

# HOME NEWS

Summer 2017

Written in partnership  
by customers and staff  
of North Devon Homes



- Join us for some Summer Fayre fun

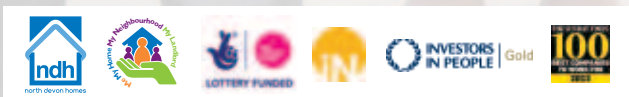
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## Front cover image:

Anneka Rice attends the Slade Silver Big Bash - read more about the event on page 17

# Welcome to the summer edition of Home News!

In my last article I mentioned the exciting times ahead of us as an organisation, and the planned changes we hoped to make to prepare us for the future and to meet the challenges ahead. These are now well underway; we have made great new appointments to the Board, created a new working partnership with the local authority as well as setting up a new customer engagement structure through C90.

We need to be flexible and adaptable to a changing environment and the new Board members will complement our existing skills, experience and knowledge at North Devon Homes, ensuring we continue to create communities where people want to live. The new world is something I spoke about when I met the Customer Forum recently, and at the time I don't think any of us saw the prospects of a general election looming and the potential role housing would play. We await the outcome with interest, however we are in a strong position to respond to whatever direction government policy takes us, but keeping our focus particularly on the needs and aspirations of people in North Devon.

In terms of meeting the housing needs of local people, we will shortly see the first homes coming out of the ground at our Anchorwood development in Barnstaple and at Lamaton, South Molton. We continue to look for opportunities to build new homes and communities, and our new Partnership Board arrangement with North Devon District Council will be key to enabling us do this.

Customer engagement must be at the forefront of our business and we have been able to enhance the Board with some of our new members coming from a customer service and tenant involvement background. This, together with C90, will maintain our service priority at North Devon Homes.

We are looking forward to holding our seventh Customer Summer Fayre on Wednesday 26th July - your invitation and more information about this year's event is included in this newsletter. We would love you to join us for a fantastic fun day out!

Finally, I must recognise the important role our local authority members have made over the years and with the move to a new governance structure we say "cheerio and thank you" to Faye Webber, Jeremy Yabsley and Brian Moores. They have been a great asset and played an important role in our history, and I am really pleased that we will stay connected with the local authority as Brian takes on the role of Chair of the Partnership Board.

Enjoy the summer.

**Robert Stronge**  
Chair of the Board



## Leading the way in North Devon

Over the last six months we have been making a number of important changes to the way the company is run. These changes were agreed at the EGM (meeting) on 13 April. We have made these changes to comply with changes to regulatory requirements, and to ensure that we have the necessary skills and expertise on the Board going forward, to oversee and deliver our business to customers.

We are increasingly under pressure to deliver new affordable homes with less government subsidy and reducing rental income. There remains a significant shortage of affordable homes for local people; we are positioning the business to do all that we can so we are able to keep providing new homes, and to ensure that our current homes are well maintained. In order to generate funds to build new affordable homes, we are increasing our delivery of market sale and shared ownership homes across North Devon. The proceeds from the market and shared ownership sales will help us provide affordable homes for local people. We are working closely with the planning department and local residents to ensure we deliver the right number of homes in the right places for local people.

Undertaking more risky activity such as market sales, in uncertain times, means that we need to ensure we have the right skills and experience on our Board to oversee the business. We recently moved from a constitutional Board to one which is "skills" based and have successfully recruited the following new Board Members:



### James Barrah

James is the Director of Housing and Communities at Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council, bringing a wealth of front line housing management experience and knowledge to the Board.

### Sabina Goodman

Sabina has extensive financial and commercial management experience in accounting, business modelling, business plans and financial analysis and reporting.



### Dr Debbie Hay

Debbie has worked for many years as a consultant and trainer in the social housing sector, has been a board member for several housing associations, and founder member of the Good Governance Network, which supports organisations to develop better customer engagement in policy strategy and governance. She is also Director of Learning at the Lean Partnership and lives in Devon.



### Suzanne Ingman

Suzanne is a highly experienced commercial Human Resources Director with project management skills. She brings a wealth of human resources knowledge to the Board together with organisational transformation skills. Suzanne is passionate about customer delivery and providing opportunities for individuals to reach their full potential.



### Delyth Lloyd-Evans

Delyth is a strategic leader and thinker specialising in performance improvement, transformational change and business coaching for success. She has extensive experience as an Executive and Non-Executive across a diverse range of local and national organisations.

We are delighted to welcome them all to the Board of North Devon Homes. They are all really pleased to be part of a successful community organisation; helping to shape the future of the business and ensuring that it delivers to its customers.



## Do you follow us on social media?



Like our North Devon Homes Facebook page or follow us on Twitter [@NorthDevonHomes](#) to find out all our latest news, information, events and job vacancies.

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.



