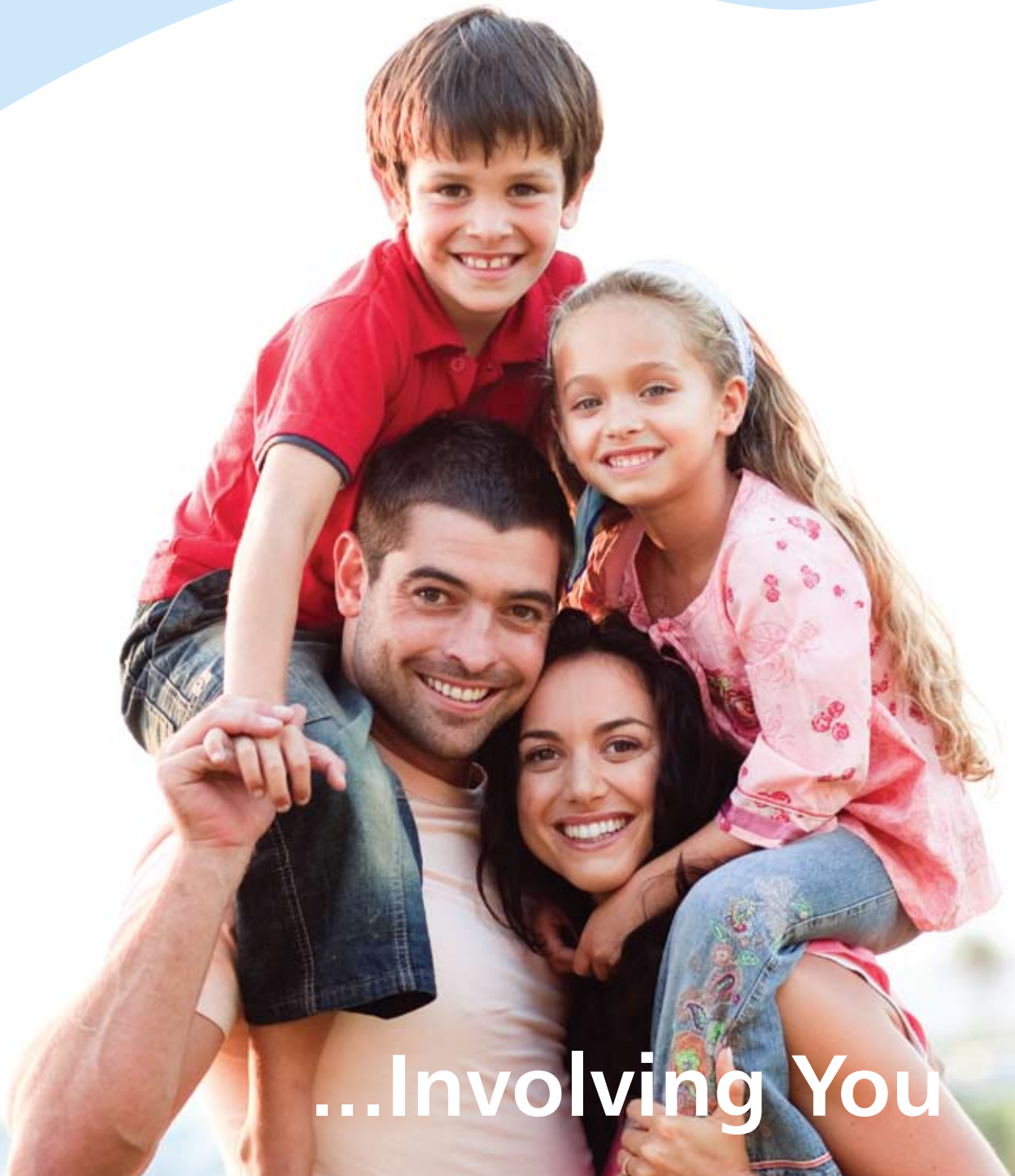


# Our offer to you...



...Involving You

**Building Successful Communities**



# Your Local Offer for Resident Involvement and Customer Services

## Introduction

Our regulator requires us to involve tenants in developing 'Local Offers' for the delivery of certain services, including resident involvement and customer services.

This leaflet explains how North Lincolnshire Homes will deliver these services to customers so that you know what to expect. It also sets out the service standards that we must meet, explains how these are monitored and what happens if we don't meet the standards.

## Customer service and choice

We are committed to providing a good quality housing service that offers choice and to treating you as an individual. We apply these customer care principles to everything we do. We will:

- ✓ Resolve your enquiry or request quickly and right first time.
- ✓ Listen to you and take your views into account.
- ✓ Treat you with respect and understand your individual needs.
- ✓ Treat you fairly and follow our policies.
- ✓ Keep you informed of progress.
- ✓ Respect your privacy.
- ✓ Give you value for money.

There are many ways for you to contact us to report a problem or ask for advice. You can contact us by telephone, email, via our website, through digital tv, or in person at our Customer Centre.

