

# HOME NEWS

WRITTEN IN PARTNERSHIP BY  
CUSTOMERS AND STAFF OF  
NORTH DEVON HOMES



SUMMER 2014

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## Forches gets Royal Seal of Approval!

It was certainly a day to remember when HRH The Princess Royal visited Forches estate in Barnstaple on Tuesday 6th May.

The Princess Royal visited the Whiddon Valley Community Centre where some of the 300 young people who are part of the NDH Starfish Project, funded by the Big Lottery, had the opportunity to meet her and explain the difference the project had made to their lives.

The visit then moved on to the Forches estate where The Princess Royal was shown the transformation of the estate due to the £20 million regeneration programme to transform the PRC



properties into modern, warm, energy efficient homes.

The visit concluded with The Princess Royal officially opening the new community play park in Forches. The play area was named 'Eden Park' by Ava Oakley, a pupil at Forches Cross School, who was chosen as the 'Name the Park' competition winner.



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## Welcome to the Summer Edition of Home News!

Customers and staff have been busy working to bring you this latest edition of Home News.

It has been a busy time since our last newsletter and we have been working with customers and partners to develop and promote our services. One of the things that captures this well is the Royal visit. The visit recognised the way in which customers, staff and partners worked to do something really special in North Devon. It was really pleasing that The Princess Royal spent so much time with the young people and youth workers to understand how things have changed over the past few years. She was genuinely interested and the young people were thrilled to spend some time talking with her. It was also a fantastic opportunity to show the wider community the new homes, the community regeneration and to open the new recreation area, 'Eden Park'. I know that the customers and staff who attended were very proud of what has been achieved and it really does show what we can achieve by working together.

The team at NDH has been working to develop and prepare some great ideas for the annual Customer Summer Fayre. I hope you will be able to attend on 30 July 2014 at Barnstaple Rugby Club. Come and meet the staff, enjoy the celebrations and entertainment and tell us a little about what we are doing that is working well and what you would like to see from us in the future. If you have yet to see the line up, or have missed the date, please see further details in this newsletter.

Finally, we hope that the weather continues as it started and that you and your family have a great summer!

**Marc Rostock**  
Director of Neighbourhoods



## Customer Summer Fayre

This year's North Devon Homes Summer Fayre is taking place on Wednesday 30th July at Barnstaple Rugby Club between 11am and 3pm. You should have already received and returned your invitation and we are really looking forward to seeing you there for another fantastic, fun and informative event. If you have not returned your invite and would like to join us for the day please call us on 01271 312500.

Calling all North Devon Homes customers to our  
**CUSTOMER SUMMER FAYRE**  
Fun for you & your family  
Wednesday 30th July 2014  
11am - 3pm at  
Barnstaple Rugby Club

Please return your registration form by Friday 11th July

For more information, please call 01271 313384

Register to receive a FREE Hacking's Ice Cream and Bingo Cart

THIS EVENT IS ONLY OPEN TO NORTH DEVON HOMES CUSTOMERS

## Help us to help you!

You may have seen a lot in the news lately about the cuts to services by Devon County Council. During July, we started consultation meetings with all our customers who receive a support service from us on both our sheltered schemes and in the community. We wanted to let people know the position with likely funding changes from next April. We are working hard, looking at the services we offer and making sure we understand what you value and how we can continue to provide support services to you.

We will have a 'Support Service Consultation Table' at the Summer Fayre on 30th July, so please come along and have a chat to us in the support team where we will welcome your views.



## Homelink Online

Our new Homelink website has been designed to provide an easy way for people to access information on the services available in the area that may enable relatives and friends of people who need some help, support and reassurance to remain living in their home.

The website **www.devonhomelink.com** provides information on all our services, home support, alarms and gives information about the support team.

If you wish to find out more information, please call us on 0800 083 7553.



## Devon Homelink

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

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

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

**0800 083 7553**

## Congratulations Philippa

In May this year Nasreen Hussain, Director of Resources left North Devon Homes to take up a new role at Soha Housing in Oxford. We wish her well.

We are thrilled that Philippa Butler has been appointed as Finance Director. Philippa has worked at North Devon Homes since March 2000 as Financial Controller and had this to say *"I am delighted to have been appointed as Finance Director and I am very much looking forward to working within the Executive team at NDH"*.



## Congratulations to Tracey

We would like to introduce you to our new Customer Board Member, Tracey Richmond. Tracey is already involved in several customer groups including the Customer Forum, Repairs and Maintenance, Neighbourhood Services and Tenant2Tenant Group. Tracey says: *"I am looking forward to finding a place on the Board that will enable me to speak for all NDH tenants. I feel passionately that affordable social housing plays an important part in supporting the people of North Devon on low incomes. I am hoping I can play a part in increasing the number of NDH properties available for our area. My experience as part of numerous customer groups and committees will help to highlight NDH from a tenant's point-of-view."*

Tracey has also recently been elected as the new Chair of the Repairs and Maintenance

Improvement Group. Please join us in congratulating Tracey on her successful appointments. We would like to thank Francis Gott who has chaired this group for the last few years. Tracey said *"I'm pleased to have been elected as chair. It is really important to be part of these groups as our contributions really do have an impact on NDH policy and direction and I would encourage more customers to come along."* If you would like to join us, our next meeting is on **Wednesday 6th August**. For more information, please contact Clare Paddon on 01271 313384 or email [clare.paddon@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:clare.paddon@ndh-ltd.co.uk)



Pictured from left to right: Vickie Jenkins, Jenny Ross, Tracey Richmond, Jane Tomlin, Terry Hayes, Fil Ross, Richard Setter, Eric Cann, Patsy Chapple, Lorna Childs and Dawn Ash.

