

# HOME NEWS



# NEWS

Winter 2019

Written in partnership  
by customers and staff  
of North Devon Homes

Seasons Greetings!

# contents

Communications	3 - 4
Neighbourhoods	5
Independent Living	6 - 7
Customer Care Team	8 - 9
Working in Partnerships	10 - 11
Income Team	12 - 13
Customer Involvement	14 - 15
Community Involvement	16 - 17
Regeneration & Development	18 - 19
Property Maintenance	20 - 21
Apprenticeships	22
Notice Board	23
Competitions	24

Front cover image:  
Slade Valley Christmas  
Fayre 2018

## Welcome to the winter edition of Home News!

Hello and welcome to your newsletter.

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Dawn Ash and I have been involved with North Devon Homes for some 12 years now, 7 of those as a Customer Board member, so I have lots of experience. One of my main aims is to increase the customer voice in the management of North Devon Homes, representing customers and working on their behalf alongside North Devon Homes, to help shape and improve our homes and the services that we use.

I am currently Chair of the C90 group, which replaced the Customer Forum. This group has been going for two years now and has completely changed the way that the customer voice is heard in the board room; this ultimately affects the decisions that we see in our services and homes. The C90 group is made up of customers, Board members and members of the Executive Team. The aim of the C90 is to use the 90 days between meetings to get views from customers to look at issues that will be discussed at the next board meeting. This helps the board understand things from a customer perspective.

This edition of Home News brings you news and updates from North Devon Homes. Please remember that this is *your* newsletter and if you have any articles that you would like to include in the next edition of Home News, please contact Emma Wonnacott by email at [marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or on 01271 312506. We would like get more people involved in helping make decisions that affect us all. There are many ways that you can be involved, from attending meetings, to taking part in surveys and you can do as little or as much as you want to do - you don't even have to attend in person, you can be involved from your armchair if you wish! Please contact Tracey Williams on 01271 313384 or email [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk) to have an informal chat about how you can become involved. We are a friendly bunch, so come and join in.

**Dawn Ash**  
C90 Chair



## Managing your home during the cold weather

With another winter upon us, we are preparing our services for another cold spell to make sure our team is available - no matter what the weather throws at us. There are a few things that you can do in your home to make sure that you are as prepared as possible for the cold weather, minimising the need to call us out for an emergency.

- Make sure that you heat your home at a low level during the winter, no matter whether you are in or away. This will ensure that even during a cold snap your pipes will not freeze and the constant low level of heat keeps your home running smoothly.
- Disconnect any hoses and turn off external water supplies at the stopcock. Once you have done this, drain your outside tap and this should prevent those pipes freezing and getting damaged in the winter.



- If you notice condensation appearing, open your windows just a notch and open any vents to allow the circulation of warm and cool air. Read more about damp and condensation further on in this issue.
- A boiler can stop working during cold weather simply because the external water pipes have frozen. Pour a jug of hot water on the pipe and wrap some insulation over the pipe and that will get your boiler up and running again in no time.
- Ensure that you have insurance cover for your personal possessions to ensure your home is well protected.

If you have any questions about preparing your home for a cold winter, please contact our team who will be happy to help.

## Christmas opening hours

Our offices will be open as follows during the Christmas season:

<b>Christmas Eve</b>	8.30 - 13.00
<b>Christmas Day</b>	Closed
<b>Boxing Day</b>	Closed
<b>Friday 27th December</b>	8.30 - 16.00
<b>Monday 30th December</b>	8.30 - 16.00
<b>New Year's Eve</b>	8.30 - 16.00
<b>New Year's Day</b>	Closed
<b>All other days as normal</b>	8.30 - 17.00

If you do need emergency help during the holiday period, please refer to the list of emergency numbers below:

**Out of hours emergency repairs:**  
0800 917 0619

**North Devon Homes:**  
01271 312500

**National gas emergency service:**  
0800 111 999

**Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



Follow us on Twitter @NorthDevonHomes

## We have updated our Privacy Policy

Last May a new data protection law, the GDPR, was introduced to bring more stringent regulations around data security. In the lead up to this, and since, we formed an Information Security Compliance Group within our team to help make business changes to comply with the new law in all aspects of our work. This group deals with a number of matters such as reviewing our policies, protecting your data and dealing with any information requests.

**You can find the most up to date version of our policy on our website:**  
[www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/customer-privacy-notice](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/customer-privacy-notice)

General Enquiries: 01271 312500

# Annual Report to Tenants - Did you get yours?

In September we published our Annual Report to Tenants which looks at how we performed over the year. Copies have been sent to all our customers and we hope you found it useful and interesting. Your feedback is always very welcome, so please do let us know what you think by emailing [marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

If you did not receive your copy, and would like one, please call our Customer Care Team on 01271 312500.



## Customer Summer Fayre 2019 and meet Homie!

Thank you to everyone for joining us at our Summer Fayre back in July. Over 1,200 people attended our event at the Barnstaple Rugby Club on 31 July 2019. Here are a few photos from the day.

We are pleased to announce the chosen name of our new NDH mascot: **Homie the Bear**. He was named by two customers, Freddie and Luke. *Homie* will be popping up at events throughout the year and we cannot wait to see more of him!

We have already started the planning process for next year's event and hope to announce the date very soon, so watch this space!



## Parking enforcement

We are aware that parking can be an issue in some of our neighbourhoods. We draw a distinction between parking and the storage of vehicles which are not roadworthy or in regular use. As part of our commitment to tidy up our neighbourhoods and communities, we have been working closely with the local council to help enforce penalties on the parking of illegal vehicles on our land and public spaces around our homes.

