

HOME NEWS

Summer 2016

Written in partnership by
customers and staff of
North Devon Homes



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Front cover image: Candar resident, Elsie Berrecloth, and North Devon Homes Support Advisor, Nikki Tolley, at the ceremony held at the Candar to mark the placing of a bench and plaque in memory of Theresa Williams, a Support Advisor who worked at the Candar in Ilfracombe

Welcome to the summer edition of Home News!

North Devon Homes has seen many strategic changes in the last 9 years, and as a board member and more recently Chair, they have all been for the good, benefitting you as tenants and leaseholders, the wider North Devon community and our partners such as North Devon Council and Devon County Council.

North Devon Homes is a great landlord that punches above its weight and delivers excellent services. You might think as Chair, I would say that, but as a housing professional with 20 years experience, I have seen many organisations and very few put their customers at the heart of the business as we do!

Team NDH, has grown into an organisation that the board and staff can be proud of.

My highlights over the last 9 years at North Devon Homes are many but the ones that stand out are:

Our development programme which goes from strength to strength, in particular the redevelopment of our pre-reinforced concrete homes. It's not always been easy but we are almost there; it is pleasing to hear the positive comments from tenants about their new homes. I look forward to seeing Anchorwood Bank being completed.

Our community work - the work on the Forches has been life changing and transformational for many. Seeing the videos made by and starring some of the kids is great; the achievements and the ongoing work of our community development team is excellent.

Working with the ever evolving board, especially tenant board members who continually give up their time and work tirelessly on your behalf, as do those on the Customer Forum and other working groups.

And the staff team at North Devon Homes: Investors in People Gold at the first attempt, Times Top 100 organisation, lowest rent arrears in the country and great customer satisfaction to name but a few of their achievements.

Finally on a more sombre note, the social housing sector is under intense pressure from government to do things differently. Home ownership is the mantra of the current government, but I worry about those who cannot, or do not want to own their own home, where do they live? That's the challenge for our sector!!



Simon Price
Chair of the Board

All change at the top

It's been another busy year of change and renewal for the board as we approach this year's AGM on the 23rd September.

The Chairman, Simon Price, steps down after serving the maximum nine years on the Board, with two of those latterly as the Chair of the Board. We wish Simon the very best and thank him for the incredible amount of time and work he has undertaken on behalf of customers and the company over his tenure. Adrian Jeffery also stands down after serving his maximum

nine years on the board during which time he has brought a wealth of strategic asset management and maintenance expertise to the team. Again, we wish him well and thank him for helping us transform the services and overseeing the improvements we continue to make in this area.

As with any change there is always opportunity to review and look to the future and we have been planning the succession of our new Chair for some time. We are delighted to welcome Robert Stronge to the role who will take the reigns at the AGM. Robert has been on the board for over a year and brings executive experience from a housing management background over many years in the sector.

We also welcome Asad Butt to the Board who has a wealth of sector knowledge and development expertise having worked at the

Homes and Communities Agency for many years.

We also welcome Scott Murray, an accountant who also has extensive experience and knowledge of our sector. We look forward to working with them to deliver our strategic objectives.

The board oversee the running of the business and set its strategic direction, ensuring that the company meets its objectives and targets. The Board is made up of customers, local authority representatives and independent members with specific skills or experience.

The board seeks to ensure that the business is well run, well managed and delivers

to its customers whilst remaining locally accountable. As Government funding reduces and homelessness increases the company is diversifying its activities to raise funds specifically for the provision of affordable homes through the sale of new homes. The changes being planned to the board will reflect this new and more risky environment.

The company will continue to do all it can to deliver great services to its existing customers, and work with partners to oversee the successful delivery of new affordable homes in North Devon.



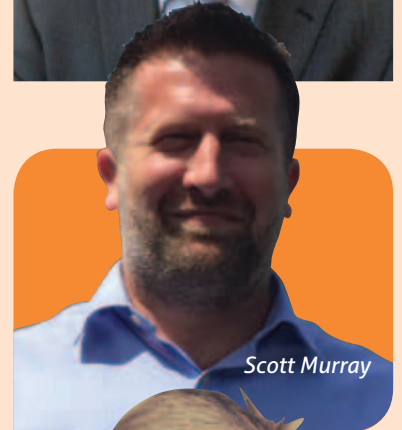
Simon Price



Adrian Jeffery



Robert Stronge



Scott Murray



Asad Butt

New website

It's here! Welcome to our new website! We are delighted to launch our newly redesigned website – it has a bright new look and lay out which we hope you will find informative and easier to use. In addition, the new site is optimised for smart phones and mobiles which means it will be easier to view the site when using these devices.

You can view our new website by visiting www.ndh-ltd.co.uk We invite you to start exploring! We would love to hear what you think about our new website – please send your feedback to rowan.summers@ndh-ltd.co.uk or call 01271 312500.



Lee Road, Lynton

In April we held an opening ceremony for our recently completed properties at Lee Road in Lynton. The event was attended by the MP for North Devon Peter Heaton-Jones, local councillors and people involved in the development of the project including staff from North Devon Homes. A ribbon cutting ceremony marking the official opening was followed by an opportunity to view the new properties and meet the people now living in them.

The development offers two commercial units and four affordable rented flats for local people living in Lynton. The scheme has been built to reflect the local architecture and landscape, offering tenants energy efficient, modern accommodation in a central location.

Mr and Mrs Elvin are the new tenants of one of the properties. Mrs Elvin said "Moving into this lovely new flat has made so much difference to our lives. We needed to move and thought we would have to go outside of the area. This has meant that we can stay living near to our family and friends. We are so happy - we feel like the King and Queen of England!"