## Changing Faces on your Forum

Following the annual Customer Forum elections we have some new faces on the Forum. The elected members for 2014/15 are: Francis Gott, Dawn Ash, Lorna Childs, Richard Setter, Tracey Richmond, Patsy Chapple, Jane Tomlin, Vickie Jenkins, Terry Hayes, Jenny Ross, Jaime Lewis and Eric Cann. Congratulations to Francis Gott who has been re-elected as Chair, Dawn Ash as Vice Chair and Lorna Childs as Secretary.

## Tenant 2 Tenant

Members of the Customer Forum are at hand to help you with any questions or queries you may have. Tenant 2 Tenant has been set up to provide impartial support to all customers. If you feel it would be helpful to have an informal chat with another tenant with no obligation, no matter how small or silly you may think your query is, then please call us on **07740 410 970**. Dawn, Richard, Patsy, Tracey or Lorna are available on this number 7 days a week from 9am to 9pm.

The Customer Forum is a group of volunteer members which meets monthly to ensure that North Devon Homes puts customers at the heart of everything they do. The Forum works closely with customers, staff, management and the Board of Directors to ensure that customer views are represented and improvements are made to service delivery as a result of customer involvement activities. Would you like to find out more about the Forum? Why not come along to one of our meetings? Please call our Customer Involvement Officer on 01271 313384.

## Scrutiny Update

During the last quarter the Scrutiny Panel has been undertaking a comprehensive look at what our older customers think about the Support Advisor Service offered by North Devon Homes. They are still undertaking consultation with customers through surveys and afternoon tea events to ask older customers what they would like to see continued, started or stopped within this service. The results will be published in the next Newsletter.

At this year's Summer Fayre the Scrutiny Panel will be holding a raffle prize draw, so make sure you find them for an entry form and raffle ticket.



## Funding for Community Projects

Partnership working is key to the continued success of our community based work. This year we were delighted that Tony Hogg, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall, gave us £3000 to build a facility in the Forches garden to develop training opportunities in horticulture. This project spans both Forches and Heppenstall gardens and has plans to expand in 2014/15. Working in partnership with Westward Housing we are creating new links into the community for further training opportunities within our communities.

The South West Foundation awarded the Forches Community Association £6000 to develop these training opportunities and establish a Community Sewing Group which will make craft articles for sale and provide an alteration and soft furnishing service for the community.

There are loads of opportunities available. Come and join the sewing group and learn new skills; spend the summer in our beautiful gardens; or have those alterations or soft furnishing ideas made by our new community service. Just call our Community Support Worker Carol Lewis or our Community Involvement Manager on **01271 312527**.



## Good Neighbours?

Everybody needs good neighbours. Do you have a fantastic neighbour who deserves a 'Good Neighbour' award? The Customer Forum

offers an award scheme to recognise this good work. If you would like to nominate your neighbour, please write to Francis Gott, 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. The closing date for nominations for this edition is **31st August 2014**. All nominations are presented to the Forum. The selected winners will be presented with a certificate and £20 voucher.



This newsletter is created and written by both members of NDH staff and our customers. We would like to say a huge thank you to those customers who offer their time to help create this newsletter. We certainly feel that it adds value and that the results are evident throughout the newsletter. We are always looking for more volunteers so if you wish to get involved in any way please do get in touch.

## Multiple Viewings

The Lettings Team has been carrying out multiple viewings at empty properties for the last 6 months. The reason for doing this is to enable more people look at a property at the same time.

An invitation is sent to the top 5 applicants on the shortlist, inviting them along to view the property. They can then decide if this is the property for them. If the person at the top of the list does not want to proceed, this allows

the next person (in priority order) to have the chance to choose the property. This change in process stops properties from standing empty for any longer than necessary and also gives customers the chance to look at an area or property they may not be familiar with, providing them with a better idea for future bidding on similar properties.

This change has proven to be very successful, with 100% positive feedback from customers.

## Voids Review

The Neighbourhood Services Improvement Group will be carrying out a review of void properties during July and August. We will be contacting all new customers who have moved into one of our homes over the last six months to find out about their experiences. Our customer inspectors will also be out and about visiting current void properties. We will be reviewing all the results at our next meeting on **Tuesday 19th August**. For more information, please contact Lindsey Eastman on 01271 312500 or email [lindsey.eastman@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:lindsey.eastman@ndh-ltd.co.uk).

## Using new technology to improve what we do

The Neighbourhood Officers will no longer be rooting through their bags to find a pen, they have been brought into the 21st century and have been issued with iPads. This will allow them to write notes whilst they are with customers, look up information from our contractor sites and provide you with other information you may need. This will save time and we hope to give you as many answers as possible while we are still with you!



## Grounds Maintenance An Apology

The standard of grounds maintenance this year has been below what we would expect and, understandably, customers have reported their disappointment to us.

Along with the other partners in this contract we have sought assurances from the Contractors, ISS, that their performance will improve.

In response, ISS has apologised and substantially increased the number of staff working on our contracts in order to clear the backlog of work. All areas should have had or will shortly be receiving their third grass cut.

We will continue to monitor the performance of the contractor carefully; both in relation to grass cutting and the other elements to the contract.