When you contact us by telephone, we will answer your call quickly and, if we cannot deal with your query straight away, we will let you know who will be dealing with it and when they will contact you. When you visit our Customer Centre, we will make sure we see you at your appointment time. If you don't have an appointment, a Customer Advisor will see you within 15 minutes or, if we are busy, we will make an appointment for you so you are not kept waiting. We will also offer you a private interview. When you contact us in writing (by letter or email), we will send you an acknowledgement within 48 hours telling you who will deal with your enquiry and when they will respond to you.

If we need to visit your home, we will arrange to call at a time that is convenient to you and will visit out of office hours if needed. All of our staff and contractors carry proof of identity and will show this to you before entering your home.

We send you the Key News magazine four times a year to keep you informed about services and progress and we send you an Annual Report once a year to tell you how we have performed. We also publish leaflets about our policies and services.

We also provide lots of information on our website, in our Customer Centre and on our digital tv channel.

It is necessary for NLH to keep some personal information about customers and we make sure that we follow legal requirements in keeping information confidential and using it properly. You can ask to see the personal information that we hold about you and we will provide this to you within 40 days for a small charge. Please contact us for more information.



# Compliments, comments and complaints

We use praise and criticism from customers to improve services by learning from our mistakes and building on our successes. If you contact us to praise or comment on a service, we will thank you in writing and tell you how we will use the information that you have given us to further improve that service.

If you are not happy with any aspect of a service you have received from us, please tell us so that we can try to put things right. You can make a formal complaint about a service by telephoning us, writing to us, via our website or digital tv,

or in person at our Customer Centre. We will investigate your initial complaint and provide you with a response within 14 days. If we have made a mistake, we will apologise and try to put things right straight away. If we cannot deal with your complaint within the set timescale, for example where we need to carry out technical tests, we will explain the reasons, agree a timescale with you and keep you informed of progress. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can progress your complaint to further stages.

Complaint stage	What happens	Timescale
Informal	You tell a member of staff what you are not happy about and they try to resolve the problem with you.	14 days
Stage 1	You make a formal complaint and a service manager investigates, tries to resolve the problem with you and provides you with a response.	14 days
Stage 2	Your complaint is investigated by a Director who tries to resolve the problem with you and provides you with a response.	21 days
Stage 3	You will be invited to present your complaint to a panel of Board members and senior managers. The Panel will review the complaint, decide whether previous resolutions were appropriate and try to resolve the problem.	1 month

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint after stage 3, you can progress your complaint with the Housing Ombudsman Service.

We look at every complaint we get to see if we have made a mistake or could have done things better. We use this information to change our policies and procedures to try to prevent similar problems happening in the future.



# Involvement and empowerment

We are committed to providing a variety of ways for residents to get involved in shaping services and influencing how we manage their homes.

Residents have helped us to develop a 'Menu of Options' which provides a range of different involvement options and explains the time commitment involved in each. Involvement opportunities include being an Ordinary Member of the company, helping with a service review, attending a focus group, filling in a survey, being a tenant inspector, joining or setting up a Residents' Association and sitting on a service panel.

North Lincolnshire Homes is overseen by a Board of Directors which monitors performance and progress and makes decisions about policies and the future direction of the business.

Five of the fifteen Board members are tenants. Each year, at least one of the tenant Board members steps down to give other tenants a chance to become a Board member. Tenants who are Ordinary Members of the company can apply to become a Board member. If there are more applications than places available, a ballot is held and the Ordinary Members of the company vote to elect a candidate onto the Board.

Earlier this year, we set up a Resident Scrutiny Panel which has the power to scrutinise any area of service including resident involvement. All tenants except for serving Board Members are eligible to apply to become a Scrutiny Panel Member. After conducting a scrutiny investigation, the Panel makes recommendations for improvements directly to the Board.

# Treating you as an individual

We aim to tailor our services and provide choices to suit the diverse needs and preferences of our customers. To help us do this, we ask tenants to fill in a 'getting to know you' survey telling us about their family circumstances and any special requirements they have.

We make sure that our offices are accessible to a wide range of people, including those who use a wheelchair or have mobility difficulties. We hold meetings and events on different days of the week and at different times of the day to try to accommodate the different preferences of people attending. We make alternative arrangements to prove the identity of visiting staff for tenants who cannot see or read our identity cards. We can provide information in different formats, including large print, audio and Braille, and in a range of different languages. If you ask us for a document in an alternative format, we will provide it to you

within 14 days. We can provide translators and signers to help customers during interviews and home visits. We also provide hearing loop systems at our meeting venues to help people with hearing difficulties. Please contact us to let us know of any communication preferences that you have.

We carry out 'Equality Impact Assessments' on all our policies and services to make sure that they are as fair as possible and do not disadvantage any particular groups of people. These assessments are carried out by staff and tenant volunteers to make sure that a wide range of views are considered. We also monitor customer satisfaction, complaints and resident involvement by age, gender, disability, faith, trans, sexuality, ethnicity and socio-economic characteristics to make sure that our services are delivered fairly and do not disadvantage any particular groups of people.