## What do you think of our newsletter?

We are currently reviewing the format of our Home News newsletter. We would really appreciate you taking the time to let us know what you think of our newsletter; for example, we would like to know your opinions on how useful or informative you find the content and layout, how much of the newsletter you read and your preferred method for finding out about our latest news and information.

Great communication is extremely important to us and, in previous consultations, you've told us it's amongst your top priorities too.

Our newsletter is one of several ways we keep you up to date with our latest news and information about your home and community. We also use our website [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk), our North Devon Homes Facebook page and our Twitter page [@NorthDevonHomes](#). We would also like to start sending more information, news and updates to you via email.

We would really appreciate you taking the time to let us know what you think of our newsletter and how you prefer to receive news and information from us. Please email [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk) with your feedback - we would love to hear your thoughts!

## Community centre makeover

The kitchen at Whiddon Valley Community Centre has recently benefited from a makeover thanks to donations from Jed Mason Plumbing and James Electrics. A brand new range cooker, a fridge freezer and a dishwasher have been installed, replacing the old appliances that were in need of updating, giving the kitchen a shiny new look.

The donations help to modernise and enhance the community centre's facilities and will benefit the local groups who regularly use the building. These improvements to the kitchen area form part of a wider project to refurbish and improve the community centre, which includes new interior decorations and furnishings.



# Join us for some Summer Fayre fun!



**This year's North Devon Homes' Customer Summer Fayre is taking place on Wednesday 26th July at Barnstaple Rugby Club between 11am and 3pm.**

Your invitation to this year's event is included in this newsletter. You can register online through our website [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk) or on our North Devon Homes Facebook page or by calling us on 01271 312500 to book your places.



This year there will be inflatable hungry hippos, zorb racing, giant pie face, 'real life' my little ponies, archery, circus skills, science workshops, animal encounters with Really Wild Learning, soft play, crafts, trampolines, street dance performances, a bouncy castle and lots of stalls.

We are also very excited to announce that we have some very special guests attending - Chase and Marshall from Paw Patrol!

The event is free to attend 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 are looking forward to seeing you there for another fantastic, fun and informative day!

## Candar residents raise £1,000 for Children's Hospice South West

People living at the Candar in Ilfracombe have been busy holding coffee mornings, breakfast clubs and bingo sessions to raise money for Children's Hospice South West. On Friday 17th March Elsie and Pauline, who both live at the Candar, presented a cheque for £1,000 to Ray from Children's Hospice South West.

The group has been invited to attend an open day to have a look around the Children's Hospice.



**devonhomelink**  
helping you to live life to the full



## 24 hour peace of mind

Could you or someone you know benefit from having an emergency Devon Homelink alarm?

Having a personal alarm fitted can help you live safely in your home, whilst giving your family, carers or friends peace of mind that you are OK, or that support will be on hand in the event of an emergency.

Did you know that you do not have to live on one of our sheltered schemes to have a Devon Homelink alarm fitted? We are able

to offer them to anyone living in the North Devon District area.

Our alarms are available for a low weekly cost from just £4.20 a week.

We are a local service with exceptional customer satisfaction feedback.

If you would like to find out more about our alarms please call us on freephone 0800 083 7553 or visit our new website [www.devonhomelink.com](http://www.devonhomelink.com).

## South Molton Independent Living Team update

Our team of Independent Living Support Officers working in the South Molton area has recently moved offices. This is due to the regeneration works currently taking place at Lamaton Park. The team is now based at the Amory Centre in South Molton, and continue to provide tailored individual support to customers living in the local area, to help maintain independence. The team also continues to maintain the good links with

the local community and friends they built up over the years at Lamaton Park.

For general information please contact the Independent Living Team on 0800 083 7553 or visit our website [www.devonhomelink.com](http://www.devonhomelink.com). If you would like to speak to a member of the South Molton team please call the Amory Centre on 01769 572009.



## Storing mobility scooters safely

Do you own a mobility scooter or are you thinking of getting one? If you are renting your home from us and are living in a block of flats, you will need to obtain permission from us first.

We understand the benefits that mobility scooters can provide and wish to support our customers who use them, to retain their independence as much as is reasonably possible. However, most of our homes were built before mobility scooters were available, and were not designed to accommodate them.

Issues such as safe storage, access and battery charging need to be considered prior to purchasing a mobility scooter. We'll need to check that there is a suitable storage area for the scooter when you are not using it, and somewhere appropriate to charge it.

If a scooter can be stored and used safely we will give permission, but regrettably this may not always be the case. Some examples when we may refuse permission include:

- Where there are no suitable areas available for the safe storage of your mobility scooter
- Where the only access to your home is via a lift – use of mobility scooters in lifts is not permitted

**In order to comply with fire regulations, mobility scooters must not be stored in communal corridors, hallways, lounges or under communal stairs. The Fire Service is clear that electric scooters represent a real fire safety threat both as a source of fire, and a barrier to escape and rescue through smoke generation and the blocking of exits.**

We plan to provide additional safe and secure storage for mobility scooters at some of our sheltered sites, where there are suitable areas for doing so.

