

Accent

# Accent's Corporate Strategy

Building on Strong  
Foundations

2024 • 2027



# Our *vision*

We believe that helping to solve the housing crisis will provide people with *stability*, a foundation for *better living* and contribute to the nation's wider objectives for local and national *growth*.



**Kelly and Ryan outside their new home at New Cardington Fields**







**Strategy**  
*context*

# In 2018 Accent made a number of strategic shifts that we believe have set our foundations and mapped the future journey of our next strategy period.

We re-confirmed our social purpose and our vision to achieve top quality homes and services, which introduced four major commitments in our strategic direction:

- ▶ An ambition to significantly increase the number of new homes we deliver
- ▶ Greater levels of investment in our existing homes and how we deliver services
- ▶ An aim to achieve a personalised service experience
- ▶ The development of a culture which positions Accent as both employer and partner of choice

To achieve this, we embarked on a period of significant change - to our funding arrangements, to our governance and leadership, and to our delivery models.

As we enter 2024, we have successfully delivered these changes and we have refocussed our organisation on our core business, ensuring that we are set up to deliver our social purpose now and well into the future.

We have reached a pivotal moment. We are building new homes, we are financially stronger and more resilient, we are able to embrace our unique geography and size, we have improved our visibility and we are able to bring our influence and resources together to tackle the real challenges faced by our customers.

A challenging economic environment, rising costs and a chronic shortage of housing supply is dramatically increasing the impact of the housing crisis and many households - including many children - are housed in inappropriate temporary accommodation. Accent's definition of the housing crisis goes beyond the conventional understanding of a shortage of new homes. We also recognise the challenges caused by lack of demand for some homes and neighbourhoods, by the historic marginalisation and stigmatisation of social housing, by the varied distribution and access to affordable homes across different demographics, and by the quality crisis within the sector which we have seen play out publicly over the recent past. Some homes are simply not up to 21st century living standards and this is becoming even more of a challenge within the context of the de-carbonisation agenda and how we ensure homes are truly fit for the future in the long term.

As a national organisation with homes across a variety of housing markets, and with a commitment to 'building better futures' to provide opportunity for our customers, we are realistic that our work alone cannot provide the equality of opportunity or access to affordable and safe homes the housing crisis is currently preventing millions of people from achieving. We believe that we have a fundamental part to play in helping to overcome the difficulties that households on lower incomes face and it is incumbent on us to deliver our core services to the best standard possible so that all of our customers feel that it is 'good to be home'.

We believe that helping to solve the housing crisis will provide people with stability and a foundation for better living, and contribute to the nation's wider objectives for local and national growth.

Our new strategy 'Building on Strong Foundations' will meet this vision through the delivery of four key objectives from 2024 to the end of 2027 which are set out as follows.



# Quality homes *for the future*





*Our Asset Management Strategy* sets out the foundation stones for preparing Accent to be both environmentally and financially sustainable in the long term, building and maintaining good quality assets that will provide larger numbers of better quality homes for our customers that are loved and affordable to access and run.

Our new growth, in combination with our financial resilience, provides us with opportunities and choices in relation to the homes that we provide for our customers and the investment that we are able to make in the communities in which we work.

We will continue to deliver a large programme of new build homes this will provide new, more energy efficient, homes for new customers who need them; enhance the overall quality of our asset base; increase our revenue income and our balance sheet capacity to borrow more funds to build more new homes and make the best use of our asset base where we are able to regenerate existing assets.

**By 2027 we will:**

- ▶ Complete a strategic asset management review.
- ▶ Increase the number of new homes we deliver to 600 starts on site per annum by 2027.
- ▶ Approve a 10-year investment plan to deliver the ambitions set out in our Asset Management Strategy 2024 – 2027.
- ▶ Formalise our plan to achieve a minimum EPC C rating across all of our homes and map a path to achieve carbon net zero by 2050.





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BRICK & TILE TERRACE





# Excellence through *customer- influenced services*

We want our services to meet the *needs* and the *expectations* of our customers and believe the best way to achieve that is to *involve* them as much as possible.