Over the past few months you may have seen cars that have been untaxed, have no MOTs or are not road legal removed. This work will continue to ensure we keep our communities at the best possible level, making sure people feel safe in their homes and have pleasant neighbourhoods to live in. We continue our mission of 'working together to create communities where people want to live'.



## Joan turns 100

Back in June, Joan Nugent from Mariners Close took her turn for the BIG birthday! For her 100th birthday she celebrated with friends and family at the centre. Big congratulations from all of us here at North Devon Homes.

## Action Days



### Barbican Lane

Back in June our team headed out for the Barbican Lane clean up day. It was great to see some residents out lending a hand and helping to clean up the community.



### Slade Valley and Burnside

In September the team hit the streets of Slade Valley and Burnside to weed along the roadsides and litter pick along the river. It was a great few hours out in the sunshine.

## Important reminder

Are your contact details up to date?

We know how important our alarm service is to our customers. To help us keep you safe it is essential that you keep both your personal and emergency contact details up to date.

We will use these details to summon help and inform your family and nominated contacts in the event of you using your alarm in an emergency.

**If you need to update your personal or emergency names, phone numbers, addresses or key holder information, please call 0800 083 7553 or email [devonhomelinkinquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:devonhomelinkinquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk)**



## Giving the OK

If you have one of our support or alarm services through Devon Homelink please do consider nominating a representative who is able to discuss your account details with us. As you are the direct customer, without you filling in a Third Party Authorisation Form we would be unable to discuss these details with anyone but you. Giving permission for a family member or trusted friend to talk to us about these details gives a little peace of mind if you are ever not well enough to speak to one of our team.

## Congratulations to Fred and Alma



Fred, age 91, and Alma, age 96, have known each other since they met 16 years ago at a coffee morning at the sheltered accommodation site that they both lived at in South Devon. When Fred decided to move to North Devon to be near his family a few years later, Alma made the decision to move with him and they settled into their new life together in Ilfracombe.

Earlier this year, Fred suggested they tie the knot! It was not that straight forward though, due to Fred's medical conditions and poor mobility, they wanted to get married in their own flat at The Candar in Ilfracombe. For this to happen they had to have a special licence and permission

from the Archbishop of Canterbury! They eventually got the licence they had been waiting for and the wedding took place on Sunday 28 July 2019 at 4pm. Many friends and family of the couple squeezed into their flat to watch the happy couple exchange their vows.

Everyone had a wonderful time and we all wish Mr and Mrs Baxter a very happy future together.



## Making our homes dementia friendly

When we start planning our new build homes we take all aspects of the build, from the materials used, to how the buildings will look, into careful consideration. In our latest development we have worked closely with our architects, Trewin, to design not only a well-built, value for money site, but also to consider design features that make living in these homes great for those living with dementia.

### At Sellick Court, in South Molton, the development has been considered with these dementia-friendly features in mind:

- Good lighting – we have made sure that all the homes at Sellick Court have plenty of natural light in them with the use of big windows or patio doors. Daylight coming into your home helps you stay aware of the time of day and of the weather outside. It also minimises dark areas and shadows on the floor that may be confusing for those with dementia.
- Flooring – the floors in our communal areas have been considered to avoid trip hazards. Any changes in flooring types will be well distinguished making it easier for those living with dementia.
- Colours – hallways have been colour-coded to make finding your way home easier for those that can no longer deal with letters and numbers in sequence. With a different colour for each block, floor and doorway, those with dementia will be able to relate to their environment when their address may have slipped from memory.
- Keeping safe – all the homes at Sellick Court have Devon Homelink alarm systems in place

for residents as part of the support package on offer. This gives peace of mind, not only for the customers, but also for their families - knowing that no matter what happens, someone is on hand to help.

- Lifts – sometimes taking the stairs will be too much for some people, so all our blocks are fitted with accessible lifts to make sure there is easy access to all floors.
- Activity – we want to make sure there is no social isolation in our developments. On this site we have two common room areas to encourage networking and engagement between customers living at the site. The Pavilion will be a relaxing room with countryside views, giving a peaceful place to enjoy, whereas the Communal Room in Block D is a quirky central hub for events and meeting up with other residents. The circular glass wall design has been created to ensure a light and airy open space for all.

If you would like more information on how to live happily with dementia please visit [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)