"We feel like the King and Queen of England!"



Have you discovered our North Devon Homes Facebook page yet? You could join 539 people who have - like us and you'll be the first to see all our latest news, stories, photos and job adverts, and - most importantly - you'll be able to start talking to us and sharing your ideas, questions, comments and news.



Join us for some Summer Fayre fun!

This year's North Devon Homes Customer Summer Fayre is taking place on Wednesday 27 July at Barnstaple Rugby Club between 11am and 3pm. You should already have received your invitation to our fun-filled family event in the post.

This year there will be a petting farm with miniature animals, segway racing, a giant inflatable obstacle course, a magic show, a disco dome, learn how to walk a tightrope and ride a unicycle,



crafts, trampolines, street dance performances, a bouncy castle and lots of stalls.

The event is free for all our customers and your entry pack will include vouchers for food and activities making this a really great day out.

There is limited parking this year so please let us know if you can catch our free bus. We hope you can join us for another fantastic, fun and informative event.

If you have not yet registered and would like to join us on

the day please visit www.ndh-ltd.co.uk or our Facebook page, or call us on 01271 312500 to book your place.



Theresa Williams' memorial bench

In January of this year, Theresa Williams, our Support Advisor who had worked at the Candar in Ilfracombe, very sadly passed away. Theresa was a popular member of staff and was well liked and respected by all the customers she worked alongside at the sheltered scheme, being well known for her caring and helpful manner and for her fantastic sense of humour.

Theresa had worked for North Devon Homes for 17 years, joining the company in August 1998, initially working at Wilder Park as a warden, and then, as the role changed, becoming based at the Candar and also covering Oaktree Gardens.

Customers living at the Candar thought a lot of Theresa and will miss her greatly, so they

decided that they would like to buy a bench and a plaque in her memory. Members of the Candar Social Club, led by Elsie Berrecloth, helped to raise the funds by organising regular breakfast clubs, coffee mornings and bingo sessions.

A formal ceremony to mark the placement of the bench and to remember Theresa was held on Tuesday 7th June. The bench was decorated with flowers and a toast was raised to Theresa. Miles Sellick, North Devon Homes' Head of Housing, and Don Lawson, a member of the Candar Social Club, spoke to the residents and Theresa's partner

Yvonne, who had gathered to mark the occasion, to share their memories of her.

The bench is situated in a lovely sunny spot on the piazza at the Candar for all residents to enjoy and remember Theresa by.



Independence Day

Our Support Advisors at Medard House held an "Independence Day" event on 25th May. The event aimed to bring together services in the local community that can improve and maintain independent living for older people, as well as reduce isolation and loneliness.

Local older people had the opportunity to find out about the services and support that are available to them at the event. Organisations attending included the See Hear Centre, Age UK, Devon Senior Voice, North Devon Homes Independent Living, Think Jessica Campaign, Go Bus, Devon Homelink, Alexander Social Club and the Memory Café.

There was a café providing light lunches, snacks and drinks which were homemade by customers who live at Medard House, as well as a prize raffle, gift shop, fun quiz sheet and craft corner.

North Devon Homes Independent Living Services Manager Bill Allen said "We are delighted to be able to showcase the services that we provide on our sheltered schemes, and the very positive relationships we have with other agencies that provide services for older people in Barnstaple and the surrounding areas."



Common rooms available for community hire

The common rooms at our sheltered schemes are a resource that can be enjoyed by customers and the wider community. Community rooms are available to all customers living on a scheme for events, however, the rooms can also be hired by local community groups.

Currently across the schemes our common rooms are used for bingo sessions, coffee mornings, memory cafes, breakfast clubs, lunches prepared by students from Petroc, Cinema Club, bell ringing, and theatre groups. **We would love to see more activities taking place, so if you have an idea, please contact your support advisor or phone our head office on 01271 312500.**

Devon Homelink

The Devon Homelink team always aim to provide a high quality support and alarm service – here is some feedback that we have recently received from our customers.

“Just a note to thank you for helping my Dad last week when he was having problems. He got into a state and pressed his alarm. As a result you contacted his carers who sorted him out. He is very grateful as are we, his family. I know that this is what you are all there for but it does not harm to say thank you.”

“I would like to say thanks to all of you for the support you helped to provide. All Mum wanted was to be allowed to live independently with a little support at home, which she did. Thanks again.”



94.7%

customer satisfaction with support service
(1st April - 31st May 2016)



alarm customers



customers receiving support



North Devon Show

This year Devon Homelink will be at the North Devon Show to meet existing customers, and offer our services to new customers. Please pop in to see us in the Marketplace Marquee on 3rd August, we'd love to see you. We'll be talking to customers about the range of services we offer, and will be using the opportunity to present our new brand and logo that clearly identifies the service as part of North Devon Homes.

Safeguarding

The Care Act 2014 required housing associations to review their approach to safeguarding and made some additional duties a requirement. In response, North Devon Homes have developed a new Adult Safeguarding Policy, refreshed our Children's Safeguarding Policy, and implemented new procedures to ensure all staff are aware of what safeguarding means, and how to report any concerns. To support this, all front line staff and their line managers have received an additional 1 days training, and all other staff have access to an e-learning package. **Safeguarding is everyone's business; if you have concerns about a neighbour, you can report it to us, or contact the Devon County Team direct on 0845 1551 007 (Adults) or 0345 155 1071 (Children).**

Technology to enable independent living

Our Devon Homelink service supports customers to live independently by providing support and stand-alone emergency alarms.

