

HOME NEWS

Written in partnership by customers and staff of North Devon Homes WINTER 2014

- **2014 Another Great Year**
Thank you!
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Welcome to the winter edition of Home News!

I am very pleased to be Chair for North Devon Homes and look forward to continuing the good work started by Pete Ratcliffe, and continued by Nick Lewis, over the past three years.

Some of the strategic priorities for North Devon Homes going forward are:

- Converting to charitable status
- Continuing with our ambitious development programme including completing the remaining PRC homes; another 273 to be completed in the next three years
- Continuing to increase the customer voice in the management of North Devon Homes
- Building on a dedicated and focused staff team
- Being a better employer
- Working with North Devon Council and other stakeholders to increase the supply of social housing in North Devon

I look forward to progressing these priorities with the Board, the Executive Team, and our Stakeholders in the coming years.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas.

Regards



Simon Price
Chairman of the Board



Christmas Opening Times

North Devon Homes will, once again, be open over the Christmas period to continue to offer our services to you.

- Sunday 28th December **Closed**
- Monday 29th December 8.30am – 5pm
- Tuesday 30th December 8.30am – 5pm
- Wednesday 31st December 8.30am – 4pm
- Thursday 1st January **Closed**
- Friday 2nd January 8.30am – 5pm

Our Opening hours over the festive period are:

- Wednesday 24th December 8.30am – 1pm
- Thursday 25th December **Closed**
- Friday 26th December **Closed**
- Saturday 27th December **Closed**

On the days that we are open our Town Centre Office will be open from 8.30am - 4pm.



**HRH The Princess Royal
visits Forches**

**665 people
attend NDH
Summer Fayre**

**Over
£4,500
raised by
NDH for
charity**

**Lowest ever
rent arrears at
£26,483 (0.2%)**

**153 new
homes
built**

**Investors in
People Gold
Award again
for NDH**

Charity begins at home

Enclosed with this newsletter is a letter explaining an important change that we are considering for North Devon Homes.

We are proposing to register the company as a charity with the Charity Commission, subject to customer consultation and feedback.

We are making the change to help make us more efficient as a business and to ensure that all the investment we make is kept in North Devon for our customers. We are consulting all our customers on the proposed change and you will find details on how to feedback on the letter enclosed with this Newsletter.

Alternatively, go to our website www.ndh-ltd.co.uk for more information.

In registering as a charity we are able to benefit from a number of tax breaks and obtain discounts on many areas of expenditure which we can use to help keep our rents as low as possible and provide more affordable homes.

There would be no change to your rights as a tenant or

leaseholder if we convert. The vast majority of other social landlords are registered charities and our plan to convert has always been part of our long term plans and, if customers agree, we would aim to register and become a charity in April 2015.



Supported Housing – Our Service Offer

You may recall we carried out consultation meetings across our sheltered schemes in July to let everybody know about the cuts to funding for our support service (Support Advisors) from April 2015.

We have been looking at our service and, as we explained at the meeting, we are determined to keep a support service in place next year.

We intend to keep staff based on the sheltered schemes to help our older customers with property matters and offer a support and wellbeing service to help maintain our customers' independence.

We will be back on the schemes over the coming months to explain the introduction of a service charge for housing management (paid for by housing benefit if you are in receipt of it) and a small charge for the support service from April 2015.

The satisfaction levels for the service remain very high and we intend this to continue into the future.

For more information on the services available, please call us on 01271 312500.



For more information or to arrange a FREE demonstration call FREE on:

0800 083 7553

Devon Homelink

Devon Homelink is an alarm service for anyone living in the North Devon area.

A small alarm unit fits to your telephone and a pendant or wrist strap allows the wearer to summon help in an emergency (24 hours a day)

Would you like to say "Thank you?"

Have you received excellent service from a team or member of staff at North Devon Homes?

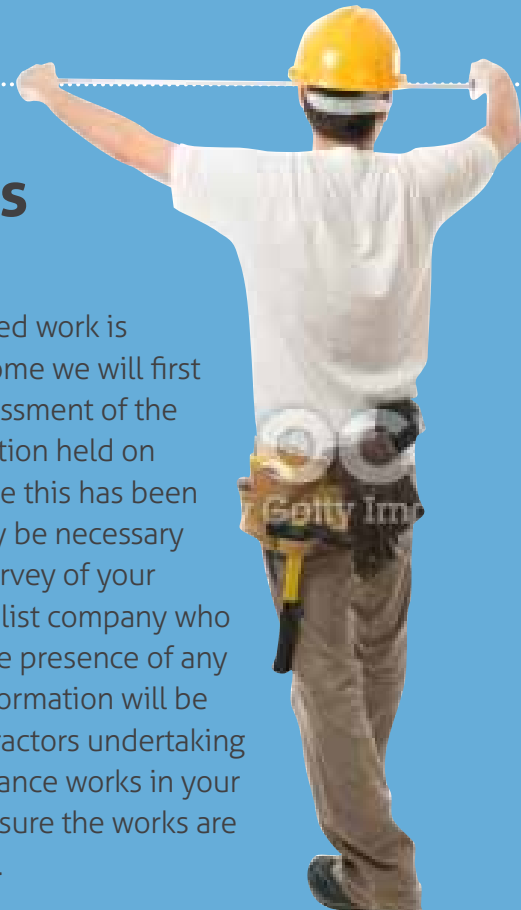
If so, please let us know as it's always good to know that we are doing things right. If you would like to say 'Thank You' please call us on 01271 312500 where a member of our Customer Care Team will be able to help you. Alternatively collect a 'Thank You' card from the Westacott Road office or our Town Centre office.