## How residents have been involved in developing the service

Many residents and stakeholders have been involved in developing resident involvement and customer services, including setting the service standards which we work to. Delegates at our tenant conference gave feedback on how well they thought that NLH performed against regulatory requirements and suggested ways of improving the service. A resident led working group helped us to achieve accreditation from the Tenant Participation

Advisory Service by carrying out a thorough review of the resident involvement service.

Customers were involved in carrying out a review of customer access which resulted in us opening the Customer Centre in Scunthorpe and extending our opening hours. We have also looked at information gathered through satisfaction surveys, complaints and other feedback, and consulted with tenant groups including Community Voice.

### Service standards. We will:

- ✓ Respond to requests for personal information within 40 days.
- ✓ Answer telephone calls within 10 seconds.
- ✓ Acknowledge letters and emails within 48 hours.
- ✓ Respond to stage 1 complaints within 14 days.
- ✓ Respond to stage 2 complaints within 21 days.
- ✓ Respond to stage 3 complaints within one month.

### How the service standards are monitored, reported on and scrutinised by tenants

We monitor our progress in meeting the service standards by checking our records of correspondence and resident involvement. We also ask our Tenant Inspectors to carry out reality checks and mystery shopping, and we look at the complaints and other feedback we receive from customers.

Every three months we will tell you how well we are performing. We also provide reports to the Board,

the Resident Scrutiny Panel and Community Voice. These reports are published on our website and printed copies are available on request.

The Resident Scrutiny Panel can decide to carry out an investigation into any service area and will provide its findings and recommendations directly to the Board.

## What happens if the standards are not met?

If we do not meet our service standards, the Board will make sure that an action plan is implemented to improve performance and will closely oversee progress. If you think that we have not met our service standards in your case, please tell us so that we can put things right.

## How the service will be reviewed in future

We are due to carry out a further review of customer service and access to services in 2013 and customers will be involved in these reviews. We may make changes to resident involvement and customer services earlier if it is necessary due to changes in legislation, because of instruction from our regulator or to implement recommendations made following a Resident Scrutiny investigation.

## Jargon buster and common terms

Regulator	The organisation that regulates social housing providers in England on behalf of the Government.
Local Offer	An explanation of the service that customers can expect to receive.
Service standard	A measurable target that the service must meet.
Ordinary Member	All tenants can apply to become an Ordinary Member of NLH and this gives them the right to attend the Annual General Meeting and vote on constitutional matters such as Board membership.
Equality Impact Assessment	A check on a policy or service to make sure that it is fair to everyone and does not disadvantage any particular groups of people.
Tenant Participation Advisory Service	The leading national tenant participation organisation that works to promote tenant empowerment.

## Further information

You can find further information about this service by contacting us, looking on our website or reading the following leaflets:

- Comments and Customer Feedback
- Working Together
- Resident Involvement Strategy
- Resident Involvement Statement
- Equality and Diversity

Leaflets are available from our Customer Centre, from our website or by post on request.



## No English?

For information please call:

08000 193530 (Arabic) للحصول على المزيد من المعلومات اتصل بـ: 08000 193530

তথ্যগুলি বাংলায় জানতে হলে এই নম্বরে ফোন করুন: 08000 193531 (Bengali)

欲知粵語版的信息，請致電: 08000 193532 (Cantonese)

हिन्दी में जानकारी के लिये 08000 193533 पर फोन करें (Hindi)

بۆ زانیاری به کوردی سۆرانی تەلهفۆن بۆ ژماره 08000 193537 بکە. (Kurdish Sorani)

Para mais informação em português contacte-nos através do telefone 08000 193538 (Portuguese)

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ 08000 193539 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ (Punjabi)

"Warbixinta oo af Soomaali ah wac 08000 193540" (Somali)

08000 193541 (Urdu) اردو میں انفارمیشن کے لیے اس ٹیلیفون نمبر پر رابطہ فرمائیں۔

Nie mówisz po angielsku? Po informacje zadzwoń pod numer 08000 195587 (Polish)

Не знаете английский? Для информации звоните 08000 195586 (Russian)

**For information in large print, audio or other formats  
please call 01724 279900**

## North Lincolnshire Homes Limited

### Registered Address

Meridian House • Normanby Road • Scunthorpe • North Lincolnshire • DN15 8QZ

### Customer Centre

15 - 19 Cole Street • Scunthorpe • North Lincolnshire • DN15 6QY

### Opening hours

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday – 9.00 am to 5.00 pm,  
Wednesday – 10.00 am to 5.00 pm, Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm and Saturday 9.00 am to 12.30 pm

### Contact Centre

Telephone 01724 279900 • Freephone 080 032 63 63

### Opening Hours

Monday to Friday - 8am - 6pm

[www.nlhomes.org.uk](http://www.nlhomes.org.uk)