However, did you know that the alarms we install for you are capable of helping in lots of other ways? Telecare and Telehealth are the terms used to describe the range of additional services that can be attached to an alarm. For instance we can fit monitors that alert the call centre if someone falls, we can fit pill dispensers and alarms, or even sensors that detect epileptic seizures and arrange for appropriate action from the call centre or carers.

If you would like to know more, please contact the Homelink team on 0800 083 7553, or 01271 312538.

Renewable heat partnership

A successful partnership project between South West housing associations including North Devon Homes, Kensa Heat Pumps Ltd and EDF Energy has recently earned recognition, winning the Best Large Scale Project Award at the South West Regional Energy Efficiency & Retrofit Awards on Wednesday 25th May. The awards celebrate the excellent work being done by the energy efficiency sector to help homeowners reduce their energy bills, tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions by installing renewable heating technology using Government schemes including ECO and the Renewable Heating Incentive.

As part of this project an innovative ground source heat pump scheme was installed in 8 bungalows at Rock Lodge Park, Lynton. North Devon Homes invested in the new scheme which replaces a poorly performing, shared oil fired heating system with a clean, energy efficient way to heat the bungalows and provide them with hot water.

Kensa Heat Pumps Ltd completed works which comprised the initial drilling of a communal array of boreholes and the subsequent installation of pipe work, 'shoebox' heat pumps and hot water cylinders to each bungalow.

Kensa's Shoebox Heat Pump, which has also won the coveted 'Business Innovation of the Year' title



at the South West Green Energy Awards in 2014, features an innovative array of boreholes which maximises efficient extraction of solar energy from the ground. The benefits to residents will be low heating bills, effective individual control of heating and hot water and no communal heating service charges.

North Devon Homes Head of Asset Management Claire Fallow says: "We are committed to providing efficient and low cost forms of heating for our customers and I hope that this is just the start of some of the solutions that we put in place for our customers that are in rural 'off gas' areas."

The scheme benefits from funding from an ECO subsidy through the Carbon Saving Community Obligation stream due to the rural location of the site. Additionally the scheme will receive regular payments from the government's Renewable Heating Incentive.

Burnside Flats refurbishment

Significant progress has been made with the exterior refurbishment of Burnside Road flats in Ilfracombe. The flats had some issues with damp penetration through the gable walls and their exterior decorations were in need of updating.

Westcountry Maintenance Services worked with North Devon Homes to improve the thermal envelope of the building by removing the defective cavity wall insulation, re filling the cavity and over

cladding the gables. In addition all the gutter and fascias were renewed, repairs works to the roofs were completed, the drains were cleared and the external lights replaced. Three of the five blocks are now complete; works will start on the two remaining blocks this summer.

The works have made a significant improvement to the exterior of the flats, giving



them a fresh, new contemporary look. We are very pleased with the results of the improvement works and have received some great feedback from our customers living at Burnside Road.



Smoke Alarm Servicing

In order to keep you safe in your home North Devon Homes annually safety check all smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to ensure they are working correctly and effectively. You will receive letters from our contractor James Electrics when they are looking to complete your service. Please let James Electrics know if an appointment sent through to you is not convenient as we are always happy to accommodate requests you have, for example, avoiding school run times, to ensure that we are able to complete your service and keep you safe in your home.

You can call James Electrics on 01271 346652 or alternatively call us on 01271 312500.

Carbon Monoxide and Gas Cookers

If you have a gas cooker in your home it is your responsibility to ensure that it is maintained and working correctly. If you do not maintain your gas cooker it may result in the gas burning incorrectly causing Carbon Monoxide fumes to release triggering your Carbon Monoxide alarm. At your annual gas safety check the gas engineer will safety check your gas cooker and if it is not working effectively he will need to isolate the appliance for your safety. In order to reduce the likelihood of this occurring always use your gas cooker in line with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure that all burners, elements and ignition points are cleaned regularly and always free from grease or food build up.

If you have a gas cooker in your kitchen but do not have a Carbon Monoxide alarm installed please call us on 01271 312500.



customer satisfaction with finished planned maintenance works



Home improvement surveys carried out

(1st April - 31st May 2016)

If your Carbon Monoxide alarm sounds:

- Open all doors and windows to ventilate the area
- Turn off all gas appliances and extinguish solid fuel fires
- Leave the property and call North Devon Homes on 01271 312500 or 0800 917 0619
- If you feel unwell seek immediate medical advice

DO NOT use your appliance until it has been checked by a professional.



Response Repairs

Home2Home new faces

We have recently welcomed three new multi skilled operatives to our Home 2 Home team: Luke Smith, Emma Simmons and Alan Brunning. Welcome to the team!



Luke Smith



Emma Simmons



Alan Brunning



Home 2 Home Multi Skilled Operatives
Mark Lane and Keith Johnson

Legionella

This edition of Home News includes a copy of our legionella leaflet which includes lots of information regarding legionella awareness in your home.

If you did not receive a copy you can arrange to receive one in the post by contacting our Customer Care team on 01271 312500.



New uniforms

Home 2 Home are pleased to unveil their new uniform. The business has gone through a number of changes over the past 12 months including the arrival of 8 new members of staff. The uniforms were chosen by both staff and customers. We hope you like the new, fresh look and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Are you looking to keep your gas and electricity costs low?

As we move into summer your gas and electricity bills may not be front of mind, but you can look to reduce your energy use - and your bills by making small changes around the home:

- Change your thermostat settings so your heating isn't on unnecessarily
- Dry your clothes outdoors if you can
- Make the most of natural light and open your curtains wide to fill your rooms with light

Residents are continuing to save money through EnergySW. Those who have switched have saved on average:

- £185 on credit meters¹
- £46 on pre-payment meters²

See if you can save by contacting:

www.energysw.co.uk

0800 408 6716 (pay monthly)

0800 408 6720 (pre-payment)

You don't need to have a recent bill to hand but if you do you'll get a more accurate quote. Why not see if EnergySW can save you money too? We can't guarantee that everyone will be able to save, but you can compare EnergySW and other tariffs available to you by using a price comparison website.