99%
Target: 95%

% of customers satisfied with sheltered service (year to date)

"your feedback really does make a difference"



Planned Maintenance works are well underway for 2014/15. This is a breakdown of some of the works completed to date:



12

bathrooms



35

Economy 7 Heating



19

Electric (rewires)



31

Heating Distribution (radiators)



36

Kitchens



33

Gas Boilers



2

Air Source

£

£450,000

Total Spend

Asbestos Surveys

Before any planned work is started in your home we will first complete an assessment of the asbestos information held on the property. Once this has been completed, it may be necessary to undertake a survey of your home by a specialist company who will determine the presence of any asbestos. This information will be used by the contractors undertaking planned maintenance works in your home and will ensure the works are completed safely.

Stock Condition Surveys

From time to time, our Asset Management Team will visit your home to assess the condition and likely replacement dates of key components; this is called a Stock Condition Survey. The survey will be completed by an NDH Surveyor and will take around 30 minutes; the surveyor will look at key components such as kitchens, bathrooms, front doors etc. The assessment information is then entered into our database which is used for our business planning and enables us to provide customers with information about when items are to be replaced in their homes.



Our team of Surveyors is made up of Peter Ebsworthy, Ade Seel, Ben Ashfold and David Wellings



Working age benefits are changing - Are you ready?

There has been a lot of publicity recently about the changes the Government is making to the way benefits will be paid.

Are you of working age?

Do you receive any of these benefits?

Universal Credit rolls out in February 2015

Universal Credit

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

Instead of receiving these benefits at different times of the month, Universal Credit will be paid as a single monthly payment.

If you receive Housing Benefit support for your rent, with Universal Credit this will be paid directly to you and you will have to pay your rent to your landlord, North Devon Homes.

Are you prepared?

There are a number of things you can do to get ready for Universal Credit:

- You will need a bank account or credit union account to receive your benefit
- Direct Debit is the easiest way to pay your rent
- Get online - Universal Credit claims will be made and managed online
- Get money budgeting advice (www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)
- Get in touch with us on 01271 312500 – we are here to help with any questions or queries you may have.

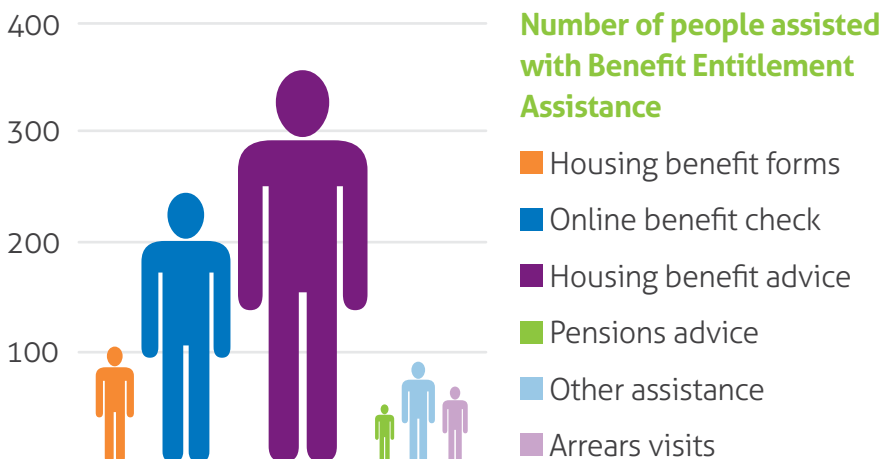


About to claim Jobseekers Allowance?

The Government has recently confirmed Universal Credit will roll out nationally (including North Devon) from February 2015.

If you are single and apply for Job Seekers Allowance, you will need to claim Universal Credit.

Universal Credit will be extended during 2015 and beyond to couples and families. To help customers keep up to date we plan to update our website & provide updates in our newsletters. Customers can also contact our Income Team for more information on 01271 312500.



Claimant Commitment (for working age claimants only)

Do you receive Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)? If so (or if you need to claim in the future), you will have to agree a 'Claimant Commitment' with Job Centre Plus. This is an important step towards the introduction of Universal Credit and is the start of a new relationship between Job Centre Plus and those who are claiming working age benefits.

