



Your Local Standard

designed by customers for customers _____ annual report 2018

NINTH ISSUE

Offering value for money

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Board, customers and staff work together to achieve highest governance rating for North Devon Homes

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North Devon Homes is a company with charitable objectives and is a registered social landlord providing affordable homes and support services. The company is regulated by the Government via the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The regulator closely monitors and regulates the activities of North Devon Homes against a set of National Standards for Governance, Viability, Value for Money and Consumer Rights. This year North Devon Homes achieved the highest ratings possible against the standards following a major review and update of its Board and Governance activities.

Chair of the North Devon Homes Board, Robert Stronge, said "I am really pleased with the latest regulatory judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing which acknowledges and recognises the



considerable amount of work the Board has undertaken over the year. During this year we have strengthened the Board considerably bringing a range of new skills, expertise and experience to help us govern the business effectively, given the significant challenges that lie ahead as we tackle the housing crisis. Throughout the year I am particularly pleased that the Board and customers are working collaboratively and that the customer voice is very loud and present in the board room".

Chief Executive of North Devon Homes, Martyn Gimber, said "This year has been extremely important as we have worked closely with the new Board, staff and customers to determine our new Corporate Plan and strategy. At the heart of this is our innovative customer approach (C90) which is really ensuring that important decisions that affect customers are being made and led by customers. The Board has set a clear strategy and approach which I am leading with my team, and staying accountable



Chair of the Board of North Devon Homes, Robert Stronge



Chief Executive of North Devon Homes, Martyn Gimber



Regulator of Social Housing

to both the Board and customers is important to me. I am proud of our achievements this year and in particular the latest regulator rating which endorses our independence and accountability to our customers".

Governance

Me
Put the customer at the heart of all we do

My Home
Maintain and build quality, affordable homes

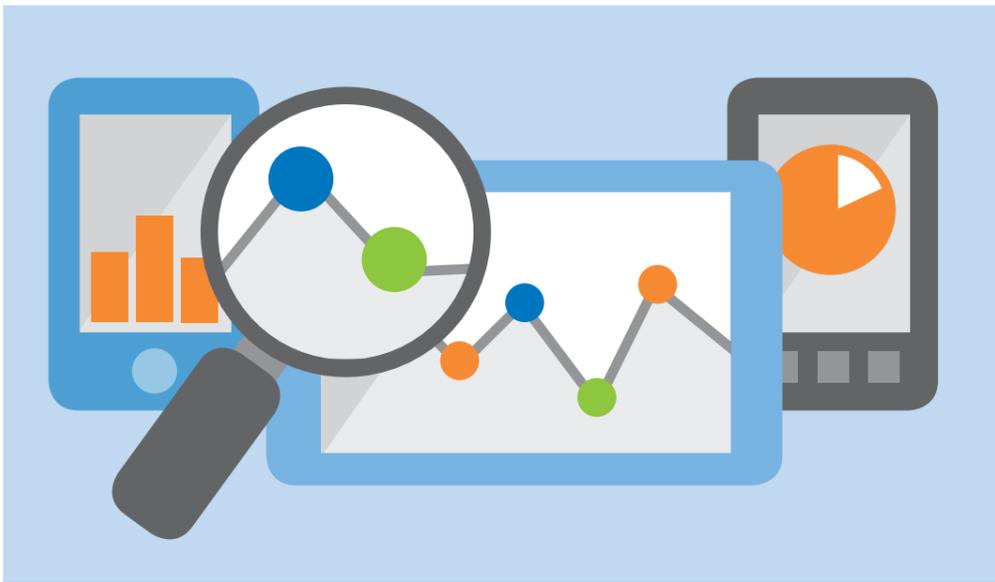
My Neighbourhood
Improve, support and develop our neighbourhoods

My Landlord
Deliver value for money

Our Performance

Welcome to our 2017-18 Annual Report, looking at how we have performed over the year. At North Devon Homes we want to ensure that we deliver excellent customer service. We work with customers to set service standards, and we monitor our performance so that customers know how we are doing.

You can find more information about our performance including our financial statements, service standards and full Value for Money statement on our website www.ndh-ltd.co.uk.



Tell us how you think we are doing
We always welcome feedback from our customers - whether that's a compliment, a complaint, or an idea for how we could improve - we would love to hear from you.

Equality & Diversity

At North Devon Homes we work with over 10,000 customers, contractors, staff and members of the public every year. When working with such a large and diverse group of people, we want to ensure, as a business, that our culture and the services we offer are accessible for everyone.

To do this we train our staff and develop a positive action culture through our values and embed equality as part of our business.

