

NEC Portal Accessibility Workshop



MINUTES

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Location</i>
Thursday 15 th January 2026 6:00-7:15pm	Online, MS Teams
<p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents / R&C Panel: 6 in attendance • BCC Officers: Liz Cheetham (Engagement), Amy Hughes (Engagement), Myriam Selfe (IT Project Manager), Paul D Watts (Training), Mark Williams (Head of Repairs & Maintenance) 	

Agenda items

<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions</i>	<i>Actions</i>
1	<p>Welcome and housekeeping</p> <p>LC opened the session, outlined housekeeping, and introductions.</p> <p>MW recapped the purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to recent resident feedback on the new NEC customer portal. • Understand barriers to accessibility and usability. • Review experiences from pre-work. • Explore improvements to guidance, videos and interface design. <p>MW emphasised the importance of resident insight in shaping the development of the new portal and thanked participants for their time.</p>	All
2	<p>Resident Experiences from Pre-Work (Registration, Login, checking rent account, guide accessibility):</p> <p>Panel members shared mixed experiences trying to register and view accounts:</p>	MS/PDW/ MW

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	<p>Key issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual registration process (Bristol Account + NEC Portal) felt overly complex. • “Create a connection” step unclear – clarity around terminology (e.g., “personal reference number”). • Not receiving personal reference number via email or SMS, or unable to locate it. • The guide does not clearly explain what the personal reference number is, where it comes from, or how to get it. • Limited functionality currently available (e.g., rent account view only; repairs not yet active). • Navigation confusion – difficult to find key features and the importance of “three dots” menus not obvious. • Colour contrast and design made text hard to read for some users • Portal name “MyBristolHousing” unfamiliar; so default back to searching “Bristol City Council repairs”. • Website outages but no clear messaging about this. • Some found the process workable once log in references located. • Video and written guidance helped, though highlighted need for simpler formats. 	
3	<p>Demonstration of the Portal</p> <p>MS demonstrated the portal in ‘real time’ using a test account.</p> <p>MS explained that emails and text messages containing login details and each resident’s unique personal reference number were issued through Gov.Notify in November 2025, although some residents may not have received them due to outdated contact information. She confirmed that the online repairs ordering module is still under development and not yet live, but work is actively progressing with an anticipated rollout later this year. In addition, she noted that dedicated mobile apps for both iOS and Android are planned for release later in the year to make access to the portal simpler and more user friendly.</p> <p>Key issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some features (e.g., “current charges” via 3 dots) were not visible or intuitive to residents when self-navigating. • Colour contrast (grey text on grey backgrounds) was highlighted as a significant accessibility barrier. 	MS

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested residents may not notice the icons or drop-down menus, suggesting a need for stronger visual cues. 	
4	<p>Review of Video Guides and Alternative Formats</p> <p>PDW provided an update on improvements being made with new supporting video guidance.</p> <p>Feedback on videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Videos are helpful and more accessible than a 20-page written guide. Current AI voice-over, residents prefer more natural or varied voices. Videos could be shorter, broken into chapters or bite-sized segments (example: registration; creating a connection; viewing rent account). Captioning, voice options, or multiple presenters may improve accessibility. <p>Ideas suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add chapter markers within a YouTube video (like audiobooks). Consider hover-over tooltips for key terms on the portal (if technically feasible). Explore ‘help’ button or simple text-based search box, offering instant instructions without reading full guides or videos (e.g., “How do I log in?” or “What is my reference number?”). 	PDW
5	<p>Future Repairs Functionality</p> <p>MW and MS provided updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repairs module is in development. Will include visual diagnostic tool (icons and pictures to guide fault reporting). Aim to eventually allow residents to book their own appointments. Commitment to involve residents in user testing before launch. <p>Additional issues raised:</p>	MW/MS

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need an “Other” option when repairs do not fit predefined categories. • Ability for residents to report repairs for communal areas or buildings where they are not the tenant (important for safety and damp/mould prevention). 	
6	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>LC thanked everyone for their contributions. MW thanked residents and highlighted feedback will inform ongoing development, and updates will be reported back to the Resident & Community Panel.</p>	MW