When you claim / receive JSA you will be allocated a Work Coach at Job Centre Plus. Your Work Coach will agree a detailed plan of what you will do to find work. The Work Coach will also make sure you understand the consequences of failing to follow this plan (which may include sanctions and/or withdrawal of your benefits).

As a job seeker you will use a new personal work plan to record and update your activity and this is reviewed on a regular basis with your Work Coach. For more information on the Welfare changes or to see a sample Claimant Commitment visit www.gov.uk or contact our Income Team on 01271 312500.



Paying your rent

Christmas is an expensive time of year for every family but it is important that you continue to prioritise your rent over the festive period. Your rent should be paid as a priority; not paying it could result in you losing your home.

At NDH we are always here to support our customers however we can. If you are struggling to pay your rent please contact us as soon as possible, our Income Team and Benefit Advisors are all fully trained and can help with:

- Budgeting – looking at what you have coming in and are paying out
- Benefits assessments – checking that you are receiving all that you are entitled to
- Debt advice – access to bank accounts and affordable loans
- Energy saving – checking that you are getting the best possible deal from energy providers
- Charitable grants

The sooner you contact us the sooner we can start to help you, so if you feel you could benefit from help with any of the above please call our Income Team on 01271 312500.



Do you have a Solid Fuel Appliance?

If you have a solid fuel appliance (whether this is an open fire, wood burner or rayburn) then it is important that this is serviced every year. If the appliance is your main

form of heating then we will service it as part of our cyclical maintenance programme. If your appliance is one that you have chosen to install then it is important you ensure that

you service it and let us have a copy of the servicing record.

To Install a solid fuel appliance you would first need permission in writing from us. We will consider each request on an individual basis but are unlikely to give permission if you have an efficient heating system already installed.

It is important that everyone with a solid fuel appliance has a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm fitted at their property. **If you have a solid fuel appliance but do not have a carbon monoxide alarm please contact our Customer Care team on 01271 312500.**

TIME TO TEST

You are at least four times more likely to die in a fire in your home if you have no working smoke alarm

Test your smoke alarms on the first of every month, then you know that they're working. Don't take risks with your family when a simple action is all that's needed. It's your life, take extra care of it.



In England over 200 people die each year in fires in their homes. These are often caused by smoking materials, cooking accidents, candles and faulty electrical wiring or appliances - especially heaters.

These simple steps can reduce the risk of fire and keep everyone safer:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home  Test them on the 1st of every month and never take out the batteries  Plan your escape route and make sure everyone knows it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Put cigarettes out – right out – and never smoke in bed  Take extra care in the kitchen and never leave cooking unattended  Make a bedtime check last thing at night to reduce fire risks – eg unplug heaters  Never try to tackle a fire yourself
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If a fire breaks out in your home. Get out, stay out and call 999

www.gov.uk/firekills



If your Carbon Monoxide alarm goes off you MUST:

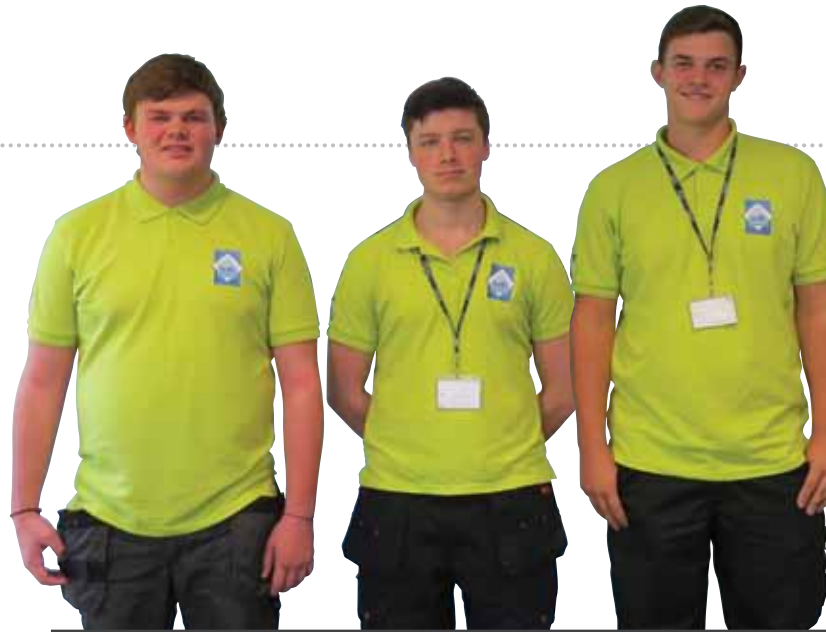
1. Turn off gas appliances (e.g. cooker, gas fire) or other sources of combustion (open fire etc) at once.
2. Immediately get fresh air into the premises by opening doors and windows.
3. Call NDH on 01271 312500 (Out of Hours 0800 917 0619) we will get a qualified engineer out to fix the problem.
4. If anyone is experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headaches, dizziness, vomiting, call the emergency service on 999. Immediately move to a location that has fresh air.
5. Do a head count to be sure all persons are accounted for.
6. Do not re-enter the premises until they have been aired and the problem corrected.

