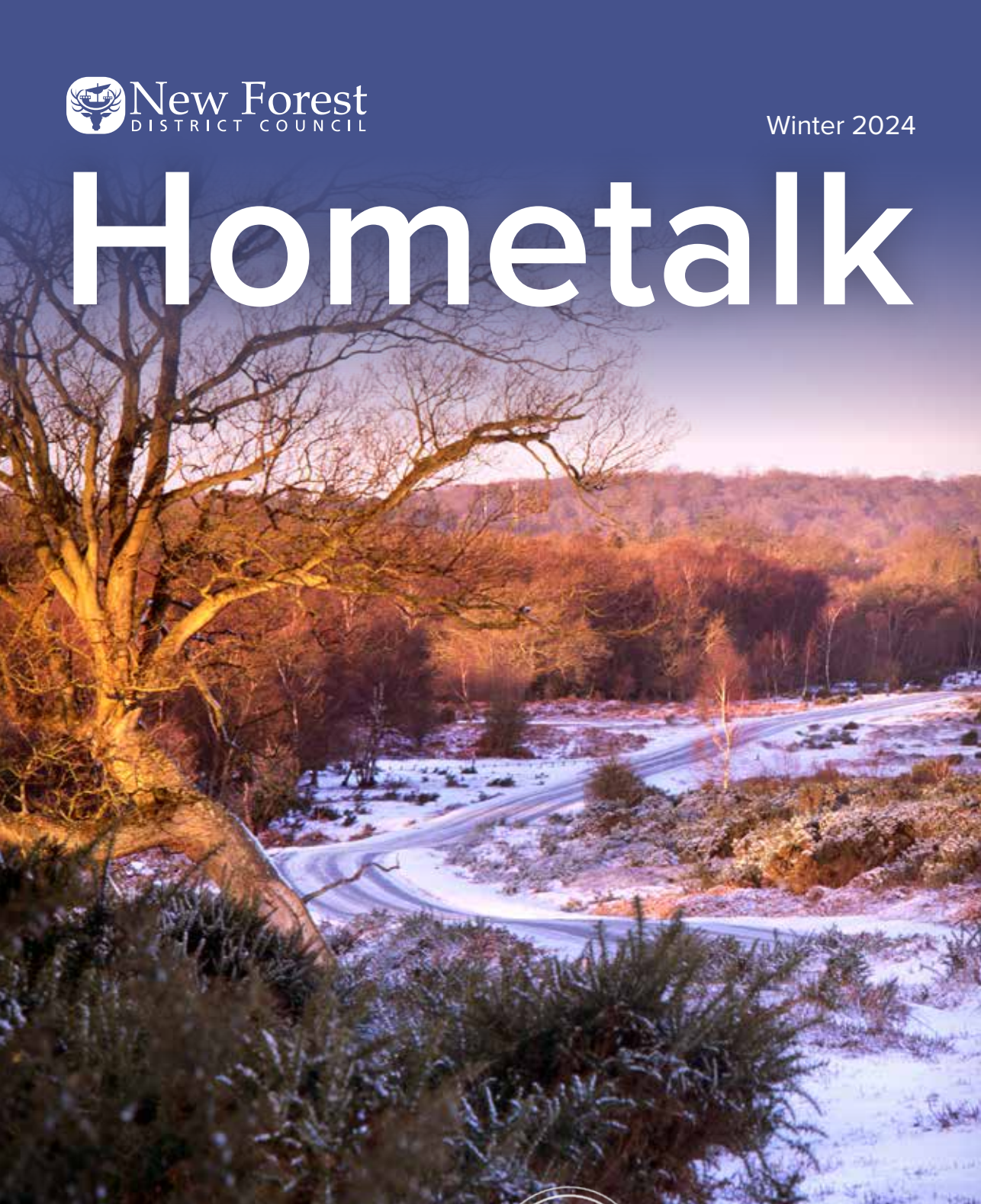


Hometaalk



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

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

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Hometalk can also be viewed on our website at newforest.gov.uk/hometalk

Get in touch

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

Email: TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk

Post: Tenant Engagement team,
New Forest District Council,
Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA

Messages from us

Sign up to receive resident emails

newforest.gov.uk/emails

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 Resident Services, 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

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

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.

Service updates



We've been working hard behind the scenes in creating an improved housing service for you. Building a team that can meet your needs and changing expectations has been a priority and in this edition of Hometalk we're pleased to bring you an update on the Service Managers responsible for those Housing Services delivered to you.

We hope that this gives you a clearer understanding of the teams who are responsible for the services we provide, and help you contact the right service when you need us.





Kirsty Farmer Service Manager, Housing Resident Services

Who are you and what is your service responsible for?

I'm Kirsty Farmer, Service Manager for our housing resident services teams. These are made up of:

Housing Landlord Estate Management - managing the tenancies of our 5,200 properties and neighbourhood management.

Tenant Engagement - getting to know our tenants.

