



Your Local Standard

designed by customers for customers _____ annual report 2019

TENTH ISSUE

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Changing times in a changing world

What do they mean for communities like ours?

With the uncertainty of Brexit and the economy looming over the country, it's hard to see what may or may not happen once October has past. North Devon Homes (NDH) is trying to ensure we cover all avenues to make sure that whatever happens and wherever these changing times take us, we are able to maximise on value for money, services provided and that we continue to provide the best homes for our customers.

One of the ways NDH is doing this is by working closely with our customers and local communities. By working together we can make sure

that customers are helping to shape the future of housing with us. With different customer groups advising on different aspects of the business, North Devon Homes can maximise inputs and effectiveness across all the work we do.

Over the past year we have been working with our customer groups to ensure that everything we do in the business maximises our Value for Money (VfM) so that if we are affected by Brexit we are in the best possible place to deal with the costs that may arise.

We're also involving customers in our Digital by 2020 Project (DB2020), which

will see the launch of new technologies and processes in the coming year. We've been preparing for this during the last financial year and so far everything looks set to see a fantastic change for us and our customers. We launched a new project space to run alongside DB2020 in Braunton last December, which has been a real asset to our customer C90 meetings.

North Devon Homes offers something special. We have a great team, a supportive range of customers and, with the changes coming, we are holding on to what is most important to our customers and team: **the community.**

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 2018-19 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, good value and that we continue to work with our customers to set service standards and performance levels so that they can see how we are doing.



What is C90?

After consultation with some customers it was decided that we needed a core customer group who would regularly meet with our Board and Exec Team as well as other members of staff. The group, which consists of four customers, meets every 90 days with two members of our Board and two members of our Exec Team. They run through a variety of agenda items from different staff members; this may include reporting, marketing or financial information. All with the aim of strategising the best way forward for NDH and its customers.

You will read a lot more about C90 throughout this Annual Report.

Working together with customers

A key theme of this report is working with our customers. We've upped our game over the past 12 months and have now got many customer groups working with us on various projects. As well as C90, Tenant2Tenant and Scrutiny Panel that you will have heard mentioned before, we now have Fresh Ideas, which is a group of customers working on providing feedback and ideas on anything from marketing materials, customer handbooks and the website. We have also, as part of the DB2020 Project, started a Customer Journey Mapping group; this is where customers can come along and have a say on the process and impact of a subject within the business. Topics covered so far have included Rents, Repairs and Neighbourhoods. We'll continue to work closely with our customers on more as we go forward.

NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION - TOGETHER WITH TENANTS

The Housing Federation is leading on an initiative called Together with Tenants. A strategy aimed to challenge some social landlords working and liaising with their customers on all aspects of the business.

It may already sound familiar as we have helped lead the way with our own groups working with customers. We have shared this with our C90 customer group and also approached the NHF to become part of the leading group on the campaign.

Their feedback was that NDH has been a real influence in their campaign and our groups are being used as an example of how things should be done – a real win for our customers and our team!



Working Tenant2Tenant

It has been a busy year for the Tenant2Tenant team who have helped us support our customers in many different ways. The areas that they have been involved in have been wide ranging and varied and have been a huge asset to the NDH team assisting them in their work with customers.

The chart below shows the number of visits the team made to other tenants per month. In total they made 25 visits during the year April 2018 to March 2019, helping

customers to understand how to access services, move home or get the support or advice that they needed.

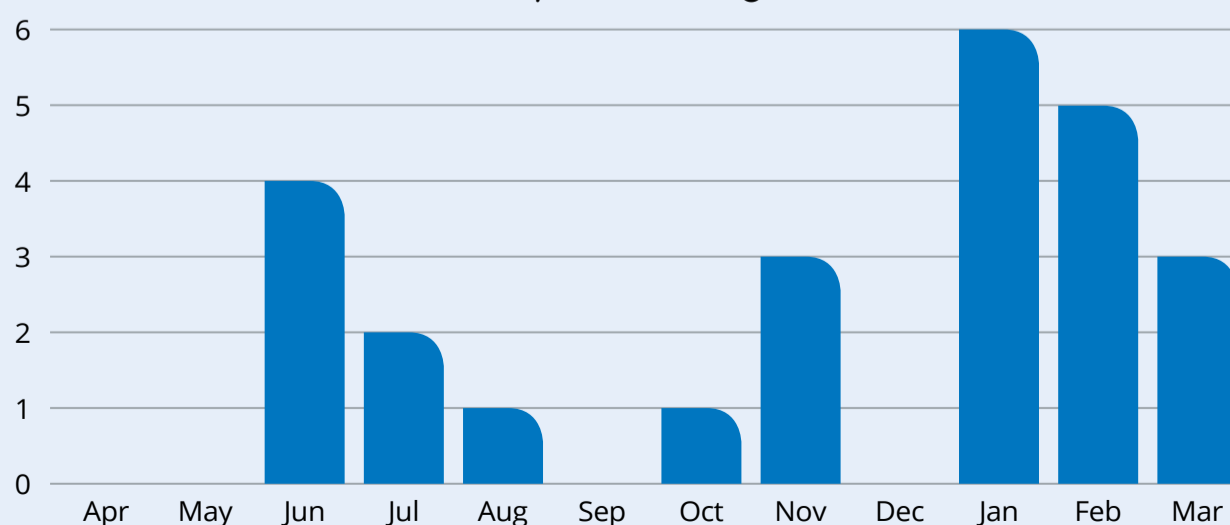
There are three volunteers for the T2T group: Dawn Ash, Patsy Chapple and Tracey Hearn. They are all elected members of the C90 group and have had training to help them in their T2T role.

