

# Hometaalk



New Forest District Council's  
magazine for tenants and leaseholders

Approved  
by tenants

 **Tenant**  
Engagement

# In this edition of Hometalk

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## Editorial contributions from

Tenant representatives, Hometalk Editorial Panel Home Participants, and officers from New Forest District Council (NFDC) housing services.

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## Get in touch

If you have any ideas for future articles please contact the tenant engagement team.

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New Forest District Council,  
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## Available online

Hometalk can also be viewed on our website at [newforest.gov.uk/hometalk](http://newforest.gov.uk/hometalk)

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The information contained in this magazine is for general information purposes only. New Forest District Council assumes no responsibility for tenants signing up to or volunteering in respect of any independent organisations appearing in this magazine. All information contained within this edition is correct at the time of going to print.

## Alternative formats

If you would like this information on audio CD, audio tape, braille, large print, any other format or interpreted into a language other than English, please contact the Tenant Engagement team by phone on 023 8028 5119 or by email at [TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk)



# Messages from us

## Communal Gardens

If you live in a communal block, please do not use any part of the garden area for beloved pet burials or memorial items.

## Sign up to get resident emails

[newforest.gov.uk/emails](http://newforest.gov.uk/emails)

## Council meetings

### Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

This panel comprises of councillors from across the district and is responsible for the overview and scrutiny of the following Council services:

Housing Estate Management and Support, Housing Maintenance and Compliance, Housing Options, Rents, Support and Private Sector Housing, Housing Strategy and Development.

By going to our website, you can:

- read previous minutes
- see the agenda for the next meeting
- listen to meetings live or afterwards via YouTube

You can find out more about all NFDC meetings at:

[newforest.gov.uk/CouncilMeetings](http://newforest.gov.uk/CouncilMeetings)

## New ways to recycle and reduce waste currently due from 2025

We will be rolling out a new and improved waste and recycling service for a greener New Forest district. This includes:

- new weekly food waste collections
- wheeled bins for recycling and rubbish, collected alternating weeks
- glass collections remaining the same

The new service will be rolled out in 3 stages within the district, based on 3 geographical areas.

Most properties will have wheeled bins. We're reviewing properties that will use sacks or communal bins instead.

Before we switch to the new service in your area, we will write to you with details of what new containers you will receive, how we can help, and lots more information.

We are also planning to collect foil, cartons, and extra plastics in the future. We will know when we can do this once more is known about plans for new recycling facilities in Hampshire.

Find out more at:

[newforest.gov.uk/WasteChanges](http://newforest.gov.uk/WasteChanges)

# Tenant Engagement Strategy

2024-2028



## National context

National Housing regulations and nationally recognised bodies (Social Housing and Housing Ombudsmen) prescribe that a decent tenancy, necessary quality services that are important to them and be at the core of any social housing service. Yet, over the last few decades have prominently featured many tragic cases of those in need, or a failure to act on critically important feedback or a result, there has been intense scrutiny and resulting government legislation that are all relevant to this strategy and beyond. Five major social and unhelpful views on what it means to be a 'social housing' tenant in recent years, highlighting a need to change, to do better and diverse world.

Regulator of Social Housing the Government has changed, published 'Housing Residents - Social Housing White Paper' in 2020 with clear expectations for social housing providers.

Set out 7 clear priorities:



## Strategy priority 3

### Knowing our tenants and supporting

Record keeping and data management is a crucial part of best responding to our tenants, whilst also informing service design. Tenants will receive a quality service that will be tailored. We provide services that are important to them and be able to respond to those tenants. Without quality data, we can neither respond to tenant first approach - and at worst, risk being non-compliant expectations.

#### We will:

- undertake an initial review of our customer data, its quality and relevant - recording data on protected characteristics
- undertake a survey of tenants and their households to future service design, including personal characteristics
- only collect data that is meaningful, up to date, and relevant. To this end, we will periodically review the data we hold, and complete data cleansing exercises where needed.



## Strategy priority 2

### Putting tenants first

We will work with our employees to reinforce accountability at all levels of our service. We want to work in partnership with tenants to collectively improve services and outcomes for both tenants and our team.

#### We will:

- encourage ownership and accountability of services and actions required by our employees - from the top down - ensuring this is a focus for Members and Directors/Service Managers through the design of strategies and policies, regular briefings, and the inclusion of feedback in service design.
- ensure that tenant feedback is a standard agenda item for tenant facing services (through team meetings, staff office talks and 1:1 meetings).
- ensure the tenant engagement team are involved in projects and policy/service re-design that will affect tenants.
- provide regular training, webinars and/or briefings to staff, to ensure good practice and relevant legislation is embedded within our Housing Services.

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# Our Tenant Engagement Strategy

Everything we do, we're doing with you!

An update from Dave Brown, Tenant Engagement Manager.

## Firstly, thank you!

You may recall that in the last couple of editions of Hometalk, we've mentioned both the Social Housing Regulation Act and also our proposed Tenant Engagement Strategy, setting out our plan on how we'll involve you in our Housing Services, and making sure that you can hold us to account.

I'm really pleased to say that after lots of scrutiny, review and consultation (involving tenants, your councillors,

and our staff), our new Tenant Engagement Strategy has been adopted by the Council. I'd like to offer a massive thanks to everyone who took part in the consultation, and specific thanks to the members of our Tenant Involvement Group who directly influenced the content of the strategy on behalf of all tenants.

So, what does this mean for you, our tenants? Our strategy focuses on 4 priorities that we aim to achieve and deliver on over the next 4 years.



Here's our 4 priorities and a bit about what they mean for you and your communities:

**1**

### Listening to our tenants

We will establish a clear offer to tenants on how their voice can be heard, by establishing a menu of engagement opportunities to encourage a diverse set of feedback.

**2**

### Putting tenants first

We will work with our employees to reinforce accountability at all levels of our service. We want to work in partnership with tenants to collectively improve services and outcomes for both tenants and our teams.

**3**

### Knowing our tenants and supporting engagement

We need to know our tenants to provide services that are important to them and be able to respond based on the needs of those tenants. Without quality data, we can neither respond well, nor can we develop a truly tenant first approach.

**4**

### How we communicate with tenants

We know effective communication is key to the success of not only this strategy, but for tenant engagement as a whole, and the effective delivery of our services and compliance against regulations. We will use a range of communication methods that meet our tenants' needs.

Ultimately, the strategy is about giving you a voice, enabling you to hold us to account, making it easy for you to work with us in partnership, and getting the housing services that are right for you. We know we have some way to go to delivering these priorities and getting this right – our focus is on ensuring transparency, fairness, and mutual respect through the implementation of the Strategy and our housing services.