Where we are providing storage we will make a nominal charge to cover running costs and the ongoing repair and maintenance of the facility.

We promote the safe storage and use of mobility scooters for customers who live on our sheltered housing schemes or in a block of flats. The health and safety of all our customers, staff and visitors is a priority and we want to ensure that mobility scooters are used without affecting the quality of life of others who live at our properties.

## A community quilt

Our customers Margaret, Jenny and Caroline live at Medard House, Barnstaple. They knitted and put together some shapes to make a patchwork quilt, after deciding they would like to get people together in the common room to enjoy some company whilst crafting.

What a fantastic idea - well done ladies!





## Advice on tap

Each year, 20,000 people in Devon and Cornwall save on average £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:

- Housing Benefit
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income based Employment Support Allowance
- Income Support
- 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 John of Bideford, who was struggling with his household bills. He has a water meter and applied for the WaterCare tariff as he receives the guaranteed element of Pension Credit. The tariff has reduced his water bills by 15% saving him £108 off his annual charges.

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.

South West Water are attending our Summer Fayre on 26th July - please visit their stand for water information and advice.

## 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.





# Samaritans' offices refurbished

The local Samaritans branch in Summerland Street, Barnstaple has recently benefited from some essential repairs and improvement works, thanks to a community initiative by North Devon Homes and donations from big hearted local businesses.

The project was successfully delivered through joint working between North Devon Homes and its partner contractors, Pro-fit Windows and Doors, James Electrics and Liberty Gas. 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.

Pro-fit Windows and Doors supplied and fitted a new front door; James Electrics removed and refitted the electrics and entry system; and Liberty Gas have carried out a range of improvement works including replacing a radiator, servicing the boiler, general repairs and painting.



## Servicing

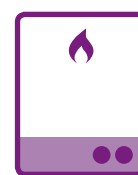
North Devon Homes will service and maintain certain items of equipment in your home. The diagram below shows the equipment we service and the frequency that we do this:



**Smoke Alarm**  
Annually



**CO Alarm**  
Annually



**Gas Appliances**  
10 Monthly



**PVs**  
Annually



**Rainwater Harvesting**  
Annually



**Air Source Heating**  
Annually



**Oil/Solid Fuel Boilers**  
Annually



**Chimneys Swept**  
Annually



**Electrical Inspections**  
10 Years

In addition we also complete a home improvement survey every 5 years.

If you would like any information about the servicing of equipment in your home, please email [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or call 01271 312500.



## Asbestos survey letters

We have, for some time, been commissioning surveys of customers' homes in advance of maintenance or repair works, to identify the location and condition of any asbestos containing materials (ACMs). If left alone and in good condition, these ACMs do not present a health risk. However, if disturbed, they can release fibres which, over time, can be harmful. This is why it is important that anyone working in your home knows of their location. In the past this information was shared with contractors going into the properties to do works, with new tenants moving into empty properties and with any other customers on request. In view of the amount of information that we've collected, we feel that now would be a suitable point at which to begin sending the asbestos information out to our customers, irrespective of whether any works are due to take place.

Letters containing information from the asbestos surveys are due to be sent out over the next few months. About two thirds of our properties have been surveyed for asbestos over the past three years and will be receiving this information soon. However, if your home has not had a full asbestos survey carried out during that time then you will be contacted by our surveying contractor, Gully Howard, during the next

12 months to arrange a survey. The use of asbestos in buildings was banned in 2000, so if you live in a property built after this time it will contain no asbestos and you should not expect to receive a letter.

It is important to state that there is no expectation for our customers to take any action upon receiving this information. Asbestos was widely used as a building material up until the 1990s and can be found in many people's homes, but in the vast majority of cases will pose very little risk to health.

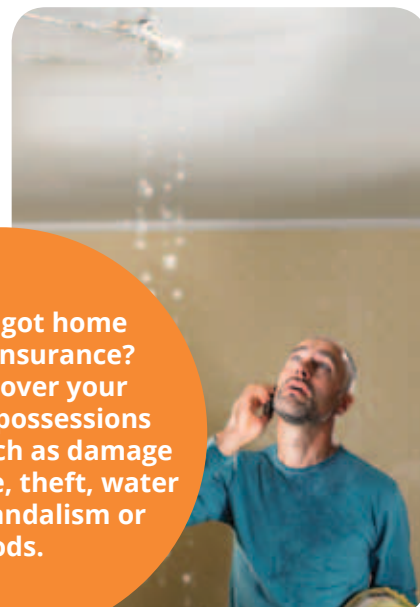
As the letter accompanying the survey will explain, while we feel it is appropriate for our customers to be informed, it is still important that permission is sought from us before you make any alterations to your home. Examples of alterations are improvement works to kitchens and bathrooms including new tiles or taps and boxing in pipework. In basic terms you can decorate your home i.e. paint walls and ceilings but anything that is more intrusive, including the smoothing of walls and ceilings prior to decoration must have permission.