We are hopeful that things will get better and that the contractor will continue to improve the services which they are committed to for the rest of the year, leading to better and more regular grass cutting in line with the contract they hold.

Thank you to all our customers for working with us on this matter.



# Successful Community Action Day for Frankmarsh and Gorwell

On Thursday 29 May members of staff from North Devon Homes joined police, local councillors, residents and children's summer club / street champions for a community action day in Frankmarsh and Gorwell.

The action day was a great opportunity for all parties to work together to improve the appearance of the estate and included litter picking, pathway weeding and a general tidy up of the estate.

There was also a recycling area where people could leave items for other residents, with one young boy very happy as he gained a new bicycle.

A huge 'Thank You' to everyone who came and made the day such a success.



## Neighbourhoods 'Go Clear Up'



Tracey, Adam and Kevin of the Neighbourhoods Team attended the One Ilfracombe 'Go Clear Up' event, rolling up their sleeves to help tidy the town. The event lasted for one week from 11th – 18th May. The event was a great opportunity for Tracey, who

is new to the Ilfracombe patch, to develop links to the One Ilfracombe centre, the local Council and the Police, whilst getting involved and making a difference to the local community.



## Future dates and locations of Action Days

During the summer holidays we will be carrying out action days on Woodville and Forches. We will contact you nearer the time if you live in that area – please do get involved. As you can see from Frankmarsh and Gorwell, it is a day to be proud of and gets positive results for everyone.



## Communal Services - tell us your thoughts

Following the communal cleaning review, the Neighbourhoods Team is placing some service monitoring cards in communal blocks. We would like you to tell us what you think about the cleaning and grounds maintenance service you receive and report any issues. Your views are important to us and will be used to improve the service. Please keep an eye out for the new cards and take a few moments to complete the card and pop in the post.



## Babysitting courses

The young people's project will be running two babysitting courses this summer. This two day course is free to young people aged 14+ and will include one day training in looking after babies and children; and one day of paediatric first aid accredited by Triangle Training. The course details are as follows:

**Ilfracombe** 29th and 31st July at Vision Centre Slade Valley

**Barnstaple** 26th and 27th August at Whiddon Valley Community Centre

**To book a place, or for more info, call Andie on 01271 313377.**

## Wren Music Summer Workshops

We are lucky enough to have Wren Music returning for their Summer Music workshops this year. The programme is free and takes place at Whiddon Valley Community Centre on Wednesday 6th, Thursday 7th, Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th August from 10.30am to 3.30pm. Booking is essential



and you can attend for all or just one of the days...it's up to you!! Please contact Andie on 01271 313377 for more info or to book a place.

## Youth Club Times

The NDH youth club times and locations:

**Forches Youth Club** (for ages 9 upwards) – Monday & Wednesdays 6.30-8.30pm @ The Whiddon Valley Community Centre, Barton Rd, Barnstaple EX32 8NG

**Hangout Youth Club** (for ages 10 upwards) – Tuesdays 6.30-8.30pm @ The Deaf Centre, Bicton Street, Barnstaple EX32 7EB

**Slade Valley Youth Club** (for ages 9 upwards) – Wednesdays 6.30-8.30pm @ the Vision Centre, Slade Valley Rd, Ilfracombe EX34 8LU

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



## Meeting Princess Anne

On Tuesday 6th May, Princess Anne came to Barnstaple to visit Eden Park and talk to the young people about the youth project. She came to Barnstaple because she was interested in what the young people are doing at the youth club. Before she opened the park, Her Royal Highness spoke to a variety of young people about what we do and enjoy about youth club.



She asked me in particular, what I enjoy about being a part of youth club. I replied that I like playing group games outside, because our youth worker comes up with some really fun and really interesting games.

Andie Scilly, our Lead Youth Worker chose me to present the flowers to Princess Anne because I always get involved with everything, but don't always put myself forward. I felt very nervous at the beginning because someone royal was coming to Forches and every one doubts us because they think we are different to any other place. Afterwards I felt really proud of myself, because I had just given someone from the royal family a bunch of flowers.

**Jasmine Turner, 11**

## Courtney Green A Budding Actress

My name is Courtney Green and I'm an actress! I've always loved singing and acting, it's just part of me. It all started when I auditioned for the North Devon Gang Show, I got a part and a solo which gave me confidence! I then starred in a Home Care Trust video before gaining a part in a show of Miracle on 34th Street. This year I have done a music video for local artist Julian Langer, and two films. One short film called Dancing Days, is making its way through the film festivals and a feature film called Gabriel Cushings Carnival of Sorrows.

Acting is fun, exciting and challenging but I still have to get my homework done and try my best in school. I would like to become famous one day, but for now I'm on the ladder, and I have a long way to climb to the top!



**Family Fun Day**  
**Thursday 21st August 2014**  
**12—3.30pm**  
 @ The Vision Centre, Slade Valley, Ilfracombe. EX34 8LU

This year we will have a programme of events happening throughout the day.

All Day: Fire trucks and police car on site  
 12.30 and 2.15pm Meet Peppa Pig  
 1pm Exmoor Zoo Demonstration  
 2.45pm Fire Service Demo  
 3pm Raffle

Entrance: Adults and Children just 50p!!