¹ £185 is the average saving of dual-fuel customers who pay monthly that have actually switched to EnergySW between 01/01/16 and 31/03/16; individual savings will vary according to current supplier, location, consumption and EnergySW tariff options.

² £46 is the average saving of dual-fuel customers on the PAYG tariff that have actually switched to EnergySW between 01/01/16 and 31/03/16; individual savings will vary according to current supplier, location, consumption and EnergySW tariff option

ADVANTAGE
SW

EnergySW
Powered by OVO



Permissions

North Devon Homes are seeing an increase in DIY projects in our properties where customers have not asked for permission to carry out the works. We wish to remind all of our customers that it is a condition of their tenancy to seek permission prior to undertaking any works at their property other than basic decoration. We ask this for the following reasons;

- To ensure that any works requested can be undertaken safely. We need to check asbestos and other records for this
- To ensure that our properties remain fit for purpose and in a safe condition
- To prevent high recharges to customers when we have to put things right
- To ensure that we have all of the correct permissions such as building control approval, planning permission, highways consent etc
- To ensure that we get all the required safety certificates returned to us e.g. electrical safety certificates

If you have made alterations and have not asked permission then please contact us and we will discuss this with you. If you want to apply to make alterations to your property please contact us and we can send out a form for you to complete.



New asbestos surveying contractor

North Devon Homes have appointed a new asbestos surveying contractor. Gully Howard will be working with us towards our aim of collecting asbestos information on the majority of our properties. Gully Howard will be contacting customers directly to arrange appointments for access. It is important that we collect this information about your property so that we can ensure that you and our contractors are kept safe whilst using and working in your home.

All surveyors will carry photographic identification so please ask them for this. Please ensure that all cupboards and loft spaces are accessible so that we are able to gather all of the information we require.

If you have any queries regarding asbestos in your property please contact us on 01271 312500.



✓
1,677

total repairs completed
April - May 2016
(as at 4th July 2016)



98.9%

of jobs completed on time
April - May 2016
(as at 4th July 2016)



No Smoking

North Devon Homes aims to provide a safe working environment for our staff. We would really appreciate it if you could not smoke in your home whilst you have members of staff or contractors present.



When life changes, your benefits can change too.

North Devon Council campaign to cut down on benefit overpayments

A new campaign has been recently launched, to help reduce the amount of benefits being overpaid in North Devon.

North Devon Council is reminding local people who claim Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support to report any changes in circumstances, as it could affect their benefits.

Over-payments have to be paid back to ensure the council is not financially disadvantaged; however this can lead to financial hardship and worry for benefit claimants. It also costs the council time and money to chase up.

The council is using leaflets, displays on bin lorries and a poster campaign to push the message "when life changes, your benefits change too".

Changes in circumstances which can affect housing benefit and council tax support payments include:

Income

- an increase/decrease in earnings, pension, tax credits, savings or any other state benefits
- if you stop receiving any other benefits or allowances

such as Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support

- if you start receiving any other benefits or allowances

Accommodation changes

- if you change your accommodation
- if your rent changes
- if you start to share with someone

Household details

- if your children leave school, college or university
- if you or your partner are away from home for more than four weeks
- if you have an addition to your family
- if someone leaves your household

For more information and to notify the council of your changes online go to www.northdevon.gov.uk/benefits. You must also include any evidence of your change in circumstances.

Alternatively, you can call the council on 01271 388877 or pick up a leaflet and form in any of the council offices at Lynton House in Barnstaple, The Ilfracombe Centre or the Amory Centre, South Molton.



Do you have a child leaving education this summer?

This could affect your finances. Child benefit and child tax credit will no longer be paid (typically around £80/week) and if your non-dependent is earning more than £133 a week this will also affect the amount of housing benefit you will be entitled to. Check out your entitlement at www.turn2us.org.uk. It's a good idea then to work out a new family budget to make sure all the essential costs are covered and agree what everyone will contribute to the cost of running the home.

Paying your rent by Direct Debit

Direct Debit is the easiest and safest way to pay your rent. Each month your payment is made automatically from your bank account. As a bonus, we are now offering a £25 prize each quarter for one lucky customer who pays their rent by direct debit. If you would like to switch to this payment method, and be in with a chance of winning the prize, give the Income Team a call on 01271 312500.





The Royal British Legion

Are you a member of the Armed Forces, Reservists or a Veteran? You and your family could benefit from the services of the Royal British Legion. They offer a whole host of support services, including:

- Money Advice
- Benefits Advice
- Crisis Grants
- Employment Support
- Handy Van Service
- Dementia Nursing Services

Find out more by calling their advice centre on 0808 802 8080 or visit their website at www.britishlegion.org.uk.

Universal Credit

This new benefit continues to be rolled out to some new claimants in North Devon. The Income Team are providing lots of support to help customers through their claim and to make sure that you get all the housing costs you are entitled to. If you are making a new claim, we would be happy to hear from you to help you through the process. Remember that, in most cases the housing costs will be paid directly to you and you will then need to make arrangements to pay your own rent. Enquiries about your claim can be made over the phone on 0345 6000723 or talk to your Work Coach at Jobcentre Plus.

The Income Team is here to support you. Please call us on 01271 312500.



