

Abbeyfield National Residents' Panel

Minutes 04/08/2026

Present:	Resident Engagement
SP (SP)	Abbeyfield Resident - Esk Moors Lodge, Whitby
AK (AK)	Abbeyfield Resident - Esk Moors Lodge, Whitby
BS (BST)	Abbeyfield Resident – Ivy House - Somerset
AO (AO)	Abbeyfield Resident - Esk Moors Lodge, Whitby
AE (AE)	Abbeyfield Resident – Downing House, Manchester
JG (JG)	Abbeyfield Resident - High Lane, Stockport
SF (SF)	Abbeyfield Resident - Girton Green, Cambridge
RS (RS)	Abbeyfield Resident – Girton Green, Cambridge
PS (PS)	Abbeyfield Resident – Isle of Wight
Petra Taylor (PT)	Head of Governance and Company Secretary - Abbeyfield
Peter Davies (PD)	Customer Quality Manager - Abbeyfield
Terri Pettifer-Eagles (TP-E)	Board Member - Abbeyfield
Justin O'Brien (JO'B)	Resident Engagement Manager - Abbeyfield
Apologies:	
CH (CH)	Abbeyfield Resident - Abbeyfield House, Garstang
MN (MN)	Abbeyfield Resident – Abbeyfield House - Ulverston
MB (MB)	Abbeyfield Resident – The Old Vicarage, Somerset
PB (PB)	Abbeyfield Resident - Carnarvon House, Nottinghamshire
RG (RG)	Abbeyfield Resident - Salisbury
BS (BSA)	Abbeyfield Resident - Privett Farm House, Gosport

	ITEM
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies: Justin welcomed members and guests to the meeting and introductions took place. Terri Pettifer-Eagles attended as part of the ongoing programme of engagement between Board members and the National Residents' Panel. Apologies were received from CH and MB.
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2026 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record.
3.	Action Log:

	The Panel reviewed the Master Action Log. The Wi-Fi and internet action remained in progress. Justin explained that the six-to-eight-week timescale previously indicated had now passed and that he had followed this up with Rob. An update had not been received before the meeting and Justin would continue to pursue this. This remains part of the Housing “You Said, We Will” Action Plan. The Panel queried the completed fire alarm / evacuation action because the outcome had not been recorded on the log. Justin agreed to obtain the detail from Meg and also clarify whether the position applied to volunteer fire wardens / fire teams. The Panel clarified the existing organisational structure action. Members wanted a simple overview showing the Board, Chief Executive, senior leadership and management structure, with more detailed service information provided separately where useful. Justin agreed to prepare an initial version for circulation before the next meeting. The Panel asked whether a paper copy of the Action Log could be provided with the monthly papers. Justin agreed to arrange this, recognising that the live log may change between meetings. Justin also confirmed that the timetable for resident-friendly policy summaries should be aligned to October, when the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) publication scheme is due to be in place.
4.	Terri Pettifer-Eagles – Board Member Terri introduced herself and explained that she chairs the Board’s People Committee and also sits on the Customer Committee. She outlined her professional background in human resources, learning and development and executive coaching before taking questions from the Panel. The Panel asked whether, if she were considering downsizing, Terri would choose to live in an Abbeyfield service. Terri said she would not rule Abbeyfield out but had not yet seen an option that would necessarily suit her current lifestyle. This led to a wider discussion about Abbeyfield’s different service models and, in particular, independent living. The Panel emphasised that independent living is genuinely independent. Residents have their own homes and make their own decisions about how they spend their time. They may be out for the day, meet friends, go to lunch, take part in activities or receive visitors. Panel members felt that this level of independence was not always sufficiently understood across Abbeyfield.

