

HOME NEWS

Winter 2016

Written in partnership
by customers and staff
of North Devon Homes



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Front cover image:
Wishing you a Merry Christmas from members of our young people's project 'Bridging the Gap'

Welcome to the winter edition of Home News!

Welcome to the winter newsletter and hello from me. It was a great honour for me to be appointed Chair of North Devon Homes at the recent AGM. In the history of NDH there are a lot of things that we can be very proud of, all achieved with great partnership working between customers, leaseholders, staff and the Board and of course our external contractors and service providers.

This has provided us with a great foundation on which to build the future of NDH as we move into a new era. This is especially true given the challenges we are facing at the moment with an uncertain economic and political environment, not forgetting our wish to fulfil our regulation requirements.

There are a few challenges ahead and I see my role and that of the Board, together with other stakeholders, to help steer us through these and emerge as an even stronger provider of excellent services, achieving value for money, meeting the needs of the local communities in this part of the world and delivering quality homes in places that people would choose to live in.

It's an exciting time for the Board too as we are reviewing how we operate and what we need to do to respond to these new opportunities and challenges. What we have to be careful about though is to ensure that we keep doing the things we are good at; stop doing those aspects that are no longer required or relevant; and be in a position to change and adapt as we grow and develop. Whatever shape the Board takes in the future one thing that is key for me is the way in which we work together with our customers and leaseholders and I am particularly looking forward to working closely with the Customer Forum.

I come to this role having spent a couple of years as a Board member with NDH and more recently I became a Trustee with a learning disability charity operating in South Devon. In addition to these roles I have worked in the housing sector across the UK for over 30 years, so lots to draw upon; but that is of little use without the added involvement of fellow Board members and their skills and experiences, together with those of the staff team and you the customer.

Finally just before we turn and look to the future I would like to say a huge thank you to the outgoing Chair, Simon Price and a fellow Board member Adrian Jeffery who gave sterling service over the last 9 years.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Robert Stronge
Chair of the Board



North Devon Homes and Customer Forum Successful 16th AGM



North Devon Homes and the Customer Forum held their 16th joint Annual General Meeting at Portmore Golf Park on Friday 23rd September 2016.

The successful event which set out North Devon Homes' position as a high performing community landlord was well attended by customers, partnering organisations and staff. Joanna Elson, Chief Executive of the Money Advice Trust, attended as guest speaker.

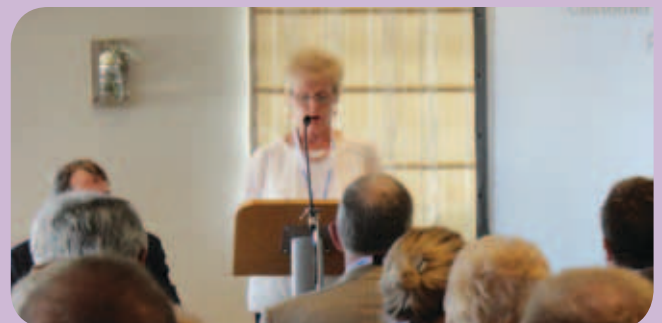
The financial results and accounts were approved for the year which showed an increased turnover and good financial performance in the housing sector. The company reported on continued investment with over 70 new affordable homes constructed during the year with a further 275 planned.

Presentations were given by the Executive Team of North Devon Homes highlighting the work and achievements of the business over the past twelve months. This year's results showed how North Devon Homes continues to offer great value for money, presenting independent analysis which established that operating costs and customer satisfaction were in the best performing quartile when compared to other south west based social

landlords. Improvements in customer involvement, repairs and maintenance services and community and neighbourhood development were also highlighted.

Patsy Chapple, Vice Chair of the Customer Forum, gave a presentation detailing the work that the Customer Forum has been doing throughout the year and encouraged other customers to become involved.

North Devon Homes' Chief Executive, Martyn Gimber, said "It has been another good year of performance for North Devon Homes despite difficult market conditions and economic uncertainty. We have been able to reduce rents as well as maintain our excellent customer service levels which we are very proud of. We are also pleased to be underway with some high profile regeneration and development in North Devon bringing badly needed affordable rented homes into the local community".



Want to be among the first to know?



Want to be among the first to learn about our latest news, stories and information? How about being the first to find out about our new job vacancies or upcoming events?

The best way is to visit our North Devon Homes Facebook page and like us or follow us on Twitter @NorthDevonHomes. We always post our latest news here first.

Like or follow us and our posts will appear automatically in your news feed. And, most importantly, you'll be able to start talking to us and sharing your ideas, questions, comments and news.

Have you visited the new North Devon Homes website?

Did you know you can use our new website to:

- Report a repair
- Pay your rent
- Apply for our latest vacancies
- Find out about our latest news and upcoming events
- Find a home
- Arrange support

It's quick and easy and best of all you can do any of these things at a time which is convenient to you.

You can visit our new website at www.ndh-ltd.co.uk.