Rachel Ford Works Auditor

Rachel is North Devon Homes' Works Auditor and has been in post for 12 months. Rachel carries out surveys on a sample of completed repairs to check for works quality, accuracy of invoicing, accuracy of job descriptions and customer satisfaction. The sample includes works carried out by and on behalf of North Devon Homes.

Where potential errors have occurred, Rachel queries these with the relevant manager to ensure that, where necessary, these are rectified.

Please do not be concerned if works at your home are selected for auditing; we are simply striving to deliver service excellence and value for money being provided by North Devon Homes.



New Home 2 Home Apprentices

Home 2 Home would like to welcome three new apprentices who started with us in September 2014. Brad Chapple, Gerish Waldon and Wesley McKenna are working towards a Multi Trade Repair and Refurbishment NVQ concentrating on carpentry and roofing.

Their apprenticeships will last for two years, during which time they will attend College on a Monday and spend the rest of the week with a Home 2 Home Operative learning the practical skills needed to obtain the qualification.

"I am really enjoying the opportunity to learn new skills and gain experience whilst working towards my NVQ"



North Devon Homes does not insure your furniture and personal possessions. However we have teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risks to offer you an affordable home contents insurance policy.

Protect your belongings against a whole range of risks and find peace of mind.
For more information you can call Crystal Insurance on **lo-call 0845 601 7007** (it may be cheaper to call 01628 586187 from a mobile)
Or visit www.crystal-insurance.co.uk
You can even request a member of the Crystal Insurance Team to call you back.

Terms & conditions, exclusions & limits apply.
A copy of the policy wording is available on request.
The Crystal Insurance Scheme is a product name arranged and administered by Thistle Tenant Risks. A trading style of Thistle Insurance Services Ltd. Lloyd's Broker. Authorized and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. A.I.T. Group Company. Registered Office: The 3rd Bostleigh Building, 138 Houndsditch, London, EC3A 7AW. Registered in England No 00338645. VAT No. 244 2321 96.



100%
Target: 100%

% of properties with a valid Gas Safety Record month end

94.8%
Target: 97.4%

Response Repairs completed on time year to date



97%
Target: 96%

Response Repairs customer satisfaction with service received year to date



Keeping you warm and your home damp free

With winter finally with us after an unusually warm start to autumn, we are more likely to start seeing condensation in our homes – which can lead to mould.

Mould is small black, green spots that appear on walls and other surfaces. If you find mould in your home clean the area with detergent and a damp cloth and dry the area thoroughly.

Condensation is one of the main causes of damp in a home. Here are some tips to help prevent mould growing in your home:

Ventilation: Always keep vents open. Never block or cover air bricks, flues or vents.

Bathroom: Where fitted, always use extractor fans. Close the door and open the window to allow the air to circulate.

Heating: Keep your home warm. Keep a low background heat in unused rooms and air rooms regularly.

Furniture: Leave a gap between furniture and outside walls. Avoid putting mattresses directly on the floor.

Loft: For safety reasons and to avoid blocking ventilation you should not access or store items in your loft.

Windows: Whenever possible, open windows slightly to allow your home to air. Ensure that trickle vents on windows are left open.

Drying Clothes: Whenever possible dry your clothes outside. Do not dry clothes on radiators, use a clothes rack in a cool room with the door closed and the window open.

Kitchen: When cooking keep the door closed and windows open. Put lids on pans and turn on any extractor fans.

If you have tried all the suggestions above and are still concerned about mould in your home then please contact us on 01271 312500. A member of our Customer Care Team will be able to arrange for a surveyor to carry out an inspection on your home.



Data Protection

To comply with the Data Protection Act and to keep the information we hold on our records safe, when you contact us our Customer Care Team will ask you some security questions to confirm your identity.

Once we are happy that we are speaking to the correct person, we will then be able to discuss specific information about your tenancy.

If you wish to grant permission for anyone else to discuss any element of your tenancy with us, on your behalf, then you will need to do this in writing. When writing to grant permission, please provide your nominated person's full name, date of birth and national insurance number as they will also be required to answer

some security questions.

Please ensure that any personal details we have for you are up to date and correct. If you require any further information about the Data Protection Act and how North Devon Homes keeps your information safe, please feel free to contact the Customer Care Team on 01271 312500.



Don't forget to register or you won't be able to vote

In May 2015 there will be local, national and European elections but you won't be able to vote unless you are registered.

Recently, all North Devon and Torridge residents were sent letters which highlighted how a new system of Individual Electoral Registration is being introduced across the country. This means that each individual is now responsible for registering themselves.

Many residents have been automatically moved

onto the new Electoral Register. However, some will need to take action to join or remain on it.