This year we have:

- Reviewed each and every complaint to ensure that they did not raise or identify any underlying Equality and Diversity issues.
- Carried out a range of adaptations to our customers' homes.
- The Board has considered each major decision it has made in terms of its impact on equality for customers.
- All policies and service standards approved in the year have been reviewed and amended to take into account best practice on equality.
- All contracts we have committed to with external agencies include specific requirements on treating customers fairly and with respect.



Welcome to Taw Wharf

North Devon's highly anticipated new housing development at Anchorwood Bank will be called 'Taw Wharf'. The name references the development's beautiful location beside the river Taw and also reflects the site's long maritime history. The area was formerly a busy port where a shipbuilding industry of national distinction thrived during the middle of the twentieth century.

Taw Wharf forms part of an historic, landmark, urban regeneration project located in the heart of Barnstaple. The huge 30 acre site will be transformed into a vibrant riverside community which will include a new and exciting development for shopping, eating and relaxing, and the regeneration of the Oliver Buildings area.

Creating Future Communities

We are working with our partners Pearce Construction to deliver this exciting new housing development. Building works are progressing well, having commenced from the centre of the river fronted area of the site and then working towards the new bridge.

The first new homes will be ready for occupation from spring 2019. The housing will be developed in 5 phases over a 4 year period; phase 1 of the development will consist of 42 new homes; 37 homes will be for outright sale and 5 new homes will be for shared ownership, where a minimum of a 40% share will be for sale.



Any profits we make from the sale of new homes will be reinvested into the provision of affordable homes in the local area.

This historic landmark regeneration project will help to create a new sustainable, vibrant neighbourhood, demonstrating our commitment to local, ethical development and creating communities where people want to live.

Income Team

Universal Credit

Over the past year the Income Team has been talking to many of our working age customers making sure they are well informed about Universal Credit. This is the biggest change to welfare benefits in a generation; we have been letting customers know how it might affect them and how best to avoid any difficulties. We have been encouraging everyone to make sure they are paying their rent on time, to be in the best possible position when the transition over to Universal Credit happens for each household.



New Tenancies

We have worked with 353 households to help get new tenancies off to a good start as well as assisting customers who have had difficulties with debts or benefits.



Members of Staff from North Devon Homes 'Income Team'

EVICCTIONS

Most North Devon Homes customers make paying their rent a top priority; however we do offer lots of support for anyone falling into difficulties to help get things straight again. For the minority who do not give proper priority to the payment of their rent we take legal action in the County Court. This year we started 21 new court cases. Six households did not keep to the terms of their court order and these resulted in evictions. This is a last resort for us and we always try to offer lots of support to anyone who is in financial difficulty.

What's next for The Income Team?

- We will be focussing extra support on vulnerable customers switching over to Universal Credit.
- We will be working to extend the payment options available to customers and help with moving over to the best option.
- We will be working closely with partner organisations to make sure that our customers have access to affordable financial services and the best deals for them.



Value for Money

As a community landlord, Value for Money (VfM) is a key driver of our culture and is integral in everything that we do, from setting strategies at Board level through to delivering good value services to our customers. Delivering VfM is one of the four main strategic objectives in our Corporate Plan - maximising the value of the services we provide within available resources. We aim to deliver a high quality service as efficiently and effectively as we can.

Our Regulator (the Regulator of Social Housing) has introduced a new VfM standard which is based on some key measures and during 2018/19 the Board will be reviewing its VfM strategy in light of the new requirements. The Regulator will look at the measures to judge efficiency across the sector.

Value for Money Targets

There were a number of VfM targets we set in 2016/17. Progress during 2017/18 is provided below.

- 

Reduce central overhead costs
Performance has improved but is still slightly worse than similar housing associations. This improvement has been largely driven by decreases in all overheads and particularly IT.
- 

Improve lettings performance and reduce void rent loss
Performance in terms of re-let times and rent loss has improved from the previous year, but both remain higher than similar housing associations. However, a significant improvement has been seen in 2017/18.
- 

Review Major Works and Cyclical Maintenance costs to identify areas of improvement
Our costs in this area have remained consistent from year to year, but our costs for major works service provision and cyclical maintenance management are higher than others.
- 

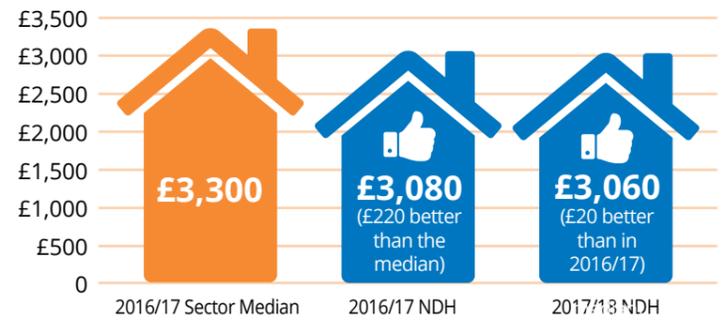
Implement Lean Thinking and Great Game methodology to provide tools for all staff to improve VfM
There are groups of staff trained in both approaches to help improve VfM and process reviews are underway.
- 

Trial innovative energy efficient approaches in our properties to save customers money
Tesla battery installation and Energiesprong (zero carbon) projects have been carried out on certain properties to trial the approach.
- 

Implement a new approach to customer involvement (C90) to bring customers, Board members and staff together to review performance and identify service delivery options that will deliver VfM
This has been fully implemented with the new C90 group successfully created.