Housing business and customer management - housing hub customer service team, repair planners, disrepair customer response, right to buy, garage allocation and tenancy administration.

Private Sector Housing - housing standards, Houses of Multiple Occupation, Empty properties, Disabled Facilities Grants and managing our private sector leasing properties.

What are you currently working on?

Over the coming months, we're working on a Housing Landlord Estate Management restructure, an Anti-Social Behaviour strategy, Domestic Abuse policy, and private sector housing strategy!

How can we contact your teams?

To contact my team, you can do so via the Housing Support hub, contact details are on page 44. Or for Private Sector Housing – 02380 285151 or email privatesectorhousing@nfdc.gov.uk





Chris Pope Service Manager, Housing Options and Tenancy Accounts



Who are you and what is your service responsible for?

My name is Christopher Pope. My role as Service Manager for Housing Options and Tenancy Accounts is to oversee the performance and set the strategic direction for both teams. Housing Options and Tenancy Accounts are key areas for the Council and Housing Service.

Housing Options provides information, assistance and advice to people to help resolve their housing situation by keeping them in their home or by helping them find alternative accommodation.

The Tenancy Accounts Team collects Income for the Housing team and supports tenants by offering advice on budgeting, maximising their income and offering support and advice to get tenants' accounts back on track to avoid any legal action.

What are you currently working on?

The key areas of focus for the next six months are to continue to prevent Homelessness in the first place and to update all Homesearch applications to ensure information is up to date. And then, for my accounts team, is to focus on reducing tenants' rent debt by speaking to those with arrears to understand the reasons and offer solutions to clear the debt.

How can we contact your teams?

Information on homelessness and the support we offer can be found at newforest.gov.uk/homeless or call 023 8028 5222 or email housing.options@nfdc.gov.uk

Information on paying rent can be found at newforest.gov.uk/rents or call 023 8028 5222 or email rents@nfdc.gov.uk



Sophie Tuffin

Service Manager, Housing Maintenance Programmes & Servicing

Who are you and what is your service responsible for?

My name is Sophie Tuffin, I was appointed in May 2024 as the Service Manager for Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing.

My job is to make sure repairs are completed to a good standard. Where we have equipment in homes, it is serviced and maintained and where we plan to renew items like kitchens, our work is safe and of a good quality.

Teams operating within this area are:

- repairs
- cleaning
- empty homes
- cyclical servicing to include gas and electrical
- planned work

What are you currently working on?

Over the next 6 months our teams will be renewing key computer systems in order to deliver a modern repairs service.

Our repairs teams will complete 20,000 repairs in the next 12 months. 100 homes will receive improvements which will increase the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating, improving comfort.

How can we contact your teams?

Tenants should contact the Housing Support hub with any issues they may have, details can be found on page 44.





Ritchie Thompson Service Manager, Housing Major Projects

Who are you and what is your service responsible for?

I am Ritchie Thomson, Service Manager with responsibility for Housing Maintenance Major Projects, a housing service delivery area with responsibility for fire and building safety, asbestos management compliance, disrepair and structural reparation and housing project management.

The Major Projects team consists of 9 staff, Housing Fire Safety Manager, 3 Building Safety Officers, Corporate Asbestos Manager, Asbestos Manager Officer, Asbestos Administrator and 2 Senior Structural Surveyors.

We're responsible for:

- fire and building safety (including inspections and risk assessments)
- asbestos management (records, surveys, audits and analytics)
- disrepair and project management (structural repair, building safety & disrepair works)

What are you currently working on?

In addition to the normal day to day, our priorities over the next 6 months includes: a review of our garages, looking at their condition and occupancy; further fire remediation work within our housing blocks, including a move from analogue systems to digital (which will enable remote monitoring ahead of the national digital switchover deadline); and replacement of our maintenance and repairs management system to improve service delivery to residents.

How can we contact your teams?

During office hours, residents can contact the team by calling the Housing Support hub on 023 8028 5222. The hub is open on Monday to Thursday between 8.30am and 5.15pm, and on Friday between 8.30am and 4.45pm.



Tim Davis Service Manager, Housing Strategy and Development



Who are you and what is your service responsible for?

I'm Tim Davis, and my service centres around 3 linked, but separate areas of activity.

We are responsible for the development and provision of new build and additional council homes for rent and sale across the New Forest District and in the New Forest National Park.

We work with internal departments, external bodies and providers to maximise the delivery of affordable homes through the best use of local and national policy and resource.

We are responsible for the Council's overarching strategic housing and enabling functions.

The combined purpose of my service is to maximise the delivery of affordable housing across the New Forest district and the New Forest National Park for the benefit of those who are in housing need and who

cannot afford to rent or buy on the open market.

What are you currently working on?

Currently, we're continuing to work hard on maximising the number of additional permanent and temporary affordable homes being delivered by the Council and are Project Managing some very significant developments that are currently under construction or being planned.

How can we contact your teams?

