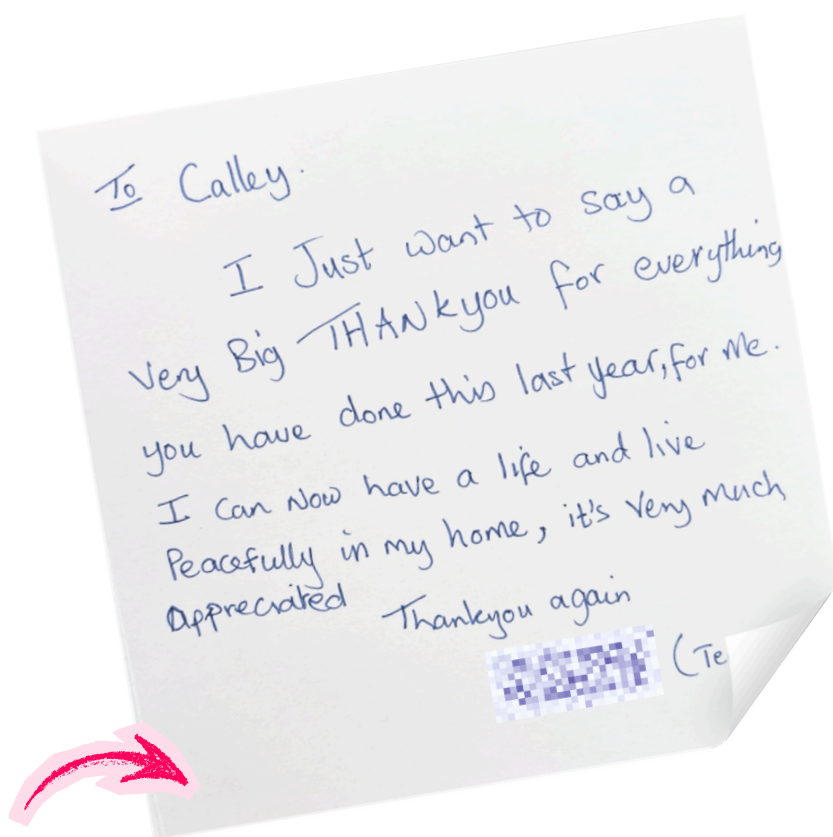
### How Housing Partner Cally helped a customer feel safe

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) can seriously affect *wellbeing* and feeling *safe* at home.

A recent case in the North East shows how our Housing Partner Cally helped a customer regain peace in their home.

The customer had been experiencing verbal abuse, objects thrown into their garden, and other disruptive incidents from a neighbour. Cally acted quickly, offering reassurance, gathering information, and working directly with those involved. The situation was resolved, and the neighbour eventually chose to move out, meaning no formal legal action was needed.

The result? The customer can now enjoy their home in peace again and sent Cally a heartfelt thank-you card:



I just want to say a big thank you... I can now live a life, and live peacefully in my home. It's very much appreciated.

**Cally said, "Anti-social behaviour can seriously affect a person's sense of safety. I'm proud to have helped, and receiving this card was a meaningful reminder of the positive impact we can have."**

### Anti-social behaviour satisfaction surveys

If you've recently contacted our anti-social behaviour (ASB) service, please look out for a short survey once your case has closed. It asks about your experience - from reporting your concerns to how we communicated and handled your case.

We survey customers so we can clearly see what's working and where we need to improve. Every response is reviewed alongside performance data and case reviews to help us strengthen our processes, guidance and training.

If you receive a survey, please take a few minutes to complete it - your feedback genuinely shapes our ASB service.

Find out more about reporting ASB, the support available and what to expect on our website or call our team:

<https://acctgrp.org/92e86e>



## HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

Your feedback shows where we must do better

Every year we ask customers what they think about the services we provide. This feedback is part of the *Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)*.

These are questions that housing providers like Accent ask their customers. They help us understand what is working well and where we need to improve.

This year's results for customers in shared ownership homes show a mixed picture.

There are some signs of progress.

In some areas, more customers told us things are getting better.

**For example, scores improved for:**

- listening to customer views
- how we handle complaints
- keeping shared areas clean and well maintained
- our work in neighbourhoods
- how we deal with anti-social behaviour

The biggest improvement was in shared areas being clean and well maintained, which increased to **38.3%**.

These changes matter. They show that improvement is possible.

But we know the overall picture is not good enough, and we want to be honest with you.

Overall satisfaction from Accent's shared ownership customers is still too low.