Dawn said "We feel that it is a valued service, creating a 'bridge' between NDH and its customers. The work that we do is rewarding especially

when a problem is solved to the satisfaction of all involved.

Our phone numbers are 0774 0410970 and 07811 273671. If you think that we could help, please give us a ring. The only areas that we don't get involved in are anti-social behaviour cases and the formal complaint process but we will signpost you to where you need to go to get help. We have found that these cases were beyond our expertise and were best left to the experts."

Number of visits year ending 31 March 2019



Income Team

Rent Arrears

The Income Team has worked alongside customers to keep our rent arrear levels low at just 0.6% through our prevention and early intervention work. We've focused our efforts on the three risk areas for debt – the beginning of a tenancy, when there's a change in benefit entitlement, and at the end of a tenancy.

This final level of 0.6% is one of the lowest across the country and we're extremely proud of the work the team have done to achieve this.



426
Properties let at affordable rent level



0.60%
or **£88,142**
Current tenant rent arrears



430
Financial inclusion / welfare support officer referrals



0.70%
or **£101,964**
Former tenant rent arrears



6
Evictions for rent arrears



2,275
Properties let at social rent level

Credit Union Sustainability Partnership (CUSP)

In the last year we set up a new partnership with eight other housing associations creating a new Credit Union, Westcountry Savings and Loans, for our customers and local communities. Since launching in September 2018 we've seen a great take up in accounts and people using their low cost loan rates. The innovative partnership aims to bring Credit Union services to customers, communities and staff to tackle the issue of high cost credit by providing affordable, trusted financial products.



MONEY MATTERS

The Money Matters service worked with 420 households over the year helping to access an extra £130,000 for customers. We tailor the service to individual needs helping with everything from budgeting and debts; troubleshooting universal credit claims; and applying for benefits and discretionary payments. We've been able to improve household income and reduce outgoings.

Payment Options

At the beginning of the year we looked at modernising some of our payment options available to our customers. After rolling out the Allpay payment app and online services it has proved highly popular over the past year with around 10,000 transactions being made via one of their services.

Recurring Card Payments have become a good alternative to setting up standing orders or making payments via the telephone and 300 customers have now switched to this payment method. More changes are coming later this year for cash and cheque payments which you can read about on the Customer Care Team page.



Working together

We've worked closely with a range of partners who are able to improve financial wellbeing for our customers, including Westcountry Savings and Loans, who have brought affordable financial services to North Devon; South West Water and the LEAP project, helping to keep down utility costs in the home; and the Positive People programme, helping individuals access employment and realise their potential. We've built on our relationships with North Devon Council and benefits agencies to make sure that households in crisis get access to support to sustain their tenancies. As a result we have had just six evictions for rent arrears over the year.



What's next for The Income Team?

- We will be working with customers to get everyone paying their rent on time with no debts between payments
- We will provide information to customers about welfare reforms and provide practical support to those most vulnerable
- We will be working towards better digital access to customer accounts
- We will maintain our income collection and deal with rent debts so that we can continue to provide vital services for all.

Value for Money

As a community landlord, Value for Money (VfM) is a key driver and is integral to our culture and everything that we do. We work closely with our C90 and Scrutiny groups to deliver VfM targets to meet our objectives in our Corporate Plan. We aim to deliver a high

quality service as efficiently and effectively as we can.

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has identified seven key measures to see how well we are performing. We have set ourselves targets

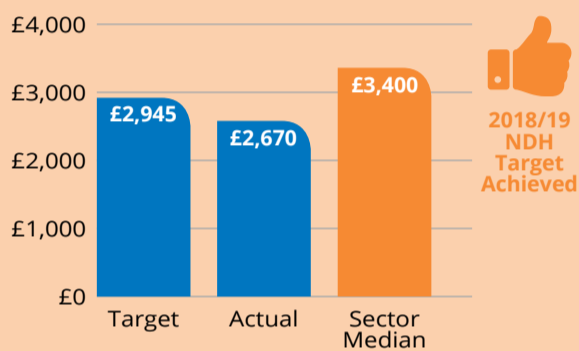
against these measures, and also against three other VfM measures that the NDH Board has selected. Our performance against these is below. A full VfM statement is published within our Financial Statements on our website which can be found at www.ndh-ltd.co.uk.