For more information contact Andie or Sophie on 01271 313377

## Slade Valley Fun Day

**Thursday 21st August 12noon - 3.30pm**

The Youth Team are putting on their second Slade Valley Fun Day in Ilfracombe which will be bigger and better this year. We are working with the Fire and Rescue Service, the Police, One Ilfracombe and Petroc to bring a day full of activities and fun. On offer this year we have: Exmoor Zoo animal display, Peppa Pig, Raffle, BBQ, Fire Trucks, Police Cars, Interactive Tent, bouncy castle plus loads more...

**The Fun Day will take place on Thursday 21st August 12-3.30pm @ The Vision Centre, Slade Valley. For more information, or if you would like to get involved, please contact Andie on 01271 313377.**

## 'Health Kick' for young people of North Devon

The young people of Forches and the Hangout Youth Clubs, which are run by North Devon Homes and supported by the Big Lottery, have been getting involved in a project called 'Health Kick'.

The aim of 'Health Kick' is to encourage young people out of the house, having fun and getting fit at the same time. There have been a number of visits to the Fitness Factory gym where Linda and Tom Matthews, the owners, have been very supportive of the project giving up their time and facilities for the young people to use for free.

The young people have been very excited by this project, having already learnt so much about their bodies and fitness. We hope this is just the start and the young people will continue with their fit and healthy lifestyle once the project has finished.



## Loan Smart with a Smart Loan

Are you borrowing from doorstep lenders? Do you know how much interest you are paying? Doorstep lenders charge very high interest rates, typically in excess of 200% and in, some cases, can be up to 5000%. NDH works closely with Plough & Share Credit Union to provide lower cost, ethical loans and savings products. Did you know Plough & Share charge just 26.8% interest on their smart loan? For more information please visit our offices at Boutport Street or Head Office or call Plough & Share directly on 01837 658123.

## It's all thanks to you!

The NDH Income Team are celebrating another record performance. Rent arrears have fallen to just 0.20% (compared with 0.28% last year). This fantastic result has been achieved against a backdrop of a harsher financial climate, significant welfare benefit changes (including the spare room subsidy and benefits cap) and continuing pressures on household budgets. **A big "Thank You" to our customers for paying rents on time and helping us to maintain the services we can offer you.**

The Income Team continues to work with customers to reduce debts and provide support to those facing financial difficulties. If you are facing financial pressures please contact our Income Team on 01271 312500. We are here to help, not to judge!

## Welfare Reform

### Universal Credit – expected start date April 2015

In our spring newsletter, we shared with you details about Universal Credit, one of the Government's flagship welfare reform changes. Universal Credit is expected to start in April 2015, initially for single

**FAQ: I live with my partner and we are both pensioners, am I affected by Universal Credit?**

**No, Universal Credit only affects people of working age.**

**FAQ: I live alone and I receive pension credit, am I affected by Universal Credit? No, Universal Credit only affects people of working age.**

the existing welfare benefit system and that many of our customers may be concerned as to how the introduction of Universal Credit may affect them.

In summary, if you are of **working age** and receive ANY of the following benefits then you will be affected as Universal Credit rolls out.

- Housing Benefit
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Employment Support Allowance (income related)
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

In the coming months, we will be setting up a rolling programme of information to help customers who may be affected by the changes, including frequently asked questions. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact our Income Team on 01271 312500.



**FAQ: I am of working age and I have my housing benefit paid directly to North Devon Homes. Will I be affected by Universal Credit? Yes. The Housing Benefit will form part of your monthly Universal Credit payment. You will need to make arrangements to pay your rent to North Devon Homes from your monthly Universal Credit payment.**

## Safety In Your Home

### Asbestos

#### Where is asbestos likely to be found in the home?

Asbestos is a natural mineral, which can break into tiny particles which if inhaled can be harmful to health. It can be found in many common building products both inside and outside the home, including roofing and flooring products, decorative ceiling coverings such as artex, floor tiles, pipe lagging and many other products.

#### What are we doing to manage asbestos in our homes?

NDH is committed to managing asbestos and will do so by:

- Providing you with information about asbestos
- Offering you advice if you are concerned about asbestos
- Ensuring the health and safety of you and your family is our main priority at all times
- Using fully qualified surveyors or specialist contractors to take samples if considered necessary
- Sealing or encapsulating asbestos; or we'll remove it if it is damaged
- Ensuring only fully licensed specialist contractors will be used to remove asbestos
- Keeping a register of all asbestos found in our properties

We will not normally remove

asbestos materials if they are in good condition, as it is perfectly safe if undamaged. However, we will return to check at your request if you are concerned that it might have become damaged.

#### I suspect there might be asbestos in my home – what should I do?

Most importantly don't be unduly concerned. If you suspect that you might have damaged or ageing asbestos in your home, please contact NDH's Planned Maintenance Department on 01271 312531 during office hours, and we will arrange for a surveyor to call.

### Gas in the home

There is a risk of fire, explosion, gas leaks and carbon monoxide poisoning if gas appliances such as cookers, boilers and fires are not properly installed and maintained. NDH carries out yearly inspections to ensure your safety. We usually start arranging appointments within 10 months of the last safety check. This is done to ensure that we can arrange an appointment that is suitable for you. We are obliged by law to carry out these checks and if we cannot gain access we will work with the legal team to gain access. Remember it is for your safety.

#### Gas in the home - what to do if you smell gas

- Call National Grid on 0800 111 999 (ideally outside of the property)
- Do not smoke
- Turn off gas supply at meter (if possible)

- Do not turn on anything electrical (light switches etc)
- Ventilate the building by opening windows and doors
- Leave the building immediately

If you have any concerns at all please contact us on 01271 312500 or 0800 917 0619.