**If you have any queries about asbestos in your home or the asbestos survey letters please email [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or call us on 01271 312500.**

## Emergency out of hours repairs

If a major problem occurs outside North Devon Homes' opening hours, such as during the evening, or over a weekend, you can call the Out of Hours emergency line on 0800 917 0619. The Out of Hours call centre will take details of the issue. If the issue is assess to be an emergency, it will be referred 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 would like to report a non emergency repair you can do this at any time online via our website at [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk), which will be picked up when our offices reopen.



**Have you got home contents insurance? This will cover your household possessions for things such as damage caused by fire, theft, water damage, vandalism or floods.**

# Money Matters - Budgeting Special

Welcome to our budgeting special. We've been talking with customers about some of the challenges of managing on a tight budget, and the things that we can all do to make our money go that bit further.

With welfare reform changes taking effect, there's no better time to put a household budget together, making sure you're getting the best deals, knowing where your money goes and even increasing your income.

We hope that there is something here for everyone and that we are able to inspire you to take some steps towards improving your finances. Meanwhile, the Income Team are always happy to answer any questions you have so please get in touch with us on 01271 312500.

## Moving house?

If you are on Devon Homechoice and actively bidding for a new home, it's worth planning for the costs of moving.

- Make sure your rent on your current home is up to date. You may not be considered for a property if you have arrears and your landlord will want to take up a reference to see how you have conducted your tenancy.
- Remember that you will have to pay up to 1 month's rent in advance before you are given the keys to your new home. So, think about how you will pay this
- You might need to budget for new carpets and curtains and hiring a van.
- When you do move, make sure you leave your home in a clean and tidy condition to avoid any charges.



## Budgeting

Most of us know how much money we've got coming in, but it can be more of a challenge to keep track of our spending. There's nothing like a good old-fashioned pen and paper to help us understand where



our money is going. Write everything down over the course of a few weeks, and then have a look back to see where you might be able to make savings. If you prefer to use your smart phone there are lots of apps available that can help - have a look at your app store to see if there's one that suits you - most of these are free. Use your phone to take a photo of the receipt every time you buy something to record your spending.

Our budget planner on page 13 will help make sure you've covered the everyday expenses, and there's space to add in anything else that you know you spend money on regularly. You'll need to think about which payments are the most important such as your rent, council tax and TV licence, and consider where you might be able to make savings.

## Need help with debts?

Deciding to do something about your debts is the first and most important step to getting in control of your finances. There are lots of free debt advice services who can help work out what's best for you. Get in touch with one of these:

- [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org) 0808 808 4000
- [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org) 0800 138 1111
- [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) 0344 411 1444

Avoid using the fee-charging debt management companies that advertise on the TV, radio and online. They make their money from you.

## Universal Credit

The Universal Credit full digital service will be rolled out across North Devon from April 2018. If you are of working age and are currently on benefits or tax credits, you will automatically be switched over to Universal Credit when you have a change of circumstances.

It takes around 6 weeks for your first payment to be made and you will then be paid monthly in arrears direct into your bank account. It's important to remember that the money paid to you will include an amount for your housing costs and it is then your responsibility to pay your rent to North Devon Homes.

## 5 things you can do to prepare for Universal Credit

1. Get yourself into a financially stable position before Universal Credit is rolled out.
2. Make a budget and deal with any debts.
3. Make sure you have an active bank or credit union account that your benefit can be paid into. This should be an account that allows you to set up direct debits and standing orders, and allows you to manage your account online.
4. If you get your housing benefit paid direct to North Devon Homes then this is paid four-weekly in arrears. You should talk to us now about bringing these payments back in line with the terms of your tenancy agreement. This could be by regular weekly instalments of as little as £5.
5. Universal Credit claims are made and managed online. You will need to have regular access to the internet. If you don't have broadband at home check out where your local free broadband hotspots are. If you don't have a lot of experience using the internet, now is a good time to take a course to boost your web-confidence.



## Will I be affected by Universal Credit?

If you are of working age and you receive one of the following benefits then you will be switched over to Universal Credit from April 2018 onwards:

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Tax Credits
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Income related Employment & Support Allowance

## Banking for all... basic bank accounts

Did you know that over 1.5 million people in Britain don't have a bank account? This can be because of a poor credit score and being refused by the bank; or because customers are wary of charges or worried about going overdrawn. The Government has been working with the major high street banks to ensure that everyone can now get access to a basic bank account.