Read our strategy at [newforest.gov.uk/TenantEngagement](https://newforest.gov.uk/TenantEngagement)

# How you can get involved

There are many ways you can be a part of improving our service to you.



## Give feedback on your query with us

It starts very simply by using our services or calling us with a tenancy related query – if we get this right, let us know, as we record all feedback to help us know what works and what needs improving. However, also let us know when things are not working, and we will always look to learn from any complaints made.



## Become a member of the Tenant Involvement Group

If you've got time to give and really want to take an active part in reviewing and scrutinising our services, we have a number of roles that allow you to do this. You could become a member of our Tenant Involvement Group (see page 9). They meet monthly and review our services and performance.



### **Become a member of the Tenant Approval Panel**

You could become a member of our Tenant Approved Panel – with options to look at specific services that interest you, and give your views, opinions and expertise at a time and method convenient to you.

### **Speak to us when you see us**

You can also speak to us when we're out and about in your communities (look out for the Tenant Engagement team, the Neighbourhood and Tenancy Management officers, or any council housing representative) – and we're often at the community hubs to have a chat and hear what's going on.



### **Taking part in a survey**

If you're asked to take part in a survey (see pages 16-19), let us know how you feel about our services. Please be honest and open as it helps us get things right.

### **Get in touch**

If this sounds like you – contact us, the Tenant Engagement team.

Call us: 02380 285222

Email us:

[TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk)

However you wish to get involved, we'd like to make it as easy and accessible as possible.





# Reviving a flower bed

**Residents in New Milton came together to clear and replant flowers in a neglected bed.**

Residents at Davis Field in New Milton approached us earlier this year with an idea to take on some flower beds that were in need of a little love. The flower beds in question had become overrun with invasive plants and just looked tired and uncared for. A group of residents came together and asked for permission to clear the beds, and then replant and maintain them for the benefit of the whole Davis Field community. The Council thought this was a great idea and worked with the resident group to review any risk and

health and safety concerns and were then able to give our permission to go ahead.

On Saturday 30 March, the group and some of the community came together and started this work. Tenant Engagement Manager, Dave Brown, who attended on the day to help out, said “It’s always great to hear of a community coming together with ideas. This is a great example of a resident-led activity, that was simply supported by NFDC with permission to utilise council land”

If you want to take action to improve your community with like minded neighbours, speak to our Tenant Engagement team.



“We have a voice...  
and it is good to know  
that we are heard”

## Our Alaine



What being a Tenant Representative means to me.

My husband and I moved into our bungalow in 2006 and a few years later I was introduced to becoming a representative when I entered a garden competition laid on by the council.

I met quite a lot of tenants and officials from the council at the presentation for the best gardens competition and was pleased by the way everything was handled. I was invited to join as a Tenant Representative and to find out how tenants were cared for, and what policies were in hand for improving their strategy in engaging tenants.

I duly joined and met the other representatives, of whom some were long standing in the group.

Since then, I have been going to the monthly meeting and have been very impressed by the way our group has been introduced to the managers of council departments, and how our input has been considered in order to have a stronger role in governance.

Management has been invited to our meetings to update us on their policies and working structure, and have taken into consideration our views and comments. Their feedback is brought to our attention and confirmation.

We have recently had the councillor, who acts as the lead Portfolio Holder for Housing, joining in some meetings to see how we are faring.

We are offered free admittance to various training courses relevant to being a Tenant Representative with professional trainers leading the workshops. The courses are held at hotels and other venues where there are lunches provided and taxi transport is provided if required.

I'd thoroughly encourage any tenant who wants to be involved to get in touch with the Tenant Engagement team. See pages 6 & 7 for more details.

**You said,**

**we listened,**

**we did!**



We want to continue to let you know how your voice is influencing our services. Whilst we'll often dedicate a number of articles to this, we aim to have a summary of this as part of our 'you said we listened' page here. In this edition, we bring you a Tenant Satisfaction Measures special!

## Complaints

### You said

You are unhappy with the way we deal with your complaints. We need to listen more to your complaints, and may need to reconsider our approach to complaint handling.

### We listened

In April, our Tenant Involvement Group completed a scrutiny exercise to look at our complaint performance, our policy and process, and what 'good practice' looks like.

### We did

We aim to use this scrutiny exercise to recommend changes to our complaint handling process, so tenants get a consistent and good service when making a complaint, and that we're able to show learning outcomes from those complaints.

## Listening to tenants

### You said

We could improve how we listen to tenants and act on their views and feedback.

### We listened

We are directly addressing this through the implementation of our strategy. However, we have prioritised our approach to recording feedback and learning from any common themes.

### We did

Hearing your voice, and you being able to influence our services is one of our key priorities. By feeding back on the changes you're making, we hope that you will see that we are listening and making the improvements.





## Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

### You said

Our approach to Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) is not as good as it could be, with just 62% satisfaction in this service.

### We listened

We'd already appointed a new Anti Social Behaviour Manager, Chris Pike. Chris has been working incredibly hard with our teams to ensure that our approach to ASB is a priority. Chris has more recently involved a group of tenants in reviewing our new ASB procedure to ensure it is focused on the right outcomes.

### We did

We want you to feel safe in your home and community. Our new approach to ASB is another step towards this desire. We'll be monitoring the effectiveness of our process and considering a new ASB strategy to further bolster our commitment.

## Communal areas

### You said

Some of our communal areas which we maintain could be better.

### We listened

We now have a more flexible team of mobile cleaners, that can be assigned to the areas where needed most. We will also be monitoring performance over the year to ensure we are getting this right.

We are also looking at how we can be more proactive when out in our communities to ensure we are spotting issues or concerns at an early stage.

### We did

Your neighbourhoods are as important as your homes. We want to make sure that we are making these improvements so that you are proud to live in your community, and know how to hold us to account if we're not getting this right.

See page 6 for ways to have your say

# Support available

## Community hubs



You can get cost of living support at 5 weekly community hubs. Staff from our benefits and housing teams, as well as from other organisations, including Citizens Advice New Forest, will be available to give advice and information.

They can help with issues such as paying rent or Council Tax, claiming benefits, debt, housing and information on other support that may be available to you.

The hubs are held at the same time as the weekly food ladders. You can also get a hot drink, a biscuit, and meet other local people.