Social Housing Cost per Property

(Measuring our average cost per property against other providers).



Social Value

The value that North Devon Homes provides to its customers includes a social return to communities. We invested £131k in our Independent Living Service to support older customers in their homes and are additionally using these staff out in the community to identify and resolve wider issues that vulnerable customers may have (for example repairs, planned works, neighbourhood issues).

Our youth project continues to deliver significant value for young people and their communities. The project actively engages with 90 young people on a weekly basis, having over 200 registered with the project, many of whom engage during the school holidays. In addition, 25 parents consult with youth workers on a regular basis some of whom have received intensive support over a number of months.



92%

Overall customer satisfaction with our service



90%

Customers satisfied with their neighbourhood



£4.7 million

Invested in our stock as part of our planned, cyclical and major works maintenance programme



34

New affordable homes delivered



19

Homes acquired from other housing associations



£7.2 million

Invested in the acquisition and construction of new homes



178

New affordable homes to be delivered over the next 3 years



98%

Customers satisfied with repairs works carried out in their home

Independent Living Services

What have we achieved in 2016/17?

The Independent Living Service

We have continued with the development of the Independent Living Service (ILS) to provide a range of value added services. The ILS team, based at our sheltered schemes, continue to support those living in our properties who may be struggling to maintain their independence. We are often the first point of contact for customers on sheltered schemes and will either be directly involved in supporting customers, or signposting to specialist agencies. The team also delivers the housing management service to sheltered schemes, an increasing part of our role. Our alarm service, Devon Homelink, remains the number one provider of emergency response alarms in North Devon.



97.87%
of customers satisfied
with support service



1062
Devon Homelink
customers



274
New Devon Homelink
customers



271
Devon Homelink customers
leaving the service



253
Support service
customers



20
New Support
service customers

What's next for The Independent Living Service?

- The ILS team will continue to provide the core services of support to the more vulnerable, and the housing management service on sheltered schemes. Alongside this we will develop specialism in some key areas of service delivery such as improving our understanding and responses to people living with dementia and responses to hoarding in our properties.
- We have launched an initiative at two sites to assess the demand for and impact of WiFi being freely available

in sheltered scheme lounges. Through the year we will monitor the uptake and usage to determine our strategy for WiFi and how it ties into the "digital by default" environment.

- We will continue to investigate how we can fulfil our partnership role as a community landlord with local external agencies. We are particularly interested in helping to develop joint services that support the most isolated and vulnerable, such as befriending services.



23
Support service
customers leaving
the service



Lamaton Park

Lamaton Park Redevelopment

Throughout the year we have been working very closely with our colleagues in the Development and Regeneration team to support the redevelopment of the Lamaton Park site in South Molton. This is an exciting opportunity to deliver new, purpose built units of accommodation that include features specifically designed to support people as they get older, and help them to maintain their independence. It's not often that this opportunity to help shape a new scheme comes along, and we have enthusiastically embraced this.

Partnership Working

We retain an ambition to deliver services in partnership with the health service, and through the year worked on a model of "step down" accommodation designed to help alleviate bed blocking in hospital. The model was presented to local commissioners at the end of the year and we will remain close to this initiative in the coming year.

Neighbourhoods



70
New ASB cases



67
Closed ASB cases



33
ASB cases open at year end

What's next for Neighbourhoods?

- Making further process improvements to the voids process following recommendations of the LEAN review of the service.
- Reviewing the Neighbourhood Rangers procedures.
- Updating letting service standards.
- The introduction of the new service charge system.

Neighbourhood Ranger

We carried out a review of the Neighbourhood Ranger role and identified ways to adapt the role so that the Neighbourhood Ranger's work can be focused on estate based activities.

Hoarding



We have developed an internal protocol outlining how we will deal with hoarding. We have been working with the Independent Living team to enable extra targeted resource to help address this issue. Both teams will be completing training in the coming months to support their work. We have made links to other agencies to discuss a coordinated approach to tackling hoarding.