These are simple accounts which allow you to safely store your money and pay your bills. There is no overdraft facility so you can't go overdrawn, and they are completely free of all charges. They usually come with a debit and cash point card. These accounts are not widely advertised by the banks so you might need to ask specifically about them. If you've applied for a bank account and been refused because of your credit score, then a basic bank account might be suitable for you.



# Cut out and keep budget planner

Your Income	Weekly (£)	Monthly (£)
Wages/salary (take home pay)		
Wages/salary (partner take home pay)		
Income Support		
JSA/ESA		
Tax Credits		
DLA or PIP		
Carers Allowance		
Child Benefits		
Maintenance/CSA		
Pensions Credit		
Personal Pensions		
Any other income		
Housing Benefit		
<b>Total</b>		

## What you owe

Company Name	Balance Outstanding (£)	Monthly Payment (£)
<b>Total</b>		

Your Expenses	Weekly (£)	Monthly (£)
Rent		
Council Tax		
Electricity		
Gas		
Coal/Wood/Oil		
Water		
TV Licence		
Groceries/ Housekeeping		
Maintenance/CSA		
Life Insurance		
Home Maintenance (e.g. windows)		
Home Phone		
Mobile Phone		
Satellite (sky/internet)		
Hire Purchase Items (e.g. Brighthouse)		
Clothing/Footware		
Launderette/ Dry Cleaning		
Leisure		
Christmas/Birthdays		
Car Insurance		
Petrol		
Road Tax		
Other Travel Costs		
Regular Savings		
Other (health, pets, donations, kids club etc)		
<b>A Income Total</b>		
<b>B Expenses Total</b>		
<b>Total Money</b> (Total A minus Total B)		



## Foodbank

The Trussell Trust reported a 6.4% increase in the number of emergency food parcels they issued last year to help people in crisis situations. Here at North Devon Homes we have been working with the Northern Devon Foodbank to help make sure our customers don't go hungry during difficult times. They have centres in Barnstaple, South Molton and Ilfracombe and North Devon Homes are able to issue foodbank vouchers to people in need. Contact us in confidence to discuss your situation or visit [www.northerndevon.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.northerndevon.foodbank.org.uk) for more information.

**If you would like to support the vital work of the foodbank you can make a food donation at Tesco's stores and at one of the local church collection points.**

## Working Tax Credits

You may be entitled to Working Tax Credits if you are on a low income and:

- Single (aged 25+) and working at least 30 hours per week
- Aged 60+ or disabled and working at least 16 hours per week
- Single with children and working at least 16 hours per week
- Couple with children working 24 hours per week between you (with one of you working at least 16 hours)

## Christmas costs

Summer's here but before you know it we will be thinking about Christmas! Now is a great time to start putting a little aside on a regular basis to spread the cost of Christmas. Think about what your budget will be for gifts and keep an eye out for bargains now.

## Shop around for the best price

It's tempting, when we are so busy, to automatically renew things like car insurance, mobile phone contracts or TV and broadband packages when they are due for renewal. Sometimes we feel loyal to companies we have been with for a long time, however, our loyalty may never be rewarded so it really pays to shop around.

- Use comparison websites – using two or three of these sites will increase the number of companies and deals on offer.
- Don't be afraid to haggle. If you want to stay with a particular provider they may be prepared to match an offer from another company.
- Are you on the best tariff for your gas and electric? Talk to the 361 Project about help with switching.
- Some shopping websites offer money back on your online shopping.
- The best deals are usually offered to attract new customers. If you've been a customer for more than a year, you're probably not getting the best deal.

## Some of our favourite budgeting websites

We love [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com) Martin Lewis' website which helps keep us money savvy. For inspiration, why not sign up for their weekly email.

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) is our first point of call for anything covered by a government department – benefits, housing, jobs and pensions information.

We also take inspiration from some bloggers who share their first hand practical advice for living on a budget. Have a look at 'Diary of a Frugal Family' at [www.frugalfamily.co.uk](http://www.frugalfamily.co.uk), or Jack Monroe's recipes at [www.cookingonabootstrap.com](http://www.cookingonabootstrap.com).

And last but by no means least, our own website [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk) or follow us on facebook or twitter where we share money and benefits information we think you might be interested in.

## Forches estate regeneration customer survey

On Monday 3rd April staff from North Devon Homes and members of our Bridging the Gap Young People's Project, visited the Forches estate in Barnstaple to conduct a survey, to find out what people living there think about the regeneration works that have been carried out in the area during the last few years. The survey was carried out to assist the North Devon Homes customer Scrutiny group, with a review of the regeneration works that they are currently undertaking.



Thank you to everyone who spoke to us on the day or filled out the survey online to give us their feedback.