# Dealing with condensation

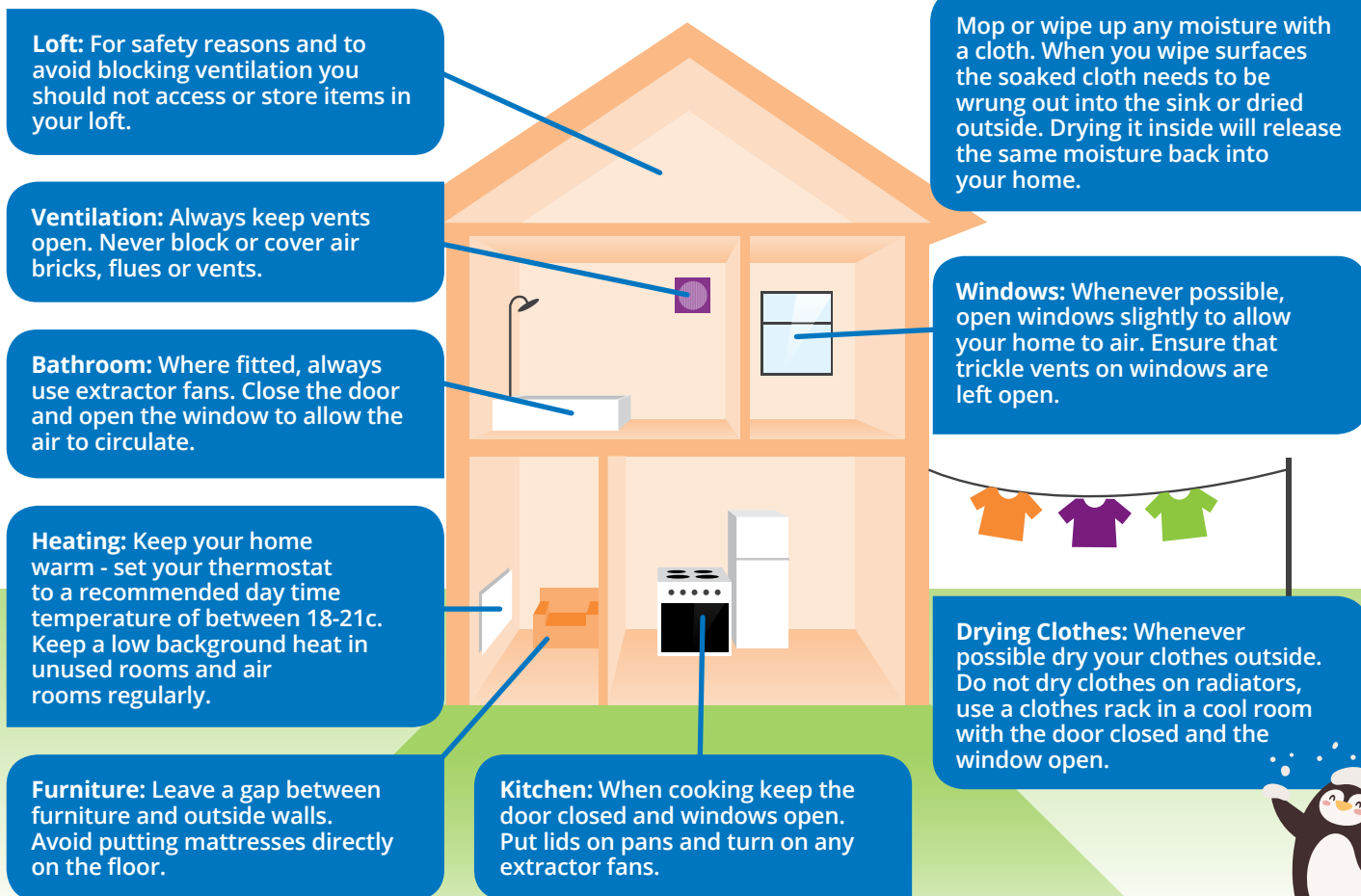
The average household produces about 24 pints of moisture every day. Moisture is held in the air and must be allowed out of your home, otherwise condensation will form.

There is always moisture in the air, even when you cannot see it. When the air gets colder, it cannot hold all the moisture and tiny drops of water appear, particularly on cold surfaces. This is condensation. You may notice it on your windows, particularly in the morning, or as the mist on the mirror when you have a bath. Condensation mainly occurs during cold weather. It tends to appear on cold surfaces and in places where there is little movement of air. Condensation can lead to mould.

Two people active for one day	3 pints
Cooking and boiling a kettle	6 pints
Having a bath or shower	2 pints
Washing clothes	1 pints
Drying clothes	9 pints
Using heating systems	3 pints
<b>Total amount of moisture produced in your home in one day</b>	<b>24 pints</b>

Mould will appear as small black and green spots. Mould is a living organism so it needs killing to get rid of it. To do this, wipe down affected areas with a fungicidal wash. Remember to wear rubber gloves and follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

Visit [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/my-home/repairs-property-care/damp-condensation](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/my-home/repairs-property-care/damp-condensation) for more information and a short video with more tips about reducing condensation.

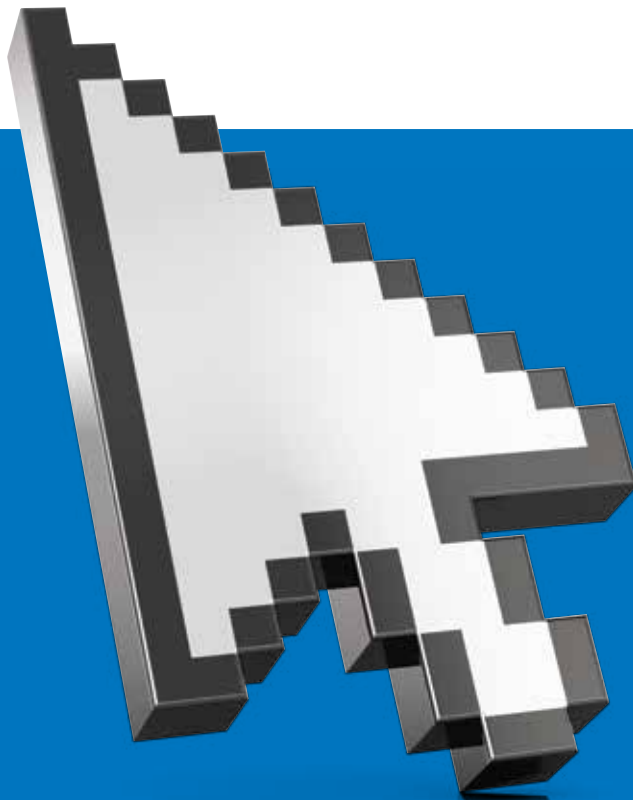




# Moving online

As we move closer to our Digital by 2020 deadline we are encouraging all our customers to send in enquiries and general feedback to us via our website and digital channels such as email. We have a large Customer Care Team on hand from 8.30am until 5pm each day and dedicated team members to cover our digital formats, so we expect to reply to your enquiries within 24-48 hours depending on the matter.