Voids

We carried out a full review of the voids and lettings procedures and policy and updated these as required. Following this we conducted a LEAN review, which is a continuous improvement approach that focuses on reducing waste to deliver what our customers value most. This has created an action list to further improve and implement changes and improvements over the coming year. In addition, this has highlighted the need to implement technology processes, some of which will be linked to the new voids and lettings system.



218
Total lettings
(re-lets and first lets)



184
Total re-lets



34
New lettings
(first lets)



31
Tenancy changes
(acquisitions and successions)

Community Clear Up Days

In August we held a Clear Up Day at Gorwell and Frankmarsh and in September we held a similar event at Wrafton. The events were attended by a wide range of people from the local community including residents, councillors, police and staff from North Devon Homes. Everyone worked together to help improve the appearance of their local community by litter picking, weeding pathways and collecting unwanted items for disposal.



Gorwell Ball Park Makeover

The ball play area at Gorwell Park benefitted from redecoration works which give the park a fresh new look, thanks to a joint initiative between North Devon Homes and National Citizen Service (NCS).

National Citizen Service helps school leavers learn life skills. Part of their four week course involves the children organising and carrying out a social action project which will benefit the community.

The wall looks very colourful and really helps to brighten up the ball park area.



Customer Involvement



Local Conversations

5 Events
215 Customers



Focus Groups

3 Events
28 Customers



Digital Fayres

2 Events
23 Customers



C90 Meetings

3 Meetings



Scrutiny

11 Meetings
5 Reviews

C90

In June 2017 a new C90 Group was launched in place of the Customer Forum. The C90 Group is comprised of Board Members, Executive team, 4 customers and staff.

The C90 Group aims to ensure that customers have a voice in how their homes are managed. This will help to ensure that the Board is well informed from a customer perspective.

It is called C90 as it meets every 90 days and works together to look at performance information, different services provided to customers and identifies what is working well and what areas potentially need improving.

After every C90 meeting various customer involvement activities are carried out to capture customers' opinions, ensuring a good representation of customer feedback to influence decisions. The results from this are then shared with the C90 group at the next meeting and actioned.

Since it was launched the C90 group has worked on:

- Permission process
- Recharge policy
- Digital/social media
- A regular look at performance figures and recommending improvements.



There are many ways you can get involved which will feed into the C90 Customer Group. You can make a difference, no matter how much of your time you can spare. Here are some of the numerous ways you can help:

- Local Conversations
- Take part in online surveys, facebook forums, phone/text surveys
- Customer consultation – feedback on letters/leaflets via email
- Be a mystery shopper
- Become a Community Neighbourhood Advisor/Inspector in your area
- Become a member of Tenant 2 Tenant
- Hot topic focus groups/meetings
- Join our Scrutiny Panel

All customers are welcome to join us. If you would like to find out more or suggest how we can help in your community, please contact Tracey Williams on 01271 313384.



Award Finalists

C90 has been recognised nationally as innovative in Customer Involvement, being nominated as a finalist by the Chartered Institute of Housing in the UK Housing Awards 2018 in the 'Outstanding Approach to Tenant Involvement' category.

This is a huge accolade for NDH, recognising our new approach to customer involvement at a national level. Marc Rostock, Director of Neighbourhoods and Dawn Ash, C90 Chair were very proud to represent our customers at the London awards ceremony in May to collect our finalist certificate.

Scrutiny

Our Scrutiny Panel is a group of customers who meet once a month to scrutinise the services of North Devon Homes, recommending what needs improving. This year they have worked hard carrying out reviews on the regeneration of Forches and Woodville, the permission process, Universal Credit, and carried out a detailed review for C90 on the Customer Handbook by studying 32 other housing association websites.



Local Conversations

We have visited many areas across our communities to listen to your feedback face to face. This year we have visited customers in Wrafton, Braunton, Prieford, Ilfracombe, Woolacombe, Bratton Fleming, Forches and Woodville.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to talk to us or to fill out the survey. We really value your feedback and will use it to help improve the services that you receive.



Future Plans

- Continue listening and engaging with our customers by holding regular events such as local conversations, focus groups and digital community events.
- C90 and customers are currently working on improving the customer website and handbook for the benefit of all customers.
- Producing a new Customer Involvement Strategy.

Customer Care Team

Out of Hours Service

- We have revised the criteria used to categorise Out of Hours repairs. This has simplified the information the Out of Hours agents refer to, which makes it much quicker for them to diagnose the issue and identify the correct course of action. We have also revised some of our contact arrangements for the Out of Hours service, which means that only emergency callouts where there is a Health & Safety risk to residents or property will be referred to the contractor. This has reduced the number of callouts which, in turn, has reduced the callout costs associated with the Out of Hours service.
- The call quality assessments have helped us identify both strengths and developmental areas; some calls we have assessed have been used for training our service provider's new recruits.
- We continue to schedule quarterly feedback sessions to discuss any issues and move the service forward. This has really helped us to strengthen the relationship with our Out of Hours service provider.



