



Your Homes
Newcastle



Welcome to your
new
home

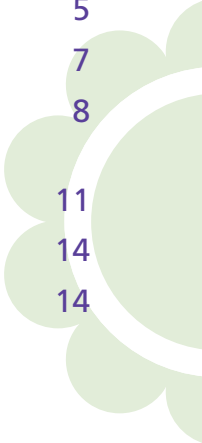
This information is about Your Homes Newcastle, who are responsible for managing council homes on behalf of Newcastle City Council. If you need this in a different language phone 0191 278 8633.

This information is also available in easy read, large print, Braille and audio tape. We can also arrange for you to see a British Sign Language interpreter.

বাংলায় Bengali	এই তথ্য হল নিউক্যাসলে কাউন্সিলের ঘর বাড়ীর ব্যবস্থাপনার কাজ আমরা কিভাবে করি সে সম্বন্ধে। এই তথ্য যদি <বাংলায়> অথবা অন্য কোন ভাষায় প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে এই নাম্বারে ফোন করুন- ০১৯১ ২৭৮ ৮৬৩৩
普通话 / 国语 Chinese Simplified	这是有关我们如何管理纽卡斯尔市政房屋的信息。如果您需要此信息的普通话版本或其它语言版本，请致电 0191 278 8633 索取。
廣東話 / 粵語 Chinese Traditional	這是關於我們如何管理紐卡素市政房屋的信息。如果您需要此信息的廣東話版本或其它語言版本，請致電 0191 278 8633 索取。
فارسی Farsi	این اطلاعات در مورد شیوه مدیریت مسکن دولتی در نیوکاسل است. در صورت نیاز به این اطلاعات به زبان فارسی یا زبانهای دیگر با شماره تلفن ۰۱۹۱۲۷۸۸۶۳۳ تماس بگیرید.
Français French	Ces informations concernent la manière dont nous gérons les logements sociaux de Newcastle. Si vous avez besoin de ces informations en français ou dans une autre langue, téléphonez au : 0191 278 8633.
کوردی سۆرانی Kurdish	ئەم زانیاریانە سەبارەت بە چۆنیەتی بەرپۆشەبەرایەتی خانووەکانی شۆرای شاری نیوکاسیلە. ئەگەر حەزتان لە وەرگرتنی ئەم زانیاریانە بە زمانی کوردی یا ھەر زمانێکی دیگەر ھەبە بە زمارە تەلەفۆنی 0191 278 8633 پێوەندی بکەن.
Português Portuguese	Esta informação refere-se à forma como gerimos a habitação social de Newcastle. Se precisar desta informação em <português> ou noutra língua, queira ligar para o 0191 278 8633.
русском Russian	Информация о нашем управлении муниципальными жилыми домами в г. Ньюкасле. Если Вы нуждаетесь в этой информации <на русском> или другом языке звоните по тел. 0191 278 8633.
Español Spanish	Ésta es información sobre cómo gestionamos las viviendas municipales de Newcastle. Si necesita esta información en español o en otro idioma, llame al 0191 278 8633.

Contents

Introduction	4
Core values	5
Customer care	5
Service standards	7
Our equality policy	8
What to do if you have a compliment, comment or complaint	11
Ombudsman	14
Is there anyone else who can help?	14




Introduction



Thank you for choosing Newcastle City Council as your landlord. We, Your Homes Newcastle, are managing agents for Newcastle City Council. We hope you will be very happy in your new home.

We are owned by Newcastle City Council. We are responsible for the day-to-day management of Newcastle City Council's homes.

We have produced this handbook to give you useful information and advice to help you make the most of your new council tenancy. It aims to help you settle into your new home and to answer any questions you may have throughout your tenancy. As well as setting out your tenancy conditions, the handbook contains information on your rights and responsibilities as a tenant, and our rights and responsibilities as your landlord.




We have designed the handbook to give you basic information and to tell you where you can get services, advice and more detailed information about issues that may affect you during your tenancy.

Please read this handbook carefully as it is your guide to the Your Homes Newcastle housing and support service. Make sure you put it in a safe place so you can refer back to it whenever you need to.

Core values




Our 'core values' are about the way we behave and how we provide our services. Our core values are as follows.