We would love to know what you think about our website. Please send your feedback to rowan.summers@ndh-ltd.co.uk.



- Make a complaint
- Give feedback on the services we provide
- Make a general enquiry



Community Christmas tree

We are currently completing refurbishment and decoration works to Burnside Road flats. As part of these works we needed to remove a tree that was growing too close to the building. We waited until the onset of winter to remove the tree so that it could be donated to a local organisation to use for their Christmas decorations.

The tree was donated to the Lantern Centre in Ilfracombe and is situated in the building's courtyard area. It formed part of the display for the town's Lighting the Lights event which saw hundreds of people pack into the Great Hall to enjoy mulled wine, mince pies and festive music.

Woodville completion event

We hosted a celebratory event in October at Woodville, Barnstaple, to mark the completion of 66 homes we have recently built there. These new properties form the final phase of a 5 year development programme for North Devon Homes, during which time over £30 million has been invested in the provision of 300 new affordable homes across the North Devon area.

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.

The development at Woodville comprises of 66 new homes for shared ownership and affordable rent. North Devon Homes has worked closely with local architects Trewin Design, Devon's affordable housing and planning teams, together with the contractor Pearce Construction to design and deliver a scheme that offers the new owners and tenants energy efficient, modern 2, 3 and 4 bedroom accommodations in a popular Barnstaple location.

Peter Heaton-Jones and North Devon Homes' Chief Executive Martyn Gimber, planted a tree to mark the official completion of the project. This was followed by an opportunity to view some of the new properties and meet the people now living in them.

North Devon Homes' customers Mr and Mrs Edwards have lived at Woodville for over 40 years. Mrs Edwards said "We were delighted to be offered a new bungalow; perfect for our needs. We love our new home and have settled in well. Thank you, North Devon Homes".

"We love our new home and have settled in well."



New tenant handbook

The Tenant Handbook, which holds key information for our customers, has been fully revised in partnership with the Customer Forum, and North Devon Homes staff.

The Customer Forum decided the new handbook should be a smaller more accessible document to read, holding only key information supported by more detailed self help guides which are currently being developed and will be available on the NDH website.



Christmas opening times

Fri 23 Dec:	08.30-16.00
Sat 24 & Sun 25 Dec:	Closed
Mon 26 Dec:	Closed
Tues 27 Dec:	Closed
Wed 28 Dec:	08.30-17.00 (16.00 at TCO)
Thu 29 Dec:	08.30-17.00 (16.00 at TCO)
Fri 30 Dec:	08.30-17.00 (16.00 at TCO)
Sat 31 Dec & Sun 1 Jan:	Closed
Mon 2 Jan:	Closed
Tue 3 Jan:	Open as usual



Plans for the future at Lamaton

Following extensive consultation, our sheltered scheme at Lamaton Park is being redeveloped to provide 35 units of accommodation for the over 55s in South Molton. Lamaton Park has served the area well for nearly 50 years, but it is recognised that the accommodation no longer meets the local community's needs. Working closely with residents, we have managed to find appropriate accommodation whilst the redevelopment



of the site takes place. We plan to begin the redevelopment of the site in 2017 with the new accommodation comprising a range of 1 and 2 bedroom properties some with their own entrance and others in a communal facility. The plan shows the layout of the accommodation in 4 blocks.

Past and present residents at Lamaton Park enjoyed a farewell cream tea on a beautiful sunny August afternoon organised by Jude, Nicola and Rosie from the NDH Independent Living Services team. We were able to swap stories of "Lamaton life" and bid farewell in a fitting and fond way.



New leaflets

The Independent Living Service has produced two new leaflets explaining the Home Support and Emergency Response Alarm services. These are available at all NDH offices and a number of other locations such as GP surgeries. If you would like a leaflet for yourself you can download them on our website www.ndh-ltd.co.uk. **If you would like copies of the leaflets or a supply for a community location, please call us on 01271 312500.**

North Devon Show

The Independent Living Service was in attendance at this year's North Devon Show meeting customers both new and old. Previous years had seen the stand outside and subject to the changeable North Devon weather – this year we set up in the Marketplace marquee and enjoyed a really busy day regardless of the weather outside. Visitors to the stand were able to see the new logo and branding, and were treated to tea and cupcakes in keeping with the atmosphere at the show.



Making a difference

Our Support Officers are based in teams covering Barnstaple, Ilfracombe and South Molton "patches". They support customers in NDH sheltered schemes, as well as others living in the wider community – it's a busy role and every day brings a different challenge. Recently our team worked with a lady aged 87 living in one of our sheltered schemes. For some time she had been suffering with failing health and finding daily living more difficult to cope with, including tasks such as keeping on top of correspondence, shopping and cleaning, and was suffering a degree of anxiety in being able to cope with her dog. With the help and input of her Support Officer, she has been able to make arrangements for cleaning and shopping, receives direct support with her correspondence, and has subsequently reduced her anxiety about her dog. She said of the service "Very happy with things as they are; a great service".