Channel Shift

- We have been promoting our website for customers to use to contact us and have seen a gradual increase in the number of issues being reported via this channel.
- We have switched our payment provider to Allpay, which is giving customers greater flexibility when making payments with options available online, via an automated telephone system, the Allpay app, or by a recurring card payment. The response to these additional methods has been really positive, with customers particularly liking the fact that most of these payment options are available 24/7.



Recharges

- A new Recharge Policy has been drafted. This aims to be much clearer about what we will recharge customers for, and the rationale for this. We have also introduced a menu of charges, so that we are able to advise customers of the cost of the recharge up front and so avoid any nasty surprises later on.
- Our internal processes have been subject to a LEAN review and as a result will be streamlined. This will make it much easier for us to raise recharges and avoid any delays getting invoices sent to customers.
- We have consulted with Customer Groups on the proposed changes.

What's next for the Customer Care Team?

- Payment options - changes to our direct debit arrangements; going paperless and offering far more flexible payment options to customers.
- Review of the payment options available at Head Office to ensure we offer the most efficient methods for both our customers and for our business.
- Garages – strategic disposal of sites where there is little or no demand or where the costs to refurbish these are disproportionate to the rents we will recover. On those sites where we have identified major works are required, we will consult local residents to ensure we will have demand for garage facilities following the refurbishment.



83.33%
of letters responded to within 10 working days



42,430
calls answered during the year (Approx 170 per working day)



88.28%
customer satisfaction with call handling



969
Response repairs surveys conducted over the telephone (against a target of 720)

Opening Hours

Monday - Friday: 08.30 - 17.00

Head Office number: 01271 312500

Emergency out of hours number: 0800 917 0619



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 ? 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.

Development & Regeneration



Church View, Newport

January 2018 saw the completion of the development at Church View, Newport. This development has provided four affordable 2 bedroom houses for rent in the Barnstaple area.

Lamaton Park, South Molton

The existing building at Lamaton Park, South Molton has been demolished, making way for a new development that will provide 33 affordable homes for people over 55. Upon completion, the homes will be adaptable for a range of needs. The development is due for completion in August 2019.



Kingsway, South Molton



This development was completed in April 2018 providing a 2 bedroom bungalow for open market sale.



Taw Wharf, Barnstaple

We are pleased to announce that works at Anchorwood Bank are progressing well since the start on site in January 2018. This development will provide 172 new homes by 2021 and will create a new neighbourhood within the heart of Barnstaple.

Harman Court and Goodleigh View, Gorwell



Harman Court



Goodleigh View

We are pleased to announce that the development at Gorwell was completed in April. This development will provide seven new affordable homes at Harman Court and sixteen new affordable homes at Goodleigh View.

Jordan Close, Barnstaple



We are delighted to announce that work commenced on site at Jordan Close, Barnstaple in early February 2018. This development will provide two adapted affordable bungalows and one affordable house which are due for completion in December 2018.

Churchill Court, South Molton

The development at Churchill Court, South Molton was completed in March 2018 providing four new affordable 2 bedroom houses and three 3 bedroom houses for the South Molton area.