We had a 20% response rate which will help us shape future development projects.

Well done to Mrs Kemp who won the prize draw of £120 in shopping vouchers for taking part.

## Good neighbour awards

Three people have recently won Good Neighbour Awards. Dawn Ash, Chair of the North Devon Homes Customer Forum, presented the winners with their awards.

Elsie Berrecloth, who is an amazing 94 years old, organises and runs numerous events for residents at The Candar and Ilfracombe which include a breakfast club, coffee mornings, bingo, raffles and over the years has raised thousands of pounds for local charities. Elsie also helps out her neighbours when they are feeling ill and is a great and caring neighbour.

Mr Preece was nominated for helping his 89 year old neighbour, Mr Sloan with his water bill and for being a brilliant and caring neighbour.

Jenny St Luce won her award for all her fantastic help and support at community events at Medard House, Barnstaple.

**Do you have a fantastic neighbour who deserves a 'Good Neighbour' award? Please send your nominations to Dawn Ash, Customer Forum Chair 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 receive a certificate and £20 voucher.**

Thank you and well done to all the winners!





## Talent Show

Members of our Bridging the Gap young people's project held a talent show on the evening of Tuesday 11th April at West Down village hall, Ilfracombe. There were lots of performances including some amazing singing and dancing routines. The audience included members of the young people's family and their friends and also staff from North Devon Homes. The audience voted for their favourite performances and the winners were announced at the end of the show. The evening's entertainment included a 'Lip Sync Battle' between the young people and staff from North Devon Homes, with the young people's team being the resounding winners! A raffle was also held on the night raising £100 for the Bridging the Gap young people's project.



## Young Health Champions

Members of our Big Lottery funded young people's project have achieved a level 2 Young Health Champions qualification. The young people have been working hard to gain the qualification that is taught as part of an innovative partnership project with NHS England and Training Health Promotion Devon, which aims to take education into the heart of the community. The qualification is equivalent to a GCSE in health.

## Tpas award shortlist

North Devon Homes' Bridging the Gap young people's project was recently shortlisted for an Excellence in Youth Involvement Award at the Tpas Awards 2017.

The Tpas Award for Excellence in Youth Engagement recognises projects and initiatives that have helped to address youth needs and facilitate change, as well as recognising the commitment and continued activity of local young people.







## Anneka Rice attends the Slade Silver Big Bash

We held an event in April to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Slade Vision Centre.

Anneka Rice attended as special guest on the day, returning to Ilfracombe 25 years after the Slade Vision Centre was built as part of the 'Challenge Anneka' TV programme in 1992.

We worked in partnership with the Slade Vision Centre Committee, who manages the facility to hold a "Slade Silver Big Bash" family fun day event, supported by the Big Lottery Celebrate fund, to mark the occasion.



People attending the event enjoyed lots of exciting activities including a photo booth, bouncy castle, inflatable pillow smash, animal encounters from Really Wild Learning, meet the Minions, face painting, children's entertainers Entertainingly Different, street dance and martial arts displays, and performances from local magician Tom Rose and musicians Rough Justice and Chloe Marie Aston.

It was a fantastic event with around 400 people attending during the day and many local people bringing photos from 25 years ago to show Anneka and talk to her about their memories of when the Vision Centre was built.





## Anchorwood Bank

Works are continuing on site – earthworks are ongoing and the new access road is nearing completion. Building works for the first phase of the housing area of the site are due to commence in September.

When complete the site will provide 172 new homes comprising 135 market sale and 37 affordable properties. In addition, Pears Investments are undertaking the retail development which will include Next.



Aerial images recently taken of the site highlight the scale of the regeneration project.

This is a major investment for the company and an example of North Devon Homes taking a more innovative approach to tackle the significant housing issues in North Devon. 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.

## Lamaton Park

We are keen to progress with our plans to regenerate the existing units, replacing them with a mix of new homes to include affordable homes.

Planning permission has now been secured and we are scheduled to start on site in October this year.



## Churchill Crescent, South Molton

Demolition of the garages is now complete. Works to neighbouring properties have now finished and retaining structures have been created on the site. The site will provide 5 two bedroom and 2 three bedroom new affordable timber framed homes, due for completion in early 2018.



# Church Grove, Barnstaple

The site compound is now set up within the car park. Works are progressing well - the garages have been demolished and the rubble is being crushed to reuse on the site.

The adjoining road will be temporarily closed to enable the safe demolition of the garages. This site will provide 4 new two bedroom affordable homes in the Newport area of Barnstaple.



## Gorwell Phase 1

Pearce Construction were awarded the contract for the regeneration works at Gorwell in January 2017. We are delighted to report that works are progressing well at both the Crow View and Goodleigh Road sites on the estate.