Support Officers are here to help

Our team of support staff have been working hard over the last year to deliver a wide range of services to customers. Since the loss of the Supporting People funding in March 2015, the Independent Living Service has evolved with a commitment to supporting individual customers, who need help to continue to live independently, and to provide an easily accessible point of contact within the sheltered schemes. You may have noticed that the Support Officers are more involved in the "housing management" tasks that used to be undertaken by your Neighbourhood Officer.

What hasn't changed is that Support Officers are there to help! They can offer regular welfare

checks, assist with access to appropriate health and care services, help with benefits claims and forms, and provide support to maintain people's independence in a whole variety of ways.

They are a visible presence on the sheltered schemes and are able to now handle a host of customers' initial enquiries from car parking to common room booking to new tenant sign-ups and reviews. The feedback we have received about the Support Officers' changing role is positive and we would welcome hearing more about our customers' experiences.

Please do contact Bill Allen, Independent Living Services Manager on 01271 313351.

Community initiative refurbishes Ariel Studios, Ilfracombe

The Ariel Studios at Mullacott, Ilfracombe has recently benefitted from an extensive refurbishment of its exterior decorations thanks to a community initiative by North Devon Homes.

The project was successfully delivered through joint working between North Devon Homes and its partner contractor, Westcountry Maintenance Services. When awarding some larger contracts, North Devon Homes will take into account the contributions offered by the contractor which

would benefit the wider local community.

Westcountry Maintenance Services were awarded a 2 year contract for the external painting and decorating of North Devon Homes properties in 2014, and as part of this contract they offered to support a community labour project. The exterior refurbishment of the Ariel Studios was subsequently selected by North Devon Homes.

Westcountry Maintenance Services provided the labour needed to complete the exterior decoration works and all the paint required for the project was kindly donated by Dulux and delivered by them free of charge.



After



Before



Help us look after your home

We require a home improvement survey to be carried out periodically to ensure that we hold correct information about your home. We use this information to plan improvement works to maintain your home and keep it in good condition.

Please help us to look after your home by confirming and keeping home improvement survey appointments when they are booked. If your home requires a survey and you receive a letter from us, it is of benefit to you that this survey takes place as we will not be able to include your home in any improvement works until it has been carried out. The survey should take no longer than 20 minutes during which time our surveyor will check all components including kitchens, bathrooms and external doors.

New Information Services Manager

We have recently welcomed a new Information Services Manager, Ben Shirley, to the North Devon Homes team. Ben says: "I'm very passionate about technology and how it can be used to deliver real value to a company. Having worked in both the public and private sector, I've been lucky enough to experience the challenges faced by both types of organisation.

Having previously worked for NDH, I was excited to learn of an opportunity to rejoin and take stewardship of the IS team. This is an exciting time to build a new strategy to support the

business into the future. Some of the challenges now being faced by NDH are similar to those I have faced in the past, for example, continuing to provide high quality services with fewer resources in difficult economic times, and I look forward to being able to use that experience to the benefit of Team NDH."



You're hired!

We have recently welcomed three new apprentices to the Home2Home team – Nathan Elliot, Jay Newman and Ryan Madge. They will work with our qualified team of tradespersons

in the following areas: carpentry, roofing, wet trades, painting and decorating, glazing, plumbing and tiling, learning how to carry out a wide range of quality repairs.

Our apprentices will work towards achieving a Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Multi Trade Repair and Refurbishment, specialising in carpentry and wet trades.



*Left to right:
Nathan Elliot, Jay Newman and Ryan Madge*

Liquefied Petroleum Gas

If you have liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) appliances in your home, then please ensure you tell us about it. We need to ensure that these are serviced and maintained and will arrange for a gas safe engineer to carry out an annual inspection.

If you have any LPG appliances that we do not service please call us on 01271 312500.



Gas Cookers

If you have a gas cooker it will be visually inspected at the time of your gas service, but it is your responsibility to ensure that it is working safely and effectively. A gas cooker that is not working properly can produce poisonous Carbon Monoxide gases. North Devon Homes now install Carbon Monoxide alarms in all kitchens with gas cookers and any room with appliances that burn combustible materials. If you have a gas cooker but do not have a Carbon Monoxide alarm in your kitchen please call us on 01271 312500.

In order to keep your cooker working as it should, ensure that it is kept clean and that all burners are free from grease and food build up. The flame on your gas cooker should be crisp and blue. Lazy yellow or orange flames mean you need to get your appliance checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

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.



Fire Safety

Helping us to help you / top tips for keeping safe

There are a number of things we do to help ensure your safety; here's an example of a few.

In communal areas:

- We complete fire risk assessments to identify the risk from fire.
- We undertake regular inspections to identify defects and housekeeping issues.
- We repair and maintain fire safety equipment.
- Our staff work with customers to manage communal areas of buildings to ensure they are kept clear of combustible items such as personal belongings and waste.

In communal areas and individual properties:

- Fire detection is installed, tested and maintained.