## Community hub locations

### Calshot

St Georges Hall, Tristan Close,  
Calshot, SO45 1BN  
Thursday, 12pm to 1.30pm

### Fordingbridge

Avonway Community Centre,  
36 Shaftesbury Street, Fordingbridge,  
SP6 1JF  
Friday, 12.30pm to 2.30pm

### New Milton

Nedderman Centre, Marryat Road,  
New Milton, BH25 5NY  
Wednesday, 9am to 10.30am

### Pennington

St Marks Community Hall, The Square,  
Pennington, SO41 8QN  
Thursday, 12pm to 2pm

### Totton

Testwood Baptist Church, 283a  
Salisbury Road, Totton SO40 3LZ  
Wednesday, 9.30am to 11.30am

You can read all about our cost of living help and support at [newforest.gov.uk/CostOfLiving](https://newforest.gov.uk/CostOfLiving)

## Water bills

Southern Water and Bournemouth Water have schemes for people who are struggling to pay their bills. Contact your water provider for more information.

Southern Water: 0800 027 0363, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Bournemouth Water:

[bournemouthwater.co.uk/household/help-support/financial-support](https://bournemouthwater.co.uk/household/help-support/financial-support)

## Childcare through Universal Credit

You may be able to claim back up to 85% of your childcare costs if you are employed, getting Universal Credit and use a registered childcare provider. This also includes holiday clubs, after school clubs and breakfast clubs. The maximum amount a month is £950.92 for one child and £1,630.15 for 2 or more children.

GOV.UK: [gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-childcare-costs](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-childcare-costs)

## Energy bills

If you are struggling to pay for energy, or think you may get into difficulty, contact your energy supplier as soon as possible as they may be able to help.

If your energy supplier is unable to help you, check if you can get a grant from the British Gas Energy Trust. These grants are available to anyone you don't have to be a British Gas customer.

Ofgem: [ofgem.gov.uk](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

British Gas Energy Trust: [britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants](https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants)





## Pension Credit

Pension Credit gives extra money to those on a low income to help with living costs and household bills. It is separate from your State Pension and does not affect any amounts of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support you get.

If you get Pension Credit you can also get other help, such as:

- help with your heating costs through the Warm Home Discount Scheme
- a free TV licence if you are aged 75 or over
- help with NHS dental treatment, glasses and transport costs for hospital appointments

## Who can claim

You can claim Pension Credit if your weekly household income is below:

- £218.15 if you are single
- £332.95 if you have a partner

Some income is not counted when working out your weekly income, such as Attendance Allowance.

## How to claim

Don't miss out on this extra support you could be entitled to! For more information and details on how to apply, please see [gov.uk/pension-credit](http://gov.uk/pension-credit) or you can apply by phone on 0800 99 1234 (calls are free).

A friend or family member can call and make your claim for you, or you can request a paper application form to fill in and return.

## Support available

We are working with Citizens Advice New Forest and Age Concern New Forest who have trained advisers who can assist you with making your application. Their contact details are:

### **Citizens advice, New Forest**

Visit one of their local offices at Lymington, Hythe, New Milton, Ringwood or Totton.

Phone: 0808 278 7860

Website: [newforestcab.org.uk](http://newforestcab.org.uk)

### **Age Concern, New Forest**

Age Concern New Forest, Southward House, Beaulieu Road, Dibden Purlieu, SO45 4PT

Phone: 023 80841199

Email: [info@ageconcernnewforest.org.uk](mailto:info@ageconcernnewforest.org.uk)

# Managed migration to Universal Credit

If you are of working age and get legacy benefits, you will be moving onto Universal Credit.

Legacy benefits are:

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Employment
- Support Allowance with Tax Credits
- Jobseekers Allowance.

If you get Housing Benefit and are of pensionable age you do not have to do anything, you will continue to get this.

## When does the migration begin?

Migration from “legacy benefits” to Universal Credit started from April 2024.

## What do I need to do?

If you receive a Universal Credit Migration Notice from the Department for Work and Pensions, you must claim Universal Credit by the deadline date on your migration notice, this is 3 months from the date of the notice.

## Why do I need to do this?

Your benefits will stop if you do not claim Universal Credit by the deadline date so it is important you claim Universal Credit by this date, otherwise you will lose out on money you are entitled to.

Once you get Universal Credit, this is paid to you and you will have to pay your rent.

## Support available

You can receive support through this process. For help making this claim, you can:

- call the Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline on 0800 169 0328. They can also offer advice.
- call Citizens Advice’s national advice line on 0800 144 8444.
- speak to a member of the Benefits team by calling 01590 646121 Monday to Friday between 8.45am and 1.00pm.

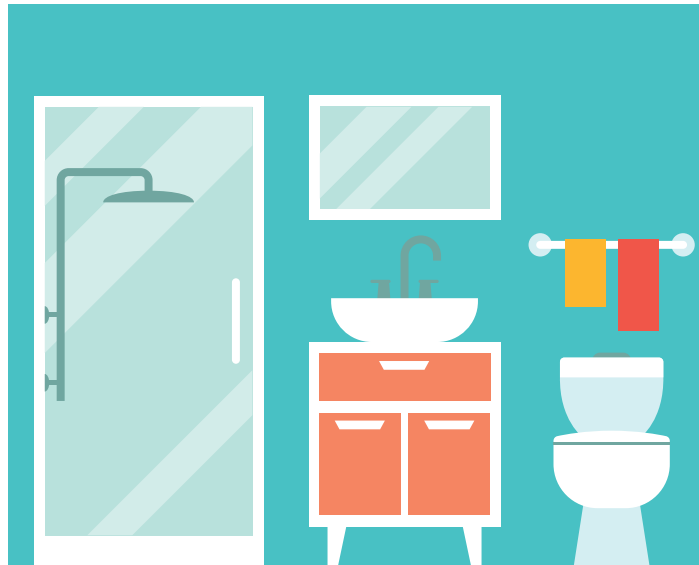
# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

You're views and our performance.

As part of the new regulatory requirements, we needed to collect and assess our performance against a number of Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These include 10 measures of service delivery performance, alongside 12 measures that collect the views of our tenants.

The results are in! We're really pleased with the results, and very proud of the good work you've told us we do. However, we also recognise that there is still room for improvement, and some areas where we need to do better! See pages 10 and 11 for some of the actions we're taking as a result of what you told us.