If you are interested in knowing more about the work of the Housing Development and Strategy Team please email housing.developments@nfdc.gov.uk with any questions you may have, or visit the council's website for information on shared-ownership and schemes that are coming forward.



A recent visit to Willow Tree

Out and about

A message from us

We're keen to hear from as many tenants as possible and are always looking for ways to engage with you and continue to hear your voice regarding our housing services, on things that are important to you. You can contact us in many ways (see page 44), but we're also keen to come to you and hear what's going on in your community. As a result, we're going to be out and about as much as possible over the coming months, so come and speak to us and let us know what it's like in your area.

You'll perhaps see us at the community hubs (details of which are on page 43) or walking about on the estates. Sometimes we'll come with a specific purpose or to

carry out a consultation (see an example on the left) - and you can usually spot the Tenant Engagement team by our blue t-shirts and fleeces!

Come and say hi and talk to us about anything that's important to you in your community - we're keen to listen and make sure you have a say in how we manage your home and work in your community.



Dave

Joy

Sarah

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am putting pen to paper to thank you, the 'New Forest District Council' for sending those kitchen fitters to my home. I can never thank you enough for the care and respect they gave me whilst they carried out the work on my kitchen, from the planning, fitting and completing that they have done throughout all the refit of my kitchen. They have kept me informed about all the work that they

Tenant kitchen improvement

Contractors go above and beyond

We're always trying to make sure our services meet the needs of you, our tenants. This is the case for not only officers employed by the council, but also our employed contractors who carry out work on our behalf.

It was fantastic to receive some lovely feedback from a tenant following a kitchen replacement, and especially how the contractor and kitchen fitters had really made time to understand the tenant's needs and approached the job with empathy, understanding and care.

The tenant was so pleased with the work and approach taken, they took the time to let us know, writing us a letter specifically highlighting the great service received.

If you've had a great service, let us know. We're interested in all feedback on our services. We use compliments to help us learn and understand what works well for you. So, if you are pleased with a repair, visit, or simple interaction with one of our teams, let us know.

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'.

Grounds maintenance

You said

Many residents often mention grounds maintenance to us. This was also raised by our Tenant Involvement Group as an area where tenants may not know what they can expect and who is responsible for the various grounds and natural areas that need to be maintained.

We did

As a result, we've kicked off some ground maintenance scrutiny with our Tenant Volunteers helping you, our tenants, tell us what's working and what can be improved – this commenced in the summer and will run for a number of months, alongside a wider Grounds Maintenance review. Watch this space for updates that result from this work.

Howard Oliver House

You said

This year, residents at Howard Oliver House approached us with some small, but important concerns.

Through an agreed meeting, a plan was drawn up to make some improvements through a 'Social Value Fund' application.

We did

This resulted in improvements including:

- new security fencing and gate to improve tenant wellbeing
- a compost bin to help residents maintain their communal space
- replacement benches, allowing residents to enjoy the communal space, and encouraging social activities
- repositioning of the signage at the scheme

If you've got an idea about improvements in your community, please email TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk and we'll be happy to arrange a conversation.

Hometalk survey

You said

We asked you for your views on future editions of Hometalk, ranging from the design, to the articles included within. You told us that you loved the design and the choice of colour and pictures included, and also that the articles were informative and very little was irrelevant or not interesting. But you suggested there also needed to be something “just for fun”, along with some suggestions including articles on repairs and neighbourhoods.

We did

So in this edition we’ve included some of your suggestions on pages 30 and 32. Here you’ll find a puzzle page, what repairs I can do myself, and continued to include some articles that interest you, alongside some important service updates and performance information. We hope you continue to find this both interesting and informative – but if you’ve got any other suggestions, please let the Tenant Engagement team know at TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk

Complaints

You said

Our Tenant Involvement Group looked at our complaint satisfaction earlier this year, and made recommendations on how we could improve our complaints process.

We did

These recommendations continue to be considered and implemented – but we’re pleased to say that:

- all complaints are now recorded centrally, and we’ll be looking at addressing any common themes arising
- we have a dedicated complaints team who ensure we understand and respond to complaints in time and fully
- we are considering how to measure the impact of complaints, through regular surveys
- we are looking at a full training programme for all housing officers to ensure complaints are identified and responded to with understanding and professionalism

We’ll keep you updated on these steps and hope that if you do make a complaint, you’ll receive understanding, and a desire to put things right. We hope also that this approach leads to increased complaint satisfaction.

Support available

Warm Homes Discount Scheme

The Warm Homes Discount Scheme is now open, it is a one-off £150.00 discount off your electricity bill.

If you are eligible, your electricity supplier will apply the discount to your bill, the money is not paid to you.

You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity and you're eligible. Contact your supplier to find out.

Eligibility

You qualify for the discount if you either:

- get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit or
- are on a low income and have high energy costs

Pre-pay or pay-as-you-go meters

You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter.

Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you're eligible, for example a voucher you can use to top up your meter.

