

# HomeNews

Written in partnership by customers and staff of North Devon Homes

Winter 2020



Page 11

## Heating Replacement During Coronavirus – A customer story



£20 Love2Shop vouchers

03

News from the community

11

Maintaining your home during winter

12

# INSIDE...

02 Welcome

05 Financial health in 2021

08 Repairs and responsibilities

11 Community news

12 Maintaining your home during winter

15 What's on



@northdevonhomes

@northdevonhomes

@north.devon.homes

**Answers:**

Page 10: Cinnamon, Book, Iron.  
Page 16: Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and, of course, Rudolph.

# Welcome to our newsletter

## Welcome to the winter edition of Home News!

You will notice this winter issue is a little different from our usual Home News update. As our last update came later than normal due to Coronavirus, and was mailed just a few weeks ago in September with the Annual Report, we decided that a full magazine probably wasn't needed. However, we could not let the festive season pass without a message to our customers to wish them a Merry Christmas and to give an update on where we are with the winter season upon us. So, we are pleased to introduce your 'Mini Home News' packed with updates and Christmas themed fun and games.

It really has been a year to forget in so many ways with one of the most testing and challenging times that anyone can ever remember. Looking back on what has happened it has been a time when the whole community has come together and maybe there are some things

to remember and we have some incredible acts of kindness and support over the past year. I am particularly proud of the team at North Devon Homes who have worked tirelessly to maintain support and services to our customers. There are many reasons to be optimistic for the future with a vaccine on its way and I want to thank you as a customer for your continued support and understanding through these incredibly challenging times. I know the team here are all keen to get back to some normality in the very near future – in the meantime stay safe and we wish you and your family a Merry Christmas.

**Martyn Gimber**  
Chief Executive



## Your chance to win!

Want a chance to start your New Year off with a bang? We are giving away two £20 Love2Shop vouchers to two lucky customers. All you need to do is answer the following question – and the answer can be found in this magazine!

**How many times have customer insights influenced our business decisions since March?**

To enter send your answer, along with your name, address, email and a phone number to:

Email: [marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:marketing@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

Or by post to:  
FAO Marketing, North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple EX32 8TA

Competition entries must be received by 31 December 2020. Full terms and conditions available on our website:  
[www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/competition-tcs](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/competition-tcs)



## Christmas opening hours

As we continue to work remotely, our team will be available over the Christmas period by telephone or email at the times below. If you need to see a member of staff at Head Office, this may be possible to arrange but by appointment only. Please contact the staff member directly to arrange this.

**Monday 21 to Wednesday 23 December:**

8.30am until 5pm every day

**Thursday 24 December (Christmas Eve):**

8.30am until 1pm

**Friday 25 December (Christmas Day):**

Closed

**Monday 28 December (Boxing Day):**

Closed

**Tuesday 29 to**

**Thursday 31 December:**

8.30am until 4pm every day

**Friday 1 January (New Year's Day):**

Closed

## Contacting us

As ever, our team is here to help. If you need to speak to us, you can call us or email us on the details below:

Phone: [01271 312500](tel:01271312500)

Email: [customercareteam@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:customercareteam@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

Out of Hours Emergency Phone Number: [01271 312522](tel:01271312522)

If you have a specific enquiry for a team you can also email using the following email addresses:

Repairs: [customercareteam@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:customercareteam@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

Rent and payment enquiries: [rents@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:rents@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

Support and Independent Living enquiries: [devonhomelinkinquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:devonhomelinkinquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk)

You can also message us on Social Media too. These channels are monitored during normal office hours and, as ever, we aim to respond within 48 hours:

[www.facebook.com/northdevonhomes](https://www.facebook.com/northdevonhomes)

[www.twitter.com/northdevonhomes](https://www.twitter.com/northdevonhomes)

[www.instagram.com/north.devon.homes](https://www.instagram.com/north.devon.homes)



## Financial health in 2021

**Thankfully 2020 is almost over and we can look to the future. What better way to start 2021 than a commitment to improving your finances?**

We can't predict what will happen over the coming twelve months so it's best to be prepared. A dip in income is likely for a lot of us, so build your cash reserves if you can to cover any shortfall. That way, you won't need to borrow as much should you face emergency bills, and you'll sleep better knowing you have money to fall back on.

Saving is easy with your local Credit Union and Westcountry Savings and Loans (WSL) have a range of accounts to suit members' needs.