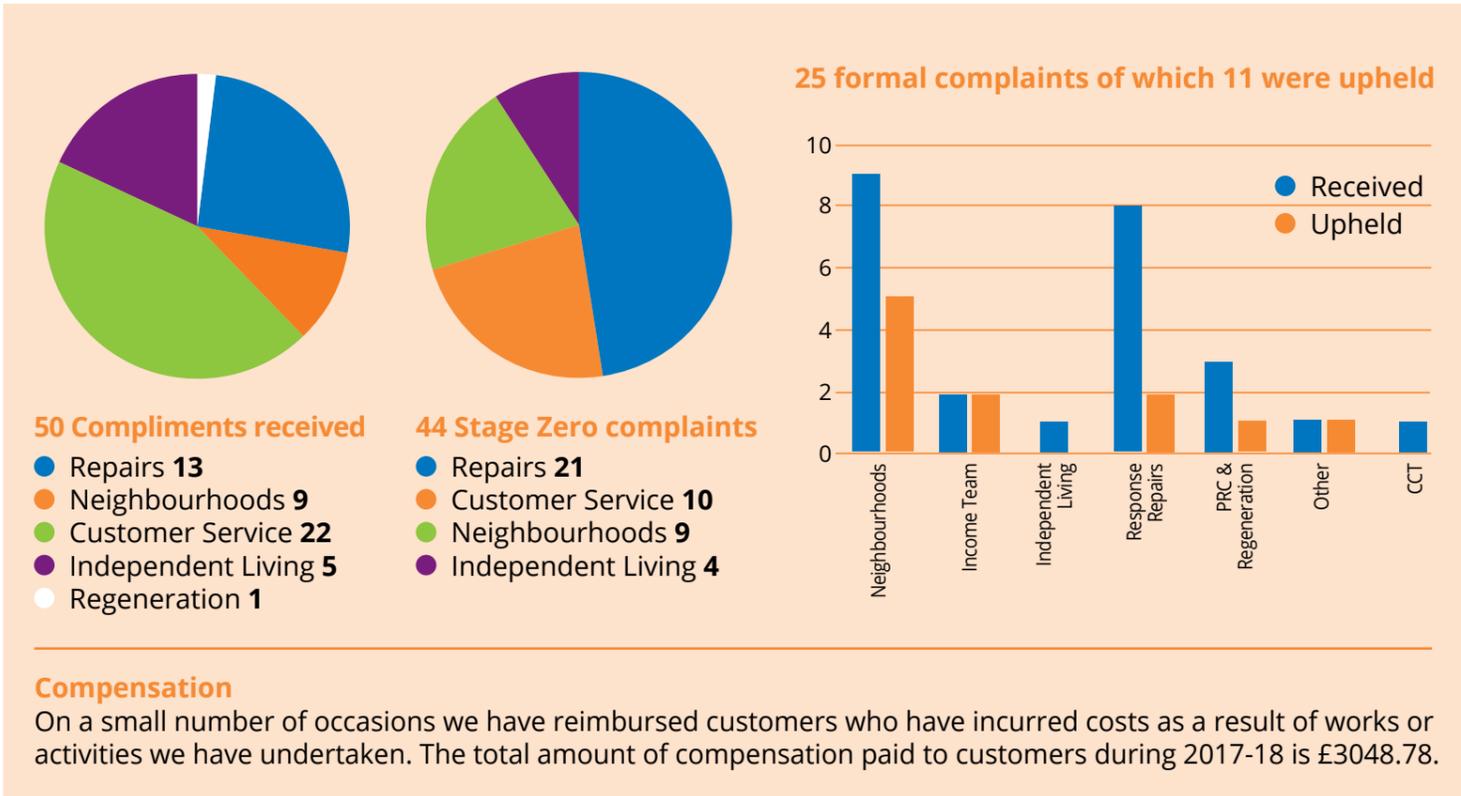
Section 106 acquisitions

During early 2018 we received 14 new affordable homes in phases at Crookmans Close, Barnstaple from developer Wainhomes.

Future Developments

We are in the process of planning our Regeneration and Development programme for the next three years. We plan to develop 321 new homes to meet a range of needs including rented, shared ownership and market sale. We aim to grow our total stock to 3,400 homes by 2021. To help achieve these aims we will work in partnership to create and enhance communities where people want to live.

Complaints & Feedback



If you would like to give feedback on our services, forward a compliment or make a complaint you can contact us in the following ways:

- Via our website www.ndh-ltd.co.uk
- Call our **Customer Services Coordinator** on **01271 313361**
- Write to us at **North Devon Homes, Westacott Road, Barnstaple EX32 8TA.**