You can now register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

For more information, contact the council's elections team on 01271 388277 or email elections@northdevon.gov.uk



403
Target: 360

Number of phone surveys completed (year to date)



24.7
seconds

Target: 15 seconds

Average time to answer calls (year to date)



98%

% customers happy with the way we handled the call (year to date)



Good Neighbour Award Winners

Congratulations to Mr Harold Parkhouse from Witheridge who has been awarded a Good Neighbour Award. He was nominated by his neighbours Roy and Lorraine Nash for "...giving us produce from his garden, bringing papers, cutting grass and tidying... I'm sure other people do this but the amazing thing about Harold is that in January he will be 90 years old!"

Congratulations to Dorothy Lewis from Medard House who has been awarded a Good Neighbour Award for helping her neighbour Yasmin Perryman after her husband became ill. "Mrs Lewis has always been a good neighbour, but the last few weeks she has gone above being a good

neighbour. Every time she has gone to town or just to the shop she's knocked on my door and asked if I needed anything. She also took my husband's prescription to the chemist for me. I couldn't wish for such a good neighbour"

If you would like to nominate a neighbour, please write to Francis Gott, Customer Forum Chair, at our head office address giving your name and address and the name of neighbour, their address and why you would like to nominate them. We will present the winners, selected by the Customer Forum, with a certificate and a £20 gift voucher.

Joint North Devon Homes and Customer Forum AGM

North Devon Homes and the Customer Forum held their 14th Annual General Meeting at the Barnstaple Hotel on Friday 26th September. The meeting was well attended by customers, partnering organisations and staff, with Jenny Allen from the National Housing Federation attending as a guest speaker.

Chairman Nick Lewis retired from his position as Chairman of the Board and Simon Price took over the post. Martyn Gimber thanked Nick Lewis for all his hard work on behalf of the

company and its customers.

The financial results and accounts showed an increased turnover and good financial performance. Presentations were given by North Devon Homes' Executive Team summarising the performance and key highlights of the business over the past twelve months.

Francis Gott, Chair of the Customer Forum, gave a presentation showcasing some of the work that the Customer Forum has been involved in during the last twelve months. He extended an invitation to other customers to become involved.

For further information, please call Rowan Summers on 01271 313384



Customers Involved in Contractor Recruitment Process

This year North Devon Homes wanted to recruit a new contractor for external decorations works. Customer members of the Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Group have been involved in setting some of the questions asked of potential contractors. Questions were formed by asking members to share things that they felt were important to customers when external decorations works were carried out at their properties. The contractor's responses to these

questions were then analysed by customers to see which ones had addressed their concerns most effectively. This customer feedback formed part of the decision making process for choosing which contractor was awarded the external decorations contract.

If you would like to get involved as a North Devon Homes Customer please contact Rowan Summers on 01271 313384.

Rowan Summers New Customer Involvement Officer

Rowan Summers has recently joined the Community Involvement Team as a Customer Involvement Officer and will be covering Clare Paddon whilst she is on maternity leave. Rowan says "I am really pleased to have been appointed to the role of Customer Involvement Officer, it is a really exciting opportunity and I am looking forward to working with customers to support them to be involved in the company and to have their say".



customers involved in selection of the external decorations contractor



void property inspections completed by customers

Empty Properties Inspections

Voids are properties that have become vacant and are awaiting a new tenant. A team of customer inspectors have been working hard visiting empty properties to inspect their condition and the standard of the repairs and maintenance works that are completed to prepare them for incoming tenants. In addition, all new customers who have moved into their homes in the last six months have been contacted by the team of inspectors to find out about their experiences. In this way the void property process is viewed from a customer's perspective. This information is fed back to the Neighbourhood Services team and these views incorporated into the voids process. If you would like to get involved please call Rowan Summers on 01271 313384.





Thank you for joining us

This year's Summer Fayre was the biggest and best yet with over 660 customers joining us at the rugby club on Wednesday July 30th. Here are some of our favourite photos from the day.



We hope to hold next year's Summer Fayre on Wednesday July 29th so make a note in your diary now and further information will be contained in our spring newsletter.



Tenant 2 Tenant

Members of the Customer Forum are at hand to help with any questions or queries you may have. Tenant 2 Tenant has been set up to provide impartial support to all customers with any housing related issues. Sometimes it can really help to talk things through, and as tenants ourselves we really understand things from a tenant's perspective. If you feel it would be helpful to have an informal chat with another tenant, no matter how small or silly you may think your query is, then please call us on **07740410970**.

We are available on this number 7 days a week, 9am to 9pm.





Thank You!

After 15 years of service as a customer volunteer on the Customer Forum, becoming Chair of the Customer Forum, a Board Member and finally setting up and chairing our Scrutiny Panel, Jean Elliot has decided to retire from customer involvement.



We would like to say a massive 'Thank You' to Jean for her tireless efforts in driving the customer's point of views on service satisfaction and value for money.