The Christmas Saver means you'll be ready to buy presents and food ahead of the festivities in December:

- deposit up to £200 each month,
- WSL pay 1% on your balance on 31 October, and
- your savings are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Credit unions are non-profit, community organisations offering affordable loans and straightforward savings accounts. Our aim is to help everyone in the south west achieve greater financial independence. The Credit Union is owned by its members, so you have a say in how they do things.

[www.westcountry.org.uk](http://www.westcountry.org.uk) | 0800 304 7041

### DID YOU KNOW?

**The snowiest city on earth is in Japan.**

Aomori City in northern Japan receives more snowfall than any major city on the planet. Each year citizens receive 312 inches, or about 26 feet, of snow on average.

## Getting additional support

The darker, colder days that come with the winter season can leave some people struggling more than usual with a number of issues from mental health, to money worries, to loneliness.

If you need a helping hand, please do not suffer in silence. You may just need a simple chat with someone, or you may need a full package of support from food to advice. Whatever you need help with, there is someone out there to help.

### Mental Health Support

#### Samaritans

Call their free phone line 24 hours a day 7 days a week on 116 123 or visit [www.samaritans.org/branches/barnstaple](http://www.samaritans.org/branches/barnstaple)

#### MIND

Call 0300 123 3393 or visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

#### Living Options Devon

Free counselling for disabled people across Devon call 01392 459222

### Food Support

**North Devon Homes** can give you a foodbank voucher to swap for a food parcel at your local centre in either Barnstaple, Ilfracombe or South Molton.

#### Food deliveries

Visit [www.imaginaryspace.co.uk/devon-food-and-drink](http://www.imaginaryspace.co.uk/devon-food-and-drink)

#### Belle's Place in Ilfracombe

Call Carol on 07400 083207 or visit [www.bellesplace.co.uk](http://www.bellesplace.co.uk)

#### Bishops Nympton Community Shop

Call 01769 550226

#### North Molton Bulleds Shop

Call 01598 740309

#### Ilfracombe Lockdown Shopping Services

Visit [www.oneilfracombe.org.uk/lockdown-shopping-services-in-ilfracombe](http://www.oneilfracombe.org.uk/lockdown-shopping-services-in-ilfracombe)

### Help with money

#### North Devon Homes' Money Matters Team

Call 01271 312500 or visit [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/money-matters](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk/money-matters)

#### North Devon Council

For help with additional funding for your council tax or benefits applications call 01271 388877

#### South West Water

For help to reduce tariffs with certain benefits visit [www.southwestwater.co.uk/bills/need-help-paying-bill](http://www.southwestwater.co.uk/bills/need-help-paying-bill)

#### Online benefit checker

Visit [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

#### National Debt line

Visit [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

#### Christians against Poverty

Visit [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org)

#### Search for grants

[www.grants-search.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.grants-search.turn2us.org.uk)

### Other and General Support

#### Devon Partnership Trust

Visit [www.dpt.nhs.uk](http://www.dpt.nhs.uk)

#### Freedom Centre

Call 01271 321171 or visit [www.freedomcommunityalliance.org.uk](http://www.freedomcommunityalliance.org.uk)

#### Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP)

Call 0800 060 7567 or visit [www.applyforleap.org.uk](http://www.applyforleap.org.uk)

#### 361 Energy

Call 01271 599361 or visit [www.361energy.org](http://www.361energy.org)

#### North Devon Voluntary Services

Call 01271 866300 or visit [www.ndvs.org.uk](http://www.ndvs.org.uk)

#### Torrige Voluntary Services

Call 01805 622666 or visit [www.torrigevcvs.org.uk](http://www.torrigevcvs.org.uk)

#### Encompass

Call 01271 371499 or visit [www.bpag-encompass.org.uk](http://www.bpag-encompass.org.uk)

#### See Hear Centre

Call 01271 373236 or visit [www.facebook.com/seehearnd](http://www.facebook.com/seehearnd)

#### The Mooring @ Braddon House

Open 6pm to midnight Thursday to Sunday call 07850927064

#### Chulmleigh Volunteer Group –

Call Sue on 01769 581612

#### South Molton Coronavirus Support Group

Visit [www.onesouthmolton.org](http://www.onesouthmolton.org) or call 01769 572501

#### Citizens Advice

Visit [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or call 0344 411 1444

#### North Devon Council Community and Voluntary support hub

Visit [www.northdevon.gov.uk/coronavirus/communities-and-voluntary-sector-support](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/coronavirus/communities-and-voluntary-sector-support)

#### Ilfracombe Community Car Service

Visit [www.ilfracombetowncouncil.gov.uk/community-car-service](http://www.ilfracombetowncouncil.gov.uk/community-car-service)



# Repairs and responsibilities

Winter brings a new range of possible repairs and so we thought it would be helpful to include a quick glance of the responsibilities of customers and our responsibilities for maintaining your home.