Debt advice

Debt can happen to anyone, 'don't ignore it'. Free advice and support can help you find ways to manage your debts and reduce how much you pay each month. Citizens Advice New Forest have a specialist debt team. Telephone 0808 278 7860 to book a free debt appointment.

Help with food

If you have a mobile phone you can download apps to help reduce your food bills. Apps like Too Good To Go, Kitche, No Waste, and Olie.

You can read all about our cost of living help and support at newforest.gov.uk/CostOfLiving



Pension Credit

Could you be entitled to some extra help?

Pension Credit is separate from the State Pension and does not affect any amounts of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support payments. If you get payments you can also get:

- cold weather payments
- winter fuel payment (now only available if someone is in receipt of Pension Credit or has made their claim by 21 December 2024). Expected fuel payment for 2024/2025 could be between £200 and £300
- 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?

If your weekly income is below these amounts, you can claim Pension Credit:

- £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.

What information do you need to make a claim for Pension Credit?

To claim Pension Credit you will need the following information about you and your partner if you have one:

- your National Insurance number
- information about your income and savings
- the bank account details that you want the payments to go to

How to claim

Don't miss out on this extra support which you are entitled to claim and receive.

For more information and details on how to apply, please see www.gov.uk/pension-credit or you can apply by phone on 0800 99 1234 (calls are free). You can also check if you qualify for Pension Credits see Pension Credit calculator at www.gov.uk



Christmas collection dates

Christmas and New Year waste and recycling collection dates

Black and clear sacks

If your normal collection date is:	Your revised collection day will be:
Wednesday 25 December 2024 and Wednesday 1 January 2025	Thursday 2 January 2025
Thursday 26 December 2024 and Thursday 2 January 2025	Friday 3 January 2025
Friday 3 January 2025	Saturday 4 January 2025

Glass

If your normal collection date is:	Your revised collection day will be:
Wednesday 25 December 2024	Saturday 21 December 2024
Thursday 26 December 2024	Saturday 28 December 2024
Wednesday 1 January 2025	Saturday 4 January 2025

As usual, garden waste collections will be paused for two weeks from late December. This will be from Monday 23 December 2024 to Sunday 5 January 2025.

All other collection days will stay the same.

Check your collection day at newforest.gov.uk/findyourcollection



Festive recycling tips

Reuse greeting cards to create gift tags for next year, or recycle, but please remove any decorations like ribbons first.

Recycle plain brown wrapping paper. For all other wrapping paper, reuse or add to your rubbish sack - most wrapping paper contains some plastic and foil and can't currently be recycled in Hampshire.

Reuse festive sweet and biscuit containers, you can recycle tins made from metal.

Recycle all types of empty plastic bottles, including milk, toiletries and cleaning bottles.

Remember to remove food and drink from items before recycling, and check they are clean and dry.

What can be recycled in your clear recycling sacks

Remember, these 6 items can be recycled using your clear recycling sack:

Empty aerosols, plastic bottles, tins, cans, paper and card.

What can be recycled in your glass collection box or communal bin

You can recycle empty jars and bottles, all colours and sizes.

Real Christmas tree recycling

Recycle real Christmas trees at our drop-off sites between 31 December 2024 and 14 January 2025. View addresses for the drop-off sites on our website at newforest.gov.uk/christmasrecycling



Future waste changes

We will be introducing a new waste collection service, so together we can recycle more and throw less away.

It will be rolled out in phases for different areas of the district, from summer 2025 to spring 2026.

New waste service

How the new service will work:

- your food waste will be collected every week
- recycling and rubbish will be collected fortnightly (recycling will be collected one week, and rubbish the next)
- most properties will use wheelie bins for recycling and rubbish, and caddies for food waste
- your glass collection will stay the same, using the same glass container you use now