Our score for overall satisfaction with Accent increased slightly to **39.5%**. This is still much lower than it should be.

**Some other important scores also went down this year, including:**

- feeling safe in your home
- being kept informed
- being treated fairly and with respect

We know these are important parts of a good service and which really matter to customers.

The results tell us that too many shared ownership customers do not feel they get a service that is clear, fair or responsive.

And we know this isn't good enough.

**What we need to improve**

**We know we need to focus on the parts of the customer journey where trust can break down.**

**This includes:**

- clearer and more regular communication
- better and faster responses
- treating customers fairly and with respect
- making it easier to raise concerns
- improving how we handle complaints from start to finish

We know some customers do not feel listened to when they contact us. We also know that even where scores have improved, some are still very low.

This means we need more than small changes.

We need to make the shared ownership customer experience better, clearer and more consistent.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey this year. Your feedback is helping us see where we must do better.

## Listening, learning and acting



**When you give us feedback, we want to do more than just hear it.**

**We want to learn from it and act on it.**

# That's why we have created our TSM Action Plan.

This plan sets out the changes we are making because of what customers told us in the survey.

For shared ownership customers, the plan is especially focused on the areas where trust is lowest and where the service needs to improve most.

### **This includes:**

- communication
- complaints
- listening to your views
- treating customers fairly and with respect
- shared areas and neighbourhoods
- anti-social behaviour

Some actions are already complete. Others are under way.

### **What this means for you**

The action plan includes practical steps to improve your experience.

### **For example, we are working to:**

- give clearer information to customers
- improve the way we communicate about issues that matter to you
- make it easier to raise concerns and get answers
- improve how complaints are handled
- give customers more chances to shape services
- improve shared spaces and neighbourhoods
- review service charges to make sure they are clear and easy to understand
- create clearer customer information in newsletters and handbooks

We are also improving how we understand customers' needs, so we can provide a better service.

### **Focused action for shared ownership customers**

We know shared ownership customers do not always experience our service in the same way as rented customers.

That is why this cannot be a one-size-fits-all response.

### **We need to improve the parts of the shared ownership experience that matter most, especially:**

- fairness
- communication
- trust
- how concerns are resolved

We know plans only matter if customers see real change.

That is why our focus now is on making sure improvements are felt in day-to-day service, not just written in a plan.

We will continue to share updates on the changes we are making.

Thank you for your feedback. It is helping us improve.

The below actions are helping to improve repairs, estates, complaints, communication, ASB, treating customers with respect and listening & acting on customer views.

## Actions

Introduce 'last mile tracking' so you can see when contractors are due to arrive

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Improve the customer information we hold, so we can tailor our services more effectively

**Deadline:** JANUARY 2028

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Review our service charges to make sure they are transparent and easy to understand

**Deadline:** JANUARY 2028

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Explore how we can improve our systems, so contractor appointments and updates are tracked in real time

**Deadline:** JUNE 2026

---

Look to improve the way we interact with customers through a variety of channels, and co-design with customers

**Deadline:** DECEMBER 2026

---

Trial cleaning schedules and information on noticeboards in communal areas

**Deadline:** JUNE 2026

---

Involve customers in selection of our repairs contractors

**Deadline:** MARCH 2026

---

Develop a Communication Strategy

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

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Provide simple reporting routes for communal cleanliness / damage

**Deadline:** JUNE 2026

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Strengthen how we work with contractors, using clear performance measures

**Deadline:** MARCH 2026

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Introduce a new case management system so we can track issues more effectively

**Deadline:** JANUARY 2026

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Strengthen how we review contractor performance, using clear measures

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Introduce a new Customer Inclusion Policy to make sure we adapt our services when needed

**Deadline:** MARCH 2026

---

Embed a new customer engagement framework

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Relaunch Community Action Plans to focus on the improvements that matter most in your community

**Deadline:** APRIL 2026



Review how we collect feedback following how we have handled Anti-Social Behaviour

**Deadline:** JUNE 2026

---

If you give us a low satisfaction score, we'll call you back to understand what happened and how we can put it right

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Publish regular 'You said, we did' updates so you can see how we've learned from complaints and improved our services.

**Deadline:** JULY 2026

---

Use new dashboards to spot issues earlier and make sure complaints are handled properly and on time

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Provide extra training for staff so every complaint is dealt with fairly, consistently, and with care

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Tailor our newsletter to audiences based on the tenure of their home

**Deadline:** COMPLETE

---

Create customer handbooks

**Deadline:** JULY 2026

## Our TSM results


Response  
rate

37.4%



-2.0%

1. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Accent?