The ground works are continuing at a good pace, and works to the necessary utility diversions and retaining structures are nearing completion. Following this, building works will commence for the construction of

the new affordable homes. On completion both sites will provide 16 two bedroom flats and 7 three bedroom affordable homes.

We would like to thank the local community for their patience and understanding during the works. We are committed to continuing to work closely with them and keep them informed, particularly when large deliveries are made to both sites. The new homes are expected to be completed in early 2018.



## Merewood Close PRIXford

We are due to acquire 2 new properties from Pearce Construction on the Merewood Close development at PRIXford.

The 2 two bedroom semi-detached homes will provide new homes for affordable rent and are subject to a local occupancy tie to the Marwood area.





## Community springs into action for the Great British Spring Clean

In March we held an organised litter pick at the Forches estate, Barnstaple, to support the Great British Spring Clean, a campaign to get half a million people out and about cleaning up their local communities.

The team of volunteers, which included staff from North Devon Homes, a local Councillor, and people living in the local community amassed 16 bags of rubbish during the 3 hour event.

The Great British Spring Clean is a new campaign, with a view to it becoming an annual event, helping to bring people together to clean up the country.

## Introducing **LEAP** The **New** Energy and Money Saving Service Free For Local Residents!



All the Devon councils in the CosyDevon partnership are offering local residents a new, completely **FREE OF CHARGE** service called **LEAP** (Local Energy Advice Programme). **LEAP** can help you to save money and to keep your home warm and cosy.

### How it works:

Once we've checked if you're eligible, you will get a **FREE** home visit from a friendly, qualified Home Energy Advisor. LEAP can:

- **Install FREE, simple energy saving measures** (LED light bulbs, draught-proofing etc.) which can save the average household £30 on their energy bills a year.
- **Give you day-to-day energy efficiency hints and tips** and make sure your heating controller is programmed properly.
- **Help you check if you are on the cheapest energy tariffs** - could save you over £280 a year.
- **Arrange a FREE telephone advice service** to help you with benefits, money and bill problems.
- **Refer you for further energy efficiency improvements**, such as loft insulation or a new boiler.



### You may be eligible for the LEAP service if you:

- have a low income
- have a child under 5
- receive Housing Benefit
- receive an income or disability related benefit
- have a long term illness or disability.

**CosyDevon**  
hug your home



Call us now on 0800 060 7567 (Freephone) to book your **free** home visit, or apply online: [www.applyforleap.org.uk](http://www.applyforleap.org.uk)  
(office hours 8.45am till 5.30pm, Monday to Friday)



## Royal British Legion Devon Outreach Drop-Ins

The Royal British Legion run regular Devon Outreach Drop-Ins. Their Area Welfare Team are here to help with lots of things including, for example, financial grants, benefit help, handyman services and care homes.

The sessions are part of the Legion's extensive Poppy Support services. If you are serving, have served or are the spouse, partner, dependent or carer of someone who has served in the UK's Armed Forces, then you are eligible for their help.

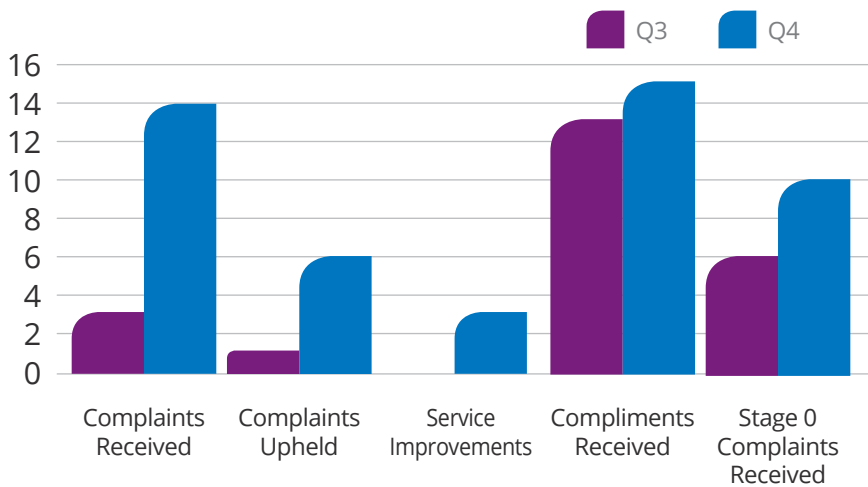
The sessions run at:

- Barnstaple Library on the second Tuesday of the month 10.30am-1pm
- South Molton Amory Centre second Thursday of the month 12-2pm

If you would like more information please call 0808 802 8080 or visit [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk).

# Complaints and Compliments

October 2016 - March 2017



The number of complaints received increased during Quarter 4 as did the number of Stage 0 complaints. However, less than half were upheld.

All complaints we receive are investigated independently and we always seek to learn from things when we unintentionally get something wrong in the service we provided to you.