Seven RSH Measures

2017/18 Sector Median (Orange) | 2018/19 NDH Group Results (Blue)

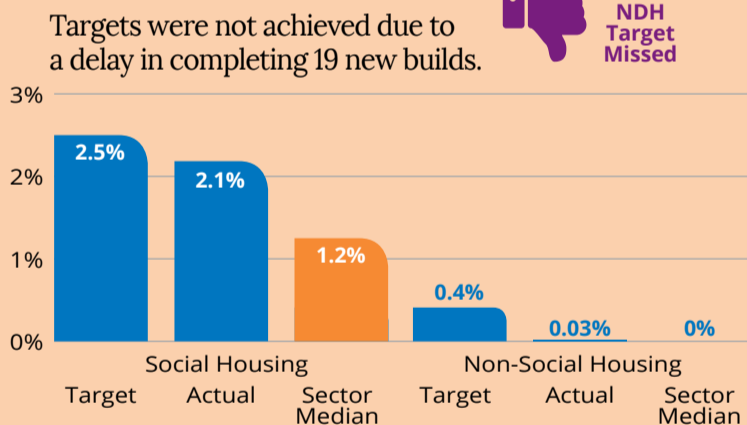
1. Headline Social Housing Cost per unit

How much it costs to manage and maintain one property.



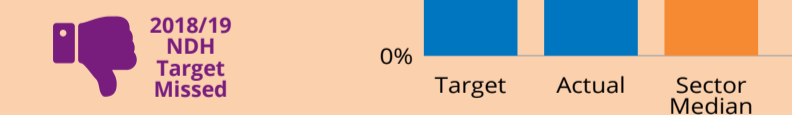
2. New Supply

The number of new properties we delivered as a % of all our properties – split into social housing, and non-social housing.



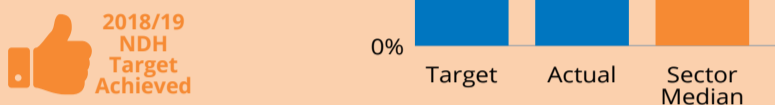
3. Reinvestment

How much we spent on building new homes and investing in current homes, as a % of the value of all the homes we own.



4. Gearing

How much debt we have; the higher the figure, the more debt compared to our assets.



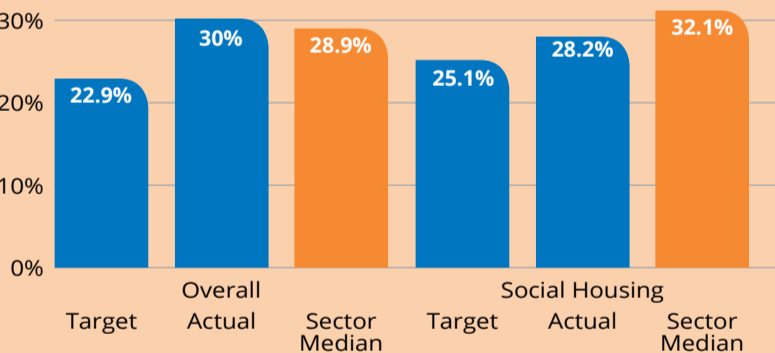
5. Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation – Major Repairs Included

How much finance we have available and how much we can invest; the higher the % the more capacity we have.



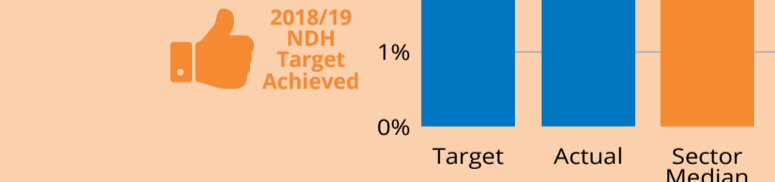
6. Operating Margin

Surplus made overall before exceptional expenses are taken into account.



7. Return on Capital Employed

This measures how efficiently we are investing our capital resources.



£6.7 million
Invested in the delivery of new homes in 2018/19



£3.3 million
Invested into our existing homes as part of our planned, cyclical and major works programme



88%
Overall customer satisfaction with our service



97%
Satisfaction with response repairs carried out in 2018/19

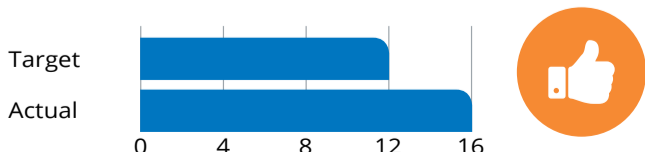


94%
Satisfaction with Planned Maintenance works carried out 2018/19

Other Measures

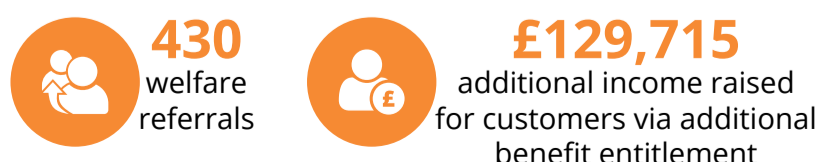
1. Changes as a result of customer feedback

Every change we made directly as a result of what customers have said through our C90 customer involvement structure.



2. Financial welfare referrals having a positive impact for customers

This measures referrals and financial benefits for customers.