240 litres



180 litres



23 litres



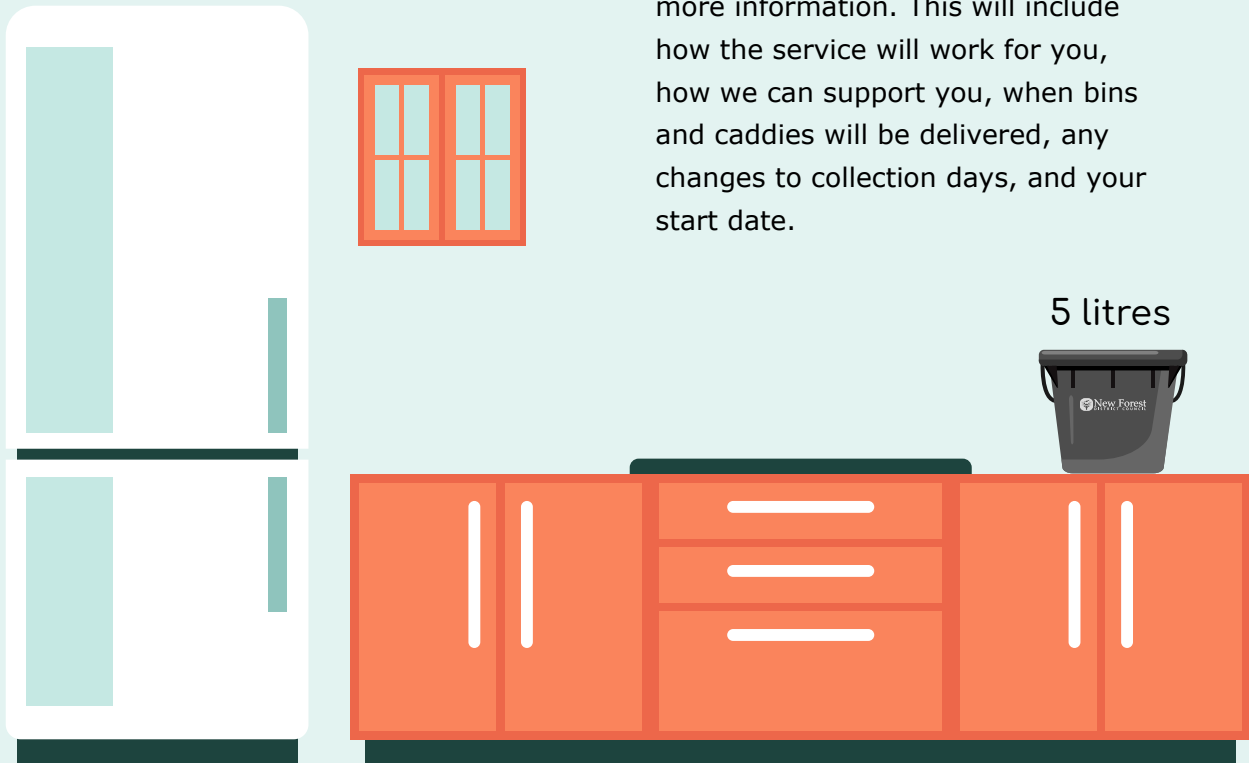
If you live in a flat

If you live in a flat, you may get communal bins instead of wheelie bins. Properties using communal bins will have new food waste communal bins and be provided with a small kitchen caddy to make separating food waste from rubbish easier.

What's next

Nearer the time, we will confirm when each property in the district will join the new service. We will also confirm how households needing more or less space for their waste can apply for a different size bin.

Before the changes are due in your area, we will write to you with lots more information. This will include how the service will work for you, how we can support you, when bins and caddies will be delivered, any changes to collection days, and your start date.



Tenant satisfaction surveys

Thanks to everyone who took part in last year's tenant satisfaction surveys. We're required by the regulator of social housing to undertake tenant surveys every year, and as a result, we've partnered with Acuity (also known as Acuity Research and Practice) to undertake these surveys for us for the next few years.



Acuity are a recognised provider of tenant satisfaction surveys, and work with many social landlords to deliver their surveys. We're really pleased to be working with them and hope that, if you are surveyed by Acuity in the future, you'll receive an outstanding and pleasant experience.



We'd also like to thank you in advance for giving your honest feedback, something that'll help us deliver and improve our services, keeping you at the heart of everything we do.

Surveys this year will be taking place over two waves, so you may have already been contacted, or may be contacted in the new year. Once we have the results, we'll share these with you and the regulator, and let you know how we're addressing your feedback in our service action plans.

Visit newforest.gov.uk/tenantengagement to find out more about the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. You can also visit arap.co.uk if you'd like to know more about Acuity.

Update from Dave Brown, Tenant Engagement Manager

In the Summer edition of Hometalk, we let you know about our tenant data collection project, aiming to improve the information we know about our tenants and their households.

The project is now well underway, and many of you will already have been contacted to check and update the details we hold, via Beehive.



Thanks to everyone who has undertaken the survey so far. We're in the process of updating our systems with those details to ensure:

- we have the right information about you and your household
- we can use this information to better shape our services and provide you with the right housing services, at the right time, in a way that works for you

If you've started the survey, but not yet completed it, don't worry, you can pick up where you left off and won't have to start again.

If you would like to talk to us about this or any concerns you may have, please message us at TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk

Who does what in the New Forest

In the New Forest, there are 3 tiers of local government.

Hampshire County Council

New Forest District Council

Your local town or parish council

The National Park Authority and Forestry England also have areas of responsibility.

This page aims to help you identify which authority is responsible for the services in your community.

Roads and highways

Car parks

On-street parking

Fly tipping clearance

Housing and homelessness

Waste and recycling collection

Waste disposal and public tips

Adult social care

Allotments

Building regulations

Births, deaths, marriages

Burials, cremations, cemeteries

Children's services

Concessionary travel

Elections and electoral services

Emergency planning

Environmental health

Litter, bins, street cleaning

Libraries

Licensing

Local planning

Parks and open spaces

Public toilets

Public health

Schools and education

Trading standards

Trees

	New Forest District Council	Hampshire County Council	Town and parish councils	New Forest National Park Authority	Forestry England
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How to pay rent



Rent is due every Monday and is payable in advance, it is your responsibility to ensure you pay weekly – you can pay in several ways.