**The percentages on this page show how you rate our services (known as the tenant perception measures).**



Satisfaction that your home is well maintained

**82.1%**

Satisfaction with our approach to complaints

Satisfaction with NFDC's approach to ASB

**62%**

**29.1%**

Overall  
satisfaction  
**81%**

Satisfaction that  
NFDC make a  
positive contribution  
to the neighbourhood

**72.1%**

Satisfaction that we  
keep you informed

**78.9%**

Overall  
satisfaction  
with repairs

**82.8%**

Satisfaction with  
time taken to  
complete repairs

**82.8%**

Satisfaction that  
we listen and act  
on your views

**67.8%**

Agreement we  
treat you fairly  
and with respect

**82.2%**

Satisfaction that  
communal areas  
are clean and well  
maintained

**68.6%**

Satisfaction that  
your home is safe

**84.7%**



# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The figures on this page show how we're performing against key areas of service delivery.



## Complaints

For every 1000 homes,

**7.9** stage 1 complaints were received.

**100%**

of those stage 1 complaints were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales.

For every 1000 homes,

**1.5** stage 2 complaints were received.

**100%**

of those stage 2 complaints were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales.

## Decent homes standard and repairs

**2.1%**

of homes do not meet the decent homes standard.

**94.3%**

of emergency responsive repairs were completed within our target timescale.

**92%**

of non-emergency responsive repairs were completed within our target timescale.



## Building safety

**95.6%**

of homes that required fire risk assessments had them carried out.

**98.3%**

of homes that required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections had them carried out.

**75.5%**

of homes that required legionella risk assessments had them carried out.

**98.2%**

of homes that required gas safety had them carried out.

**100%**

of homes that required passenger lift safety checks had them carried out.

## Anti-social behaviour

For every 1000 homes,

**30.8** anti-social behaviour cases were opened.

For every 1000 homes,

**0.6** anti-social behaviour cases involving hate incidents were opened.

We'd like to offer a personal thanks to the 576 tenants who took part in the perception surveys (undertaken by TLF Research), your openness and honesty is really appreciated and allows us to take meaningful action on those areas that you've told us are important to you.

We've now submitted these results to the Regulator of Social Housing as required, and expect the national results to be published some time in the Autumn. We'll share our results, and any other information with tenants in the winter edition of Hometalk, on our website or upon request, and keep you updated on our continued work to improve our services.

If you'd like to get involved in reviewing and shaping our services, see page 6.



## Housing development



Penman House,  
Salisbury Road, Totton



In January 12 newly built high energy efficient flats were completed in Totton and are now providing rented homes for people with a local connection to the New Forest district.

Built on the site of the former Testwood Social Club, the land was originally purchased in 2019 as part of the Council's Housing Strategy aim to deliver more affordable homes.

### Why Penman House?

The scheme of one and two bedroomed flats has been named 'Penman House' in honour of Councillor Neville Penman who saw the potential for new affordable homes on the site when the Social Club closed its doors for the last time in November 2018.



### What is special about the scheme?

From the very start the Council wanted to see the new development built as an example of excellent energy efficient design. With this in mind it was suggested that the scheme could meet a new standard which has been proposed by the Government for introduction in 2025. Called the "Future Homes Standard", all twelve homes have been designed and built to meet the all-electric specification which includes Air Source Heat Pumps, additional levels of insulation, triple glazing and 36 photo voltaic



panels on the roof to contribute to the tenants' electric running costs.

As a result, 10 of the flats have been rated as meeting the highest level of domestic energy performance (Energy Performance Certified A) and 2 flats have been rated EPC B.

Recognising the advanced technology that has been included in the scheme, the Housing team are going to work closely with new tenants over the coming year. We are going to monitor how well the energy efficiency measures are working and how families are managing warmth and ventilation in the summer months. To help with this some very clever systems have been incorporated within a sample of the homes to record temperature, moisture in the air, and carbon dioxide. All of the information is going to be collected by the Council so we can learn from the experience and ensure that our tenants are getting the most from their homes.

## The opening event

When the scheme completed in January an opening event was attended by tenant representatives, Councillors and Officers who had the chance to look over the scheme.

After cutting the ribbon Councillor Penman said, "When I heard that the Social Club was to close its doors in 2018, I felt some good might come from this if affordable housing could be built

in its place and it's rewarding to see the good use it has been put to. 12 homes for local people that are comfortable, spacious, and affordable to heat.

This is a very proud day for me both as a Ward Councillor for Totton and as Chairman of the District Council. This project not only shows what we have done but it shows others what they should be doing too. Our Council has been ahead of the curve and set an example".

## Saying thank you

Of course, the success of Penman House is down to many different people, companies and organisations who made it possible but especially Homes England (a central Government Agency) who awarded us a grant of £700,000 to help pay for the scheme.

More new council developments are underway, and we look forward to giving updates in future editions of Hometalk.

**Tim Davis, Service Manager Housing Strategy and Development**

### Breaking news:

Penman house has just been shortlisted for a national housing award!

# Housing service's Annual report and performance 2023/2024

Every pound spent on the services we provided our customers were apportioned in the following way:



## Tackling homelessness

1,865 households approached the Council requesting homelessness assistance.

399 duties granted to households to help relieve their homelessness and provide temporary accommodation to them.

499 duties granted to households to help prevent their homelessness.

228 successfully prevented homelessness cases with existing or alternative accommodation.

## Housing income

We collected 98.4% of rent due.

The Tenancy Account Team supported many tenants to seek financial advice, help with Universal Credit Claims and provided the reassurance and time to tenants to help resolve their situations.

## Disability facilities grants

128 disabled adaptations were completed for our council tenants including:

- 38 level access showers
- 5 extensions
- 8 stair-lifts
- 10 ramps
- 2 ceiling hoists
- 6 bathroom adaptations
- 59 other minor adaptations

## Housing estates management

### Anti-social behaviour

166 cases opened with follow up investigations, visits and mediation required.

### Mutual exchanges

- 54 households swapped their Council accommodation with other households

## Social strategy and development

134 new homes were delivered by the council contributing to the corporate plan target of 600 additional council owned properties by 2026.

## Building maintenance

### Our planned maintenance replaced:

125 kitchens  
122 bathrooms  
251 windows  
375 external doors  
24 fire doors  
49 roofs

### Reactive maintenance

19,416 repairs carried out

## Social housing allocations

331 social housing properties let across all landlords including 282 council owned properties.

There are 1,953 households on the housing register.



# It's good to talk...



## How can I be a good neighbour?

It's important that, as neighbours, we respect each other. To listen to one another, take pride in where we live, respect other peoples' lifestyles, and look out for others by maintaining good relationships. A good neighbour will help develop a sense of community and will create a safer and happier place for all.