39.5%  +2.1%

2. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Accent provides a home that is safe?

58.2%  -0.7%

3. How satisfied are you that Accent listens to your views and acts upon them?

32.0%  +2.7%

4. How satisfied are you that Accent keeps you informed about things that matter to you?

44.0%  -0.8%


5. Accent treats me fairly and with respect

45.4%  -0.9%


6. Accent's approach to complaints handling?

18.6%  +3.0%


7. Accent keeps communal areas clean and well maintained?

38.3%  +9.8%

8. Accent makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?


29.5%  +5.0%

9. Accent's approach to handling anti social behaviour?


26.8%  +3.4%

## We also asked you...

1. Would you recommend Accent as a housing provider?

60.4%  +1.1%

2. How well does your Accent home meet your current needs?

55.6%  -0.6%

# **ALWAYS LISTENING:** **Our new approach to your feedback**

**Changing how we collect and publish our Tenant Satisfaction Measure results**

From *April 2026*, we are changing how we ask for your feedback on our *Tenant Satisfaction Measures* (TSMs).

## **What's changing**

We ask all customers who live in rented and shared ownership properties for their feedback on our TSMs each year.

Before, we asked everyone at the same time of year, generally in the autumn. Now we're going to be asking for feedback on our TSMs at four different points in the year, although each customer can only complete the survey once during the year.

## **The 4 different survey times will be during:**

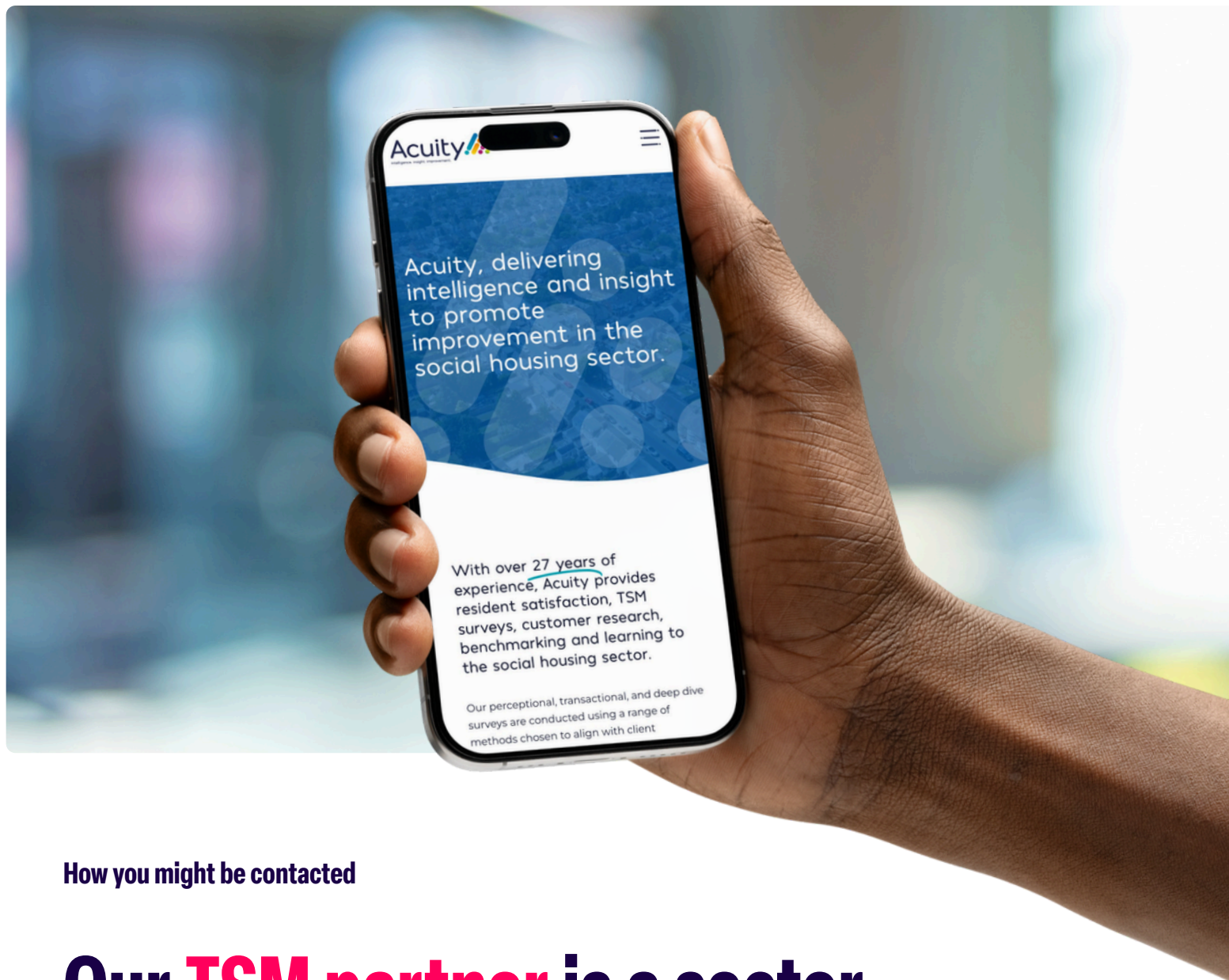
- April - June
- July - September
- October - December
- January - March