Remember in the case of a fire you may have to get out of your home quickly, so don't clutter corridors and escape routes

If you have any concerns about fire safety or if you'd like to report a repair please contact our Customer Care Team who will be able to manage your enquiry on 01271 312500.

As a resident of North Devon Homes there are things you can do to help us manage fire safety, protecting yourself and others. See below for some top tips!

- Do not smoke in any common areas, it is strictly prohibited.
- Test your smoke/carbon monoxide detectors weekly; remember it's important to keep these alarms in working order – they could save your life!
- Allow our staff and contractors access to your property to test your detection equipment.
- Do not make any alterations to your home without North Devon Homes' permission. You could affect the fire safety precautions within your home. This includes replacing your front door or installing cat flaps.
- Do not tamper with any fire precautions, such as fire doors in communal areas and if damage is observed report to us as soon as possible.
- Have an escape plan. Make sure you know how to escape safely from your home should a fire break out and what you should do if your escape route is blocked.



Prepare for a repair

If you have an appointment booked for a repair or maintenance works it is important that you prepare your home prior to the arrival of the tradesperson. Please clear the area where the works will be carried out including the moving of furniture or appliances. Please also ensure that the access in and out of your home is clear.

If you are unable to do this due to medical or health reasons we can make arrangements to help you.

Please call our Customer Care Team on 01271 312500 if you would like to arrange assistance.

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.

North Devon Homes staff can choose not to carry out works in environments where people are smoking.



Working well together

Members of staff from our Home 2 Home repairs team attended a Working Well Together event at Petroc alongside a range of local contractors and small businesses.

2.2 million people work in Britain's construction industry, making it the country's biggest industry. It is also one of the most dangerous. In the last 25 years, over 2,000 people have died from injuries they have received as a result of construction work. Thousands more have been injured or made ill.

The Working Well Together Campaign is an industry led initiative which helps support small businesses to improve their health and safety performance. Working Well Together was launched in May 1999 and has been the most successful and long standing campaign in the construction industry.

Working Well Together events are held to provide free up to date health and safety information and advice directly to workers in the construction industry. North Devon Homes' Health and Safety Adviser, Debbie Short, is part of the south west division of the Working Well Together campaign, helping to coordinate and deliver training events throughout the region.

More information about the campaign is available at www.wwt.uk.com.



Get ready for Universal Credit

Universal Credit for working age people is gradually being rolled out across the country. The big change for North Devon Homes' customers is that your housing benefit will be paid straight to you (not to your landlord) in a single monthly payment. You will then need to make sure that you pay your rent. To be ready for this change you will need to:

- Have a bank account that lets you set up standing orders and direct debits
- Have access to the internet so that you can manage your claim online
- Gradually build up a month's credit on your rent account
- Talk to the Income Team for advice and support with benefits or debts



Benefit Cap

Over the past few weeks the Income Team have been working with customers who will be affected by the benefit cap.

North Devon Homes' Income Recovery Officer, Linda Fast, said "Lots of my customers weren't aware just how much their housing benefit would reduce and didn't realise that they would have to find the shortfall from their other income. I've been able to chat to customers about the options available to them and work out a plan together. One lady was able to talk to her employer about increasing her working hours, this meant she qualified for working tax credit and was then exempt from the benefit cap altogether."

Check if you will be affected at www.gov.uk/benefit-cap-calculator and talk to the Income Team on 01271 312500.

Marriage Allowance

Could you be entitled to a tax break worth up to £432? If you are married or in a civil partnership and one of you is a non-taxpayer you may be able to claim. **Check your eligibility and claim online at www.gov.uk/marriage-allowance.**

Don't let your finances snowball out of control this Christmas

Please make paying your rent a priority. If you are struggling to pay your rent please don't ignore the situation.

Call us now for free, confidential advice and support on 01271 312500.



Compare before you renew

It's not always easy to increase your income but it's well worth a bit of time spent making sure you are getting the most competitive deals on household expenses.

- Check out price comparison websites for the best gas and electricity deals (remember to check whether your electricity supplier is part of the Warm Home Discount scheme)
- Some payment methods might attract a discount – usually direct debit.
- Compare your phone and broadband and TV deals and don't be afraid to ask your existing supplier to price match.
- When renewing your insurance make sure you ask your existing insurer for their best quote and compare it to other insurers.
- Some banks offer a cash incentive to attract new customers. See if one of these deals is right for you.
- Keep a record of all your family spending over the course of a month and use this to put together a household budget.
- Need help with budgeting? Talk to our Money Matters team on 01271 312500.
- Check your entitlement to benefits online at www.entitledto.co.uk/benefits-calculator

Money Matters

North Devon Homes offer a free and confidential service called 'Money Matters' to help and support our customers.

Our work could help you to maximise your income and reduce outgoings, which can result in you having more money in your pocket.

If you feel that you would benefit from our service, call us for an appointment on 01271 312500.