3. Staff volunteer days linked to customers and community

The target for 2018/19 was to set up the volunteering scheme ready to start in April 2019. This was achieved and staff volunteer days are being delivered in 2019/20.



Independent Living Services

Equality & Diversity



We have been invited to be part of a local equality and diversity partnership with the local diversity charity, Sunrise. We are pursuing this and will update you as things develop.

SAFEGUARDING

Following the introduction of the Care Act 2014, we responded to the duties on housing associations by launching comprehensive and intensive training for all front line staff and their managers. Since 2016 (the first training cohort) we have delivered the training to in excess of 125 people. Although the Care Act specifically refers to Adult Safeguarding, we deliver Safeguarding training which covers children and young people at the same session.

From autumn 2019 we will be starting a programme of refresher training for those who have already been through the intensive session, as well as maintaining the intensive sessions for new starters.

We will also develop the systems to ensure that contractors, involved customers, and others we may work with are fully aware of their safeguarding duties and our procedures.

What's next for The Independent Living Service?

- Establishment of specialist Hoarding Intervention Team – For customers who are struggling with managing hoarding, but who are unsure how to tackle it.
- Working to launch Mental Health service for customers – this would be a low level intervention service for those who maybe struggling to cope but unable to access a statutory service.
- Individual fire risk assessments – working with our sheltered scheme customers to identify their risks and work with local fire and rescue service to share information they may need to save lives.
- Emergency Alarm Maintenance – working with our contractor Chubb we are working on a preventative maintenance schedule to ensure all alarms are fit for purpose.



Getting online

Kiosks and broadband have been installed at two of our supported sites – Mariners and Medard; and also in reception at Westacott Road. The Kiosks allow customers to access the internet via a large tablet that comes pre-loaded with useful sites and apps. Wi-Fi is also provided so that customers can get on the internet using their own devices. The installations are part of our drive to enable people to explore and use digital services and support NDH's Digital programme.

NEW CHARGING POLICY

This year a new charging policy was approved by C90 which we think makes the charging for services fairer. Since the loss of Supporting People funding in 2015, the Independent Living Service has been funded by a mixture of charged-for services and contributions from North Devon Homes.

We have taken the opportunity to make sure that any NDH support is consistently applied and that it is only available to NDH tenants. We have also created a charging policy to be applied to non-NDH tenants to support us in being fair when our services are required by external agencies.

Devon Homelink

We currently help 1,150 people living across North Devon achieve peace of mind by providing an emergency alarm with 24/7 call centre response.

This is how we compare to other services available:

	Devon Homelink	Lifeline 24	Telecare 24	Age UK	Westward
Set up fee	£0	£47	£42	£69 - £129	£0
Minimum Contract (in months)	2	3	3	3	3
Local service	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Free Repairs Service	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Free Parts Replacement	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Attend same day or within 24 hours	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Additional fees in the fine print	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Recent testimonials

“ Very satisfied with [the ILSO's] support – we are treated with respect, [the ILSO] is very professional in their job. ”

“ Really very good – would be lost without them. In general keep me on the straight and narrow, helped me attend appointments. It's a pleasure for you to come and see me. You're A1. ”

“ [ILSO] is a brilliant support worker. They're professional, effective and engaging. Indeed they are an asset to the support service at NDH. ”

Neighbourhoods



Abandoned Vehicles

We have been working in partnership with North Devon Council to deal with the problems associated with abandoned vehicles. This has been a growing problem and there has been a high number of vehicles abandoned recently. Whilst following our own internal procedures and legal processes, we have also been working with the Council to action removals and disposal of these cars. If you are experiencing problems and suspect that a vehicle has been abandoned, please let us know. If you are storing vehicles inappropriately please be advised that it is likely that we will be taking action on behalf of your neighbours and others affected.

Supporting our customers

Every day we deal with complex support needs such as mental health, domestic violence and child protection. We work with agencies to support people to stay in their homes and manage their tenancies.

Removing Fixed Term Tenancies

Back in November our Scrutiny Panel reviewed our use of Fixed Term Tenancies and deemed them poor value for us and our customers. In December the review went to our Board and they agreed and made the business decision to move all customers onto more secure assured tenancies.

Lettings

Our lettings officer works really hard to get to know all new customers during their pre-tenancy interviews. She assesses all the reference requests

and risk assessments to ensure the best match possible to our homes and neighbourhoods, to ensure customers can manage their tenancies with us.



218
Properties re-let during the year



38
Mutual Exchanges facilitated



3,235
Households in our communities supported by the team



9
Neighbourhoods related Stage 1 complaints received



5
Neighbourhoods related Stage 1 complaints fully or partially upheld following investigation



ACTION DAYS

Our team has been working really hard this year organising many action days in our neighbourhoods. Last year the team took part in five clean up days through the year. The areas tackled included Lower Moor, Westacott Road, Gorwell and Frankmarsh, Queen's Avenue and Slade Valley in Ilfracombe. More action days are planned for 2019/20 as well as tying into more volunteer days through our new volunteering scheme.



What's next for Neighbourhoods?

