

# Welcome to our Annual Report to Northumberland County Council Tenants 2013/14

## Introduction:

Welcome to our annual report for tenants of Northumberland County Council for the year 2013/2014.

This year 2013/14 saw the first new council homes at Hodgsons Road built for many years and a further 60 new council homes at Ark Royal Close in Blyth are expected to be ready for allocation from the summer of 2014 onwards. Northumberland County Council, in partnership with Homes for Northumberland and other housing providers will continue with our ambitious plans to increase the supply of affordable housing in Northumberland.



In my welcome letter last year I talked about the challenges of Welfare Reform and we know that our tenants have felt the impact of changes to the benefit system in their pockets. The council are very aware that one agency alone cannot tackle the effects of the governmental reforms and we are ensuring that our priorities in areas such as employment, skills and training, social services and financial inclusion are all geared towards supporting people through these difficult times.

I'll end this year on a similar note as last year and urge everyone to take every opportunity you can to tell Homes for Northumberland how they are performing. I remain committed to ensuring a successful relationship between the council and Homes for Northumberland; together we want to deliver excellent customer service to our tenants and the best way for them to continually improve their service is to have a clear understanding of what it's like to be a tenant of Northumberland County Council.

**Councillor Allan Hepple, Policy Board Member – Planning Housing and Regeneration.**

## Tenant Satisfaction

A full set of results are available from Homes for Northumberland. Please contact them on 01670 542424. [www.hfn.uk.com/about\\_us/performance/default.asp](http://www.hfn.uk.com/about_us/performance/default.asp)

All tenants were asked to complete a customer satisfaction survey and 3,196 (38%) of you responded, which is typical of response rates for this type of survey and even higher than expected. The 2014 survey results were in most cases far better than the previous results in 2009.

**88% of tenants were satisfied with the overall service they received; an increase of 9% from 2009 (79%).**

**The top 5 factors contributing to overall satisfaction were:**




# How we're performing

## Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

### Our standards say we will:

- Make it easy for you to get in touch with us.
- Make it easy for you to complain and we will deal with your complaint quickly and fairly.
- Provide services that meet your needs.
- Give you the opportunity to get involved, to have your say and to help shape and drive services and decisions.

### This is how we performed:

Measure	2012/2013 Performance	2013/2014 Target	2013/2014 Performance	2013/2014 Overall Rating
% of calls abandoned by Homes for Northumberland's Customer Services Centre	4.75%	5%	2.59%	
% of enquiries dealt with at first point of contact	87.26%	95%	90.18%	
% of calls answered within 20 seconds	77.86%	95%	83.9%	

- **91%** of tenants said that Homes for Northumberland have friendly and approachable staff.
- **87%** found staff to be helpful, which is above the benchmark average (85%).
- **76%** was satisfied with the way Homes for Northumberland dealt with complaints.
- **71%** felt that Homes for Northumberland listened to their views, which is **3%** higher than the benchmark average.

**Homes for Northumberland have taken various steps to improve performance. For instance, the Customer Services Team will continue to take part in regular training events to expand their knowledge and reduce the need to transfer calls. In addition, as staff sickness levels and lack of holiday cover affect performance, additional staff are being trained and extra telephony systems have been installed.**





# Your Home

## Our standards say we will:

- Provide a 24/7 emergency repairs service.
- Offer you a morning, afternoon or evening appointment for repairs.
- Complete your repair in one visit wherever possible.
- Ensure that your home is safe and meets decency standards.
- Provide you with a safe, warm and affordable home

## This is how we performed:

Measure	2012/2013 Performance	2013/2014 Target	2013/2014 Performance	2012/2013 Overall Rating
% jobs fixed right first time	96.38%	96.5%	97.27%	
% of appointments kept against appointments made.	99.27%	99.3%	97.25%	

- **74%** of tenants used the repairs service in the last 12 months and 84% was satisfied with the last repairs service they received.
- Tenants were particularly satisfied with the dirt and mess being kept to a minimum, being told when the workers would call and the overall quality of the work.

**Homes for Northumberland are setting up a new diary system to prevent overbooking and bookings made for staff on sick leave and will closely monitor the effects of this on performance.**





# Your Neighbourhood

## Our standards say we will:

- Carry out regular estate inspections with residents and other partners and publish what we find and what we do about it.
- Respond to anti social behaviour complaints within 5 working days
- Respond to serious anti social behaviour, domestic abuse or hate crime within 1 work day
- Remove offensive graffiti within 24 hours of you reporting it to us. Other graffiti will be removed within 10 working days of you reporting it to us.
- Take enforcement action where we find fly tipping.

## This is how we performed:

Measure	2013/2014 Target	2013/2014 Performance	Overall Rating
% of serious anti-social behaviour complaints responded to in 1 working day.	100%	98.90%	
% of anti-social behaviour complaints responded to in 1 working day.	100%	97.62%	

- 75% of tenants were satisfied with the way Homes for Northumberland deals with anti-social behaviour, which is considerably higher than average for similar landlords.
- 8% of tenants had reported anti-social behaviour in the last year and of these 56% were satisfied with how this was dealt with.
- 88% of tenants were satisfied with their Neighbourhood as place to live.
- Homes for Northumberland completed 52 estate inspections with tenants during 2013/14 to help identify areas for development and improvement with the help of local people.

**Homes for Northumberland will be carrying out a full review of the anti-social behaviour process during 2014/15.**

## Value for Money

## What was your rent spent on? For every £ of your rent, we spent....

### Repairs and Maintenance

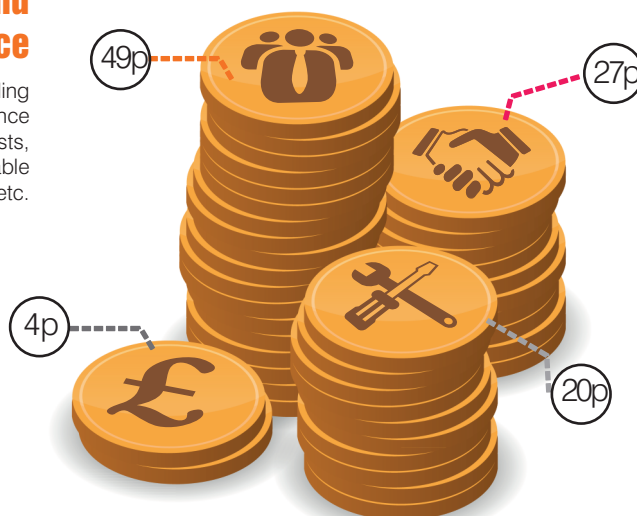
This includes the cost of providing the repairs and maintenance service. This includes salary costs, vehicles, fuel, consumable materials, stores issues, etc.

### Management of Major Works

This is the cost of the section who manage the major works programme on behalf of Northumberland County Council.



**83% of tenants were satisfied that their rent provides value for money, up from 77% in 2009.**



### Central Services and Overheads

This includes costs associated with the financial and performance management of Homes for Northumberland, the MD and Directors, governance, premises costs and Customer Services Centre.

### Tenancy & Estate Management

This covers managing tenancies, collection of rent, sign ups, safer estates work grounds maintenance on estates.

This report is available at [www.northumberland.gov.uk/housing](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/housing).

If you require any additional copies of this report or have any comment to make

please contact **Northumberland County Council Housing Services** on 0845 600 6400

or through the **Contact Us** pages on our website <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3467>