## Your responsibilities

Contents insurance

Carpets, laminate, curtains, curtain fixtures, furniture and soft furnishings

Internal painting and decorating including small wall cracks, fixtures and fittings

Changing light bulbs, plug fuses and cookers

Bathroom fittings, new toilet seats, new bath and sink plugs and chains, shower units (unless provided by NDH)

Door keys, door name plates

Washing lines, TV aerial, satellite dishes unless communal and faulty

Keeping gardens tidy: lawns, shrubs, hedges, flower beds and trees

Garden sheds and fencing dividing properties, greenhouses and gates

Window/door glass, adjustments of doors if carpets are fitted.

Controlling condensation levels (see our condensation leaflet)

Pest control

## Your home



If in doubt check it out,  
just call us on 01271 312500

## Our responsibilities

Unless the damage is caused by you

The structure and outside of the property, including drains, gutters and outside pipes

Servicing: gas, smoke, fire and carbon monoxide alarms

Fittings for water, gas or electricity

Radiators and other items that heat your home or water.

Fixtures such as basins, sinks, baths, taps and toilets

NDH kitchen and bathroom flooring

The main route into and out of your property (paths and driveways) but not including your garden or fence (unless it is a boundary fence)

Burst pipes, blocked drains, heating that isn't working, faulty front and back doors or windows

To report a repair call us on **01271 312 500** or fill in the online form via our website: **www.ndh-ltd.co.uk** See our repairs leaflet for more information.

## Business update

Throughout the pandemic we have continued to offer service to customers as a priority whilst ensuring the safety of our customers, team and partners.

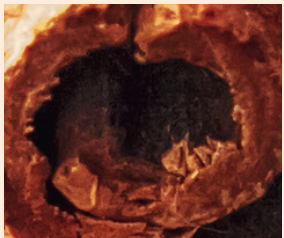
In the spring, our Corporate Plan, a document outlining our business goals for the next three years, will be launched, so work is underway to find out what is important to customers. In the last Home News issue, we asked customers to complete a short survey – a big thank you to everyone who took the time to do this – and we followed up with customers after the survey to get more information and insights. Your feedback has been taken to our Board and Exec Team to review and help inform how we will develop our plans for the next few years.

Customers have not just been helping with our future either. We have needed constant, on demand suggestions from customers for a variety of service-related policies, reviews and projects during the last year. Since March, customer insights helped to influence business decisions 186 times. We continue to listen to our customers – meeting online, taking feedback over the phone and meeting in person when possible to do so.

As we move into a new unknown world, we will continue to need the support of our customers and partners to help shape a new, better NDH.

If you would like to know more about getting involved in giving feedback, please contact Tracey Williams on: [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or call 01271 313384

Can you guess what these everyday objects are just from a close up photo?



Take a look at the following close-up images, and see if you can guess what they are.

Answers on Page 2

## Community news

### Generations Together

At the end of October our team held a Generations Together virtual event for customers. Bringing together our young people with some of our customers, we held an afternoon of Halloween themed games and fun including Halloween Bingo and Music Bingo and a fun spooky quiz.



### Heating Replacement During Coronavirus – A customer story

“We had a storage heater in the front room and a small convector heater in the bedroom. The bedroom heater used £5 for just 30 mins of heat and was too costly to use so we stopped using it and got by with the storage heater in the living room.

My husband’s arthritis was worsening in the cold so we would use the booster switch during the day, which helped but it ran up a big bill and the switch burnt out twice from over-use. North Devon Homes came out to fix it, but it went wrong again.



Then in August they sent a surveyor out to have a look and said we were on the list for new heating and total rewire. I thought we would have a long wait but to our surprise we were told six weeks. We were so happy knowing we would not have another cold winter like previous years.

As promised on the day, the electrician came in and rewired our flat and took out the old heaters, it was meant to take a week, but they completed it all in two days. They left everything so tidy and clean afterwards.

The new heating looks modern and is digital, so easy to use. We now have two large heaters, one in the bedroom and the other in the front room, it has made such a difference already – it’s lovely and warm and it’s also helped towards stopping the condensation that was gathering due to insufficient heat. Also, our first monthly bill came in recently and it was half the amount it was last year. We are so happy that NDH replaced our heating.”