Direct Debit

We offer two payment dates – 1st or 15th of the month – simply complete a Direct Debit form by visiting our website newforest.gov.uk/rents or call on 023 8028 5222 and we will set up your preferred date.

Standing order

Payment is made automatically from your bank. You will need your 7 digit tenancy reference along with the following account details:

Lloyds Bank plc

Sort Code: 30-80-63

Account No: 29293160

Account name: NFDC

Telephone

Payments can be made over the phone using a debit or credit card by calling 02380 285222 option 2. Alternatively, payments can be made 24 hours a day via our automated line

by calling 0300 456 0626.

Online

Make a payment online by visiting our website newforest.gov.uk/rents

Swipe card

Payments can be made in any Post Office or pay point outlets.

To request a card please call 02380 285222 option 2 or email housing.business@nfdc.gov.uk

Please be aware payments can take up to five days to credit your rent account by this method.

In person

Payments can be made at any of New Forest District Council Information Offices. See locations on page 40.

Complaints

A message from us

"I'm not happy with..."

"Can you tell us more..."

We're keen to learn from your experience of our services, and know that sometimes, we don't get it right. We welcome complaints and these tell us when you feel you haven't had or experienced the service you'd expect – and enable that learning.

If you have had an experience that leaves you feeling like we've not done something we should've, haven't listened, or have made the wrong decision, please let us know – your complaint will be followed up.

Complaints can be made in several ways.

Email

complaints@nfdc.gov.uk

Web form

newforest.gov.uk

Telephone

023 8028 5000

Post

Information Governance and Complaints Team,
New Forest District Council,
Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road,
Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA

Social media

Via Twitter or Facebook. However, we request that personal information is not disclosed on social media. Any complaints received in this way will be dealt with separately to ensure that confidentiality and privacy is maintained.

In person

Through a meeting with a council officer.

Damp and mould advice

Managing moisture in your home

Condensation is the most common cause of mould. This happens when moisture in our home, created by daily activities, condenses on cold surfaces.



Tips for reducing moisture

Whenever possible, keep windows open to allow for good ventilation. Keep window trickle vents open and clean.

Wipe condensation from window sills each morning. The removal of condensation from walls and internal windows is your responsibility.

Keep your heating at a constant temperature of around 19 to 21 degrees Celsius. It's cheaper to set the heating at a lower temperature for longer, than high for shorter periods.

Dry clothes outside or in a dryer. If this isn't possible, use an air dryer inside and open your windows.

Close your internal doors when you're cooking or showering.

If damp has been caused by a problem with the structure of your home or due to an outstanding repair, it is New Forest District Council's responsibility to fix it. Please report it as soon as possible.

Cleaning mould

It's important to clean away mould as soon as you see it and continue to do so regularly.

Using fungicidal washes

Fungicidal washes can be used to remove mould and are available from most hardware stores. These should be used as directed by the manufacturer.

Using white vinegar

White vinegar is a more environmentally friendly and often a cheaper way of removing mould. If you are cleaning a large area of mould, use the vinegar neat. For small patches, mix it 50:50 with water and spray it onto the mould.

Let it sit on the mould for 60 minutes before wiping it away. Wipe from outer edges inwards, which will prevent further spread.

For more difficult patches, mix 1 part white vinegar with 1 part baking soda, mix it into a paste and apply. Leave on for at least an hour, or overnight where possible, before wiping away with a damp cloth.

When cleaning mould

When cleaning mould, you should:

- use protective equipment such as gloves and mask
- ensure the room is well ventilated
- shut doors to other rooms to help stop mould spores spreading around your home
- throw away any cloths you use to clean the mould
- throw away any soft furnishings, such as toys and clothes, affected by mould
- shampoo areas such as carpets
- clean away mould growth as soon as you spot it
- take pictures to track the progress of mould and inform the council if you need to escalate the issue further

Reporting damp or mould

If you are a New Forest District Council tenant and have damp or mould in your home, you can report it online at newforest.gov.uk/dampandmould

You can also report it by calling us on 023 8028 5222 or by emailing housing.support@nfdc.gov.uk

Fire safety



Fire safety information is important to ensuring you understand, not only what we are doing to keep you and your home safe, but your responsibilities too.

We have updated the fire safety information pages on our website making relevant information easily accessible to our residents. Please visit newforest.gov.uk/firesafety

You can also request information via our online form by scanning the QR code on this page or email us at fire.safety@nfdc.gov.uk



The safety of our residents is of the highest importance to us, so if you have any queries or concerns, please contact us.



Gas safety checks

We have a legal requirement to inspect all gas appliances annually in council properties.

We require all tenants to allow our engineers access to their properties to make these checks.