The Scrutiny Panel has been undertaking a service review of our older person's service which has been very positive. Michelle Rigler (the new Scrutiny Chair) stated that "the report to Board highlighted how important the service is for older customers and made recommendations to expand the service. The Panel also recognised how important Support Advisors are to customers; a strong theme that came through when consulting with over 50 customers."

The Scrutiny Panel is currently reviewing customer satisfaction feedback for Response Repairs and Planned Maintenance.

University looks at NDH Youth Initiative



Dr Susan Cooper from the University of St Mark and St John, Plymouth has been holding focus groups with young people and parents from Barnstaple, Gorwell and Ilfracombe. Dr Cooper will also be talking to our key partners over the next few weeks as part of producing an independent evaluation on the youth service NDH currently offers to over 300 young people in our communities.

This external validation of our work will be invaluable in the task of finding continuation funding for this work beyond March 2015 when the current Big Lottery funding ends. We will be delighted to share these findings and the results will be published in the next newsletter.



Sew and Hoe goes from strength to strength

This year the community garden in Forches has made £266 from sales of produce grown; this has covered the bills for the water and compost and will cover next year's seeds.

The NHS and Community Action South West are new partners in the garden and are going to take on two sections to bring in more volunteers to work alongside community volunteers. Alongside our work with Grow Jigsaw this will make next spring an exciting time for the garden as more people get involved.

Our Sew and Hoe project is gaining more members every week. There is now a dressmaker volunteering with them which is proving very successful and the first items made by the group have been sold.

Currently the group is busy making Christmas bunting to sell to raise funds towards keeping the group sustainable when the funding from the South West Foundation ends next spring.

To be part of the project or for more information call us on **01271 312527**.



5 fully trained members on the Scrutiny Panel



Slade Valley Fun Day

On 21st August the 2nd Annual Slade Valley Fun Day took place at the Vision Centre in Ilfracombe.

This year was bigger and better than last year with the support of Ilfracombe Fire Service and the Police. Petroc and One Ilfracombe also came along and there were guest appearances from Peppa Pig and Woody from Toy Story.

The Fire Service did a chip pan fire demonstration and Exmoor Zoo brought along some animals and insects for the children to get up close to.

The day raised over £400 for the youth club and we would like to thank all the people involved in

the day, especially Ilfracombe Rotary for their donation which helped to make the day extra special.

We are hoping to run another Fun Day next year on Thursday 13th August 2015 if you would like to get involved then please contact Andie on 01271 313377.



Babysitting Course

21 young people across Barnstaple and Ilfracombe attended two babysitting courses run by the youth team at NDH in partnership with Triangle First Aid Training.

This 2 day course included a full day's accredited paediatric first aid training and a full day in looking after babies and children. This involved learning about safeguarding issues, feeding and changing babies and how much a baby costs!

The young people received two certificates for completing the course which they can now use for earning some money by becoming babysitters. **We are hoping to run more of these courses in the future so if you would like more information please contact Andie on 01271 313377.**





PGL Residential

A group of 31 young people attended an outdoor adventure weekend at PGL Beam House, Torrington in August. The young people were from all three youth clubs and this was the first time they had been taken away together as one group.

The young people took part in lots of activities including surfing, zip wire and blow karting. They

also worked together on personal skills around team work and problem solving.

It was a fantastic experience for all the young people (despite the spider infestation!!) and everyone really enjoyed it.



Youth Club Times

The NDH youth club times and locations:

Forches Youth Club (for ages 9 upwards)

Monday & Wednesdays 6.30-8.30pm @ The Whiddon Valley Community Centre, Barton Rd, Barnstaple EX32 8NG

The last club in Forches will be Monday 22nd December, reopening on Monday 5th January 2015

Hangout Youth Club (for ages 10 upwards)

Tuesdays 6.30-8.30pm @ The Deaf Centre, Bicton Street, Barnstaple EX32 7EB

The last club in Gorwell will be Tuesday 16th December reopening on Tuesday 6th January 2015

Slade Valley Youth Club (for ages 9 upwards)

Wednesdays 6.30-8.30pm @ the Vision Centre, Slade Valley Rd, Ilfracombe EX34 8LU

The last club in Slade will be on Wednesday 17th December reopening on Wednesday 7th January 2015

All sessions are just 50p. For more information please contact Andie on 01271 313377.



367

young people involved in youth projects



Woodville Local Lettings Plan



North Devon Homes has invested £10 million redeveloping the Woodville Estate. This has included the demolition of 34 pre reinforced concrete properties and 20 garages.

Replacing these on the site are 66 new homes. To help form this new community, we are going to use a local lettings plan which has previously been a great success on the Forches Estate.

The aim of the plan is...

- To sensitively let vacant properties to establish a sustainable community
- To create an economically balanced community with some priority given to those households who are working (a target for 30% of the properties to have at least one member of the household in employment).
- To get the right mixture of child density and occupancy levels.
- To free up social housing in North Devon through downsizing.
- To ensure that those people with a local connection are prioritised over applicants without such a local connection.