**If you would like more information about how you can utilise our digital channels please visit [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/contact-us](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/contact-us)**



## Subletting your garage

Please be aware that as well as being a breach of your Licence Agreement, subletting your garage can come with some charges that you may not be the cause of. We have recently seen cases where customers have sublet or loaned their garage to friends or family, only for the licensee (customer) to be left with large charges as the friend or family member has breached the Garage Agreement. This has resulted in lock changes, clearance charges and loss of rental charges.

If you no longer use or need your garage, please hand in your notice to our Customer Care Team. One week's written notice is required to end the Licence Agreement. If you know someone who would like a garage, ask them to get in touch to be added to our waiting list. For further information and details of charges for our garage rentals, please go to our website [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk), email [customer@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:customer@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or call us on 01271 312500.



## Team changes

Last month we bid a fond farewell to Gloria from our Customer Care Team who retired after 30 years of service at North Devon Homes and the council prior to the takeover. The team celebrated Gloria's final day by dressing in animal print - a key signature dress code that Gloria had modelled for many years!

Although we lose Gloria we are pleased to welcome Chloe Prince and Chloe Davison, who both joined earlier in 2019 and are now fully trained and on hand to help with any queries that customers may have.

At the time of print we are also in the recruitment process for two new team members as we expand our team and look forward to welcoming the new members to Team NDH.

# Working in Partnerships

We have always worked on a range of matters with a number of different partners from contractors to the local authority. Our partnership working has proved to be a successful way of solving problems as a collaboration and making the most of joint resources to tackle issues. Here are just a few of the partners we are working with currently:

## Advantage South West

Back in 2003 we started Advantage South West (ASW) with three other housing associations. The partnership was created to deliver better outcomes for social housing customers through collaborative working. The partnership works together to find new, more economical housing designs, find new methods of construction with better value for money outcomes, procure better value supplies and develop better recruitment and skills programmes.

In October ASW ran a Collaboration Day with our current and prospective member organisations to work out where our similar issues lay, so we can focus our strategies for the coming years.

**ADVANTAGE**  
SOUTH WEST



## Westcountry Savings and Loans

You will have seen us mention our Credit Union Partnership before - either in previous issues of Home News, or on our website and social media. The partnership and the Credit Union are going from strength to strength. The first year has seen us engage with hundreds of new customers, whether residents of North Devon Homes or of a partner housing association. If you are interested in taking out a low cost loan, or starting a regular savings account where your money is safe and secure, please visit [www.westcountry.org.uk](http://www.westcountry.org.uk)

## 361 Energy

361 Energy is gearing up for a busy winter helping North Devon residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Last year the 361 Energy's 'Save & Warm' campaign saw 500 home energy visits completed. These resulted in savings of over £1 million in energy bills, efficiency measures and income for North Devon households. They hope to do even better this year.

Over 69% of residents in North Devon qualify for a free home energy visit, but 361 Energy currently only reaches 1% of the population.

If everybody in North Devon had a home energy visit, we estimate local savings of over £50 million and a reduction in CO2 emissions in North Devon of over 138,000 tonnes per year.

On a home energy visit a 361 Energy advisor will review your energy usage, give you free



energy-efficient light bulbs, draft excluders and more to improve the efficiency of your home. They will also help you to switch energy provider if needed. A visit takes about two hours.

**To find out if you qualify for a free home energy advice visit, please contact 361 at [www.361energy.org/save/](http://www.361energy.org/save/) or call 01271 599361.**



## Positive People and Pluss

**POSITIVE  
PEOPLE**

Adding to Life  
**pluss**

For a while now we have been working in partnership with Positive People and Pluss to provide free training, digital and education courses for our customers.

They take referrals from us for people who need a helping hand getting back into work or who want to learn a new skill for their employment, job seeking and self-employment courses. If you would be interested in learning more about the services available, please email [marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk) with your information and we will pass your referral on to the team. They are also able to help signpost to relevant services and community groups – so if you have a great idea for a community event or course, please do get in touch.

As well as the educational courses, they also run our digital training courses and we are excited to be preparing for our digital launch next year by running a series of digital training courses for our customers at the start of the new year. Each session will focus on a different topic and you can attend as many or as few as you feel you need. The sessions are free to attend and refreshments will be served. Please see our

website for the dates and venues for each session.

### **Get device ready**

An introduction to your laptop, tablet or iPad. Find out more about how your device can work for you, not the other way around.

### **Time to talk**

Get involved with online communication. Whether it is one to one or as part of a group, this session will help you.

### **Online safety**

Learn more about what is out there and complete some simple steps to increase your own safety. Feeling safe is the key to confidence!

### **Let's get social!**

You have definitely heard about it! You may even have ventured into the world of social media. Now let's get to grips with it.

### **The everyday Internet**

Searching, purchasing and booking appointments. The internet can help us in so many ways. Get to know ways we can use it.

## **A case study...**

Mary was referred to Positive People as part of our partnership. Mary has Alzheimer's, so after discussing her needs, the team found she would benefit from organising her calendars. She had also expressed an interest in collecting photographs into a digital scrapbook to aid her memory.

Mary had a modern Android phone so Positive People provided her with a new Samsung Galaxy Tablet and Keyboard. Mary now downloads choral songs so she can practice her singing; and a botany app that helps identify flowers just by taking a photograph of it with her tablet.

Later on, Positive People synced her tablet and phone calendar together and added in OneNote to help her organise her days and appointments, doctors, holidays and so on.

Mary has now been purchasing online train tickets and can print from her phone and tablet to her printer and is adding to her digital scrapbook using Canva to keep her memories for her and for her family.



uSwitch

comparethe  
market.com™

361 ENERGY

## Energy switching

There has been a lot in the news recently about making sure you switch utility providers wherever possible to make sure you are always on the best deal. The government has made the switching process easier than ever now, so there is very little work involved for us as a consumer. Do not be loyal unless it pays.