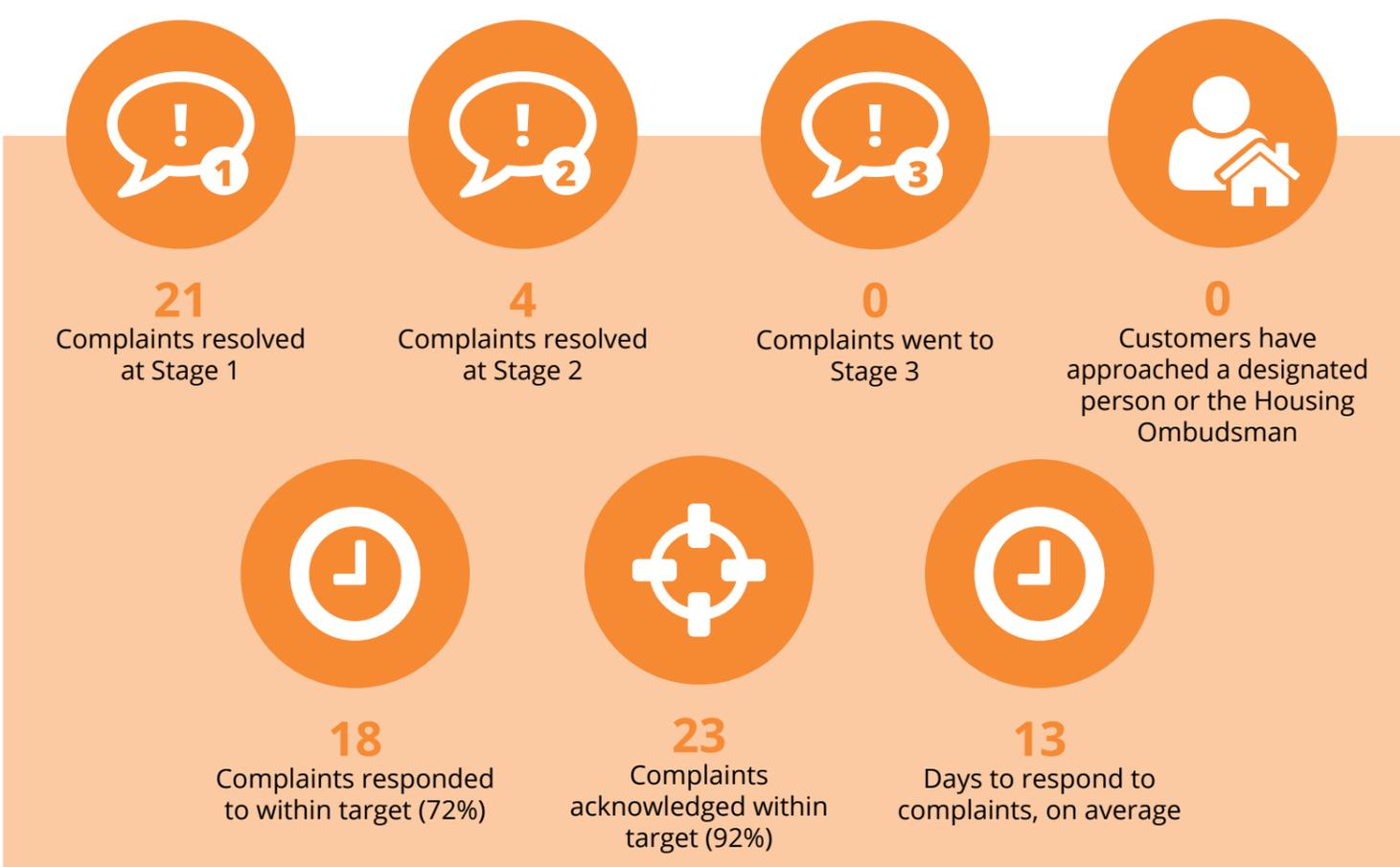
What have we achieved in 2017/18?

- We wanted to resolve more issues/complaints raised by customers at their first contact with us, and therefore continue to see an increase in stage 0 complaints.
We have successfully been capturing more of this information and are pleased to report that stage 0 complaints have increased by 12%.
- We wanted to aspire to achieve a 100% response rate to stage 1 complaints within 15 working days.
This year our response rates have dropped 21%, this is due in part to the lower number of complaints being received. Some of these were communicated to customers so they were aware of the delay. In addition, we found there were some quite complex complaints taking more time than we had hoped to investigate.
- Share complaints and learning information with Board Members and customers at the regular C90 meetings to give an understanding of complaints.
Information is presented every quarter at C90 meetings about the number of complaints and which team has received them. Further information is available on request.

During 2017-18 we reviewed the customer feedback policy making the following changes:

North Devon Homes no longer has a Customer Complaints Panel for a designated person as part of the complaints process. This was changed because of our success in resolving complaints within our own process and the Customer Complaints Panel had never been used since its introduction as part of the Localism Act 2011. If we receive a request in the future, we will signpost customers either to an MP or a local councillor.

We have introduced a new process for our customers enabling them to have a formal review by a Senior Manager of a decision that we have made. This could and has included things such as being denied permission for non standard items such as a shed larger than 8 x 6.



We would like to thank all our customers who have taken the time to contact us with their complaints and compliments.

Looking After Your Home

Response Repairs 2017/18

During the past year, Home2Home has continued to grow with additional skilled tradesmen joining the team. There has been further investment in equipment and the fleet, enabling better repair coverage to our housing stock. Home2Home growth means that they are able to undertake more work in-house.



96.47%
Response repairs completed on time

Planned Maintenance

In 2017-18 439 units of planned maintenance works were completed. 65 customers refused planned works and 31 units were reassessed, meaning that upon inspection, the works did not need doing.



322

Planned maintenance satisfaction surveys completed



95.65%

Customers satisfied with the completed works (308 out of 322 customers)



£1.24m

Spent on planned major works to existing homes

New repairs software system

The introduction of a repairs software system has been initialised and Home2Home are currently working towards a fully implemented system. This will support a fully functional repairs system which will ensure better productivity and communication.

It will ensure that Home2Home Operatives working in the region, and back office staff, have clear visibility of all jobs in the system.