- **Accountability** – acting openly and taking responsibility
 - **Integrity** – acting fairly and honestly
 - **Passion** – working positively with enthusiasm
 - **Respect** – treating everyone with care and professionalism
 - **Forward-thinking** – proactively looking for improvements and solutions.
- 

Customer care

We are committed to providing a good customer service. To achieve this, we will:

- be friendly and treat you fairly and with respect;
 - provide you with easy-to-understand information in plain language;
 - tell you about the services we provide and any changes to those services;
 - deal positively with your compliments, complaints and comments;
 - keep your information confidential;
 - listen to your views on how we can improve our policies and practices; and
 - treat everyone fairly, no matter what their age, disability, sex, race, religion or sexual orientation.
- 

What you can expect when you visit us

Our offices and reception areas will:

- be accessible and welcoming;
- be tidy, clean and safe;
- have useful information on display; and
- display opening times and out-of-hours contact numbers.

You have the right to speak to someone in private (someone of the same sex if necessary), and we will provide an interpreter or British Sign Language interpreter if you need one.

If you cannot visit our office, we will make other arrangements to see you.

What you can expect on the phone

When you phone us:

- we will answer your call within five rings;
- the person answering the phone will tell you their name; and
- if the person you need to speak to is not available, the person who answered your call will:
 - offer to help you;
 - take a message; and
 - arrange for the person you need to call you back.

What you can expect when you write to us

- We will reply within 10 working days.
- We will tell you the name of the person who is dealing with your enquiry.

What you can expect when we visit you

- Our staff will show you ID. Always check their identity before you allow them into your home.
- If we visit and you are out, we will leave a card with details of the time we called and the reason, and the name and phone number of the person you need to contact.
- We will contact you if we need to rearrange your appointment.

Service standards

We have service standards so that everyone who uses our services knows what level of service they can expect from us. We have produced service standards for all our services, and copies are available in all community housing offices and customer service centres, and on our website (www.yhn.org.uk).

We regularly review the standards to keep them up to date.

Service standards are available for:

- Housing management
- Property and maintenance (repairs)
- Community Care Alarm Service
- Sheltered housing
- NFS (Newcastle Furniture Service)

- HASBET (antisocial behaviour team)
- Concierge service
- Delivering modern homes
- Right to Buy
- Leasehold management
- Your Choice Homes – lettings service
- Asylum Seekers' Unit
- Adaptations – changes to your home to help with physical need assessed by social services
- Advice and support work
- Young People's Service
- Re-location and re-settlement – helping people affected by redevelopment work to move
- Equality and diversity

Our equality policy

Our tenants are made up of people of all ages, abilities, ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs and sexualities.

We want to make sure that none of our tenants are disadvantaged and that they all have opportunities to use our services and be involved in what we do.

We employ over 800 people, so we need to make sure that none of our staff experience discrimination and they all have the opportunity to progress and develop while they work for us.

How the policy works

The policy influences how we:

- provide services;
- recruit and support staff;
- work with other organisations; and
- involve communities.

Equality laws

We will, of course, keep to all the anti-discrimination laws that relate to things like employment rights, sex discrimination and race relations. We are trying to do more than just what we need to do by law. We are also following certain codes of practice to help prevent discrimination and work towards equal opportunities.

What does this mean in practice?

We take account of equality in all our services. Here are some examples.

- We are going to consistently monitor who uses our services and who responds to our consultations so we can work out whether we are doing the right things for different groups of people.

- We will make sure that all our information is available in a range of formats to suit everyone.
- We automatically offer interpretation services.
- We will work with council staff and voluntary organisations to find out how much we take account of people's special needs and circumstances.
- We are improving our offices to provide easy access.
- We are training our staff in equality issues.
- We expect all the contractors who work for us to keep to our equality policy.
- We will take action to challenge discrimination whenever we find out about it.

If you think we may not have done what we say we will in relation to equality, please see 'Complaints' on the next page.

What to do if you have a compliment, comment or complaint

Compliments and comments

We want to know what you think about our services. You can give us your comments by:

- telling a member of staff;
- writing to us;
- filling in one of the customer comment cards available in any of our offices; or
- filling in one of our customer satisfaction surveys which we may send to your home from time to time.