When we select potential households for these new homes we intend to give priority to customers who have paid their rent on time; looked after their homes and have not been involved in any anti social behaviour.

If you are interested in being considered for these new homes, please contact us on 01271 312500.

Garden Project at Normandy House

A group of residents at Normandy house, in Barnstaple have joined together to form a Garden Group.

All residents at Normandy House are invited to join the group for an annual fee of £1.50. The group members hold regular meetings and everyone is encouraged to get involved with planting and tending to produce; in return they receive some of the wonderful home grown vegetables. All residents are welcomed and encouraged to enjoy the beautiful garden, even if they have chosen not to join the Garden Group.

Local residents are invited to visit and take a look at the fantastic garden created by all the hard work of the Garden Group at Normandy House.

If this has inspired you to think about setting up a similar project in your local area then please contact Lisa Lee on 01271 312500 for further information, to arrange a visit or speak with members of the Garden Group.





Slade Valley and Burnside Action Day

On Wednesday 22nd October North Devon Homes, the Police and One Ilfracombe worked together to hold a community clear up day at Slade Valley and Burnside Road, Ilfracombe.

Volunteers from One Ilfracombe and North Devon Homes litter-picked the whole area, removing large weeds overhanging pavements, cleared and tidied up communal rubbish bin areas, removed rubbish from various drains in the area, strimmed overgrown grassed areas near the stream and cut back brambles close to public footpaths. Additionally, PCSO Pete Hyde litter-picked the stream.

North Devon Homes provided two large skips for residents to dispose of unwanted items and collected large items of furniture from residents' gardens. This was beneficial to all residents and cost effective for the Council as this will reduce collections and fly-tipping in the area.

A massive "thank you" to all who helped on the day, it was a great success and a benefit to the whole community.

"It was a really successful event and working together with other agencies has made a real difference to the area and community".



Customer satisfaction with New Lettings

Based on figures April - Sept 2014



Dedicated days spent in your neighbourhood

Dates for your Diary in 2015

South Molton Action Day	8 April
Chumleigh Estate Inspection	28 April
Queens Estate Inspection	13 May
Fremington Estate Inspection	3 June
Wrafton Estate Inspection	24 June

We have the most satisfied neighbourhoods

To ensure that we perform well and offer Value for Money we compare (benchmark) our performance against other housing associations. We are really pleased to learn that, based on the most recent data, we have the most satisfied neighbourhoods in the South West with 95.85% of customers telling us that they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. It also emerged that we were second in offering value for money for our lettings service. As one of the smallest Housing Associations in the group we were really pleased with this result and will continue to work hard to maintain this level of satisfaction.

To support this we estimate that our neighbourhood's staff have achieved over 1200 cases of multi-agency working, including meetings consultations and home visits.



New Homes for North Devon



South View, Bratton Fleming

Four affordable rented local occupancy properties were completed in March 2014.



19 High Street, Ilfracombe
Conversion works took place in summer 2014 and involved converting former office units into two residential flats.

Kensington Close, Barnstaple

In July 2014, North Devon Homes purchased 5, two bedroom affordable rented properties from Chichester Homes.

Springfield, Bickington

We are investigating an exciting proposition for land at Springfield, Bickington involving modern methods of construction to minimise disruption on site and deliver new homes speedily.



10 Market Square, Ilfracombe

Conversion works are nearing completion with internal finishing works underway. This project will provide 2, one bedroom flats.

Woodville

Development here will provide 66 new properties, providing new affordable housing for rent in the area. It will also incorporate 9 shared ownership properties which will be available in early 2016.



Pill Gardens Phases 1 & 2

Provided 32 new affordable properties, all of which have a local occupancy tie. The properties were completed in August 2014.



The Orchards, Lovacott

Will provide 9 affordable rented properties, all of which have a local occupancy tie to the Lovacott area.



10 Forches Avenue, Barnstaple

Works are complete with customers moving into their new homes shortly. This project involved transforming commercial units into two ground floor flats.



Gorwell, Barnstaple

Following the recent community event, we intend to finalise plans and make appropriate planning applications by Christmas 2014.



Forches, phase 2, Barnstaple

Has involved demolition of 72 PRC properties and the construction of 80 new homes. These will consist of a mix of 52 affordable rents, 13 social rents and 15 shared ownership properties.



Getting on the property ladder

As part of our continuing regeneration throughout North Devon we have made a number of our properties available to purchase on a shared ownership basis. This is where you purchase a percentage of the property and pay a small amount of rent to North Devon Homes for the remainder. There is an opportunity to 'staircase', buying additional amounts of the property, so ultimately you could end up owning your own home outright. We met up with Mr Williams who has recently purchased a Shared Ownership property in Gould Road, Barnstaple and this is what he had to say:

"I had been previously living in a caravan for two and half years, prior to securing one of the new build shared ownership houses at Forches Estate Phase 1. I saw purchasing a shared ownership property as a means to an end to help secure fees and a deposit, which have ultimately allowed me to get on the home ownership ladder.