You will still only be surveyed once during the yearly cycle.

Changing our approach will help us understand what is working well, and what we need to fix, much sooner.

## **What this means for you**

When asked to take part in the short survey (takes between 4 and 10 minutes to complete), you will be able to quickly share your views about your home and our services.



## How you might be contacted

# Our **TSM partner** is a sector-leading specialist called **Acuity** - they will carry out the survey for us.

This is so that our TSM process is independent, and so that customers can speak freely and confidentially about Accent.

Acuity will contact you via the method you prefer (stated on sign up) but you can change this at any point by logging into MyAccount where you can change your contact preferences, or calling our team on **0345 678 0555**.

Acuity will therefore contact you by any of the following ways:

1. Email or text message (SMS) with a link to a survey
2. A phone call asking you to take part. This will come from **01273 093939**
3. A paper survey by post

Acuity is a trusted company that works with many housing providers, and they follow strict data protection rules. However you can still contact us by the usual methods to confirm that the link/call is genuine.

You can also choose to give feedback without your name being shared.

## Why we are doing this

We want to:

- ▶ **Listen to you more often.**
  - ▶ **Fix problems faster.**
  - ▶ **Improve our services.**
- 

We'll use what you tell us to:

- ▶ **Improve repairs and services.**
- ▶ **Make our communication clearer.**
- ▶ **Make better decisions.**

We'll also share updates with customers throughout the year so you can see what we are doing.

Your feedback really matters to us, and we're committed to listening, learning and acting on your feedback. We hope you can take part in our TSM survey.

Due to the volume of responses we receive, we're unable to guarantee a personal follow-up to every submission. However, if your response indicates a health and safety or safeguarding concern, a member of our team may be in touch to ensure you receive the right support.

If you have an urgent question that needs immediate action, please contact us directly at **0345 678 0555** from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday or email our customer services team on [\*\*customerservices@accentgroup.org\*\*](mailto:customerservices@accentgroup.org).

# REMORTGAGING: A guide for Shared Owners

If you already own your home through Shared Ownership, there may come a time when you need to review or change your current mortgage product or terms.

**Perhaps your current deal is ending, your circumstances have changed or you're thinking about buying further shares in your home.**

**Homemade Homes by Accent** are here to make the process clear and straightforward. Here's what you need to know. Before you go complete your remortgage, you must obtain formal written consent from Homemade Homes. We'll need:

- A copy of your new mortgage offer
- Written confirmation if you are borrowing more than the amount needed to repay your existing mortgage (explaining why)

This helps us ensure your new mortgage complies with the terms of your Shared Ownership lease.

We recommend you begin the process of remortgaging at least three to six months before your current mortgage (or fixed product rate) is due to end.

## Fees:

- £60 (including VAT)
- An additional £120 (including VAT) if a legal restriction is registered against your property at HM Land Registry and a signed notice is required

## Further borrowing

Further borrowing means increasing your mortgage above your original loan amount. In these cases, consent from Homemade Homes is required.

You'll need to provide:

- Your new mortgage offer
- A copy of your lender's valuation report

This allows us to confirm the maximum amount you're permitted to borrow under your lease.

Further borrowing is only permitted for specific reasons:

- Buying additional shares in your home (staircasing)
- Meeting lease obligations, such as essential repairs
- Allowing one leaseholder to buy out another leaseholder's share

If your request doesn't fall into one of these categories, we won't be able to approve it.