## What happens when my neighbour and I are not getting along?

Disagreements between neighbours, however small, can fester over time and do lasting damage to relationships in the long term. That's why we encourage you to raise your concerns with one another and find amicable solutions as early as possible. If you need help with this, please contact us to talk about how we can help.

It's important, as neighbours, we are tolerant around things like children playing, BBQs, and noise during the day. But if it is bothering you, then it's better to discuss with your neighbours, as opposed to letting it irritate you.

## How can the council help?

Firstly, getting neighbours to talk can be incredibly powerful and often stops a neighbour dispute escalating to more serious Anti-Social Behaviour. It allows different perspectives to be discussed, and awareness and understanding to be developed. We can help by reviewing your concerns and discuss safe ways of communicating with one another. If you need more formal help we can talk to both neighbours and try and work out a solution. One of the most successful methods of doing this is by using mediation.



Want to  
discuss a  
concern about a  
neighbour?  
Contact us on  
02380 285222

## What is mediation?

Mediation brings both you and your neighbours together in a structured way and it can be used between two individuals or a group of neighbours. It's for cases when there is a clash of lifestyles or when both parties can't find a resolution on their own.

Mediation can be face to face or done via shuttle (where the mediator negotiates an agreement without you being face to face). The outcome of mediation should result in better understanding between neighbours and a shared agreement between you both.

## Does it work?

Yes - sometimes the best solution is one that we reach together.

We are working with a local mediation provider and recently referred two neighbours to mediation who had a disagreement around the level of noise,

verbal abuse and drugs. Both parties engaged well, listened to one another and through mediation they found a number of agreements and assurances about how to deal with any further issues in the future.

Sometimes people are reluctant to take up mediation, as in this case, so we worked with both neighbours to understand the possible benefits. Afterwards, our tenant told us "I wasn't so keen initially, but it is definitely worth doing, there are some things that can be aired."

We offer this service to our tenants for free, along with 3 months of aftercare and support to help any agreements to be maintained.



## Fire safety

# Lithium batteries

We are living in a world where the only thing we aren't plugging in to recharge, is ourselves. When we look around our homes, we are charging more and more devices; from our phones to our cars, our laptops to our scooters.

E-scooters and E-bikes appear to be taking the world by storm and these come with their own hazards, and lithium batteries seem to be the culprit. Although only e-scooters in official rental e-scooter trials may be used legally on roads, there are more and more e-scooters being privately purchased and fire services have reported that there have been a significant number of battery fires involving these. If you use an e-scooter illegally, you could face a fine and penalty points on your licence, and the e-scooter could be impounded.

A lot of our rechargeable items are powered by lithium batteries and are normally supplied with a battery charger that plugs into a normal household socket.

Although most batteries are safe in normal use, lithium battery packs, particularly if of poor quality, when damaged or improperly used, can pose a significant risk.

# 3 Li



## Warning signs to look for with your battery

**Heat:** It's normal for batteries to generate some heat when charging or in use, but it should not feel extremely hot to the touch.

**Bulging, lumps and leaks:** A common sign of it failing.

**Noise:** Failing lithium batteries have been reported to make hissing or cracking sounds.

**Smell:** A strong or unusual smell (which could be toxic) from the battery

**Performance:** Failure to fully charge, or longer charge times.

**Smoke:** If your battery or device is smoking, a fire has already started. Raise the alarm, get out, stay out and call 999 immediately.

## Damaged batteries

Battery packs can be damaged in use, most often by dropping them or in a crash.

Damaged batteries can catch fire rapidly and without warning. Check your battery regularly for any signs of damage. If you suspect any damage, you should replace the battery. Do not charge or use it.



## Take aways

Don't leave your device charging when you are asleep or not in the property.

Don't overload your charging socket.

Don't charge or store your battery where it could block your escape in the event of a fire.

Don't charge your battery in any communal areas of a building.

Only use the correct charger with your battery.

Only buy e-bikes, e-scooters, and batteries from trusted retailers and manufacturers.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Don't attempt to modify or tamper with the battery.

Always dispose of old or damaged batteries correctly.

Check for the CE or UKCA safety marking on your battery and charger.



# Gas safety

Keeping you safe in your home

## Your responsibilities for having your own gas appliance

The council as a landlord has its own legal duties to maintain and check annually the landlord's gas appliances in tenant homes. This is usually the gas boiler.

However, it is the tenant's responsibility to make sure their own gas appliances, whether this be a gas fire or cooker, are also checked and maintained.

All manuals and manufacturer's instructions must be kept with the gas appliance for information about servicing and repairs.

## Who can install and service your own gas appliance?

Only a registered Gas Safe Engineer can install and service your own gas appliance.

Tenants have a duty to make sure that their own gas appliances are correctly installed by a registered Gas Safe engineer.



Make sure you check that your engineer is qualified to do gas works safely by asking them for their Gas Safe Registered ID card. This will include the Gas Safe Registered logo printed on it - their registered number can be checked on the Gas Safe website.

## Council approval for alterations to the gas supply at your home

The council must approve any alterations to the gas supply and connections at your home.

Tenants must apply for permission to carry out any home improvements and this can be done through the New Forest District Council online portal. All works must be approved by the council before any work commences – whether it is small or big - to ensure any work is completed correctly and safely.

For more information, visit: [newforest.gov.uk/PermissionForHomeImprovements](https://newforest.gov.uk/PermissionForHomeImprovements)  
Or, you can contact our Housing Hub team on 023 8028 5222.



## Which rooms require a carbon monoxide alarm installed?

Every room containing a gas appliance requires a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm to be installed. As the landlord, the council must fit a carbon monoxide alarm fitted in every room containing a fossil fuel gas appliance, although this is not a requirement for cookers only in kitchens, the council would still prefer to install one in this room.

Tenants can check that the alarm is in working order by pressing the test button on the device. This will activate an audible tone to prove to the user that it is fully operational.

However, if this does not happen then please contact the council for the alarm to be replaced.

## Signs of an unsafe gas appliance

If you are concerned that your gas appliances are not working correctly, the signs to look out for are:

- yellow floppy flames on cookers and fire
- black soot marks around the casing of the appliance and possibly on the walls
- excessive condensation around the appliance when in use
- only use a gas cooker for its intended purpose and not to heat a room

## Knowing the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning

Carbon monoxide cannot be seen, tasted or even smelt. However, sufferers from CO poisoning can have the following symptoms:



- headaches
- dizziness
- breathlessness



- collapse
- nausea
- loss of consciousness

## If you suspect CO poisoning:

1. Turn off any gas appliance, if safe to do so.
2. Open doors and windows to allow air into the property.
3. Leave property and get into the fresh air.
4. Seek medical advice as soon as possible by contacting NHS 111, or in event of an emergency contact 999.
5. Contact the Gas Emergency Helpline 0800 111 999 and they will be able to assist with the gas emergency.