Complaints

You can make a complaint if you are not happy about a decision we have made or a service we have provided. For more information on making a complaint, see our booklet 'Compliments, complaints and comments', which you can get from any of our offices.

As far as possible, we aim to provide a high-quality service which you will be satisfied with. However, we know that sometimes things can go wrong. There may be times when you do not agree with a decision we have made, or something we have done, and you may want to complain. There are a number of ways you can do this.

If you have a complaint, the first thing you should do is to complain to the relevant section. So you should phone or take your complaint to the office or person who dealt with your enquiry.

How can I complain?

- You can complain in person, by phone, by letter or by sending an email to yhnccc@yhn.org.uk.
- You can also complain on our website at www.yhn.org.uk.
- If you prefer, you can ask a friend or relative to speak or write to us for you.
- When you contact us, please make sure you:
 - give your name, address and phone number; and
 - tell the person you speak to what your complaint is.

If your complaint is about a member of staff, you should send your complaint to his or her manager, not to another member of staff.

Our staff will do their best to settle your complaint at this stage without you needing to do anything else. If we cannot sort out your complaint straightaway, we will give you a receipt. The receipt will show:

- details of your complaint;
- the date you can expect to receive an answer by; and
- the name of the person who took your complaint.

We will write to you with a reply within 10 working days. By law, we need to deal with some complaints in a different way. If so, we will tell you and give you more information.

If you have complained to the relevant section but they have not been able to put things right, or you are not happy with the result, the second step is for you to make a formal complaint.

At this stage, you should put your complaint in writing. You can do this by filling in a complaints form. You can get forms from any of our offices, the reception areas at the civic centre or any library.

Please ask a member of staff if you need help writing your complaint or filling in the form. If you prefer, a friend or relative can fill in the form for you.

We will then pass your complaint to a senior manager who will write to you within two working days to let you know we have received your complaint. The senior manager will also give you their name and a reference number. This information will make it easier for you to contact the person dealing with your complaint if you need to.

The senior manager will:

- investigate your complaint;
- take any necessary action; and
- make sure you receive a written reply within 10 working days.

If your complaint needs more investigation, and we cannot send you a written reply within 10 working days, we will write to you and let you know when you will receive a written reply. If you are still not happy with the results of our investigation, you can ask the Corporate Complaints Officer at the city council to review your complaint. The Complaints Officer will write to you within three working days to let you know:


- they are reviewing your complaint;
- how long it will take to investigate; and
- when you will receive a written reply.

Ombudsman



The Complaints Officer at the city council will also be able to help you if you would like your complaint to be passed to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Local Government Ombudsman investigates complaints of poor management by local authorities and certain other organisations such as Your Homes Newcastle. They investigate complaints about most council matters including housing, planning, education, social services, consumer protection, drainage and council tax. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the organisation has done something, but they cannot question what a council has done simply because someone does not agree with it.



You can send your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman at any time. The Ombudsman's address and phone number are in the 'Useful addresses' booklet. You can get leaflets about how to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman from any of our offices, the reception areas at the civic centre or any library. Or, go to the Ombudsman's website at www.lgo.org.uk.

Is there anyone else who can help?

Apart from asking for help from a friend or relative, you can contact an independent person or organisation, for example:

- your local councillor;
- your MP;
- a solicitor;
- a citizens advice bureau; or
- Newcastle Advocacy Centre.

You can get details of who your councillors and MPs are, and how to get in touch with them, from any of our offices, the reception areas at the civic centre or any customer service centre or library. You can contact your councillor at any stage of the investigation about your complaint. Your councillor will be able to raise the issue with us for you. The phone numbers for each citizens advice bureau are listed in the 'Useful addresses' booklet.

Who should I contact?

🏠 Complaints Officer
Democratic Services
Civic Centre
Barras Bridge
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE99 2BN

☎ Phone: 0191 211 5116 or 0191 211 5051

There are detailed guidance notes on how to make a complaint in the booklet 'Compliments, complaints and comments', which you can get from any of our offices.



Your Homes Newcastle Limited. Registered in England and Wales Registration Number 5076256
Registered Office: Newcastle Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8PR.
A company controlled by Newcastle City Council