## We're here to help

If you're considering remortgaging, changing your mortgage product, or applying for further borrowing, get in touch with us before you proceed. The team at Homemade Homes will guide you through the next steps and make sure everything runs smoothly. Call our team on **0345 678 0552**.

## Update on the Renters' Rights Act 2025

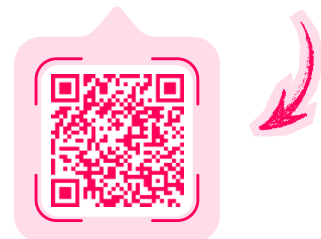
You may have seen recent news about the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and wondered what it means for your home. We'd like to reassure shared owners about an important change that came into effect in December 2025.

One of the key updates relates to how shared ownership leases with a term of 21 years or more are legally defined. Previously, these leases were classed as "assured tenancies". Under the new legislation, this is no longer the case.

While this is a technical legal change, it's important that shared owners are aware of the updated definition and how it may relate to their lease.

For full details, you can read the government's official guidance on the Government website here:

<https://acctgrp.org/vvk>



If you have any questions, please contact our Leasehold and Homeownership Team. They'll be happy to help and guide you through what this means for you.

## Launching a more inclusive way to connect

We have launched a new service that makes it easier for our deaf community to contact us, and for our colleagues to contact them, through *British Sign Language (BSL)* interpreting via *Sign Solutions*.

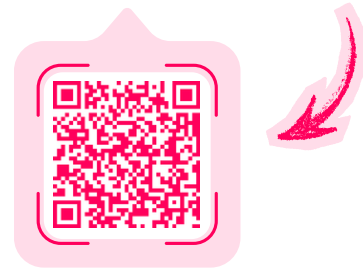
Through this service, deaf customers can get in touch with us using qualified BSL interpreters, and our colleagues can also use the service to support outbound conversations, ensuring communication is clear, respectful and accessible in both directions.

This launch is an important step in strengthening accessibility, equality and meaningful customer involvement, and reflects our ongoing commitment to designing services with people, not just for them.

We're excited about the difference this will make and will continue to listen, learn and improve how we serve our communities.

Visit our website for more information:

<https://acctgrp.org/7d8776>



## Keeping your communal spaces safe, clean and welcoming

Our Estate Services team looks after communal cleaning, grounds maintenance, and assist with aids and adaptations.



We work with cleaning and grounds maintenance contractors to deliver essential services. Our focus is simple: to keep shared spaces safe, tidy and welcoming, and to make sure services are delivered to the standards you expect.

# Grounds maintenance

- Grass cutting every two weeks between March and October (weather and contract dependent)
- Monthly visits between October and February (weather and contract dependent)
- Hedge cutting 3 times a year (outside of bird nesting season)
- Tree inspections and work based on professional arborist advice and risk management
- Improved fly tipping removal with our new contractor

We have a schedule on our website here:

<https://acctngrp.org/881271>



**Accent**

## Grounds Maintenance Schedule

Got something to say about your estate services? We want to hear.  
 We routinely survey customers about the standard of the grounds maintenance and communal cleaning services. Get in touch with us if you would like to share how you think the service is going. For enquiries, please contact **0345 678 0555**.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
Grass cutting			16 times a year (Frequency depends on weather)						Once				
Edging of beds			Every visit										
Surface clearance			2 times a year										
Remove weeds			Every visit										
Beds - summer maintenance			As and when required						Once				
Beds - winter maintenance			Once						Once				
Pruning of shrubs and hedges			8 times a year (Frequency depends on weather)										Once
Pruning overhead branches			3 times a year (As and when required)										
Strimming			As and when required										
Clear bramble/gorse			2 times during this period										Once
Rough verge maintenance			2 times during this period						Once				

Where it is raining or weather doesn't permit, visits may be missed due to wet grass churning and leaving a mess, but these visits will be picked up at a later date.

Grounds maintenance contractors have a responsibility to comply with the Wildlife Act 1981 as such pruning of hedges can be delayed due to nesting birds.

## Communal cleaning

- Regular cleaning visits in line with our service specification
- Cleaning specifications are shared
- Monitoring to make sure standards are met

## Did you know...?

- Heavy rainfall can delay grass cutting, but we will come as soon as possible
- Hedges cannot be cut during bird nesting season – contractors will return once it is safe to do so.
- Very low temperatures (below 0°C) can affect mopping.
- Storing items in communal areas can prevent cleaning and create fire risks.