We can take court action against any tenants who refuse access for gas safety checks.

If tenants repeatedly miss appointments, the property may be visited by a Supervisor who will leave a notice on the front door notifying the tenant that they must contact the gas team. If necessary, we will apply to the court for an injunction to enable us to gain access and, if appropriate, authorise us to force entry. The council will seek the costs of having to make an injunction application from the tenant.

Please ensure you help the gas team to keep tenants safe and warm in their homes by allowing access to carry out safety checks.

If you think you can smell gas in your home or in the event of an emergency:

- get into fresh air immediately, open all doors and windows to ventilate area
- turn off the emergency gas control valve at the gas meter
- extinguish all naked flames and do not smoke
- do not operate electrical switches
- if you are feeling unwell, visit your GP or hospital immediately and let them know you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide
- do not turn on the gas supply until it has been checked by a gas safe registered engineer

If you think you can smell gas in your home and you feel there is an emergency situation call the National Grid UK immediately on 0800 111 999 any time, day or night.

Repairs in your home

What repairs are you responsible for and what can you do in your home?

We've recently had a request from a tenant asking "what repairs am I responsible for and what does the council do". Whilst this is a difficult question to answer fully, as this can depend on the type of home you live in and your tenancy agreement – we've detailed below some simple guidance to help.

Firstly, the council's responsibilities

To start, it's probably helpful to outline our (NFDC's) responsibilities. We are responsible for your home as a building including ensuring that this is wind and watertight and fit for occupation. We must keep the structure and exterior of the property and common areas in repair and maintain services (where belonging to us) providing water, gas and electric to the home. NFDC is also responsible for the sanitation services (toilet and washing) and the hot water and heating facilities. If you have any repairs concerning these parts of your home, let us know.



We ask that you report any damage or repairs required to the property or common (communal) areas, and allow us to inspect and carry out required repairs with reasonable notice.

Your responsibilities

You are responsible for keeping your home in a good condition by decorating the inside of the property and ensuring that the decorations are maintained to a reasonable standard. You also need to replace light bulbs and batteries in smoke detectors where required. As part of the decoration, you can do small DIY jobs such as putting up shelves and pictures – but please only do so if competent and able, and be aware that you will be responsible for putting right any subsequent damage



to the home (such as filling holes) should you move.

We will not unreasonably withhold permission should you wish to do some other, larger DIY projects. However, we ask that if you are looking to undertake a project such as changing doors, adding or changing the fabric of the building or garden that you write to us and seek written permission to undertake the work. We will also require evidence that the project is being undertaken by a competent person if required, and that you have also sought any other required permissions (such as Building Control). You will then be responsible for maintaining anything that has been installed by you, so may wish to think carefully about the

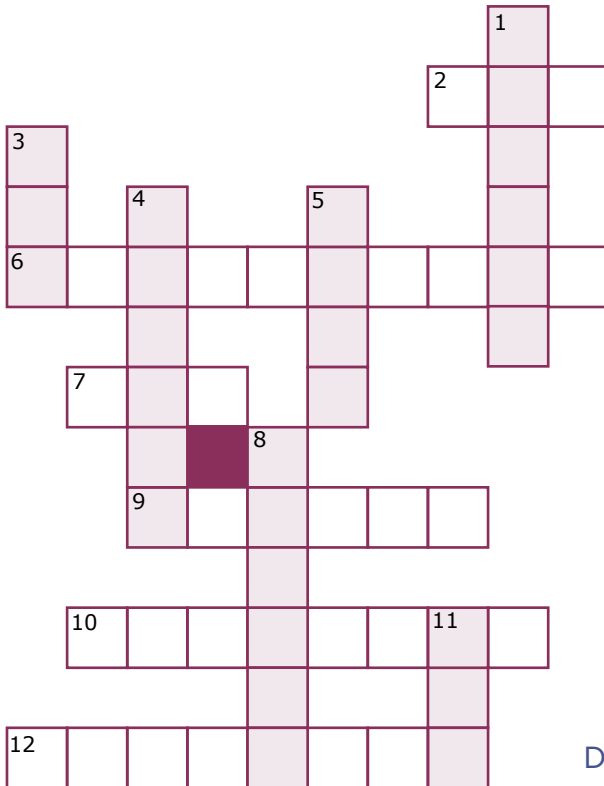
long term impact of any work you are considering.

One thing we would ask is to check your tenancy agreement. Whilst we've given a good overview here, there may be specific terms with your tenancy that tell us what repairs and jobs we're responsible for, or any specific restrictions – so if in doubt, check there or contact us via the Housing Support hub, details of which are on page 44.

If you live in a shared ownership home, or a leasehold property – you will probably have some clear or additional responsibilities. Please speak to your landlord or NFDC about this.