If you are a low user of energy (e.g. if you are a single person or a couple) then the standing charge of your provider is a big part of the bill you will pay, so make sure that this charge is taken into consideration when choosing your next provider. Your standing charge could be costing £10 per month before you have even used any energy!

You can use comparison websites such as uSwitch, Money Supermarket, Compare the Market or go to 361 Energy to help you find the best deal for your home. There are also some services such as Look After My Bills or Energy Monitor that offer auto-switching services to keep you on the best deal at all times.

If you are on a prepayment meter and struggling with debt, please speak to your provider and ask if they can reduce the amount that you repay each week – most providers have different assistance schemes to help customers when money becomes a problem.



## Don't pay for debt advice

If you are struggling with money and want to seek help with managing your money there are many routes you can follow to get help. Having a quick Google to find help may end in searches returning high fee charging businesses to offer advice that you can get free elsewhere.

There may be some costs associated with debt solutions, so you want to make sure you have received the best advice possible to make sure you are only paying what you have to.

Here are some of the places you can go to for free, impartial advice. Feel free to give our Money Matters team a call if you would like more information on these services.

**Payplan 0800 280 2816**

**[www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)**

**[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt)**

## Free money!



If you are on a low income there is a government scheme to help you save money that it will also contribute to. It is a tax free savings scheme and the government will give you up to £1,200 over four years, depending on the amount you can save.

You need to be on certain benefits, such as working tax credits or Universal Credit, but if you are eligible it is a fantastic way to save for a rainy day and get some free money in the process.

**To find out more information visit**  
**[www.gov.uk/get-help-savings-low-income](http://www.gov.uk/get-help-savings-low-income)**

# Paying your rent on time

Your rent is a priority payment and should be paid on time. Rent is due weekly each Monday and can be paid in advance weekly, fortnightly or monthly. If you are struggling with making your payments on time please speak to our Income Team as soon as possible so we can help, or make recommendations if you are unable to pay on time.

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit that is paid directly to NDH, this is paid every four weeks but in arrears. We ask that you think about making some modest payments aside from this to make sure that your rent is always paid on time and not waiting for your next benefit payment.

When you make a payment think about how long it is until your next rent payment. Again speak to our Income Team should you need help with making the next payment.



## Ethical alternatives to borrowing and saving money

With the changes in benefits, the rise in interest rates and the more expensive cost of living in recent years, some families will be feeling the pinch when it comes to paying their outgoings. As a social landlord we want to make sure our customers do not get themselves into more debt by seeking loan offers with high rates of interest or doorstep lenders. Even more so with Christmas, it can feel like your only option is to go to a payday lender to get some quick cash. This is not the only option.

We work closely with Westcountry Savings and Loans (WSL) to provide our customers, staff, friends and families with low interest loan deals that ensure you do not get out of pocket when you need a bit of help with your finances. These loans are low interest; the money raised goes back to the Credit Union members and not towards bonuses for bank managers and they are affordable and easy to apply for.

You can also open regular savings accounts with them, such as a Christmas Savings account, making sure you have money set aside each month so when Christmas arrives you have enough saved to help you with the expense.

Throughout the year WSL also host special loans and accounts for various times of the year such as their school uniform campaigns and their Prize Reward accounts, where you can win prizes just by opening an account!

We are also working with the Illegal Money Lending Team in the South West to help tackle the issue of loan sharks in the area. It is so important that if you are having any problems with your existing lenders you get in touch with them so they can help deal with the problem.

**For more information please contact our Income and Money Matters Team on 01271 312500.**

## Fresh Ideas Group

Our Fresh Ideas customer group has been busy redesigning leaflets and feeding back on how we give customers information on their homes. These leaflets are now available on our website and replace our old Tenants Handbook.

The next project that the group will tackle is reviewing all standard letters and forms that customers receive to ensure that the language and information shared is correct and as clear as possible. This is in preparation for our new computer system which will go live next year.

All customers are welcome to take part and join in at these informal meetings - please contact Tracey on 01271 313384 or email [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk) for more information.



## Tpas Tenant Engagement Experts



Earlier this year North Devon Homes became members of Tpas. Tpas supports over 200 housing associations across the UK and helps advise us on how to maximise our relationships with our customers. The membership means we will be able to access up to date information, join online forums, attend free webinars and attend training events.

Dawn and Tracey, two of our involved customers, attended the National Tpas Tenant Engagement Conference back in June. The conference was very useful and gave a good insight into all things housing for them to bring back and use for future projects.

As our customers you can also register to have access to this information, please sign up for free by visiting [www.tpas.org.uk/registration/tenant](http://www.tpas.org.uk/registration/tenant)



## C90 Panel

In our July C90 meeting, customers, board members and staff co-designed what our new Customer Engagement Strategy will look like through a workshop to gather ideas. We have involved many of our other engaged customers to look at our draft strategy. This went back to our C90 meeting in October and, once agreed, will be added to our website.

We are really excited about our plans for Customer Engagement over the coming years. We are planning lots of activities and training events; introducing new technologies and, of course, continuing our successful community events and coming out to see our customers face to face to capture your views on the services we deliver.

## Scrutiny Update

Our Scrutiny Panel has been busy reviewing our response repairs and anti-social behaviour policies. The customers involved took their recommendations to the C90 meeting in October and updates can be found on our website on the changes made.



## Tenant2Tenant help and support for you

Did you know that we have three trained customer volunteers who can visit you in your home and offer advice and support on any issues you have within your home?