Benefit cap

The Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) introduces some changes to the benefit cap. These changes, which will take effect in autumn 2016, include changes to the benefit cap levels to £20,000 a year for couples with or without children and lone parents and £13,400 for single people without children. They also include additional exemptions for recipients of Guardian's Allowance, Carer's Allowance and Universal Credit claimants who receive payments towards carer's costs.

For more information about the benefit cap changes please visit www.Gov.UK/benefit-cap.



*(All figures
April 2015 - March 2016)*

If you would like advice or to arrange assistance or support with benefit entitlement please call us on 01271 312500. The Income Team are here to help.

The Chatter that Matters

Customer Involvement Activities 2016

Clare and Tracey (Customer Involvement Officers) and the Customer Forum value all our customers' comments and ideas and, this year, will be coming to a neighbourhood near you.

We would like to chat to you and find out:

- What is important to you, what services we do well and what we can improve on
- Collect digital information to improve the way we communicate with you
- Explain the wide range of involvement activities that you can take part in to make a difference in the services we provide

We will be doing this in the following ways:

- The Doorstep Challenge – we will be door knocking /visiting our remote neighbourhoods to chat to customers

- Chit Chat Trailer Tour – we will visit a number of neighbourhoods with a mobile trailer for customers to come along and chat to us with some fun activities
- Customer Fun Days – one off events for customers to find out about our services, get involved and take part in fun activities and competitions
- Quarterly Supported Housing

Fetes – based at the sheltered sites customers can find out about our services, take part in fun activities and competitions

We hope you will join us this year in our chatter that matters tour! We will send out individual invites for the events in your particular neighbourhood.

Date	Event
Wed 10 August 2016	Chit Chat Trailer Tour - Landkey, Chittlehampton
Wed 14 September 2016	Supporting Housing Fete - Ilfracombe
Wed 5 October 2016	Chit Chat Trailer Tour - North Molton, Bishops Nympton
Wed 26 October 2016	South Molton Spooktacular Customer Fun Day
Wed 16 November 2016	Doorstep Challenge - Yelland, Instow, Westleigh

First two doorstep challenges a great success

In April we carried out our first Doorstep Challenge event. Staff and Customer Forum members visited customers in Bishops Tawton, Cobbaton, Chittlehamholt, Filleigh, Umberleigh, East Buckland, West Buckland and Swimbridge.

The day was a great success with 24 customers answering the door and completing a short survey with us. They were all pleased to see us and many commented that it was nice that we had taken the time to visit

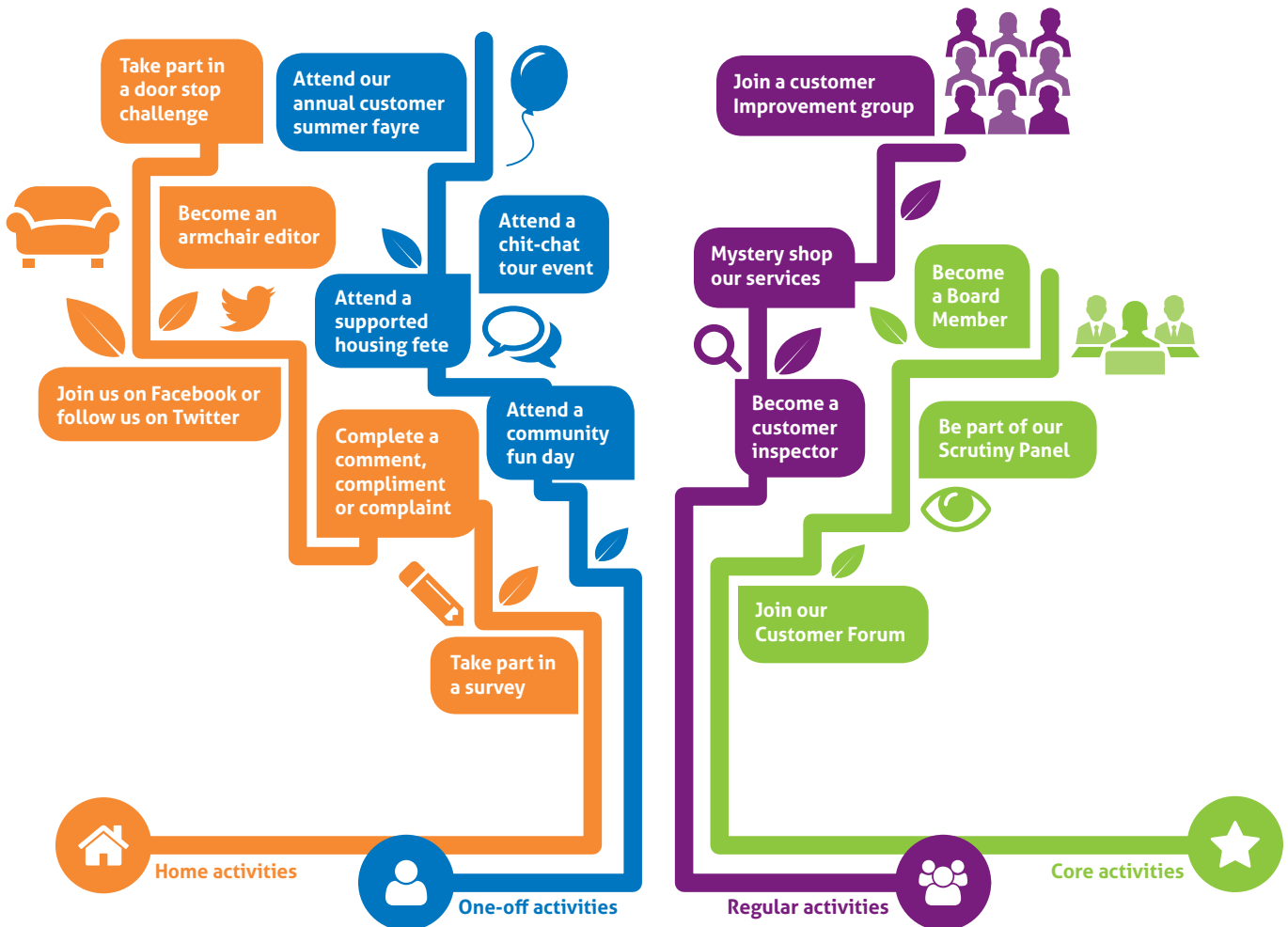
rural customers as they often feel left out.