Although the complaints increased in Quarter 4 our complaints levels remain low when compared with other social landlords.

**Thank you for continuing to send in your compliments where staff have provided you with a good level of service; we enjoy hearing about the good work that they do.**



Complaints received in Q4. 6 complaints upheld.



Service Improvements from complaints



Compliments received



Stage 0 complaints received

## Summer time in your neighbourhood

The summer is here and we will all be hoping for some fine weather and long warm evenings. Summer traditionally brings with it some extra activity for social landlords. There are estate clear-ups to organise, grounds maintenance to keep on top of and often an increase in neighbourhood complaints.

In the warmer weather and the longer days there can be increased activity in our neighbourhoods. People have barbecues, children play out later, windows are left open in the evenings – all of which creates an increase in the opportunity for disruption and disturbance.

We know that most people want to respect and get along with their neighbours, so here are a few basic tips which could help:



- Consider how your actions might affect your neighbours

- If you are having a barbecue, please do not play music outside, especially after the time when children may be trying to sleep in neighbouring properties.
- To avoid any issues, why not knock on your neighbours' doors to let them know what is going to happen and allow them to approach you first if there are any issues, rather than reporting to us or the police.
- If you are drinking alcohol or eating outside, please use the back garden. The sight of people drinking alcohol by or on the street can be intimidating to others and does not make for a comfortable neighbourhood.

**Have a good summer and please remember to spare a thought for your neighbours.**

## Save time - do it online

Did you know you can access a range of our services 24/7 online by visiting our website [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk)? You can:

-  **Report a repair**
-  **Pay your rent**
-  **Make an enquiry**
-  **Find a home**
-  **Make a complaint**

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

## Need to make a payment?

Did you know that you can use our 24 hour debit and credit card payment line to make a payment? Please call 0844 557 8321 to use this service. Calls are usually charged at 7p per minute but charges may vary according to your provider.

Please have your rent payment card (swipe card) to hand as you will need to quote the reference number on the card. If you do not have a rent payment card and would like a reference number you can request one by emailing [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk) or by calling 01271 312500.

## Contact us

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

**Web:**  
[www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk)

**Head office number:**  
01271 312500

**Emergency out of hours:**  
0800 917 0619



## Bins and recycling



North Devon Council manages all the rubbish and recycling services in the North Devon district area.

If you need to report issues with bins, waste or recycling or would like to enquire about collections of bulky household items, you will need to contact North Devon Council's waste and recycling team on 01271 374776.

You can find lots of information about rubbish and recycling on North Devon Council's website [www.northdevon.gov.uk](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk). In addition, you can report missed collections, request a bin, bag, box or caddy, and check collection dates online at [www.northdevon.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling).



## Are your contact details up to date?

If your contact details have recently changed, it is important that you let us know as soon as possible. Out of date contact details may cause delays to the services that we are able to provide to you, for example, booking appointments for repairs.

You can update your contact details using one of these easy steps:

- emailing [enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk)
- using the enquiries form on our website [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk)
- telephoning 01271 312500

## Dress Down Day

We held a dress down day and other fundraising activities in aid of Children's Hospice South West. Members of our Human Resources team presented a cheque for £171 to Children's Hospice South West's Corporate Fundraiser, Naomi Dymond.



## Fundraising for North Devon Hospice's 'Pitch in a Pound'

On Friday 10th February we held a dress down day to support North Devon Hospice's 'Pitch in a Pound' event.

North Devon Hospice nurses look after 3,000 patients a year and cover over 800 square miles of the local area. They can only provide this vital care through the support of the North Devon community.

Their first ever 'Pitch in a Pound' event saw lots of local companies, schools and groups signing up for a fun-packed day of fundraising activities to make every pound count for local families that need it most.



## Encompass South West

We held a raffle for staff and used money raised from our tuck shop during December to raise £450 for Encompass South West. This donation will be used to help provide hot lunches for those in need in 2017.



## Cinema club

Do you enjoy watching films?  
A Cinema Club is held every Wednesday at 2pm at Medard House, Barnstaple. Entry is £1 and this includes refreshments and a cake.

Everyone welcome - please call Sandra on 01271 371048 for more information.



# Summer Wordsearch Competition

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

- |          |            |          |
|----------|------------|----------|
| ICECREAM | RELAXING   | SWIMMING |
| SUNSHINE | PICNIC     | BREEZE   |
| BEACH    | SUNGLASSES | SURFING  |
| SEAGULL  | OUTDOORS   | HEATWAVE |
| BARBECUE | HOLIDAY    | PARASOL  |

**How to enter:**

Fill out the form and send it to the address below by 11/08/2017 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 Ice Creams (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 11/08/2017 for a chance to win a £20 voucher.

No. of Ice Lollies: .....

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 11/08/2017