In light of recent staff changes, the map below shows which surveyor covers each geographical area, allowing you to know who will be visiting you. **Remember to always ask for ID before letting anyone enter your home. If in doubt call us on 01271 312500.**

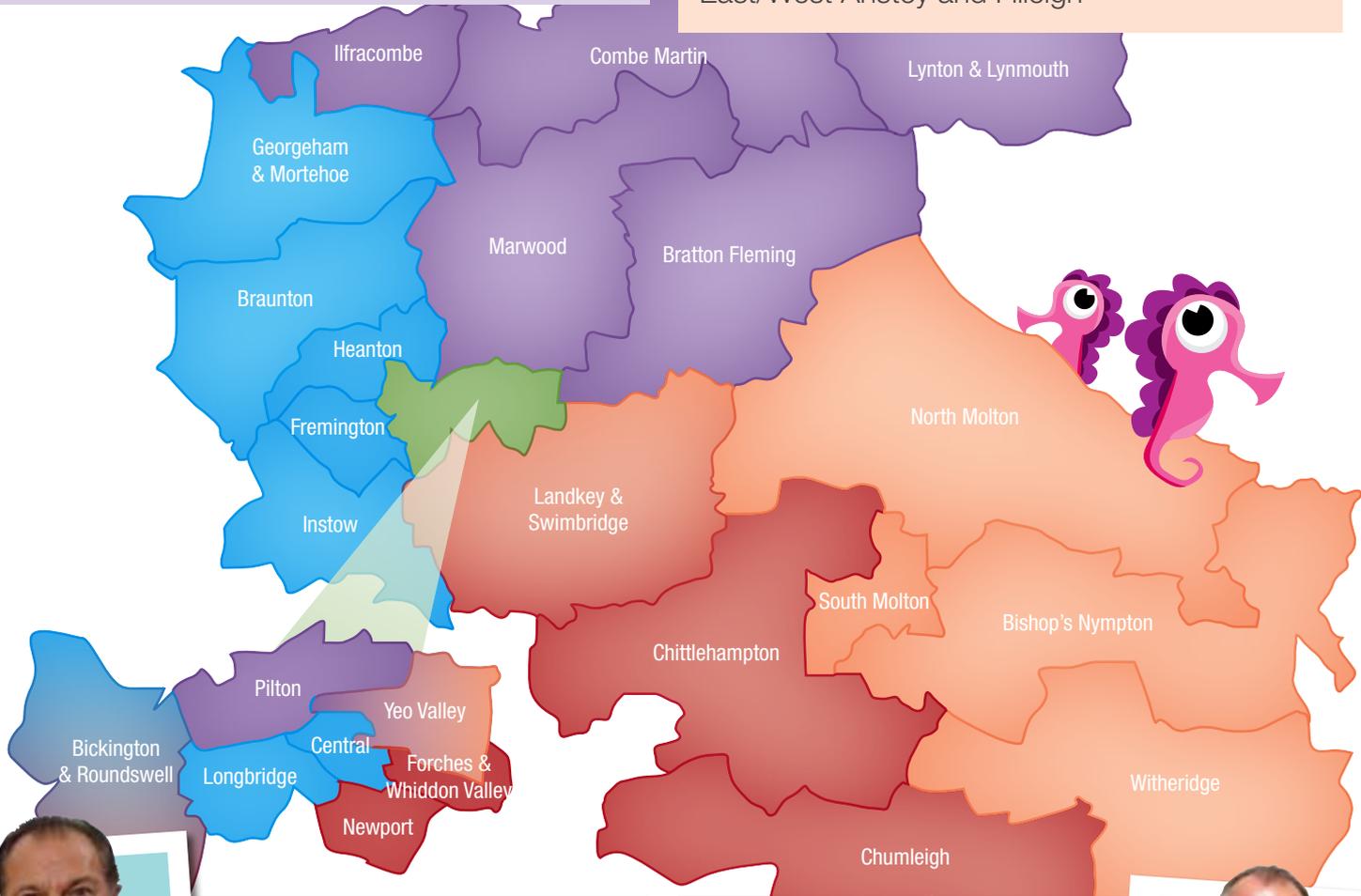


### Ade Seel

Frankmarsh, Pilton, Shirwell, Goodleigh, Brayford, Bratton Fleming, Woolacombe, Lynton and Barbrook, Marwood, Combe Martin, Challacombe, Ilfracombe, Martinhoe, Parracombe and Kentisbury

### Ben Ashfold

Gorwell, Bevan Road, Swimbridge, West Buckland, East Buckland, South Molton, North Molton, Meshaw, Bishops Nympton, Romansleigh, Rackenford, Mariansleigh, Witheridge, East Worlington, Alswear, Molland, East/West Anstey and Filleigh



### Dave Wellings

Westleigh, Instow, Yelland, Fremington, Bickington, Woodville, Magdalene Lawn, Castle Quay Court, Castle Street, Mill Road, Pottington Road, Fairview, Pathfield Lawn, Chivenor, Heanton, Wrafton, Braunton, Croyde and Georgeham

### Peter Ebsworthy

Forches, Whiddon Valley, Newport, Roundswell, Landkey, Loverings Court, Bishops Tawton, Burrington, Chittlehampton, Umberliegh, George Nympton, Rose Ash, Kings Nympton and Chumleigh



## Making Changes? Please get permission first!

At NDH our policy is to allow you to make changes to your home should you wish, but we need to ensure that this is safe for you and does not damage or limit the building. For these reasons this policy is governed by current Building Regulations, relevant planning approval and an NDH approval process.