	Practical examples were given of where this distinction affects the resident experience. The Panel noted that residents may be asked to remain at home for contractors, which can be difficult for people who are otherwise mobile and living active lives. Members felt that processes based on assumptions more suited to care settings could unintentionally restrict independence. The Panel also raised concerns that the distinction between independent living and care was becoming increasingly blurred. It was felt that this could affect who is attracted or admitted to independent living services and, over time, the character of those services and the viability of activities and facilities intended for an active resident community. Different perspectives were expressed about what independence means. The discussion recognised that physical support needs do not necessarily remove a person's independence: the ability to make choices, understand what is happening and direct the support available to them can also be central to independent living. The Panel questioned whether Abbeyfield does enough to explain and promote independent living as a distinct housing offer. Terri agreed that the organisation needs to be clear about its different propositions and how these are communicated to prospective residents. The Panel also asked whether Abbeyfield's people approach could do more to develop and support volunteers, including residents undertaking skilled involvement roles. Terri welcomed the suggestion and agreed to investigate this further. The Panel referred to the wider national discussion about social care and asked for information relating to the Casey review to be circulated.
5.	Charity Objectives Update Petra Taylor, Company Secretary and Head of Governance, joined the meeting to discuss proposed changes to Abbeyfield's charitable objects. Petra explained that the existing objects date back to 1956 and are being reviewed to modernise outdated language and provide greater flexibility for the organisation in the future. Any change requires approval from the Charity Commission. The Panel asked about apparent overlap within the proposed wording and Petra explained that some clauses provide a broad charitable purpose while others make clear that providing and managing housing and accommodation remains one of Abbeyfield's purposes.

	The Panel questioned the inclusion of “youth” and the removal of explicit reference to Christian principles. Concerns were raised that broadening the objects could potentially move Abbeyfield away from its traditional focus on older people, while the founding ethos remained important to some members. Petra explained that the proposed wording would not in itself mean that Abbeyfield would suddenly expand into new areas of service. Its purpose was to give the charity flexibility in how it may support beneficiaries in future. The Panel’s questions and comments were noted as part of the consultation before the proposed application to the Charity Commission.
6.	Pete Davis – Quality Audit Update Peter Davies, Quality Manager in the Quality and Compliance team, presented an update on the Housing Quality Audit programme. He explained that the audit was introduced in January 2025 to assess how effectively housing services meet resident expectations, drawing on the Resident Commitment developed with the Panel and the housing Consumer Standards. It is separate from the quality audit arrangements used in care services. The original aim had been to audit every housing service annually. In light of team capacity and the wider responsibilities of the Quality and Compliance function, this has been revised to a two-year cycle for housing, while care services continue to be audited annually. Between January 2025 and the end of June 2026, 43 of 49 services had been audited. Peter confirmed that visits had subsequently taken place at all services apart from Nine Oaks in Windermere, a newly managed service which had been given additional time to establish itself. This was due to be visited in September. Overall compliance across the services included in the reported results was approximately 76%. Peter explained that, from September 2026 to March 2027, the team would concentrate on services with the lowest scores, reviewing progress against actions, identifying barriers to improvement and seeking further resident feedback before the next audit cycle. The Panel questioned whether audit questions and expectations always reflect the realities of independent living. Peter clarified that the Housing Quality Audit is based specifically on housing requirements and the Consumer Standards rather than the care audit framework. The Panel also raised concerns about the amount and presentation of information displayed within services. Members felt that noticeboards can become overcrowded, making important information harder to identify. The discussion considered whether information that residents do not need routinely could

	increasingly be held on the Resident Hub, supported by clear signposting or QR codes within services. Peter acknowledged the risk of information overload and the importance of making information both available and accessible.
7.	Policy Review (standing item) There was no policy scheduled for review at this meeting. Justin thanked Panel members who had contributed to the recent consultation on the Safeguarding Adults Policy. This was the first policy considered through the new resident consultation process and forms part of Abbeyfield's wider governance arrangements for policy review. Policy Review will remain a standing item on future agendas.
8.	Care Survey Update Justin confirmed that the Care Survey had closed a couple of weeks before the meeting. All returned surveys had been collected and responses were being entered into SurveyMonkey in preparation for analysis. The response rate was lower than hoped and possible reasons for this would be considered with operational teams. There were no preliminary findings available at the meeting. An update was due to be provided to the Customer Committee, with fuller findings to be brought back to the Panel once the analysis had progressed.
9.	Forward Plan The Panel reviewed the forward plan. Justin confirmed that Shaun Mulloy would attend a future meeting to discuss repairs performance. The Panel asked whether this could be linked to the separate work to develop resident-facing information explaining what residents can expect from the repairs service. Justin confirmed that this is a separate action within the Housing "You Said, We Will" Action Plan and that the Panel will be involved in its development. The Panel also referred to concerns previously raised when considering repairs information and asked that these be recognised as part of the future discussion on repairs.
10.	Any Other Business The Panel raised questions about Alertacall and how the service operates. Justin agreed to provide further information to members.
11.	Next Meeting:

	Tuesday September 1 2.00pm Microsoft Teams
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