If you have any concerns with poor workmanship or to report any issues with a gas engineer visit, please contact the council or alternatively you can contact Gas Safe Register on 0800 408 5500.



## Homesearch Choice-based lettings

Many tenants of New Forest District Council have resided happily in their homes for a number of years. They may now have children or grandchildren who are looking to join the housing register. The process of allocating homes has changed greatly over the years and so this article aims to bring you up to date on how the housing register works today.

Choice Based Lettings is a system used by most local councils to allocate available council housing and housing association homes to eligible applicants.

Before 2020 you may have been assigned a property through a waiting list, but these days applicants are given the opportunity to express preferences for specific available properties in areas where they would like to live.

We call our system Homesearch, where properties are allocated based on criteria such as housing need and size of property.

Whilst there is a high demand for social housing, this type of allocation process aims to give applicants more control and choice over their housing options while ensuring fairness and transparency in the allocation process.

If you have enjoyed the benefit of a family sized council home and are now looking to downsize to a smaller property, please contact the Tenancy Management team on 02380 285222, and you too can join Homesearch to view suitable properties.

# Consumer standards

Your rights: what you can expect from us as a minimum

The Regulator of Social Housing has set out their requirements on the standards they expect landlords to meet. Called the 'Consumer Standards', there are 4 specific areas and standards that you can and should expect for your home and community.

We've summarised these to enable you to clearly understand what you can expect.

## **The Safety and Quality Standard**

Sets out the requirements for the quality and decency of your home, health and safety requirements, maintenance expectations, and adaptations.

## **The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard**

Details the expectations concerning you, our tenants, and how we treat you with fairness and respect; how we engage with you and understanding your diverse needs; how we provide you with information relating to our services, including performance information; and how we deal with complaints.

## **The Neighbourhood and Community Standard**

Lets us know how we can work together to ensure the safety of our shared spaces (such as on our estates and in our communities); how we can work locally in cooperation with others; and how we respond to and deal with Anti social behaviour and Domestic abuse.

## **The Tenancy Standard**

Sets out how we should allocate and let our homes; how we help tenants sustain their tenancies and avoid unnecessary evictions; the type of tenancies we provide, and how we enable people to move via Mutual Exchange.

We take pride in the fact that we are already meeting a number of these requirements to a good standard and are working towards improvement on others. Our Tenant Engagement Strategy and our commitment to your homes and safety, will ensure we are meeting those standards going forwards.

You can read more about the standards at [gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards)



## We need your help!

**New Forest District Council will shortly be undertaking a data collection project to help us understand more about our tenants and their needs.**

We know who our tenants are, but in some cases, we don't know enough about you, or how our services need to change or adapt to your personal needs.

Providing you with an outstanding and, where possible, a personalised service is really important to us. We are looking for your help to update our records about you, and your family or household.

We've teamed up with a company called Beehive Research who, over the coming months, (on our behalf) will be asking all our tenants to update their records with us. You can also find out more about Beehive research by going to **[beehiveresearch.co.uk](https://beehiveresearch.co.uk)**

We will ask you to let us know about any specific needs you or your family have, and this will help shape our housing services in the future.

Please help us by providing this data. It's not only important to us, but the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman have been clear that we need to have up to date information about our tenants and their household.

Your information is held securely and will be used to help us design future services. Your privacy and data protection is really important to us, and you can review our approach to this at: **[newforest.gov.uk/privacy](https://newforest.gov.uk/privacy)**

Thanks in advance for your support with this.





**Saturday 19 October 2024**

**9.30am to 4pm**

**Free to attend**

**Booking required**

**Lunch and refreshments provided**

## Book your place

Join us at one of our upcoming tenant training days.

You will be able to learn more about social housing, and exchange ideas with tenants from other Social Housing organisations in the area.

To book a place onto the training, or find out more about the events, please email the team at [TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk) or call Sarah 02380 285498 or Joy 02380 285119.



**South Coast Training**

**South Coast Training, who will be running the training, is a partnership group that provides informal training workshops for tenants.**

We are very keen to offer support and training for tenants who want to hold NFDC to account. If you have a small amount of time to offer and you would like to volunteer to be involved, please contact the Tenant Engagement team.





# Planned maintenance



## When will my kitchen/bathroom/windows/boiler be replaced?

One of the most popular questions we get asked by tenants is regarding improvements to your home, be this kitchen or bathroom replacements, external decorations, or window and door upgrades. Understandably, we all want our homes to be in good, modern condition.



In the past, the council have done this sort of work, road by road on a periodic basis. We were therefore able to tell you, for example, when your kitchen would be replaced, along with your neighbours, and would do this usually within a 5-year period once your home had been identified for improvement.



As we've modernised our services and increased our understanding of the condition of your homes through data and stock condition surveys, we are now able to prioritise individual homes where there is a need to replace those elements that are either beyond repair or don't meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Consequently, we no longer have a single programme of works that tells all tenants when and where improvements will be made.

We will be aware of when your internal or external elements will be due to be replaced based on the Decent Homes Standard and will have a programme of works to replace those in the most need.

We will contact you when we are ready to survey before the commencement work on your home. We also rely on you to tell us if you feel your home needs repair. Of course, sometimes, whilst your windows or bathroom may be old, they may work perfectly well – so replacement may not be prioritised in these cases. Someone from the council can talk to you about this if needed and will explain why we are not replacing something if that is the case.

Of course, sustainability and the environment are a priority as well, so we also continue to look to bring our homes up to a level that creates better energy efficiency and a more comfortable, affordable home. We continue to use our data to prioritise this work alongside our other improvement programmes. From this year forward NFDC is looking to merge the energy efficiency and

decarbonisation programmes with the traditional planned maintenance programmes. This will further move away from the road-by-road approach, to looking at each home to assess what interventions are necessary.

In short, we want your homes to be safe, decent, and comfortable, and will prioritise those homes that need upgrading.

The decent homes standard says your home must be in a reasonable state of repair and have reasonably modern services and facilities.

A reasonably modern kitchen is 20 years old or less and no longer serviceable.

A reasonably modern bathroom is 30 years old or less and no longer serviceable.

But you should note that your home is still considered decent if your kitchen and bathroom are over this age, and they are in good condition. If you have a repair that is needed, please report this to our Housing Support Hub (see page 44).