- Fixed Term Tenancies – we're working through moving all customers to assured tenancies following the change of our tenancy agreements
- More community days – we're working with our customers to provide more action days throughout the local communities
- New systems and working with customers – with the DB2020 project ongoing, our team is working with customers to ensure any changes are fit for purpose for our customers' needs.

Customer Involvement



Local Conversations

6 Events
146 Customers



C90 Meetings

4 Meetings



Scrutiny

12 Meetings
3 Reviews

FRESH IDEAS

Based on recommendations from our Customer Scrutiny Panel, a group of customers has formed our 'Fresh Ideas' working group to look at refreshing all our customer information leaflets. Meeting every two weeks in the informal setting of the local community centre, the Fresh Ideas group has been central in the redesign of our 'Getting our Permission' and 'Keeping a Pet' leaflets, which you can find on our website www.ndh-ltd.co.uk. If you would like to know more about this group, or would like to get involved, please call our Community Involvement colleague Tracey on 01271 312500 who would be delighted to talk this through with you.

Based on recommendations from our Customer Scrutiny Panel and C90, our Fresh Ideas focus group has been busy helping us co-design more customer information leaflets, which you can find on our website under 'Publications'.

C90 Update

Since its launch in June 2017 the C90 Group (comprising of Board Members, the Executive team, customers and staff) has been meeting every 90 days to look at performance information, different services provided to customers and identify what is working well and what areas could potentially need improving. After every C90 meeting various customer involvement activities are organised to explore things further with our customers. The results from these are then shared with the C90 group and actions agreed. C90 aims to consult at least 100 customers every 90 days. During the first 90 days we consulted 107 customers, getting good representation of customer feedback to help influence decisions from a customer perspective.

The C90 group has worked on a wide range of things including:

- Permission process for customers who want to make changes to their homes. C90 has suggested and made improvements to how we deal with permission requests.
- Recharge policy – customers have been consulted on the policy and made some recommendations which are being implemented to make this fairer.
- Social media – Cosmic attended a C90 meeting and led a workshop about social media. Customers have been

consulted and have been letting us know how they use the internet and how they would like us to communicate with them – this information will help to inform our Digital Plan for the future.

- The C90 group has also been reviewing and interrogating our performance indicators and using this to suggest improvements and/or to commission further work to give them a better understanding of how customers feel.



What's next for Customer Involvement?

- Refresh our customer involvement activities to develop a blended approach which will include a better digital offer and face to face community activities. Our customers will continue to be involved in the development of this.
- Customers co-designing our Tenant Handbook with a fresh approach on the information we provide to customers.
- Working with a wide range of customers and C90 to develop our Digital by 2020 project.

Customer Journey Mapping

This year saw the start of a series of Customer Journey Events where customers joined us and have helped us review what we do and help design our service offers for future. The events look at what customers see, and how this works and makes them feel. The events have been held at our Community Centre in Barnstaple and at our community and office space in Braunton.

These events have been very popular, with customers giving us their ideas on how we can improve our offer for paying rent, neighbourhood issues and how to report repairs to name but a few. All the comments and feedback during the sessions were gathered and used to map the customers' perspective of each process. This has been a real success and helped us significantly.

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATE

Our Scrutiny Panel has been busy carrying out a detailed review for C90 on the customer handbook. It has studied over 30 other housing association websites to identify good practice, and to see how we can improve our handbook and our website to benefit our customers. Thank you to our Scrutiny Panel for all their hard work.

In October, C90 and the Scrutiny Panel reviewed the Tenancy Management Policy, in particular our approach to Fixed Term Tenancies. They looked at the Government policy that started this type of tenancy arrangement, recent research into the effect such tenancies have on customers and communities, and the cost to NDH of administering them. The Scrutiny Panel asked that

customers with Fixed Term Tenancies were consulted to research further and gain an understanding on the local effect of this. After reviewing all the consultation results, the Scrutiny Panel made recommendations to C90 in October that NDH discontinue further Fixed Term Tenancies and move customers towards lifetime tenancies (Assured Tenancies), giving people greater security in their homes. The Board considered and accepted this and our Neighbourhoods team has been converting tenancies as a result.

This is a great piece of work that has improved security for a significant number of customers and reduced costs, so that we can do more of the things that add value!

Customer Care Team

Happy Birthday to us

This year the Customer Care Team turned 10. The team was created in 2009 to help offer customers a better service by closing the gaps between teams. Before then we published separate, individual phone numbers for customers to use depending on the reason for the calls. Your feedback told us that this was confusing for customers and also staff. By creating one central specialist team, we are now able to provide a team of experienced staff members who have knowledge of the whole business and who are able to deal with enquiries from start to finish.



444,793
Calls in 10 years



44
Members of the team in the last 10 years



Over 3m
Minutes spent helping customers

GARAGES

We refurbished garage sites at Congrams Close and Leigh Villas in 2018-19, improving the overall appearance of the environment and standard of our garages.

STAGE 0 COMPLAINTS

Stage 0 complaints are, quite simply, opportunities that we identify when customers call us for things that we could have done better and that are resolved by the Customer Care Team when we hear about them. These are recorded to identify any recurring issues and improve how we manage things going forward. The Customer Care Team handled 52 Stage 0 complaints in 2018-19.