*Sarah Freeman, NDH Customer.*

## Maintaining your home during winter

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

- Make sure you always heat your home at a low level, no matter whether you are in or away. This will ensure that during a cold snap your pipes will not freeze, and the constant low level of heat keeps your home running smoothly.
- Disconnect hoses and turn off external water supplies at the stopcock. Once you have done this, drain your outside tap and this should prevent those pipes freezing and getting damaged in the winter.
- If you notice condensation appearing, open your windows a notch and open any vents to allow the circulation of warm and cool air. The average household produces about 24 pints of moisture each day. Moisture is held in the air and must be allowed out of your home, otherwise condensation will form and could lead to mould in your home. Mould is a living organism, so it needs killing to get rid of it. To do this, wipe down affected areas with a fungicidal wash. Remember to wear rubber gloves and follow the manufacturer's guidelines.
- A boiler can stop working during cold weather simply because external pipes have frozen. If you can do so safely, carefully pour a jug of hot water on the pipe and wrap some insulation over the pipe and that will get your boiler up and running again in no time.
- Take out insurance cover for your personal possessions to ensure your home is well protected in the event of an emergency.



## Safety in our Independent Living Schemes

Our top priority during the pandemic has been to support the safety of our customers at all times. With this in mind, we are taking a few additional steps to increase the safety of those customers who live in our supported living schemes.

As cases locally have increased recently, we have not been able to move forward with our plans to roll out more communal area activities, but we hope you understand that this is with the safety of our customers and wider residents in mind. We will review this when we can.

Please can we ask that all customers adhere to these safety measures and ensure that they ask all visitors to do the same?



Wear a face covering in all indoor communal areas, including corridors, laundries, lifts and common rooms when in use.



Keep a 2-metre (6 foot) distance from other people living in and visiting the scheme wherever possible.



When repairs are underway in your home, leave our operators to the job at hand and wait in another room until they have finished.



Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds to help kill the virus.



If you develop any flu-like symptoms, please follow NHS advice, and call 119 to arrange a Covid-19 test and follow their guidance on self-isolating.



Please take particular care in high use communal areas such as laundries. We have introduced rotas for laundry use, and it is especially important that people keep to their allocated slot to avoid unnecessary close contact. Please use hand sanitiser before entering laundries.



**HANDS**



**FACE**



**SPACE**

## Rubbish!

With the lockdown we noticed a lot of people having a good old clear out. Unfortunately, this has led to more reports of fly-tipping in our communities. We are doing our best to keep our streets clean and free of any rubbish and so would remind all customers that fly-tipping is illegal.

If you have a lot of rubbish to throw out,

consider what items can be recycled, whether you could donate anything to charity and whether you can split your rubbish over a couple of weeks in the usual way. If not, the local tips are now open for disposal of excess waste or you can contact North Devon Council who can arrange a bulky waste collection.

If you have a home with a communal rubbish store, be considerate to others using the store, make sure any rubbish you dispose of is put into the bins and not just dumped inside the store area.

**Let us continue to work together to keep our community a lovely place to live.**

## What's on

**We may all be living in a virtual world, but that doesn't stop us from planning as many fun activities as we can! Here's what's on in our local communities:**



### 1.30pm Knit & Natter

To find out more contact [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or call 01271 313384.

### 6.30pm Virtual Youth Club

To find out more call or text: Chaz 07977 418695, Leigh 07921 697418 or Dude (Lindsey) 07889 812352 or search "NDH Youth Club (Slade & Forches)" on Facebook.



## Can you find the 16 Christmas related words?

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



- |             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| TREE        | LIGHTS   |
| DECORATIONS | STOCKING |
| RIBBON      | CANDY    |
| TINSEL      | GIFTS    |
| STAR        | SACK     |
| ANGEL       | HOLIDAYS |
| CARDS       | WREATH   |
| PRESENTS    | LETTER   |

### 6.45pm Tune in to Leigh Radio

Visit <https://s3.citrus3.com:2000/public/YfiRadio>



### 2pm Virtual Games Afternoon

To find out more contact [tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or call 01271 313384.

### 6.30pm Zoomtastic Youth Club

To find out more call or text: Chaz 07977 418695, Leigh 07921 697418 or Dude (Lindsey) 07889 812352 or search "NDH Youth Club (Slade & Forches)" on Facebook.



# Colour me in!

Can you add some colour to this snowman picture?



Santa has nine reindeer, can you name them all?

Answers on  
Page 2