For free debt advice you can also visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk and www.moneyadvicetrust.org or call National Debtline on 0800 808 4000



Warm Home Discount Scheme

If you are on a low income or in receipt of means tested benefits you may be eligible for £140 off your electricity bill under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. Phone your electricity supplier and ask if you qualify. (Most people getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit will get the discount automatically and will receive a letter telling them what to do). This will not affect your Cold Weather or Winter Fuel payment.

Direct Debit Winners

From April 2016, the Quids In Customer Group set up a new initiative to offer customers who pay their rent by direct debit or standing order the opportunity to win £25 per quarter. Congratulations to quarter one winner, Mr Bell from Barnstaple and quarter two winner, Mr D from Barnstaple who both won £25.

The next draw will take place by 31st December 2016 and if you pay your rent in this way then you are in with a chance of winning £25. Please note that if you win and are in arrears then the £25 will be put against your rent account. The voucher is also subject to no other tenancy breaches and you must be a current customer of NDH to qualify for the voucher. It excludes garages, leaseholders and shared ownership customers.

If you are interested in paying your rent by direct debit/standing order please contact the Income Team on 01271 312500 who will be happy to organise this for you.

The Chatter that Matters Events

We have had a very busy and fun few months in the Customer Involvement team holding our Chatter that Matters events and Summer Fayre Tea and Cake Marquee. We have been trialling new ways of meeting and talking directly with customers out and about in different neighbourhoods through our 'Doorstep Challenges', Independent Living Fetes and Customer Fun Days.



So far we have carried out 3 Doorstep Challenges mainly in rural areas; it has been lovely to see and chat to customers about North Devon Homes and how we can work together with you to improve our services.

Following our Independent Living Fete at Magdalene Lawn in May, we held our second Independent Living Fete at The Candar in Ilfracombe. Customers enjoyed a soup and a roll and had fun playing bingo, making bracelets and creating craft cards. A big thank you to all customers who came along and gave us valuable feedback.



In October half term we held our Spooktacular Fun Day in South Molton. Another big thank you to the customers who came along to enjoy the fun and games, meet a Minion, scary creepy crawlies (brought to us from Really Wild Learning) and special thanks to those who came in fancy dress to join in the spooky fun.

We are busy organising our next event which will be a Christmas Fun Day on Wednesday 21st December 2016 in Braunton. We really hope you are able to join us there for some festive fun and games and free festive refreshments.

We really do appreciate listening to all our customers' opinions at these events, which helps us to keep

improving our services, for example when you tell us:

- What matters most to you
- Areas of service that we can review to look at future improvements
- How you use the internet and social media so we can look at finding your preference in our communication with you.

If you have any ideas on what you would like to see at our events, please contact Tracey on 01271 313384.



Christmas Fun Day Wednesday 21st December 2016 in Braunton

We really hope you are able to join us there for some festive fun and games and free festive refreshments.

Please look out for your personal invitation for full details.



Goodbye to a long standing Customer Forum Member

This year saw our longest standing Customer Forum member and former Chair Francis Gott retire. Francis has been a great asset to North Devon Homes, the Customer Involvement team and fellow customers, working tirelessly within the Customer Forum since the Company commenced in 2000. Francis has ensured North Devon Homes worked in partnership with customers to develop and improve its services.

Some of his key achievements from the last 16 years are:

- Francis was chair of the Customer Forum from January 2012 to December 2014
- Francis was a valued Board Member for the full 9 years of office
- Selecting bathrooms, doors, heating, kitchens, doors and windows for NDH to use

- in customers' homes
- Carried out hundreds of inspections on cleaning, grounds maintenance, repairs and planned maintenance works and void properties.
- Participated in numerous customer meetings and events
- Successfully completed a number of training courses including the Information Technology Qualification
- Numerous neighbourhood improvements

We would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to Francis for all his help and hard work over the past 16 years and for making a real difference to the services that are provided to all customers.



Patsy's Story

Hello everyone. I joined the Customer Forum in 2012 after a friend asked me to come along with them.

I am a very quiet kind of person so it took me a long time to find my feet and feel comfortable in meetings. I don't think I really spoke a word in any of the meetings for the first twelve months! North Devon Homes then offered me training on effective communication skills, how to negotiate and be more assertive. Although I was a little reserved about attending, it was the best thing I could have done. By the end of the session I felt like a different person, it really boosted my confidence.

Since then I am involved in all aspects of Customer Involvement at North Devon Homes including Customer Forum meetings, customer improvement groups, inspections, telephone surveys, mystery shopping, customer events and our support service Tenant2Tenant.

This year I was made Vice Chair by the Customer Forum and as Dawn Ash (Chair of the Customer

Forum) was unable to attend the Company and Customer AGM I took up the reins to stand up and present the Customer Forum speech. I have

never stood up in public before and spoken to a large audience, this is something I never thought I could do. It's amazing what difference the excellent training really made for me, there really is no stopping me now. And if I can do it, so can you!

I feel very privileged to be part of a wonderful Customer Forum, we are all here to help all customers. The work we do makes so many changes and improvements to the services provided by North Devon Homes.