Out of Hours

The Out of Hours service ensures that all of our customers can report emergency repairs when our offices are closed so no one has to wait until the next working morning. We are constantly looking to improve the quality of the information that the Out of Hours team uses and now conduct call quality assessments each month to help us review the service moving forward.

We do ask that customers only use the Out of Hours service in an emergency and this is generally working very well – thank you!

OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday: 8.30 - 17.00
 Closed on Bank Holidays
 w: www.ndh-ltd.co.uk
 e: enquiries@ndh-ltd.co.uk
 Head Office: 01271 312500
 Emergency Out of Hours: 0800 9170 619

CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS 2019

Christmas Eve: 8.30 - 13.00
 Christmas Day: Closed
 Boxing Day: Closed
 New Year's Eve: 8.30 - 16.00
 New Year's Day: Closed
 All other days as normal.



Online Kiosk

We have recently installed a self service kiosk, a computer with internet access, at our Head Office on Westacott Road. This facility is open to all customers and will enable people to access the

internet, progress benefits claims, or register on the housing waiting list. Please take a look when you next pay us a visit and let the team know if you need any help using the technology.



970
Response Repairs telephone surveys carried out (against a target of 720)



38,745
Calls answered during the year



95%
Letters responded to within 10 working days



96%
Customer satisfaction with call handling

What's next for The Customer Care Team?

- Cash and Cheque Phase Out**
 Our involved customers have looked at our offer and noted that we are unusual in continuing to take cash payments. There are lots of complications in the procedures and agreement that you need to have in place and we have now reached a stage where very few customers regularly visit our offices to make a payment by cash.
 Having explored the issue with our customer groups, we have developed our plans to stop taking cash and cheque payments over the counter at Head Office after 30/9/2019. We have a wide range of alternative payment options available via Allpay (app, Allpayments.net, automated payment line), which are all 24 hours. Payments can also be made by Direct Debit or over the counter at high street banks, Paypoints and Post Offices. If this impacts you we will probably have had a discussion with you to explain the changes and offer support but would be happy to run through this again if it would be helpful – please just ask us the next time you are in.
- Better ways to access services**
 We recognise that many (but not all) of our customers may not be able to access our services during our usual office hours or prefer to access things online, so we have worked hard to improve the quality of the information available on our website. Customers can download forms, access useful information, report repairs and pay their rent via our website at www.ndh-ltd.co.uk. Any issues reported to us out of hours are dealt with on the next working day. If you like getting information in this way and have not looked at our website recently, please do take a look and let us know what you think.

In preparation for improving our IT systems, we are looking to design a Portal (an interactive website), which will enable customers to access their details and rent account on line. We are working closely with customers to ensure their needs are incorporated into the final design.

Development & Regeneration

More homes for people in North Devon



Jordan Close, Barnstaple

January 2019 saw the completion of the development at Jordan Close, Barnstaple. This scheme delivered three affordable homes to the area, two of which were much needed adapted bungalows.

Another successful year creating new communities

We're working hard with our partners to bring new homes to the communities we serve. In the financial year 2018-19 we delivered:



70
Units



35
Social Rented



26
Affordable Rented



8
Shared Ownership



1
Market Rented



9
Sites

Taw Wharf, Barnstaple

We are pleased to announce that by the time this is printed, the first new homes will have been handed over and completed at our flagship Taw Wharf scheme in the heart of Barnstaple. These include the first five shared ownership homes, providing a much needed low cost home ownership option for the area. The scheme will create 172 new homes, including 37 affordable homes by 2021.



Osborne Gardens, Barnstaple

March 2019 saw the completion of 12 new affordable homes from Chichester Developments in the Sticklepath area of Barnstaple. This included two shared ownership homes, with a further one to be acquired later this year.



Bay View Close, Croyde

In August 2018 we took handover of five high quality affordable homes in Croyde from Pearce Construction, for local people, including one for shared ownership.



Woodville Estate, Barnstaple

Works have now commenced to complete our regeneration of the estate, demolishing the last remaining PRC house to deliver two new flats.

Tarka Way, Braunton

Also in March 2019 we took handover of four new homes from Pearce Construction in Braunton. These included two shared ownership homes bringing much needed low cost home ownership options to the area.



Highgrove, Barnstaple

January 2019 saw the final handovers of new affordable homes at Highgrove, Barnstaple from Pearce Construction. This scheme delivered 13 affordable homes to the area.

BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Our Regeneration and Development programme goes from strength to strength, and we are working with our partners to deliver new homes for rent, shared ownership and sale to North Devon. We have over 340 new homes programmed over the next five years, which will include regeneration of our estates and acquiring affordable homes from our partners to create and enhance the communities we serve.