## Listening, learning and improving

We closely monitor our contractors through site visits, completion reports and regular performance meetings. Each contractor now has a clear action plan to ensure services are delivered consistently. Our Estate Services Manager also carries out site visits throughout the year.

## Your feedback matters

**We're proud of the positive feedback we've received recently. Thank you to everyone who takes the time to share feedback.**



These gardeners are so thorough, they are *spot on*.



The tradesman was *lovely* and *brilliant*... very respectful and did a very good job.”



Hedges cut *really nicely* and tidy with *no mess* left behind.



## You can support us by:

- Reporting fly tipping, damaged trees or safety concerns through your Leasehold and Homeownership Partner or MyAccount
- Keeping communal areas, hallways and stairs clear of personal items
- Disposing of waste correctly and safely

For more information about what's included, responsibilities and how to report issues, visit our Estate Services webpage or speak to your Leasehold and Homeownership Partner. Together, we can keep your community safe, clean and welcoming.

<https://acctgrp.org/479a05>



## Tree management update

Customers have asked for information on how we manage trees, as part of our grounds maintenance service. **Here's a reminder:**

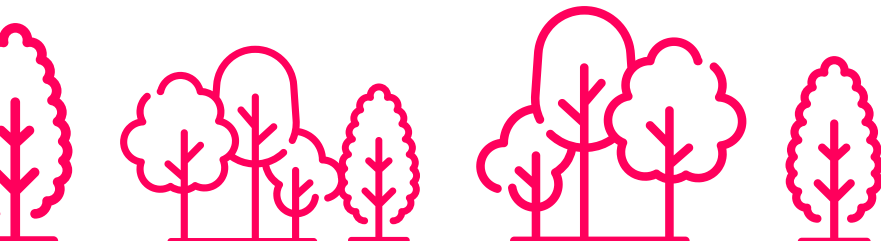
### Communal trees

We look after trees in shared areas.

- All communal trees are logged in our tree register.
- Independent tree specialists inspect them regularly.
- Any work needed, such as pruning or removal, is planned each winter when it's safest to do so.
- Urgent issues, like storm damage or dangerous trees, are dealt with as soon as possible.

For more information, visit our website or speak to our team.

<https://acctgrp.org/b03dff>



## STAY SAFE:

### Lithium and rechargeable batteries

*Lithium-ion batteries* power everyday items like mobile phones, laptops, e-bikes, and e-scooters – but they can be a serious *fire risk* if not handled properly.



**In the UK, lithium-ion battery fires have almost doubled in recent years, with over 1,300 fires reported in 2024 alone.**

#### Why they're risky

Batteries can overheat, catch fire, or even explode if they are:

- Overcharged or left charging for too long
- Damaged, dropped, or crushed
- Charged on or near flammable materials
- Charged with fake chargers, bought cheaply online
- Thrown in household bins

#### Charging safely at home

- Use the charger provided by the manufacturer
- Charge devices on a flat, hard surface – not on beds or sofas
- Avoid charging overnight or when you're out
- Keep devices away from flammable materials
- Don't leave batteries plugged in after fully charged

#### E-Bikes and E-Scooters

Private e-scooters are illegal on UK roads and pavements, while legal e-bikes must meet safety standards. Stay safe by:

- Buying from reputable retailers
- Checking for CE or UKCA marks
- Registering products for safety updates

#### Dispose of batteries safely

- Never put lithium batteries in your household or recycling bin
- Take batteries to local recycling points
- Recycle full devices if the battery can't be removed

#### If a fire occurs

- Do not try to put out the fire yourself unless using a special lithium-rated extinguisher
- Evacuate immediately and call 999

Small steps like proper charging, storage, and disposal can prevent serious accidents and keep your home safe.

We have more fire safety tips on our website:

<https://acctgrp.org/b1c0bd>



**Do you know someone who may be interested in buying a home with Shared Ownership?**

You already know how great *Shared Ownership* can be and here is your chance to *share* the benefits with someone you know.

**If you have a friend or family member who's looking to buy a home, you could both be rewarded when they purchase a brand-new Shared Ownership home with us.**

When your friend reserves and completes on a qualifying new build development, you'll each receive a **£250 IKEA voucher** – perfect for adding those finishing touches to both your homes.

It's our way of saying thank you for helping others take their first step onto the property ladder.

To find out which developments are included and to read the full terms and conditions, visit [www.homemadehomes.com/friend](http://www.homemadehomes.com/friend)



or email [info@homemadehomes.com](mailto:info@homemadehomes.com)