**For more detail on the Decent Home Standard, visit:**  
**[gov.uk/guidance/decent-homes-standard-review](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/decent-homes-standard-review)**

# Public Space Protection Orders

New Forest District Council has made two Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO).



## PSPO Number 1:

Prohibits anyone from placing, throwing or dropping items likely to cause a fire or lighting fires (of any type) or barbeques (including disposable barbeques and any outdoor temporary cooking facilities or equipment).



## PSPO Number 2:

Prohibits anyone from petting, touching and feeding, providing or depositing food for consumption by any New Forest Pony, Horse, Mule or Donkey.

The PSPOs apply to a large area of the New Forest including all Forestry England land and car parks.

Failure to comply may result in a fixed penalty of £100 or being taken to court and a fine of up to £1,000.

For more information, including the areas where the PSPOs apply, please visit [newforest.gov.uk/PSPO](http://newforest.gov.uk/PSPO)



# Wordsearch competition

This issue's theme:  
Forestry England carparks



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

## Words to find:

- Appleslade
- Deerleap
- IvyWood
- PicketPost
- SwanGreen
- Blackwater
- Goatspen
- KingsHat
- Roundhill
- VinneyRidge
- Crockford
- HatchetPond
- Mogshade
- Shatterford
- Wilverly

## To enter the competition:

1. Mark around the words clearly with a black pen.
2. Complete the entry form on page 38.
3. Send it to:  
Tenant Engagement team, New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, SO43 7PA

## Prizes:

- 1<sup>st</sup> prize is £20 shopping voucher.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> prize is £10 shopping voucher.

**Winter edition 2023 winners:** 1<sup>st</sup> prize: Mrs E, Lymington, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Mrs S, Totton

Closing date for entries is Friday 4 October 2024. Terms and Conditions apply. This information will only be used by our housing team for the purposes of the wordsearch competition prize draw, and will not be used for any other purpose or shared elsewhere.

Further information about your information rights can be found at [newforest.gov.uk/privacy](https://newforest.gov.uk/privacy) or by emailing our Data Protection Officer at [data.protection@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@nfdc.gov.uk)

## Hometalk survey

We would really like to hear your views about Hometalk magazine, so please spend a few minutes to give your feedback. You can do this by:

- logging onto Citizen Lab at [newforest.govocal.com](http://newforest.govocal.com), or
- completing the survey below and returning it to the Tenant Engagement team via your nearest Information Office (see page 42), or by post to NFDC Offices, Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA

Please give us your feedback on:

1. Front cover photograph, article designs, colours and images used throughout	2. Any articles that you felt were good or interesting
3. Any articles that you felt were not so good or unnecessary	4. Suggestions for future articles that would be of benefit to all tenants
5. Would you be happy to view Hometalk online or do you prefer a paper copy?	6. Any other comments you wish to make

### Entry form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_







## Pannage season

The New Forest pannage season begins when the acorns fall and usually lasts around 60 days.

The start and finish of it is decided by the Verderers of the New Forest and the Forestry Commission's Deputy Surveyor.

If there is a bumper crop of acorns the season may be extended.

The practice of pannage dates all the way back to the time of William the Conqueror, who founded the New Forest in 1079.

### Why do we have pannage?

The pigs are released onto the forest to eat the fallen acorns, beechmast, chestnuts and other nuts that are on the forest floor. These nuts are poisonous to New Forest ponies and cattle!

Each year, around 600 pigs and piglets are released around the New Forest to make their way through all of the acorns and nuts.

Did you know that back in the 19th century, the number of pigs released for pannage was as high as 6,000? – That's a lot of pigs!

There are quite a few different breeds of pigs that you will see on the forest, including Tamworth, Gloucestershire Old Spot, the British Saddleback and the Wessex Saddleback.

The New Forest is one of the only places left in the UK that still practises pannage

For their safety and your own, please do not approach the pigs (or any other animals in the New Forest) and do not try to feed them, they'll have plenty of yummy food with all the acorns and nuts on the floor.

And please ensure you keep dogs under control and on a short lead when near the pigs.

## Home safety

### Things I can do myself

Smoke detectors - make sure batteries are working properly and test them regularly.

Key safes and mobility aids can be purchased in high street stores.

### If I need help or advice

Free home security visits from Blue Lamp Trust

**Phone:** 0300 777 0157

**Website:** [bluelamptrust.org.uk](http://bluelamptrust.org.uk)

## Household emergency

### Things I can do myself

Water - find out where the mains supply or stopcock is. Switch off mains if necessary.

Gas - turn off gas at the meter, open doors and windows, don't use naked flames or electrical switches.

Electric -turn off mains power to the house.

### Smell gas?

Call 0800 111 999 (National Grid) and let the Housing Support Hub know.

## Consumer advice including benefits, housing, finances and legal concerns

### Things I can do myself

Keep all relevant paperwork and bills stored safely for reference. Don't ignore final bills or letters that concern you.

### If I need help or advice

Housing Support Hub (see back page)

Citizens Advice Hampshire

**Website:** [newforestcab.org.uk](http://newforestcab.org.uk)

New Forest Advice Line

**Phone:** 0808 278 7860

## Rogue traders, scams and doorstep crime

### If I need help or advice

Report an issue to Hampshire Trading Standards

**Phone:** 0808 223 1133

**Email:** [tsadvice@hants.gov.uk](mailto:tsadvice@hants.gov.uk)

**Website:**

[hants.gov.uk/business/tradingstandards](http://hants.gov.uk/business/tradingstandards)

## Preparing for winter

### Things I can do myself

Consider lining curtains and draught proofing rooms. For some DIY tips on energy saving solutions please visit [environmentcentre.com](http://environmentcentre.com)

### If I need help or advice

Hitting the cold spots

Hampshire based advice line for practical and financial support

**Phone:** 0800 8048 601

## Reducing social isolation

### Things I can do myself

Do something new either for yourself or for others. Discover a new talent, go back to something you used to enjoy, connect with people. Get to know your neighbours and your local community.

### If I need help or advice

Your local voluntary service will have details on all sorts of clubs and groups as well as transport solutions that can help.

Hampshire CVS Network

Find details of your local voluntary service

**Website:** [hampshirecvs.org.uk](http://hampshirecvs.org.uk)

The Silverline Helpline for older people

**Phone:** 0800 470 8090

## Bereavement

bereavementadvice.org

**Phone:** 0800 634 9494, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Cruse bereavement care

**Website:** cruse.org.uk

**Phone:** 0808 808 1677

## Supporting carers

### Things I can do myself

Think Carers! If you are a carer yourself, you are entitled to a carer's assessment to help identify your support needs and offer advice.