Warehouse Stock

Our in-house storage warehouse has now been stocked and is supplying our Operatives direct. This has in many cases negated the need for downtime at builders merchants and enables Operatives to spend more time carrying out repairs works in customers' homes. In addition, bulk buying of materials has provided savings.

What's next for Response Repairs?

- We will continue to strengthen the Home2HomeTeam.
- Our warehouse stock will be continuously monitored to ensure essential materials are available for our day to day activities.
- To continue to deliver high quality repairs work keeping customer satisfaction with the service high, and ensuring repairs are completed on time.



98.47%
Emergency repairs completed on time



97.54%
Urgent repairs completed on time



100%
Satisfaction surveys for completed work sent out



100%
Properties with a valid gas certificate at year end



Community Involvement

Generations Together



This year Young People from our Bridging the Gap Project have linked up with our customers out and about in the community.

In October 2017 they volunteered to clear weeds and moss from the pathways at Glebeland Villas then joined some older customers for a cream tea at Bishops Nympton Community Hall, as well as delivering cream teas to customers who were unable to get to the hall.

Ryan (Senior Youth Member and our Home 2 Home apprentice), who joined to help, said "It was great that my friends and peers could see what my working day looks like."

In April and October 2017 staff from North Devon Homes, customer volunteers and members of our 'Bridging the Gap' project, visited the Forches and Woodville estates in Barnstaple to conduct surveys 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 surveys were carried out to assist North Devon Homes' Customer Scrutiny Group with reviews on our regeneration projects. The survey findings will be used to help us shape future development projects.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

Young People and staff from the Bridging the Gap project joined residents at Medard House to play board games and enjoy festive mince pies.

Young People and the Community Involvement Team hosted a Community Christmas Lunch for 30 customers in the Whiddon Valley area.

Everyone who attended enjoyed a 2 course Christmas lunch with all the trimmings and joined in with a quiz and raffle. Lots of festive fun and laughter was had by all.

Thanks to local businesses (Tesco for their food donations, Mrs Smudgers kitchen for cupcakes, Scoffs chip shop, Rolys Fudge Pantry and Catherine Bishop Jewellery) and staff who donated generous raffle prizes which helped to raise funds for our Young People's Project.



Behind the Scenes Film Premiere

In April young people and staff from our Bridging the Gap project held a 'Willy Wonka' themed movie premiere style event at Ilfracombe Embassy Cinema to showcase "Behind the Scenes", a film starring the young people, which they also wrote and produced themselves.

Young people and staff dressed as characters from 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'; the cinema was decorated with colourful sweets, lollipops and chocolates that were handmade by the young people during their weekly youth clubs.

This film was created as part of a project working jointly with the Plough Arts Centre and Ilfracombe Embassy Cinema and was funded by the National Lottery's Awards for All.



Around 50 young people were involved in the project which aimed to use drama and film to develop important life skills such as problem solving, team work and communication and also to help build confidence and self esteem, encouraging young people to overcome fear and shyness.

The project initially started as a drama group which, led by the young people, developed into creating a film about their youth club using a Willy Wonka theme. They worked together to

think of different ways of filming their youth club, using mobile phones, a video recorder and a go pro camera. The footage was then edited by Sophie Hatch from the Plough Arts Centre.

The young people worked really hard on the project and had lots of fun along the way.

The film is available to watch on YouTube. If you would like to watch it please search 'Behind the Scenes - Bridging the Gap - North Devon Homes'.

OSMINGTON BAY ADVENTURE WEEKEND

30 young people from our Bridging the Gap Project spent an action packed weekend in July at Osmington Bay PGL, completing activities including raft building, mountain biking, climbing and the zip wire. Everyone had a great weekend in the beautiful Dorset countryside.



Charity Race Night



On 1st June members of our Bridging the Gap young people's project and Community Involvement Team held a Charity Race Night at Barnstaple Rugby Club.

The event was held to raise money for the project which runs two youth clubs at Forches in Barnstaple and Slade Valley in Ilfracombe. These clubs provide a safe environment for

important out of school activities, giving young people of different ages and backgrounds opportunities to make new friendships and build on existing ones and provides an important safety net for young people who have problems and issues in their lives 'Bridging the Gap' is co-designed by young people responding to these very real identified needs that if left unfilled could impact their adult lives and life choices.

The event was a fun filled evening of horse racing action hosted by Atlantic Entertainment, who did

a superb job of keeping the expectant crowd on the edge of their seats. In addition, a raffle and charity auction was held with some great prizes on offer, kindly donated by local businesses and supporters of the project.

There was also a special race featuring members of staff from North Devon Homes and contractors who work with the organisation, dressed in an array of dazzling fancy dress costumes competing in an obstacle course race on hobby horses.

Thank you to everyone who supported the event and for the generous donations for raffle and auction prizes.