We carried out a second Doorstep Challenge event in June and visited customers in Combe Martin. We chatted to 22 customers and all were really pleased to see us and tell us what they think of our services. For further information and results from these events please refer to our Customer Involvement Page on the website or contact Clare Paddon or Tracey Williams.



Customer Involvement Tree and Leaflet

In conjunction with the new Chatter that Matters Activities, Clare and Tracey have produced a Customer Involvement leaflet which can be found on the new North Devon Homes website. They have also produced a Customer Involvement Tree which details various different ways that you can get involved which could be at home, one off activities, regular activities or core activities.



Supported Housing Fete at Magdalene Lawn

In May the first Supported Housing Fete took place and was a great success. Customers enjoyed a cream tea, received money saving advice, spoke to staff, played table tennis and on the Wii and had the opportunity to make a bracelet or a card. Thank you to everyone who attended. The next Supported Housing Fete will be in Ilfracombe on September 14th.



Let's get growing!

The community garden at Heppenstall Road is run by local residents. The produce that is grown is shared amongst the people who help out in the garden. **If you would like to be involved in the community garden please contact Tania on 07989049757 or email jeffandtan@fsmail.net - she would love to hear from you!**



Camping at Croyde

Members of our Young People's project spent the last weekend of the half term holidays camping at Ruda Park in Croyde. The Royal Marines from the local Chivenor base very kindly donated two large tents for the young people to use for the weekend and also helped to put them up and take them down.

It was a beautiful sunny weekend at Croyde and the young people enjoyed swimming, dancing, a bbq and playing rounders on the beach.

A big thank you to Ruda Park in Croyde who were very generous in their donation of the camping pitches and entertainment passes for the weekend.

Everyone had a fantastic time in the sunshine!



North Devon Homes involved in ground breaking research project

Youth Management Teams are central to the Bridging the Gap youth service in Barnstaple and Ilfracombe. Young People are provided opportunities to run their youth clubs, manage budgets and have a say in what they would like the service to provide.

Senior Members are selected by these management teams who act as mentors and role models within their communities helping and encouraging other young people to achieve in school and aspire to their dreams.

The project works closely with the University of St Mark & St John in ensuring the young people's own stories from the project are central to sharing this work as a model of good practice through a Participatory Evaluation Process.

Researchers at the University have received funding of 302,000 Euros to conduct groundbreaking research to inform on the value and impact of youth work on the lives of young people, in the largest piece of research of its kind in Europe. North Devon Homes' youth workers attended an event at the university in June to talk to delegates from the UK, France, Italy, Estonia and Finland to share North Devon Homes experiences of using Transformative Evaluation. Dr Susan Cooper, Senior Lecturer at the University of St John and St Mark and Programme Area Lead for Childhood, Youth & Community studies, said North Devon Homes will "provide a rich and invaluable learning opportunity to our colleagues from across Europe".



busy bee



Saturday Morning Club

Whiddon Valley Community Centre,
Barton Road, Barnstaple

Every Saturday 10.30 – 12.30

Activities include: Arts & Crafts, Cookery, Gardening, Outdoor Games and generally having fun!

All materials and snacks provided for small donation of 50p per child.

All children and parents welcome.

Email carol.lewis@ndh-ltd.co.uk



Young Health Champions

Members of our Big Lottery funded Young People's Project were recently awarded Young Health Champions certificates. The young people have been working hard to gain the qualification which is being taught as part of an innovative partnership project with NHS England and Training Health Promotion Devon, and aims to take education into the heart of the community. Once they have completed the final modules of the course they will have a qualification which is equivalent to a GCSE in health.

Site Updates



Woodville

The last 2 properties forming part of the Woodville development are now really starting to take shape. These 2 bedroom houses will conclude a very successful regeneration programme on the estate, which has included a mix of houses and bungalows for both shared ownership and rent.

Sandringham Gardens

The last phases of affordable properties have now been completed on the Sandringham Gardens development. The final units, which included three 1 bedroom houses and a 2 bedroom shared ownership home, were completed in June 2016.



Pill Gardens - Market Sales

We are delighted to confirm that the last property has now been sold at the very successful development at Pill Gardens, Braunton.

Summer Fayre 2016

At this year's Summer Fayre Pearce Construction, Trewin Design Architects and Woodward Smith Architects will be joining us on our Development and Regeneration stand, and will be available to answer any questions that you might have about our planned future housing developments including:

- Anchorwood Bank
- Crow View, Gorwell
- Goodleigh Road, Gorwell
- Beaufort Walk, Gorwell
- Church Grove, Newport (Garage Site)
- Churchill Crescent, South Molton (Garage Site)
- Queens Avenue, Ilfracombe (Garage Site)
- Springfield, Bickington (Modular Methods of Construction Project)
- Woodville 6 (Modular Methods of Construction Pilot)
- Lamaton Park, South Molton (Supported Housing)

Anchorwood Bank

Anchorwood Bank is a significant local brown field site that North Devon Homes has successfully secured and is an example of the company's commitment to making a difference locally. Our plans are to develop 172 new homes with 135 being for Market Sale and 37 new affordable homes, and for our commercial partner Wessex Investors to develop six retail units on site securing new retailers for Barnstaple and the North Devon area.