Dawn, Patsy and Tracey are our Tenant2Tenant members and are happy to help. They can offer help with moving and Devon Home Choice, property queries as well as listening to you and seeing how a problem can be resolved for all involved. The only thing that they do not get involved in is anti-social behaviour cases but they can signpost you to where you need to go to get help.

Dawn tells us: "I love helping solve people's problems especially when customers don't know where to go for help. We can act as a bridge between North Devon Homes and customers to resolve problems."

Patsy tells us about the satisfaction in helping people, especially where T2T offer a link for customers to downsize through providing support at any time of the day by just being at the end of the phone.

Tracey tells us how much she enjoys helping customers and being able to make a difference in their lives. "Seeing them happy in their new homes makes our volunteering very worthwhile."

**If you are interested in finding out more and would like to talk direct to T2T please phone them on 07811 273671 or 07740 410970 or contact Tracey Williams on [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk) who will be happy to forward your details onto them.**



## Journey mapping

Journey mapping is an event where we gather a large group of customers together and explore how our services feel from a customer's point of view. In September we held a journey mapping event about our Independent Living Service. It was a very lively and exciting morning with customers giving us an amazing 177 comments, ideas and suggestions on what we can do differently now and in the future. There were also lots of very positive messages on the Independent Living Service we offer.



## Generations together

In May and October we hosted Games Afternoons at The Candar in Ilfracombe – both were fantastic afternoons of fun with residents of all ages. Board games, a quiz and a game of bingo kept everyone entertained. There will be more of these events planned in future, so please keep an eye on our website for more information.



## PGL 2019

In July we took 30 of our young people for an adventure weekend at PGL in Torrington. The weather over the weekend was fantastic and the camp helped us carry out fun activities such as surfing, high ropes, challenge courses which involved getting wet and muddy, abseiling and much, much more. The young people worked hard to earn their place by helping at youth club and with our community surveys. They fundraised at our events by doing a sponsored car wash; baking and selling cakes; attending our charity race night; and taking part in our sponsored 12 hour cycle ride – all in the last year!

Thank you to everyone who has helped with the fundraising that goes into making this weekend happen – we cannot do it without your help and it means so much to the young people that attend.

## Summer BBQ

In July, the Normandy Garden Club hosted a summer BBQ. Our Customer Involvement Team helped run the event including cooking the BBQ for 46 residents. Bingo was enjoyed after the BBQ and everyone had such a lovely afternoon.







## Loverings Court Garden Party

Back in the summer our team along with the Independent Living Service and Neighbourhoods team held an event in the gardens of Loverings Court. We took along a buffet of sandwiches and nibbles and enjoyed an afternoon of garden games including skittles and Connect 4.



## Charity donations

Thank you to St James Diary for donating the proceeds from their carrier bag sales to our Slade Youth Club fund. St James Diary is a local shop in Ilfracombe and raise money monthly for different charities that are chosen by voting on Facebook.

David, Joe and June presented the £100 at club and enjoyed seeing all the young people having a fun evening with the team.

The £100 will be put towards new board games and equipment for the club to use.



## Allotment space available

The Forches Community Garden has some growing space available for any of our keen gardeners who would like some extra space to grow fruit and veg. It is a friendly community garden and gives you a great chance to get outside and practice your gardening skills. For more details please contact Tracey Williams on [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk)





## Taw Wharf

Our Taw Wharf development has been progressing at a pace over the last few months. With the first completions and handovers taking place back in August, we now have over 10 families living on the site and starting the Taw Wharf community.

We are about to progress into the second part of the first phase and are moving onwards into building phase two of the development as well.

As well as the open market sales we have a selection of Shared Ownership and affordable rental opportunities coming up in the next few releases. For Shared Ownership we have 4x three bed houses and 2x two bed houses. We also have 2x two bed houses for rental nearly ready for release.



## Sellick Court

You will have heard about the transformation development in South Molton that we named Sellick Court after our Head of Neighbourhoods, Miles Sellick, who sadly passed away very suddenly earlier this year. Specialist funding has been received for this development from the Health Department, via Homes England, to help provide good quality affordable homes for over 55s in South Molton. We have received a large number of bids for these rental properties but we also have some Shared Ownership opportunities available at the site.





## 35 Crosslands

We have received grant funding from Homes England for 2x two bed flats, which are currently in construction at 35 Crosslands in Barnstaple. These homes will be available for affordable rental in spring 2020.

## New s106 acquisitions

A s106 is a legal term placed on a new home or site to ensure a percentage of new homes goes to local people (or those with a local connection such as a parent or child living in the town) and that portion of the site is made to be affordable either in rental or shared ownership.

We will be acquiring 24 new homes in total working with Chichester Homes across two developments: the first in Marine Parade, Instow, which will include one shared ownership opportunity; and the second in South Park, Braunton, which will have four shared ownership properties. The other 19 properties will be available for affordable rent via Devon Home Choice. If you would like more information about the shared ownership opportunities on either site, please contact Sophie Dewey on [sophie.dewey@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:sophie.dewey@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

If you would like any more information on any of these properties, please contact Sophie Dewey on [sophie.dewey@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:sophie.dewey@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

## Medard House

We have been working on the conversion of apartments at 26 to 39 Medard House at Bevan Road in Barnstaple. These conversions have been completed and customers have moved into these new homes.

## Beaufort Walk

Work has started at Beaufort Walk with the demolition of a block of flats in readiness for a new build scheme that will follow. We have planning approval for 27 new homes on the site.



## Head Office

As part of an ongoing project to provide improved office facilities for our team and visitors, work on our current office building at Westacott Road has begun with the provision of a new roof. This stage of the project is due to be completed in January 2020, with more changes coming in the future to improve working conditions for NDH staff and leaseholders.