Complaints & Feedback

Listening to our customers at all times



Introducing Natalie

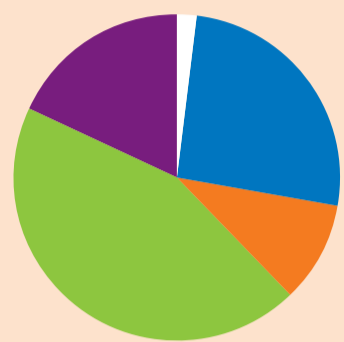
Hello, my name is Natalie and I am your new Service Improvement Co-ordinator. I have worked as a member of the Customer Care Team at North Devon Homes for the last five years. I have loved working in the Customer Care Team, speaking to customers and helping to sort out problems and queries.

I am excited to start my new role as Service Improvement Co-ordinator as I am looking forward to working with customers and colleagues to get issues resolved promptly, openly and fairly.

If you have any compliments (regarding North Devon Homes' staff or one of our contractors) or you feel you need to raise a complaint, please do get in touch. I will be happy to explore this with you.

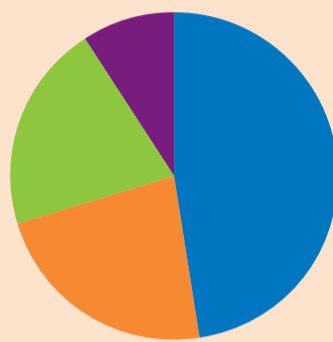
Complaints process reviewed by customers

During a Scrutiny Panel last year they reviewed our complaints process and arrangements and proposed a number of changes to make it clearer and easier for customers to give feedback to us. This year we are finishing the reviewed work and proposals and will continue to streamline the processes to make it easier for our customers.



27 Compliments received

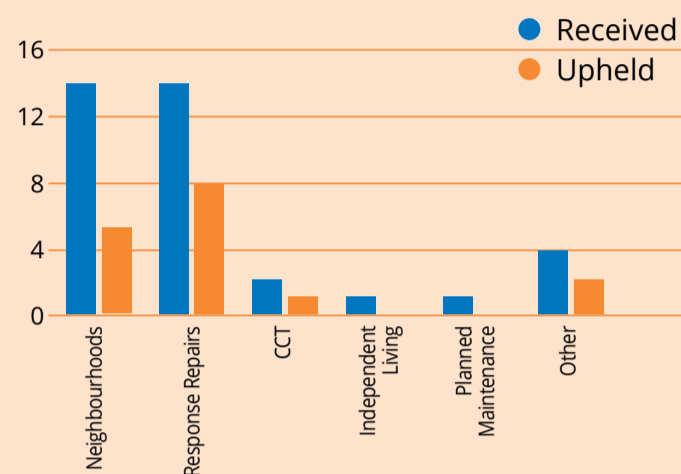
- Repairs 9
- Neighbourhoods 7
- Customer Service 6
- Independent Living 2
- Planned Maintenance 2
- Other 1



48 Stage Zero complaints

- Repairs 24
- Customer Service 10
- Neighbourhoods 5
- Income 3
- Independent Living 2
- Planned Maintenance 1
- Other 3

36 formal complaints of which 16 were upheld



In 2016, the benchmark for complaints for other social landlords was 33 complaints per 1,000 units. This would equate to around 105 complaints or around three times as many as we actually received and investigated.

Compensation

On occasion we have reimbursed customers who have incurred costs as a result of works or activities we have undertaken and where things have gone wrong. Our customer groups oversee this to make sure that things are fair to all parties involved. The total amount of compensation paid to customers during 2017-18 was £4,347.



32

Complaints resolved at Stage 1



2

Complaints resolved at Stage 2



2

Complaints went to Stage 3



30

Stage 1 complaints responded to within target (83%)



32

Stage 1 complaints acknowledged within target (89%)



12

Days to respond to Stage 1 complaints, on average

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT AND WHAT TO EXPECT

We know that sometimes things go wrong with our services, and customers can be unhappy and wish to make a complaint. Our complaints process focuses on resolving the issue as quickly as we can, and we use the learning from when things go wrong to improve our services in the future.

Customers can make a complaint using our online form, via email, by telephone or in person. Our Service Improvement Coordinator, Natalie Wyeth, will liaise with customers making complaints to understand the issues and investigate what has happened. The full complaints process is

outlined on our website or a copy can be sent to you upon request.

We only use our complaints process when our service has failed in some way. So, in some cases when a customer is unhappy, we deal with the issue in a different way. For example, where a customer is unhappy with a decision we have made in line with our policies, a senior manager would review the decision to ensure it's been made correctly in line with policy; where a customer is complaining about the behaviour of a neighbour, that would be dealt with by our Neighbourhood Officers.

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 2018/19

During the past year, Home2Home took on additional operatives so that we could develop a new programme of installing wet rooms and level access showers for our customers, supported by the grant funding that was available to them. We were able to install 50 adapted bathrooms as a result and have developed plans to build on this further.



7547
Number of repairs completed
(emergency, urgent and routine)



281
Planned home improvements delivered



100%
Properties with a valid gas certificate



7.7
Average working days taken to complete repairs



97%
Customer satisfaction with Response Repairs



70
Average energy performance of dwellings
(SAP rating)

Changing ways of working

We have introduced a new scheduling service which helps us plan and deploy people to the right places in the right ways. This is improving how we make appointments with customer and how we track jobs that we are completing. We are also able to report on the number of appointments kept and how many repairs were completed on first visit; and we will be updating you on how we are performing against our targets in the future.