Asda have already made a



significant start on site at the end of April 2016. We currently plan to start works to create the substantial infrastructure the development requires by September 2016, leading to the commencement of works to build the new housing starting at the western end of the site in the first half of 2017.

Our investment strategy for this site is to work in partnership with Pearce Construction in a similar way to the properties we have recently completed at Pill Gardens. We will reinvest any profits that we make from the market sale properties at Anchorwood Bank into the provision of new affordable housing in North Devon.

Anchorwood Bank Walkway Opening

North Devon Homes and Wessex Investors are pleased to announce that the Anchorwood Bank riverside walk and cycle way is now officially open. A ribbon cutting ceremony which was attended by councillors, business people and representatives from local ramblers groups, was held on Friday 27 May. Deputy Mayor of Barnstaple Ian Roome and councillor Jackie Flynn cut the ribbon to declare the new riverside walkway officially open.

The riverside walk and cycle way is 675m long and 3.5m wide and runs along the southern bank of the river Taw from Long Bridge to the Taw Bridge, giving wonderful views of the medieval Long Bridge, the river and Barnstaple town centre.

Under the Taw Bridge it joins the existing riverside footpath, linking it to the Tarka Trail. The footpath from the Taw Bridge is, in the next few years, intended to be upgraded by Devon County Council to a full walking and cycle link.

The new route is a key element of the Anchorwood Bank regeneration scheme and the first to open to the public. Other parts of the project are also on track – ASDA's contractors have recently begun on site and initial highways and other infrastructure works are complete, readying the area for the next phase of building.



Better Together

The Customer Care Team continues to work closely with other teams. Our 'Team Reps' regularly meet with colleagues across the business to ensure we keep our finger on the pulse of activity that might impact our customers, from Rent Statements being sent out to Clear Up Days being organised. This approach gives the Customer Care Team much more knowledge about what is happening in other teams, and helps us to answer customer queries or signpost callers much more effectively.

New Customer Care Team members

Following a recent recruitment drive, we are pleased to announce that we have recruited four new advisers into the Customer Care Team.

Jenny Drew, Julie Brett, Laura Manley and Sam Waters joined the team earlier this year and bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and customer service skills to the role.

We are also delighted to welcome a new apprentice; Chloe Coombe joined the team in January on a Traineeship. She has gone on to successfully secure an Apprenticeship with the team. Chloe is currently studying for a Business and Administration NVQ at Petroc and her role at North Devon Homes will support her studies.



Jenny Drew

Julie Brett

Laura Manley

Sam Waters

Chloe Coombe

Head Office Number:
01271 312500

Emergency out of hours number:
0800 917 0619

Opening Hours

Head Office, Westacott Road:
Monday - Friday, 08.30 - 17.00

Town Centre Office, Boutport Street:
Monday - Friday, 08.30 - 16.00



Keeping the record straight

We encourage all our customers to keep us updated with telephone numbers and contact information. This information is used by our teams and contractors so it's vital we hold the right details for you. If you have had a change of telephone number please do let us know so that we can update our records. **You can contact the Customer Care Team on 01271 312500 or by email at CustomerCareTeam@ndh-ltd.co.uk.**

 **870**

response repairs surveys completed over the telephone against a target of 720 (1st April 2015 - 31st March 2016)

 **94%**

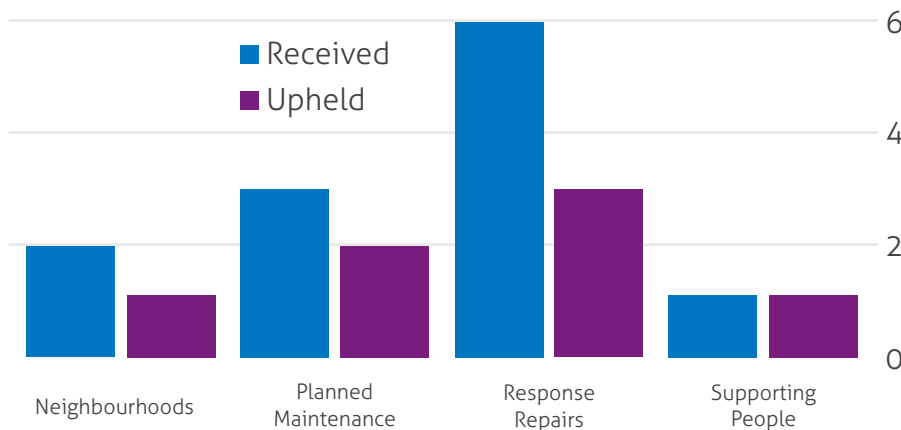
of customers' letters received were responded to within 10 working days (Jan - Mar 2016)

 **102**

nuisance complaints handled since July 2015

Complaints & Compliments

Jan - Mar 2016



19

Compliments



12

Complaints

Service Improvements from complaints: 6

Good Neighbour

Dawn Ash, Customer Forum Chair, presented a Good Neighbour Award to a customer for helping a vulnerable older neighbour through a number of challenging tenancy issues. This customer worked with North Devon Homes and social services on behalf of their neighbour and even cancelled their own personal meetings to help out. This customer's help has been invaluable in achieving positive outcomes for their neighbour.