Any customer wishing to make alterations to their property must let us know in writing by completing a NDH permission form, available from our Customer Care Team, proposing the changes they wish to make. This should be accompanied by drawings of any proposal, if possible. All permission letters go to the NDH Asset Management Team so they can ensure that works can be carried out safely and in a way which does not compromise the building.

You will be informed if there is any asbestos present in the form of a report and an explanatory leaflet, which you must pass to the contractor who is carrying out the works so that they may operate safely in your home and not disturb any asbestos that may be present.

Depending on the information we hold, a surveyor may be asked to attend your property to carry out an inspection, to ensure that it is safe to do the works and to give advice.

The following measures are in place to ensure the safety of you and other customers:

- If you are planning electrical works, then you will need to provide us with an appropriate electrical certificate.
- If you want to make any structural changes you will need to provide a comprehensive report and specification from a registered competent structural engineer.
- Any work that involves gas must be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer and a safety certificate for the work must be supplied to NDH.
- External works may require planning permission from the Council.
- Extensions will require the consent of the Council's Planning Authority and Building Control.

Any extensions will require consent from the Planning Authority and Building Control and no approval will be given until a report is received, or until planning is approved by North Devon Council.

If it is helpful, we can provide you with a specification for the works so that they will meet our standard requirements. Please call the Asset Management Team on 01271 312500.

## Accolades for Rising Stars

### Mike O'Connell

Our congratulations go to Mike O'Connell on the great news that he was a finalist in the award category 'Best Apprentice of the Year' at this year's North Devon Journal Business Awards. Sadly, he didn't win but this was a fantastic acknowledgement of all Mike's hard work over the past few years – Well done Mike!



### Paul Scovell

Congratulations to Paul Scovell on becoming Chartered Institute of Housing SW Student of the Year. Paul has been working towards a Degree in Housing and was chosen for this award due to his hard work, unfaltering enthusiasm and commitment. Paul is continuing with his studies to attain a full honours degree. Well done Paul!



## Always check for Identification

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



## New Approaches

Here at North Devon Homes we are always keen to think differently and to find new ways to improve our customers' homes. Sometimes tried and tested methods have not worked and we challenge ourselves to think differently and to work with others to find different approaches.

For example, General Practice Surveyors Ben Ashfold and Peter Ebsworthy have been working with customers to trial thermal imaging techniques for properties in South Molton. Thermal images highlight temperature differences in the fabric of the building due to wetter surfaces (which show colder) or heat loss around windows and doors.

We look forward to telling you more about how this will help our service to you in the future.

Following a successful year of planned maintenance work in 2013/14, please find below details of the planned maintenance works for 2014/15.

Item	Programmed Works Target
Kitchens	40
Bathrooms	27
Doors	173
Electrics	95
Gas Boilers	178
Electric Heating	52
Solid Fuel Heating	4
External Decorating	125
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>694</b>

## Aids & Adaptations

Do you feel you may benefit from an adaptation to your home to enable you to remain independent and help you stay in your home?

If you do, you will firstly need to arrange for an Occupational Therapist (OT) to visit you, they will make a full assessment of your needs and the works required. The OT will then forward any minor adaptation to us to be approved.

If the OT requests major works (such as wet rooms or stair lifts) the OT will need to complete a Statement of Need form. Major works funding may be obtained via a Disabled Funding Grant which your OT will be able to support you through. All major adaptation works are carried out by a selected contractor chosen by North Devon Council.

**For further information contact Care Direct on 0845 155 1007 or visit their website [www.devon.gov.uk/caredirect](http://www.devon.gov.uk/caredirect)**



## Site Updates

### Forches Phase 2

Works on Forches Phase 2 are continuing at a pace with the majority of frames now erected across the site. Roofing works are continuing to take place as well as the installation of the photovoltaic panels.



### Lovacott

We are delighted with the progress being made at Lovacott and the site is now really starting to take shape. The majority of timber frames are now erected, roofing works are ongoing, and the first few units also have now had doors and windows installed.



### Woodville

Progress on site is moving swiftly with the next stage of demolitions complete and foundation works underway. Timbers/frames continue to be erected, with roofing works now taking place on clear areas of the site.

### 19 High Street Ilfracombe

Conversion works to 19 High Street Ilfracombe have now been completed under the Empty Homes Initiative. This has provided two new affordable rented flats to the Ilfracombe area.



### Pill Gardens

We are delighted to have received handover of another rented property from Phase 2 of Pill Gardens. Finishing works are well underway on the last 5 affordable rented properties.



### Kensington Close

Five section 106 properties at Kensington Close, built by Chichester Homes, are undergoing internal finishings and are set to be handed over to North Devon Homes on 11th July.



## Further New Home Ownership Opportunity From North Devon Homes

North Devon Homes is pleased to be building a further 15 homes (a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom properties) for shared ownership in the local area, providing those considering purchasing a new home an affordable option to do so.

Under the scheme, purchasers can buy a share of a property (between 40% and 75%) and pay rent on the remaining share, with an opportunity for the purchaser to buy further shares and eventually own their home outright. Priority is generally given to housing association tenants and to those who would be unable to purchase a property on the open market.