If you would like to find out more about joining us, please email customer.forum@ndh-ltd.co.uk or contact our friendly Customer Involvement Officer Tracey on 01271 313384.



My Year at Youth Club

"Throughout this year at youth club I have had so many experiences which have helped me gain an apprenticeship with North Devon Homes which I am really proud of.

During this year I have also been head of the Forches Youth Management Team as Chair; all the things that have happened to have made me gain confidence to go further through the project.

There have been, during the year, personal bad times, but also amazing experiences like camping and PGL (Activity Centre weekend). At PGL I was a role model for my group stepping up to support Youth Workers with the younger club members.



I think the project is important from my perspective as it helps you change your ways from being 'bad' to being more mature and really succeeding in life."

Ryan Madge (Age 16)



Golden Globes

In celebration of all the achievements made by the young people over the past year, 'Bridging the Gap' a North Devon Homes project working with young people, held two "Golden Globes" style awards night at the Forches Community Centre and the Slade Valley Vision Centre. This year the events were hosted on the night by the young people with the Youth Management Team selecting 18 categories for awards including Senior Member of the year. Project staff also selected the much coveted status of senior member awarded to 6 young people as part of the two evening's events. Youth club members completed a secret ballot for the nominations also selected by the Youth Management Team. The halls were decorated in true award ceremony style, and the staff and many of the young people attended the ceremony in smart dress befitting the occasion. Guests on the

nights who participated in presenting awards were; Barnstaple Fire Station, Barnstaple Rotary, Barnstaple Deputy Mayor Cllr Ian Broome, the University of St Mark & St John's Dr Susan Cooper, the NHS, Forches School Head Teacher Paul Wisken, Ilfracombe Rotary, the Tubby Foundation, the Voice Radio Station, Barnstaple Link Rotary and the NDH Community Involvement Team. The atmosphere throughout both evenings was electric, there were smiles all round and the young people were so supportive of each other, cheering and applauding each nominee whether they were the winner or runner up.



PGL Weekend

Members of our Bridging the Gap young people's project spent a lovely sunny weekend in August at PGL in Torquay. The young people completed team and confidence building activities including boat building, canoeing, rafting, climbing and abseiling. Everyone had a great weekend in the beautiful South Devon countryside.



North Devon Show

In August, members of staff from North Devon Homes' Community Involvement team attended the North Devon Show to showcase the work of the Forches Community Garden project, alongside North Devon Homes customer Sally Hingston who regularly volunteers in the garden.

Forches Community Garden had a very successful day winning one 1st, three 2nds and four 3rds for their flower, baking, flower pot man making and vegetable entries in the horticultural marquee. In addition, their stall won 2nd prize overall in the horticultural marquee for its eye catching and colourful display.



Downsizing saved me money

Last year Mrs James downsized her home, moving to a one bedroom house in Sandringham Gardens, Barnstaple.

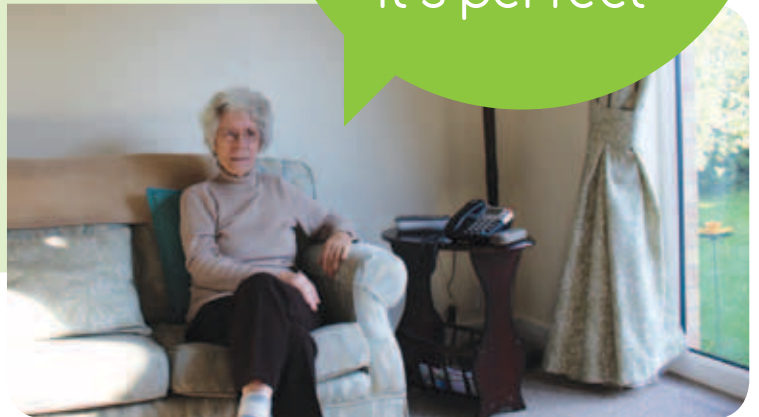
"I lived in a 3 bedroom family home in central Barnstaple for over 50 years; this is where I brought up my family. Once they had moved on with their lives I decided it was time to consider downsizing and free up my home for others in need of a family home. I initially downsized and mutually exchanged into a 2 bedroom flat, but was very keen to downsize to a 1 bedroom home, and had been waiting a considerable amount of time for one to become available.

Whilst checking Devon Home Choice I noticed the brand new beautiful 1 bedroom homes at Sandringham Gardens. When my bid was successful and I viewed my home for the first time I nearly cried tears of joy. I love everything about my beautiful home, it's perfect, I can't fault it and I have settled in

really well. My neighbours are wonderful and we look out for one another. My bills are so much cheaper because the house is so warm I don't need to turn the heating on."

In addition, Tenant2Tenant, North Devon Homes' tenant support service run by members of our Customer Forum, worked closely with Mrs James to help and support her with her move.