**Victoria, Mitchell and their baby boy in their new home**



**Emma and Sam in their  
new home at Mill View**



We want to promote a more *customer-led* approach to improving services, based on feedback, co-design, and a deep understanding of customer needs. We will do this through *authentic engagement* - listening, understanding, and acting responsively to the needs, aspirations and challenges of our customers.

We understand that true customer engagement is not a transaction; it is an ongoing relationship built on trust, transparency, and a shared commitment to customer and community well-being. It involves empowering our customers with the tools to shape their housing experiences, ensuring that their voices resonate in every decision-making process.

Improving how we engage and communicate with customers will provide the information we need, but ensuring our colleagues can easily access this and have the skills to interpret and use it will be the key to driving personalised and more satisfying service experiences to customers who trust us.

**By 2027 we will:**

- ▶ Collect comprehensive personal customer data to include information about vulnerabilities and support needs to enable a more tailored service and communication approach.
- ▶ Build a highly effective customer feedback loop, which is driving demonstrable service improvements.
- ▶ Develop an approach to Community Development which is reflective of our geography and harnesses local partnerships.



# Investing *for success*



We will build  
an environment  
where everyone is  
*valued, respected* and  
*appreciated* for who they  
are and what they bring.





# We will create ‘*moments that matter*’ for our internal and external customers and colleagues every day.

Through continuous engagement we will understand our colleague experience and know how to equip them to actively contribute their skills and energy, creating a positive and motivating work environment, which will drive higher productivity, job satisfaction, and retention.

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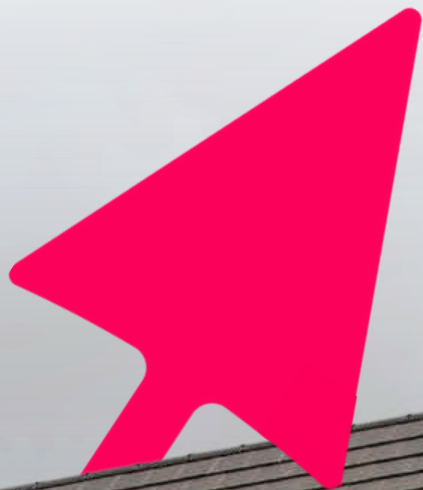
## **By 2027 we will:**

- ▶ Drive greater organisational effectiveness and productivity, following revised approaches to our ‘ways of working’ and end-to-end process mapping ensuring that we are able to maximise the resources that give added value to the services provided to our customers.
- ▶ Complete a review of our core ICT systems and agree the route to an integrated, high-performing service that supports colleagues to work efficiently and deliver great customer outcomes.
- ▶ Refine our data collection, storage and management to ensure we have high-quality, easy to access data that is used to inform decisions and provide better information to customers and other stakeholders.
- ▶ Our People Strategy has been aligned to support and help deliver the objectives and goals set out in the corporate strategy. We will develop a Leadership Academy and will invest in our colleagues to ensure that they have the training and skills to deliver excellent services to our customers.
- ▶ Embed EDI as a central component of Accent’s culture, business decisions and customer interactions.

# Lasting *change*

Our national footprint provides us with an authoritative and unique perspective to talk to and evidence the fallout of the housing crisis.





As an organisation with a strong commitment to continued growth, we will work with our stakeholders to achieve better outcomes for our customers by adding our voice to sector-wide lobbying activity. We will align with the key messages of our sector whilst presenting our own insight and expertise, utilising our customers' lived experience to support our calls for long term change.

**By 2027 we will:**

- ▶ Expand our reach and accelerate opportunities for our customers and the wider sector through lobbying and thought leadership opportunities, underpinned by Accent-led forecasting, insight, and research.
- ▶ Invest in policy oversight to position and continually adapt to public policy changes and law, and feed into communication positioning and outputs.
- ▶ Reset our stakeholder and partnership map to identify where our leadership teams need to grow and utilise high value relationships to feed this agenda and offer more support to our customers.
- ▶ Strengthen our internal and external communications functions to resource proactive stakeholder and external relations, especially across sector bodies and local and central government.



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