I am really happy that this scheme has allowed me to return to the estate where I had lived previously for over 10 years, and enjoy the fact that there is good access to local amenities on the estate. I particularly benefit from the high thermal efficiency of my new home, finding it cheaper to run, more comfortable and even allowing me to have the heating off for large portions of the year."





With so many customers moving into their new homes we thought it was important to speak with some of them to find out what they think of their new home.

We met Mr and Mrs Edwards who have recently moved into their new home at Woodville in Barnstaple. This is what they had to say to us:

"We are absolutely delighted with our cosy new home and have now settled in really well and made it our home. Our bungalow is spacious, warm and very comfortable. The stairs were a real concern in our old home so moving here has made a huge difference to us. The area is quiet and very neighbourly. Our move from our former PRC home was easier than we expected, and we can't believe how long we have lived in our new home already."

"We couldn't ask for better."



153
new homes built

Got something to say about NDH?
We want to hear it!
 Call us on **01271 312500**
 or email us at enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk

Always check for identification

All members of NDH staff and our contractors carry and present identification when they call at your home. Should you have any concerns or doubts about anyone calling at your home **do not let them in** and call us on **01271 312500**.



Identity Card
 If you are unsure of caller please
Telephone 01271 312500

Sharon Hayne
 Regeneration Officer

Holders Signature: _____

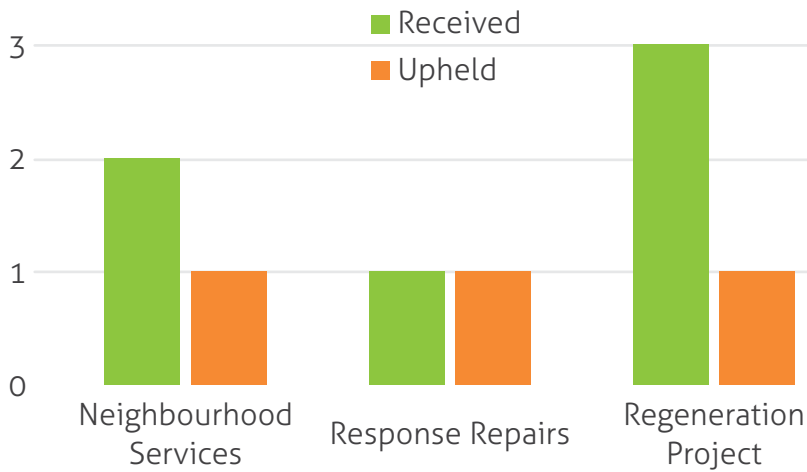
Expiry Date
 24/02/2015



"Working together to create communities where people want to live"



Complaints & Compliments



25
Compliments

6

Complaints
Received



Thank you to everyone who took the time to tell us when we performed well or when our services fell short of expectations. Without this information we would not be able to share good and bad service experiences throughout the company to help us improve the services we provide to you.

We have had a number of customers coming to us recently with unexpectedly high water bills. These are often due to water leaks that they have either not been aware of or have not reported to us. Whilst we work hard to support our customers we cannot and do not monitor your water meter for leaks. It is your responsibility to check your water meter. Unidentified water leaks can prove very costly and whilst we will fix any reported leak promptly, we will not reimburse you for water charges that we could not have known about. Please see below on how to check your water meter.

Got a Water Meter?

Avoid large unexpected water bills by completing these simple water leak checks regularly

- Locate your water meter
- Turn off all taps and appliances which use water
- Take your meter reading
- Wait for 1 hour then take another reading
- Compare the readings. Have they changed?

If you suspect a water leak, please contact the Customer Care Team on 01271 312500.



Kid's Colouring Competition



How to enter:

Fill out the form and send it to the address below by 09/01/2015 for a chance to win a selection box

Name

Age

Address

.....

..... Post code

Age groups are as follows:

7 and under

8 - 12 years

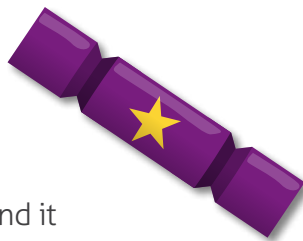
Please tick this box if you do not wish your child to be named

How Many?

How many Christmas Crackers (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 09/01/2015 for a chance to win a £20 voucher.

No. of Christmas Crackers:



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

Name

Age

Address

.....

..... Post code

For a chance to win, send all entries to:

Rowan Summers, North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8TA by 09/01/2015

Colouring Competition Winners

The two winners of the summer colouring competition selected by the Customer Forum are Miss K, aged 7 from Barnstaple; and Sally Dixon, aged 10 from Barnstaple.

How Many Seahorses Winner

In the summer edition of Home News we asked you to find the missing seahorses to win a £20 voucher. The lucky winner, drawn at random, is Mr D Robertson of Chumleigh.