## Zero Energy Buildings Catalyst (ZEBCat) Project

Work has just begun on an exciting new project to deliver a whole house retrofit to two homes in Burrington. The project aims to reduce energy demand to almost zero, significantly reducing customer utility bills, whilst providing consistent temperatures throughout their homes all year round. The project demonstrates the EnergieSprong approach to building (a Dutch initiative) and is part of a larger project of 16 homes around Devon in collaboration between Devon County Council and other Registered Housing Providers and is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. Work is carried out without residents having to move out and is set to be completed before Christmas.

# Home surveys

As part of our ongoing planned maintenance programme we need to continually visit our properties to see the fittings within them, such as your kitchens and bathrooms. These validation surveys are required so we have the most up-to-date details on the condition of our properties. For this to happen, our surveyors may need to see your kitchen or bathroom to carry out an inspection to assess the date when it will need

replacing. This inspection is not to replace your kitchen or bathroom but just to assess the condition.

We tend to visit a property every five years for no more than an hour. The surveying team will collect a range of information, such as the age of the boiler, kitchen, bathroom, roof and all the key components of the property.

## Getting our OK - Permissions

Improvements you make to your own home are welcomed in most cases but you must ask our permission for all changes before you do the work. This will mean that we can carry out any surveys that may be required and can ensure our records are up to date with the work you are doing. Our team may also be able to give advice on areas that you may not have considered for your improvements.

Please note that any changes you make to your home then become your responsibility to maintain. For example, if you change the kitchen and a cupboard breaks, it would be your responsibility to repair it.

## Success with wet rooms

We have received a lot of compliments lately about the work we've been doing on our Disabled Funding Grant wet rooms. As more work comes in and we expand we are pleased to announce the promotion of Dan Meredith to the role of Charge Hand. As we smooth the process of fitting out we are getting very few snags in the work and can now complete works in as little as ten days. To find out more about the Disabled Funding Grant, please call Devon County Council Care Direct on 0345 155 1007.



## Roofing programme

As we expand our offering through our Home2Home team we begin a new phase in repairs in our Roofing Programme. We started the first property recently at Church Lake and the team has been working really hard to get the project to work. Progress is moving along at a pace and soon we will have a finished home to be able to review the success of the work. We'll keep you updated on the work as we move forward.

## Reporting repairs

Please do not wait for a home survey or visit to make us aware of issues within your home. We want to make sure your home is as safe and well-maintained as possible, so contact us as soon as you need a repair and we will send someone around to visit at a time that is convenient to you.

**Call us on 01271 312500 or email [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk) to report a repair.**

# Property maintenance

## How to run manually controlled E7 heaters most efficiently on the E7 tariff

The easiest way to understand storage heaters is to visualise them as a big rechargeable battery. They require charging prior to discharging the energy in them.

With Economy 7 tariffs, the electricity is supplied to your home at two rates: highest cost 'peak-time' electricity and cheaper 'off-peak' electricity. The cheapest way to 'recharge' the storage heater would be to do so using the cheap 'off-peak' electricity. Check with your supplier what times the 7 hours of 'off peak' are for you. They are usually at night.

During the winter it's best to set the input control (charging the heaters up) to the maximum. This will allow the most charging power to the storage heater. In the summer you may prefer to turn the input control right down (or even off), since you won't need much heat for your home. Turning the output control (releasing the heat) right up will mean that the storage heater does all its heating very early in the morning, so not ideal if you want to be warm in the evenings. Keep on low for as long as possible to preserve the heat for when you need it. Make sure you turn the output to

zero when you are not at home or when you go to bed – there is no point releasing the heat as the storage heater charges, as this means that it won't have any 'charge' when you need it.

It may help reduce your bills if you know what times your energy supplier gives you your 7 hours at the cheaper rate so you can use your other appliances at the cheapest time of day where ever possible.

### Is the E7 tariff right for you?

To benefit from an E7 tariff you need to use more than 34% of your electricity during your night-time cheap rate hours.

If you have E7 heating but do not use your E7 to heat your home the majority of the time, it may be cheaper for you to switch away from the E7 tariff if you use your own additional heaters during the day rather than the E7 storage heaters.

**Please speak to your energy supplier to discuss your tariff options or Energy 361 on 01271 599361 to discuss your energy options [www.361energy.org](http://www.361energy.org)**

## Sky dishes

Please be aware that we are no longer able to re-tune Sky dishes on homes where work requires scaffolding which may be blocking your signal. If customers lose reception while scaffold is up we apologise and will get the scaffold down as quickly as possible when work is complete. If you have a TV aerial this may work for free TV, or you can also watch Sky on any computer if you have internet via the Sky Go app.

## Responding to appointment letters

To be able to keep your home safe we do need access for certain appointments and surveys throughout your tenancy. If we cannot get hold of you by telephone we will send you an appointment letter with a date and time. If you cannot make this time, it is extremely important that you let us know you will not be home. This will avoid us turning up for a missed appointment and will make sure you avoid any missed appointment charges.

**You can let us know by telephoning 01271 312500 or by email at [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk)**



# Becoming an apprentice

My first memory of being involved with North Devon Homes is from the age of 10 when I joined the Youth Club at Whiddon Valley. Nine years ago I never imagined that I would be here on an apprenticeship learning to do what others had done for me back then.

The reason I joined the youth club was because one of the youth workers at the time came to my school to talk to us about the activities and things they did at club. She encouraged us to come along. At first we just thought it would be great fun – but actually it was a fantastic support network and a great chance to meet new people.

After joining youth club I tried to get more involved with NDH as my confidence grew and my first interaction with the business as a whole was at the annual summer fayre. We were all made to feel like part of the Team NDH family. I also got the chance to talk to Princess Anne when she came to visit Forches about what the youth project meant to me, which was an unforgettable experience!