The new homes will be built to a high environmental

standard benefitting from photovoltaic panels, high levels of insulation, full house gas heating and 12 year NHBC Warranty. In addition NDH will be carpeting new homes throughout.

For further information, or to register your interest, please contact a member of the Development and Regeneration Team on 01271 312510.

You will also need to register with Help to Buy South West at [www.helptobuysw.org.uk](http://www.helptobuysw.org.uk)

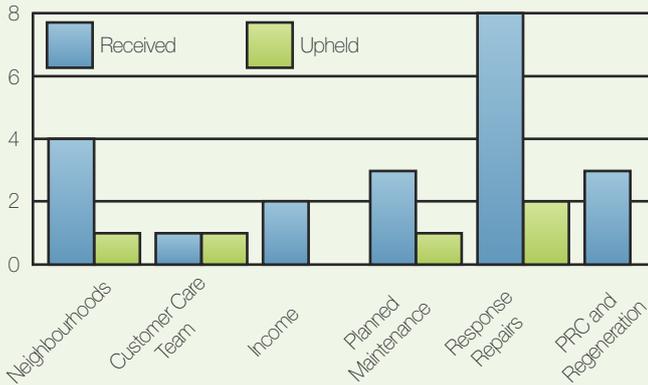


Backed by  
HM Government

South West

## Complaints and Compliments

Below is table showing the number of complaints we received during January to March 2014; how many were upheld (meaning NDH is accountable) and which areas of service they related to:



We also received 29 compliments. We do like to hear when we get things right as it helps us to embed the good work that we do throughout the company. Please keep them coming in.

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

Have you thought about becoming a member of the Company? It doesn't cost anything and it gives you the right to attend the Company's Annual General Meeting and vote on the resolutions. It also entitles you to receive a copy of the Company's Annual Accounts if you would like to see them.

Being a Company Member gives you an official voice in the life of North Devon Homes and is a good way of keeping you at the heart of the business. If you would like an application form, or would like to know more, please contact Lucy Duchesne on 01271 312500.

## Are you on a water meter?

A dripping tap will cost you money if you are on a water meter. If that drip can fill a milk bottle in 5 minutes it is wasting 60,000 litres of water a year and costing you over £150.00 a year!

Leaks are not always visible: they may be underground or in your toilet cistern. Modern toilets overflow into the toilet bowl and are not always easy to spot and can waste an incredible amount of water – and your money.

To make sure you don't get surprised with a hefty water bill, check your meter regularly by following these easy steps:

- Locate your meter
- Turn off all taps and appliances which use water
- Wait 30 minutes and take meter reading writing down all the digits in red as well as black.
- Don't use any water for 1 hour then take another meter reading
- Compare the readings.

If the readings have changed you may have a leak, so please call our Customer Care Team on 01271 312500 to report this.

Have you received good service from a member of staff? If so please let us know as it's always good to know that we are doing things right. If you wish to say 'Thank You' please call us on 01271 312500 or collect a 'Thank You' card from the Westacott Road office or the Town Centre Office.

**THANK YOU**  
nomination form  
Do you think a member of staff at North Devon Homes deserves a Thank You? If you do please use this form to nominate them for one.

Nominee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominator Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to thank someone please tick here.

## How are we doing? April - March 2013/14

Here is how we are performing in some of our key areas compared to the same period 2012/2013

**The colour of the traffic light tells us if we are on, near or have missed our target.**

● On target    
 ● Near target    
 ● Not on target

	Previous Performance	Current Performance	Target	Position
<b>CUSTOMER SATISFACTION</b>				
Satisfaction with overall service provided by NDH	91%*	94%*	90%	●
Complaints received	32	63	None	NA
Complaints upheld	22	25	None	NA
Compliments received	171	113	None	NA
<b>REPAIRS</b>				
Customer satisfaction with repairs - overall	97%	96%	96%	●
Emergency repairs completed <b>within 24 hours</b>	98.4%	96%	99%	●
Urgent repairs completed <b>within 7 calendar days</b>	97.6%	96.4%	98.1%	●
Routine repairs completed <b>within 28 calendar days</b>	97.7%	94.3%	98%	●
<b>PLANNED MAINTENANCE</b>				
Customer satisfaction with planned improvements - overall	95%	94%	96%	●
<b>GAS SAFETY</b>				
Properties with a gas safety certificate	99.95%	99.95%	100%	●
<b>ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR</b>				
Number of new antisocial behaviour cases	123	154	None	NA
Number of closed antisocial behaviour cases	126	150	None	NA
<b>CLOSED</b> minus <b>NEW</b> antisocial behaviour cases	3	-4	0+	●
<b>RE-LET PROPERTIES</b>				
Number of properties re-let	225	235	None	NA
Average time to re-let properties (days)	35	28.3	27.7	●
Rent loss due to empty properties (as a % of rental due)	0.60%	0.66%	0.45%	●
Number of mutual exchanges	50	74	None	NA
<b>RENT COLLECTION</b>				
Outstanding rent (current customers)	0.28%	0.2%	2%	●
Outstanding rent (former customers)	0.39%	0.33%	0.51%	●

If you have any thoughts on how we could make this easier to understand or more useful, please call us on **01271 312500** and ask to speak to Diane Thompson or Liz Meaney. Alternatively, email your suggestions to [feedback@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:feedback@ndh-ltd.co.uk). We are keen to hear your ideas.