If you know someone who is a carer, make time to see them and make sure that they are aware of support available to them.

### If I need help or advice

Princess Royal Trust for Carers

**Website:** carercentre.com

**Phone:** 01264 835246

Carers Together

**Website:** carerstogether.co.uk

**Phone:** 01642 488977

## Safe and well

Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service carry out free home fire safety visits to support vulnerable members of the community to ensure they are protected from fire risks

**Website:** hantsfire.gov.uk/safety/safe-and-well

Community safety team

**Phone:** 023 8028 5438, weekdays 9am to 5pm

**Email:** safernewforest@nfdc.gov.uk

## MS support

Lymington & New Forest MS Group

**Phone:** 07544583679

## Keeping healthy

Healthy eating

**Website:** nhs.uk/healthier-families

Solent Mind

Advice and support for anyone with a mental health problem. Help if you feel low, worried or anxious and need to talk.

**Phone:** 023 8202 7810

**Email:** info@solentmind.org.uk

**Website:** solentmind.org.uk

Inclusion: Specialist NHS Wellbeing and Change Services

Inclusion is a national organisation that works with individuals, families and communities who are affected by addiction, crime, mental health or need treatment for their sexual health. Whilst providing comprehensive and inclusive support and treatment, we work with patients and our staff teams to achieve the best outcomes we can.

**Website:** inclusionhants.org

## Bus services in the New Forest

Blue Star bus services

**Website:** bluestarbus.co.uk

**Phone:** 01202 338421

## Road problems including potholes and drainage problems

Hampshire County Council

You can report road problems, including potholes, pavements, roadside plants and drainage problems to Hampshire County Council.

**Website:** hants.gov.uk/roadproblems

**Phone:** 0300 555 1375

# NFDC information directory

## Information Offices

### Lyndhurst (main office)

Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road  
Lyndhurst, Hampshire, SO43 7PA

Phone: 023 8028 5000

Usual opening times:

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

### Fawley

Jubilee Hall, The Square, Fawley,  
Southampton, Hampshire, SO45 1DD

Phone: 023 8089 1640

Usual opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday  
9am to 3pm.

### Fordingbridge

Kings Yard, Salisbury Street  
Fordingbridge, Hampshire, SP6 1AB

Phone: 01425 654560

Usual opening times:

Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm.

### New Milton

Town Hall, 2 Ashley Road, New Milton,  
Hampshire, BH25 6AS

Phone: 023 8028 5000

Usual opening times:

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

### Hythe

The Grove, St Johns Street, Hythe,  
Southampton, Hampshire, SO45 6BZ

Phone: 023 8028 5000

Usual opening times:

Monday and Tuesday 9.30am to 4pm  
(closed between 12.30pm and 1.30pm)  
and Wednesday, 9.30am to 1.30pm.

### Lymington

Town Hall, Avenue Road,  
Lymington, SO41 9ZG

Phone: 023 8028 5000

Usual opening times:

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

### Ringwood Gateway

Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong,  
Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 1AT

Phone: 01425 473883

Usual opening times:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday  
and Friday, 9am to 4pm. Closed on  
Tuesdays.

### Totton and Eling

Civic Centre, Totton, Southampton,  
Hampshire, SO40 3AP

Phone: 023 8086 3138

Usual opening times:

Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm,  
and Friday 9am to 4pm.

## Customer service (for non-housing related enquiries)

Email: [customer.services@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@nfdc.gov.uk)

Phone: 023 8028 5000 (option 4),  
Monday to Thursday, 8.45am to 5.15pm  
Fridays, 8.45am to 4.45pm

Webchat: [newforest.gov.uk/contact](https://newforest.gov.uk/contact) and  
follow the link.

## Social media

You can get in touch with us on social media by messaging us with your enquiry.

Facebook: [@newforestgov](https://www.facebook.com/newforestgov)

X (formerly known as Twitter):

[@nfdc\\_updates](https://twitter.com/nfdc_updates)

## Appletree Careline

Our lifeline pendant service uses a two-way speech system linked to our team in the emergency control room, where trained operators will answer your call quickly, professionally and efficiently, to ensure that any help you need is arranged.

Visit [newforest.gov.uk/AppletreeCareline](https://newforest.gov.uk/AppletreeCareline) or call 023 8028 5523 24 hours a day to find out more.



## Housing Support Hub team

Web chat: Go to [newforest.gov.uk](http://newforest.gov.uk) and click on the 'Live Chat' option at the bottom of the page.

To discuss or raise a variety of housing related queries email: [housing.supporthub@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:housing.supporthub@nfdc.gov.uk)

To report a repair you can use one of our online forms 24 hours a day at [newforest.gov.uk/maintenance](http://newforest.gov.uk/maintenance).

Call 023 8028 5222 - listen to the options for all housing related enquiries.

If you need to report an emergency outside of our office hours, at weekends or on public holidays, call 023 8028 5250 or if the land line is unavailable, call our emergency mobile 07771 259098.

## Housing options

### Homesearch vacancies

For queries relating to Homesearch (the housing waiting list) contact [housing.options@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:housing.options@nfdc.gov.uk)

If you need to speak with us about social housing, call 023 8028 5222 (option 3) during these times:  
Wednesday 2pm to 5.15pm  
Friday 2pm to 4.45pm.

## Homeless and housing advice

For homeless or housing advice queries contact [homeless@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:homeless@nfdc.gov.uk)

If you are homeless or at risk of homelessness you can refer yourself to the Housing Options team <https://hpa2.org/refer/NEWF> or if you are homeless today call 023 8028 5222 (option 3) during these times:

Monday: 10.30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm

Tuesday: 1pm to 5pm

Wednesday: 10:30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm

Thursday: 10:30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm

Friday: 10:30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 4.45pm

You can advise Streetlink of a rough sleeper via a 24 hour, seven days a week free phone line 0300 500 0914 or visit [streetlink.org.uk](http://streetlink.org.uk)

If you need emergency assistance outside of normal office hours, call 023 8028 5250.

### Rent account advice

For enquiries about your rent payments or help with debt management contact [rents@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:rents@nfdc.gov.uk) or call 023 8028 5222 (option 2).

### Estate management

For enquiries about your tenancy or to report tenancy related issues and anti-social behaviour contact [estatemangement@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:estatemangement@nfdc.gov.uk) or call 023 8028 5222 (option 5).