"I love everything about my beautiful home, it's perfect"



Site Updates

As part of our commitment to provide affordable housing in the local area, we have a strong development programme in place for the next 5 years, to include the following:

Churchill Crescent, South Molton

Existing Garage site to be redeveloped to include:

- 5x 2 Bedroom Houses
- 2x 3 Bedroom Houses



Crow View, Gorwell

New build development to include:

- 3x 3 Bedroom Houses
- 4x 2 Bedroom Flats



Anchorwood Bank, Barnstaple

We are delighted to announce that we commenced works to build the housing and retail units on site at Anchorwood Bank in September. Infrastructure works are now well underway to raise the ground level of the site and form the roadways into the development.



The new Asda store is now completed and was officially opened on the 7th November.

The Anchorwood Bank development as a whole will provide 26 affordable rented homes, 11 shared ownership homes and 135 properties for outright sale. In addition, our partners Wessex Investors will build 7 retail units with Next, DFS, Chiquito and Frankie and Benny's already agreeing and confirming terms for occupation.



Anchorwood Bank is the largest single regeneration project ever undertaken in Barnstaple. Any profits we make from the sale of new homes will be reinvested into the provision of affordable homes in the local area for people who need them.

Springfield, Bickington

New build development using Modern Methods of Construction to include:

- 7x 2 bedroom Bungalows



Woodville, Barnstaple

Demolition of an existing Pre Reinforced Concrete property and construction of a 2 bedroom bungalow using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC).



Goodleigh Road, Gorwell

New build development to include:

- 4x 3 Bedroom Houses
- 12x 2 Bedroom Flats



Church Grove, Newport

Existing garage site to be redeveloped to include:

- 4x 2 Bedroom Houses



Ilfracombe Action Day

In August we held an Action Day in Ilfracombe which was attended by a wide range of people from the local community including residents, councillors, police and staff from North Devon Homes. Everyone worked together to help improve the appearance of the local area by litter picking, weeding pathways and collecting unwanted items for disposal.

We are looking forward to holding more Action Days during 2017.



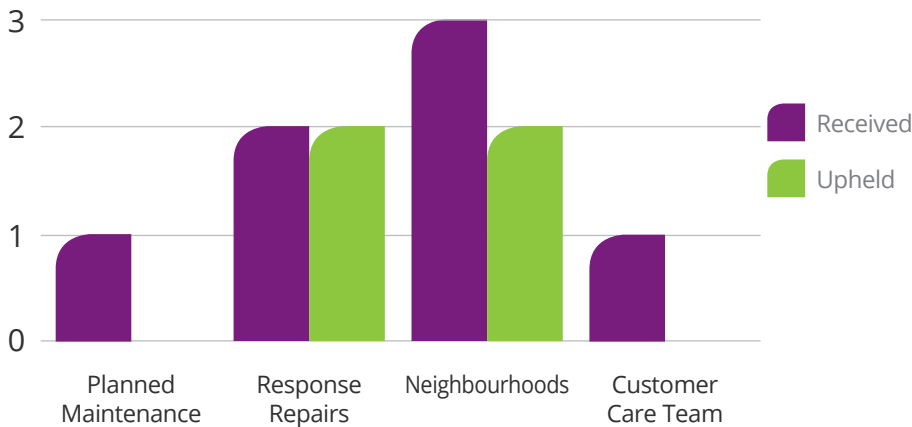
Summer Fayre - Thank you for joining us!

We held our annual Summer Fayre on Wednesday 27th July - here are some of our favourite photos from the day.



Complaints and Compliments

July - September 2016



During Quarter 2 we have identified the following learning from the complaints we received:

- A customer complained that we did not tell her exactly what would happen during the works to upgrade her kitchen. We now ensure that an appointment is made with the member of the household that uses the kitchen and that we go through a signed checklist to ensure that all relevant information is provided and understood.
- Following complaints we have discovered that problems have arisen from works completed under Disabled Facilities Grants carried out by

North Devon Council. In order to combat future problems we are currently discussing with NDC a framework for approved contractors. We are looking to have involvement in the specification of works and we are seeking to extend the warranties for works carried out.

The numbers of complaints received has continued to reduce during Quarter 2, which is good news for us as a company, but it means we are not able to learn. During Quarter 3 we will continue to collect more stage 0 complaints (dissatisfaction resolved at first point of contact) to help us continue to learn how our services affect our customers.



Complaints received. 4 complaints upheld.



Service Improvements from complaints



Compliments received



Stage 0 complaints received

You can make a formal complaint online at www.ndh-ltd.co.uk or by calling our Customer Services Coordinator, Cath Norris, on 01271 313361.

If you would like to acknowledge a member of North Devon Homes staff who you feel has gone over and above to help you please call 01271 312500 or fill in a feedback form on our website www.ndh-ltd.co.uk.

New service standards

To set out the services we provide to customers, North Devon Homes, working with the Customer Forum, first introduced front line service standards in 2010. This year members of the Customer Forum fully reviewed these standards issuing new ones that came into effect from 1st April 2016. If you would like to see a copy of the new standards they are available on our website.

New Faces!

Following a recent recruitment drive, we are pleased to welcome 2 new starters into the Customer Care Team.