\* Figure from 2009 customer survey; current performance figure from 2013 STAR satisfaction survey



## Sandcastle Fun

North Devon Homes is once again organising the annual National Sandcastle Competition taking place on Croyde beach on Sunday 31st August.

This year will see the return of the corporate event that sees local businesses battle it out to be crowned sandcastle champions. In addition, there will also be a family event which is guaranteed to be lots of fun. For further details please visit [www.sandcastle.org.uk](http://www.sandcastle.org.uk) or call Michelle West on **01271 312547**

We hope to see you there!



## Lisa's Marathon Charity Effort

In the last edition of Home News we told you that Lisa Lee would be running this year's London Marathon. Well, Lisa completed the marathon in 4 hours 24 minutes, despite being injured with shin splints. She raised a fantastic £1500 for leukaemia care. We think Lisa did an amazing job in both raising such a fantastic amount of money for charity and for completing the gruelling 26.2 miles. Well done Lisa!



## First North Devon Bake Off Competition Success

Over 40 bakers put their baking skills to the test at the Big Sheep on Sunday 29th June to create some sensational entries in the first North Devon Bake Off Competition.

After some deliberation, the judges, Sarah Escott of Best of Barnstaple, Lisa Templeton, Editor of North Devon Journal, and Phoebe Gibb, author of 'Best Ever Recipes Cupcakes', awarded the Ultimate Champion to amateur Cath Wright for her amazing banoffee pie.

In addition to the bake off displays, there was plenty to see and do at the event with a bake sale, cake decorating, face painting and a prize draw and auction. Monies raised are still being counted but expected to be in excess of £500. These proceeds will enable Starfish to support the Chemotherapy Appeal and provide vital hardship funding and community grants in Northern Devon.

Planning is already underway to make next year's event even bigger and better. For more information on Starfish and events, please like us on facebook or email [debbie.short@thestarfishcharity.org.uk](mailto:debbie.short@thestarfishcharity.org.uk)



**SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST**

North Devon Homes  
Westacott Road, Barnstaple  
10am - 12pm

**PITCHES ONLY £5**  
Sellers 9am. Buyers 10am.

## Change of Address



### Keeping everyone in the know

There are many things to think about when you're moving home. Letting people know you're moving is time-consuming but it's a vital part of the moving process.

It's easy to put it off but don't. Dedicate a few hours of one day to letting everyone who needs to know that you're moving, have your new address.

### Do you have a child under 5?

In order to keep you informed, we need to know about any changes to your contact details. If your details have changed recently please ensure that you contact us

Victoria House: 01271 321411  
 Sticklepath Children's Centre: 01271 379853  
 Email us: barnstaple.cc@actionforchildren.org.uk  
 Website: www.northdevonchildrenscentres.org.uk

## We have a number of garages to let in the following areas:

Park Villas, Bishops Tawton • Forches  
 Martin Road, Gorwell • Magdalene Lawn  
 Chittlehampton • South View, PRIXFORD  
 Fremington

If you are interested in renting a garage and would like further information, please contact the Customer Care Team on 01271 312500

## Make sure you're registered to vote

### Some changes you need to know about

The way you register to vote is changing. Instead of one member of the household registering everyone in the house, it will now be up to each person to register themselves. This new way of registering will be called 'Individual Electoral Registration' (IER). You will also be able to register online, which will make things quicker and easier.

Over the next couple of weeks you will receive a letter from North Devon Council, which will explain IER and tell you exactly what you need to do to make sure you are registered to vote.

For more information visit [www.gov.uk/yourvotematters](http://www.gov.uk/yourvotematters) or contact the Council's Elections Team on 01271 388277 or email [elections@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:elections@northdevon.gov.uk).

## THE COMMUNITY CENTRE



**Sew & Hoe**  
**A NEW group starting**  
**Thursday 19th June**  
**10-12 noon**  
**All abilities are welcome**



- Are you interested in learning a new skill in recycling new from old, such as making a new bag from old jeans.
  - Do you have sewing skills and techniques you could pass onto others or would you like to learn to use a sewing machine?
- Come along to the Community Centre on Barton Road, and try your hand at something new.



Come along and learn skills that will enable you to grow fresh 'cheap' produce in your Community Garden, all tools and seeds provided.



We are running FREE AQA opportunities in both groups so the choice is yours. Why not combine the two!!  
 Come along on the day or contact me for further details  
 Carol.lewis@ndh-ltd.co.uk  
 01271 372396



**Barton Road, Whiddon Valley**

**YOUR VOTE MATTERS**

**MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN**



# Summer Fun!

# Kids' Colouring Competition



**How to enter:**

Fill out the form and send it to the address below by Wednesday 13th August 2014 for a chance to win a colour in playhouse.

Name: .....

Age: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Post code: .....

Age groups are as follows:

7 and under  8 - 12 years

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



## HOW MANY?

How many seahorses (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 Wednesday 13th August 2014 for the chance to win a £20 voucher.

No. of Seahorses: .....



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

Name: .....

Age: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Post code: .....



For a chance to win, send all entries to Clare Paddon, North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8TA by Wednesday 13th August 2014.

### Colouring Competition Winners

The two winners of the colouring competition selected by the Customer Forum are Alisha, aged 7 from Bratton Fleming; and Kerry Rigler, aged 9 from Barnstaple.

### How Many Chicks Winner

In the spring edition of Home News we asked you to find the missing chicks to win a £25 voucher. The lucky winner, drawn at random, is Elliott Sparks of Barnstaple