We hope to continue to improve our offer and will be working on getting automated texts sent as reminders that you have repairs appointments booked.

We have also brought the empty homes (voids) service into the Home2Home department to gain efficiencies in how we work. Rob Flavell has been appointed to the position of Void Surveyor and is managing the specification of voids work and working closely with the Home2Home team to deliver and improve our void performance figures.

New Response Repairs Manager

Very recently our previous Home2Home Manager, Mo Wright, was recruited and promoted to the position of Response Repairs Manager, and she now oversees the whole repairs service. Charles Langdon has just been recruited to replace Mo and work alongside her to help run the team and manage our customer appointments. We are continuing to invest in our repairs service to improve our offer to customers.



Electrical Inspections

We used to check the electrics in your home every 10 years, but have now improved and enhanced our service standard to a 5 yearly check up. Please help us to ensure that you are safe in your home by allowing us access and being there for appointments that are made. We have a lot of homes to check over the next three years to ensure that we meet our five yearly target, and will be working hard to deliver against this target.

Asbestos Surveys

We now have completed surveys and asbestos information for the majority of our homes, with less than 40 homes out of 3,300 left to survey. If any customer has a query on the asbestos in their home, then please get in touch and our team can provide you with advice and guidance. All customers will have a copy of their asbestos report as these are now provided when you first move into your home or would have been sent out when the survey was completed. We will help you understand this when you contact us to get our OK for any works. This is one of the important reasons why we require you to check with us before you do any work.

Fire Safety

This year we have completed 218 fire risk actions across our stock within the asset management department. This has included repairs to (or replacement) fire doors, upgrading emergency lighting and improving our communal areas in flats and apartment blocks. We have installed 44 new fire doors to date and will be replacing more this year to continue to improve our performance.

Gas Safety Performance

Our gas performance has been the best to date this year, which is a great achievement considering that we had a change of contractor. Not only have we reduced the cost of the service and reduced customer disruption by including the smoke alarm checking as part of the gas service, we have also achieved 100% compliance at month end for the whole year. In total we had nine days where a gas safety certificate had expired over the year and these were all due to access issues. This is a fantastic result for NDH and our customers.

Tackling Climate Change

We have been planning a project in Burrington to achieve a high energy performance target by retrofitting insulation and renewable energy systems to two properties. We are using the pilot to guide our thinking as to how we can improve the energy performance of properties that are not on the gas network and so cannot benefit from the efficient gas central heating systems. The pilot should commence in September 2020.

Community Involvement



Generations Together

As part of our customer involvement promise we want to engage young and old with our Generations Together events. This last year has been no exception.

On Friday 21st September customers joined our Community Involvement team and young people for a Cream Tea & Digital Event at Magdalene

Lawn, Barnstaple. A great time was had by all and customers could give us their feedback about the services we provide.

Young people from our youth club provided a special Christmas lunch for 40 older residents at the Whiddon Valley Community Centre. The team served up a roast turkey with stuffing,

vegetables and plenty of pigs in blankets. For dessert there were mince pies and chocolate cake and, to help raise a bit of money for the youth club, there was a Christmas quiz and raffle, with prizes made by the young people themselves during their youth clubs. It really was a fun, festive lunch!

YOU SAID, WE LISTENED

The Wrafton coffee morning, which was set up after feedback at a Local Conversation in February 2018, continues to meet every month at the British Legion. Residents attend and enjoy a chat, hot drink, cake, fun and games, as well as getting to meet partners when we arrange visits from 361 Energy, artists and other local agencies.

In the past few months they have also enjoyed a trip to Fremington Quay with young people from our youth club and a Christmas lunch, which can be seen pictured above (right).

PGL

In July each year we run a camp and activities trip for around 20 to 30 young people who attend our youth clubs. We had great attendance at our PGL last year and all the young people really enjoyed it. This event ensures all the children who attend get a chance to have a weekend away to grow and develop skills and independence without parents having the worry of having to find the money to pay for it. The trips are entirely funded by our fundraising events throughout the year.



Christmas Sing-along

In December 2018 young people held an evening of carol singing for our older residents at Loverings Court in Barnstaple. All residents enjoyed some warm festive cheer, with hot chocolate and cream teas on a chilly night. They got the chance to join in to some carols and get in the festive spirit.

If you are interested in being involved in something like this in the future, or in any of our customer involvement opportunities please call our Community Involvement colleague Tracey on 01271 312500 who would be delighted to talk to you.

VALUE FOR MONEY: ADDING MORE FOR CUSTOMERS

The social value that North Devon Homes provides to its customers includes a social return to communities. We continue to invest in our Independent Living Service to support older customers in their homes and are additionally using staff from the Service

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 team has carried out family intervention and support, supported young people of school leaving age into college or paid employment, and are continuing to evaluate outcomes to demonstrate the benefits and VfM offered by the programme.