Sarah Peel

Sarah joined North Devon Homes in 2015 working with our Home 2 Home team and moved over to the Customer Care Team in August. She has worked in housing for a number of years, and brings a diverse range of knowledge and experience to the role.



Gary Eagles

Gary has worked alongside housing providers in the south west for many years, specialising in Customer Engagement and Community Organisation, which has given him a great insight into the challenges facing customers. Gary brings a wealth of Customer Service skills and experience to the team.



Garages

North Devon Homes owns just over 700 garages to let throughout North Devon for the storage of a motor vehicle. We hold a waiting list for our garages and the charges are £50 deposit held on account and a weekly rental of £8 to £15 per week dependent on whether you are a tenant of North Devon Homes or a private occupier. **Please contact the Customer Care Team on 01271 312500 to register your interest or for further information.**

Refurbishment of garages at Churchill Crescent, South Molton

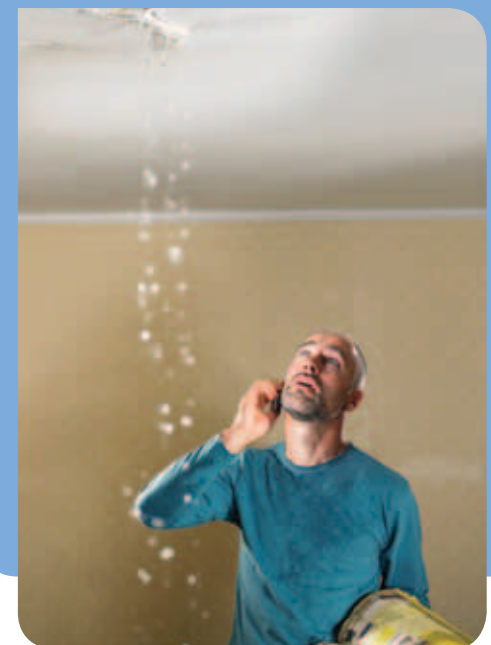
We have recently carried out major refurbishment works on the garages located at Churchill Crescent, South Molton, installing new doors and roofs and redecorating their exteriors.



Emergency Out of Hours

If a major problem occurs outside of North Devon Homes' opening hours, such as during the evening, or over a weekend, you can call the Out of Hours emergency line. The Out of Hours call centre will take details of the issue and refer this to our on-call contractor who will attend and carry out repairs to make the problem safe.

Please note that the Out of Hours line is for emergency repairs only, such as major electrical faults, heating breakdowns or uncontrollable leaks / burst pipes. If you contact the Out of Hours service with a routine repair, this will be passed to the Customer Care Team on the next working day. Alternatively, you can report repairs via our website at www.ndh-ltd.co.uk, which will be picked up when our offices reopen. Our emergency out of hours number is 0800 917 0619.



Pretty Muddy

In July, 9 members of staff from North Devon Homes took part in the Pretty Muddy Race for Life run at Westpoint Exeter.

Sponsorship and money raised from a lunch and cake sale totalled £981.57 in aid of Cancer Research UK.

Well done everyone!



Macmillan coffee morning



On Friday 30th September members of staff from our Independent Living Service and customers living at Mariners Close, Braunton, took part in Macmillan's World's Biggest Coffee Morning event.

There were lots of delicious cakes and homemade baking treats available to buy, whilst enjoying a cup of tea or coffee and a chat with others attending the event.

The Mariner's event raised £111.80, which will go towards the national total.

The World's Biggest Coffee Morning is Macmillan's biggest fundraising event for people facing cancer. People all over the UK host their own Coffee Mornings and donations on the day are made to Macmillan. Last year's events raised £25 million.



Tuck shop

Since January our staff tuck shop has raised £463 for various local and national causes, including Devon Air Ambulance, Care for Kids and Chemo Hero.



Competition Winners

Brynley Bannister won our 'Guess how many anchors' competition.

Lewis Rigler and India Teague won our wordsearch competition.

Congratulations!



Medard House Quiz



Members of staff from our Independent Living Service held a Quiz at Medard House, Barnstaple. It was a really fun afternoon and a raffle was also held, with prizes donated by customers, which raised £66 towards the Medard Christmas Social.

Congratulations to the winning team - well done everyone!



Christmas Wordsearch Competition

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

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| WINTER | ICESKATE | BAUBLE |
| SNOWFLAKE | GLOVES | HOLLY |
| SCARF | CAROLS | CHOCOLATE |
| CHRISTMAS | ROBIN | REINDEER |
| FROSTY | SNOWMAN | SANTA |

How to enter:

Fill out the form and send it to the address below by 13/01/2017 for a chance to win a £15 cinema voucher.

Name

Age

Address

.....

..... Postcode

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



How Many?

How many presents (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 13/01/2017 for a chance to win a £20 voucher.

No. of presents:



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

Name

Adult Child

Address

.....

..... Postcode



For a chance to win, send all entries to:

Rowan Summers, North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8TA by 13/01/2017