New Forest crossword

Answers on page 42



Across

2. This creature has a fluffy tail and pointy ears (3)
6. This bird taps on trees to find insects (10)
7. These animals are released onto the forest to eat the fallen acorns (3)
9. You may find these species in the forest, Grass and Adder (5)
10. This nocturnal animal has prickles (8)
12. This animal stores nuts for winter (8)

Down

1. The male and female of these animals are known as Jack and Jenny (6)
3. These animals roam freely in the forest and are owned by Commoners (3)
4. Each year these animals are rounded up in what are called drifts (6)
5. Some of these creatures have large antlers (4)
8. This animal is nocturnal and has black and white fur (6)
11. This bird makes a twit twoo sound (3)

Wordsearch competition

This issue's theme:
Christmas films

Prizes:

1st prize is £20 shopping voucher.
2nd prize is £10 shopping voucher.

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

Words to find:

Nativity
The Snowman
Nutcracker
The Holiday
Die Hard
Polar Express
The Grinch
Elf
Love Actually
Home Alone
Scrooge
The Santa Claus

To enter the competition:

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

Summer 2024

winners:

1st prize: Ms A,
Ringwood,
2nd prize: Mrs S,
Marchwood

Entry form

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Closing date for entries is Friday 2 May 2025. 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 or by emailing our Data Protection Officer at data.protection@nfdc.gov.uk

Spot the 8 differences

Find the 8 differences between the two woodland scenes on this page. Answers on page 42.





Saturday 26 April 2025

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 (which is chosen by tenants), or find out more about the events, please email the team at TenantEngagement@nfdc.gov.uk or call Sarah 02380 285498 or Joy 02380 285119.



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.

Pictured below: Tawny Owl

Owls

Owls are largely nocturnal birds hunting, breeding and communicating at night, though some species are also active during the day. Owls tend to be solitary and prefer to isolate themselves from others. They are highly adapted hunters who have incredible binocular vision and some of the most acute hearing in the animal kingdom. Owls' heads and faces are often shaped a bit like a radar dish which helps them catch sounds and direct vibrations towards their ears.

If you are lucky enough to spot them, the 4 most common species of owl that you are likely to see in England are:

Tawny Owl

The most common owl in the UK. Tawny owls are about the size of a wood pigeon, and they are extremely secretive and strictly nocturnal. What most people will recognise is its call – it consists of a hoo-hoo hoot.



Barn Owl

Barn owls are one of the most recognisable owls. They're much lighter in colour than some owls and have distractive heart-shaped faces. They have a piercing, shrieking call and can be found everywhere in the UK. You're most likely to see a Barn owl hunting over fields and grasslands at dusk or dawn.



Short-eared Owl

Short-eared owls are less common. They are primarily found in North Wales, Northern Ireland and North England. They are a similar size to Tawnies and prey upon mice, voles, rats and other small mammals.



Little Owl

Little owls are thought to be relatively common across lowland areas of England, Scotland and Wales. They primarily eat invertebrates such as beetles, earwigs, cockchafers and crane flies. Little owls are fairly active in the day and are usually spotted hunting from a treetop perch.

Find out more at birdfact.com

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

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 page 43)

Citizens Advice Hampshire

Website: 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

Website:

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

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

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: safersnewforest@nfdc.gov.uk

MS support

Lymington & New Forest MS Group

Phone: 07544 583679

Email: lymington@mssociety.org.uk

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.

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.

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.

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

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 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
or call 023 8028 5523 24 hours a day to
find out more.

Answers



Spot the difference (page 34 to 35)

Crossword (page 32)

Across

- 2. Fox
- 6. Woodpecker
- 7. Pig
- 9. Snake
- 10. Hedgehog
- 12. Squirrel

Down

- 1. Donkey
- 3. Cow
- 4. Ponies
- 5. Deer
- 8. Badger
- 11. Owl



Meet the Tenant Engagement Team

at a Community Hub this January,
February, and March.

We'll be there to have a friendly
chat about your housing services
and offer support and guidance
where needed.

Enjoy a hot drink provided by
the hubs allowing you to catch
up and meet other residents
from your area.



Calshot - 12pm to 1.30pm

- 23 January
- 13 February
- 20 March

Fordingbridge - 12.30pm to 2.30pm

- 31 January
- 28 February
- 28 March

Pennington - 12pm to 1.30pm

- 9 January
- 27 February
- 13 March

New Milton - 9am to 10.30am

- 15 January
- 12 February
- 12 March

Totton - 9.30am to 11.30am

- 8 January
- 5 February
- 5 March

Addresses for these community
hubs can be found at
newforest.gov.uk/CommunityHubs

Housing Support Hub team

Web chat: Go to 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

To report a repair you can use one of our online forms 24 hours a day at newforest.gov.uk/maintenance

Call 023 8028 5222 and 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

Rent account advice

For enquiries about your rent payments or help with debt management contact 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 or call 023 8028 5222 (option 5).

Homeless and housing advice

For homeless or housing advice queries contact 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

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

Homesearch vacancies

For queries relating to Homesearch (the housing waiting list) contact 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 and
Friday 2pm to 4.45pm.