In 2015 I became a senior member at club, which gave me more responsibility and my confidence has grown in supporting the younger members in the group. I never imagined that, when I joined five years before, I would be the one giving the support.

In 2018 I finished my A-Levels and had no idea what I was going to do next. I was quite lucky

that a summer job came up at NDH to cover the administration for the

Neighbourhoods and Income teams, so I applied and got the job for the six weeks of summer holidays. Turns out I actually ended up liking it!

It was easy for me to settle in as I already had an idea of who people were and as I had basically grown up knowing about the company, for me it was mainly just learning the role.

At the end of the summer the apprenticeship came up in business admin. As I had been doing it for the summer already, when I applied I was successful and got the role full-time. Another year in and I have now completed my Level 2 Apprenticeship in Business Administration and am now doing the Level 3 to help further my experience and skills.

I absolutely love working at North Devon Homes. They've given me such a great opportunity not just through attending youth clubs but through the chance to learn on the job in my apprenticeship. I would highly recommend an apprenticeship for anyone struggling with what to do after school or college.

**Georgia Richards,**  
Neighbourhoods Administration Apprentice



## Joining NDH

If you're interested in finding out more about apprenticeships at North Devon Homes, or in general, speak to your local college to find out more about opportunities in the area. Apprenticeships at North Devon Homes range from administrators in our Head Office on various teams to operatives on our Home2Home Team with a wide range of training skills.

**You can find out more information about apprenticeships on our website at [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/join-ndh/apprenticeships](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/join-ndh/apprenticeships)**



## Events Calendar

At NDH we have a lot of events throughout the year where we offer the chance to meet new friends, have some fun and, in most cases, enjoy a refreshment or two! Here is a snapshot of our events. You can find exact dates and timings for all these events on our website.

### Forches Community Centre

#### Youth Club

Mondays 6.30pm - 8.30pm

#### Community Café

Tuesdays 10.30am - 12.30pm

### Slade Valley Community Centre

#### Teen2Be

Wednesdays 5pm - 6pm

#### Youth Club

Wednesdays 6.30pm - 8.30pm

### Medard House, Barnstaple

#### Coffee Morning

Thursdays 9.30am

#### Cinema Club

Wednesdays 2pm

#### Bingo

Wednesdays 7pm

#### Breakfast Club

Once a fortnight on Friday 9am  
*(check our website for dates)*

#### Quiz

Once a month on Friday 2pm  
*(check our website for dates)*

### The Candar, Ilfracombe

#### Coffee Morning

Fridays 9.30am

#### Exercise for the over 55s

Mondays 1.30pm

#### Bingo

Once a fortnight on  
Wednesday 12.45pm  
*(check our website for dates)*

#### Bingo

Wednesdays 7.30pm

### Magdalene Lawn, Barnstaple

#### Coffee Morning

Fridays 9.30am

#### Bingo

Wednesdays 2pm

### Other Events

#### Wrafton Coffee Morning at the British Legion Club

Once a month on Monday 10am  
*(check our website for dates)*

#### Youth Happy Gym at Studio 20 in Ilfracombe

Thursdays 4pm - 6pm

We also run more activities with our youth club and centres during the school holidays, so please do check our website and Facebook for more information.



## Supporting Mental Health First Aid

Earlier this year ten members of Team NDH took part in Mental Health First Aid training so we can improve our support offering to our colleagues in need. This training has also spurred a new culture of talking and being more open about mental health, which helped us raise money for the local Ask for Jake and Young Minds Hello Yellow day in October.

## Welcome to Team NDH

In the six months since our last newsletter, we have seen a run on recruitment as we increase Team NDH. Please join us in welcoming to the team:

- **Scott Perry**  
Multi Skilled Operative
- **Donna Beeching**  
Independent Living Support Officer
- **Gemma Patten**  
Finance Assistant
- **Charles Langdon**  
Home2Home Manager
- **Rebecca Laing**  
Payments and Payroll Coordinator
- **Ben Frisby**  
Finance Assistant Apprentice
- **David Welch**  
Multi Skilled Operative

# Winter Wordsearch Competition

T N C L O I H S M C O E F  
M O R E I N D E E R A D A  
O C I M D N S U N W A E F  
L T A D S P O I C I C L E  
T T Y L L R L H P N M U M  
A H O S A E F U E T E F E  
I W L N L S W R O E P E V  
D G L O V E S E A R N S F  
T E O W Y N S A L C Y T Q  
U X R I M T V T N U I I F  
T C N N H S A R G T R V E  
O H E G L S K X I N A E V  
Q O C K E C I A A O Q E T  
T L V O L V L U T T P B T  
E L V E S E B R O I E V N  
R Y N I S N O W M A N A R  
Q I T H I A T V U D P G E  
P E L J X N U S N R A T E

WINTER  
SNOWING  
GLOVES  
SKATING

ICICLE  
SNOWMAN  
PRESENTS  
SANTA

ELVES  
REINDEER  
FESTIVE  
HOLLY

### How to enter:

Fill out the form and send it to the address below by 06/01/2020 for a chance to win a £15 cinema voucher.

Name .....

Adult  Child

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Please tick this box if you do not wish to be named

## How Many?

**How many penguins (not including this one) can you find throughout this newsletter?**

**How to enter:** Fill out the form and send it to the address below by 06/01/2020 for a chance to win a £15 cinema voucher.

No. of penguins: .....



Please tick this box if you do not wish to be named

Name .....

Adult  Child

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

**For a chance to win, send all entries to:**

Emma Wonnacott, North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8TA by 06/01/2020