Do you have a fantastic neighbour who deserves a 'Good Neighbour' award? Please send your nominations to Dawn Ash at our head office address giving your name and address, and the name of your neighbour, their address and why you would like to nominate them. All nominations are presented to the Customer Forum and the selected winners will be presented with a certificate and £20 voucher.

Your feedback improves services

During Quarter 4 we have identified the following learning from the complaints received:

- We are looking to introduce standard letters to provide additional advice following a surveyor's visit to prevent any misunderstanding of what a customer can do to help.
- Our Support Advisors are now able to issue parking permits and have procedures to follow to help prevent confusion around who is able to issue a permit.
- A process is to be introduced for our contractors for customers to sign if they do not wish to have temporary heaters supplied when their own heating breaks down.
- Where our gas heating contractor has to call in Wales and West for an inspection on a customer's appliance they will now let us know. Previously Wales and West have not always advised us if they have visited one of our properties.
- Where members of staff come across alterations within properties they will check with the customer if they have written permission and follow up when they return to the office so that we are aware of any unauthorised alterations and can respond accordingly.

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 our learning from good and bad service experiences throughout the Company which helps us improve the services we provide to you.

Slade Valley Ilfracombe Action Day

This year's Slade Valley Action Day will be held on Thursday 4th August. Action Days are attended by a wide range of people from the local community including residents, councillors, police and staff from North Devon Homes. They provide a great opportunity for all parties to work together to improve the appearance of the local area and include activities such as litter picking, pathway weeding, collecting unwanted items and a general tidy up of the estate.

If you would like to be involved in the Slade Valley Action Day please call us on 01271 312500 for more details.



Slade Valley Action Day 2015

Advice on Tap

Each year, 20,000 people in Devon and Cornwall save an average of £300-£400 per household just by having a water meter fitted.

At South West Water we have advisors who will help you to find out if a meter could save you money and they'll help you with the necessary forms if you want to switch. It's free and if, within 24 months, you feel it's not right for you, you can go back to an unmeasured charge.

The WaterSure tariff may help you to reduce your bill if you have a water meter and receive certain benefits, and if someone in your home has a medical condition that means extra water has to be used, or if you have three or more children living with you.

The WaterSure tariff helped Sarah of Barnstaple, who was paying £82 a month based on her rateable value charges. As Sarah has three children living at home and is receiving the right qualifying benefits, we identified she was eligible for the WaterSure tariff so we arranged for a water meter to be installed. Sarah is now saving £480 a year.

The WaterCare tariff is for our metered customers who are on a very low income. To qualify, you must be receiving one of the following means tested benefits:

- Income based Employment Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Guaranteed Credit element of Pension Credit
- Universal Credit (Housing element)

The tariff offers a discount between 15-50% off your water bill. An income assessment is carried out to determine your eligibility.

The WaterCare tariff helped Pat and John of South Molton, who were struggling with their household bills. They have a water meter and applied for the WaterCare tariff as they are receiving the guaranteed element of Pension Credit. The tariff has reduced their water bills by 15% saving them £108 off their annual bill.

For more information or to receive an application form for one of our special tariffs, call our Accounts helpline on 0344 346 1010.

If you are struggling to pay your water bill, please don't ignore it. You can contact our Debt Helpline on 0800 083 0283, so we can talk through the different options that are available to help you.



Rock Solid

In March our Development and Regeneration Coordinator Lisa Chapple and Supported Housing Team Leader Jenny Westacott completed the Rock Solid course in Exeter which comprises a 10 kilometre run and a gruelling 39 obstacles. They powered through the mud and cold to exceed their sponsorship target of £200 for Devon Air Ambulance. Well done girls!



Lou's Marathon

In October 2015, our Business Improvement Analyst, Louise Hunter, found out that she had a place in the London Marathon 2016. New to running, Louise trained for six months, and in April 2016, completed the course, raising over £600 for the Scoliosis Association UK (SAUK).

Louise says "When I was a teenager it was becoming obvious that my spine was curving to the side, and so I underwent a spinal fusion to stop it from getting any worse. It's not a pleasant operation. I was in hospital for some time, and wore a back brace for several months afterwards. Today, I have a scar from the top of my spine to the bottom, limited movement in my back, and am prone to aches and pains; however, it didn't stop me from taking on the

challenge of running 26.2 miles.

The Scoliosis Association (UK) provides advice, support, and information to people affected by scoliosis and their families, and raise awareness of scoliosis among health professionals and the general public. Louise says: I wish I had known about this charity when I was diagnosed. Instead, I was a scared teenager with no idea what was going to happen to me".

Congratulations to Louise on her fantastic achievement!

If you would like to find out more information about the Scoliosis Association please visit www.sauk.org.uk.



Competition Winners

Tegan Gallagher won our 'Guess how many Easter bunnies' competition.

Jake Inch and Rhys Roberts won our wordsearch competition. Congratulations!

Thank you to Emma Gallagher who sent us this lovely picture of her daughter Tegan with her prize for winning the 'Guess how many Easter bunnies' competition.





Kids Wordsearch Competiton

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

- | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|
| SUMMER | SANDCASTLE | SPADE |
| BEACH | HAT | SEASIDE |
| BALL | GAMES | SEAGULL |
| SUNSHINE | WARM | ICECREAM |
| CYCLING | BUCKET | SWIMMING |

How to enter:

Fill out the form and send it to the address below by 02/09/16 for a chance to win a £15 cinema voucher.

Name

Age

Address

..... Postcode

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 anchors (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 02/09/16 for a chance to win a £20 voucher.

No. of anchors:



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

Name

Age

Address

..... Postcode

For a chance to win, send all entries to:

Rowan Summers, North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8TA by 02/09/16