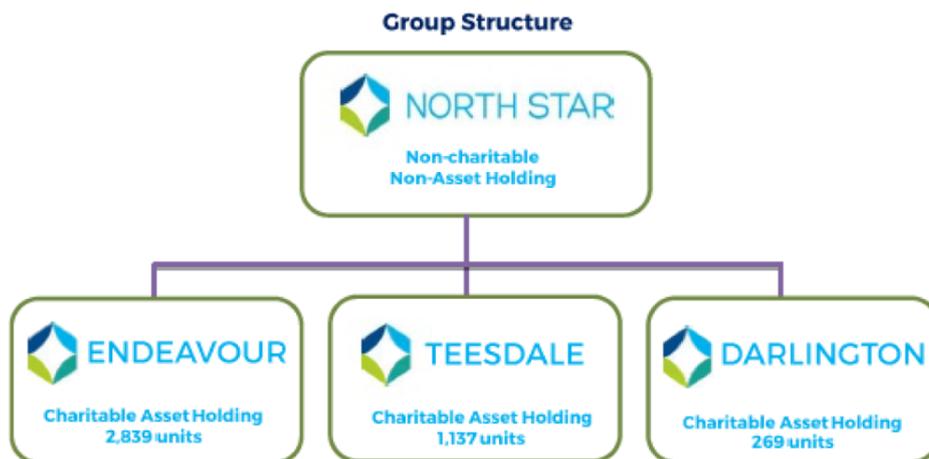


Dear Customer

Proposal to create a single landlord for North Star Housing Group.

We are writing to share some changes we would like to make to the structure of North Star Housing Group (the Group) during 2020 and invite you to share with us your views on our proposals. The change we propose to make is to simplify the structure of the Group. We believe this will have a number of key benefits for the way we do business. As a customer you won't notice any change to the people you meet or services you receive from us. But the change would lead to us achieving savings, being more efficient and generating more funds to invest in homes and services.

Our Group was formed in 2006 and has grown and evolved over the years. As things stand the Group is made up of four housing associations. This is our current structure:



Even though we operate as one organisation 'North Star Housing Group' already, each housing association within the Group is a legally separate entity. So, whilst we have a single Board, the Board makes individual decisions for each of the separate housing associations.

These arrangements can be complicated, lead to unnecessary administration and less flexibility than we would have with a simpler structure. We believe this isn't the most efficient way to work any longer and we believe we can do better.

The proposed change

We would like to bring all of the housing associations together to form one single housing association which will be known as North Star.

As a single housing association, we would continue to be a charitable housing provider which is regulated by the Regulator for Social Housing.



We recognise the coronavirus pandemic continues to cause a significant amount of unsettling disruption and change to people's lives, so it feels important to reassure you that the changes we're proposing:

- Would not affect your rights as a tenant or leaseholder.
- Would not change your tenancy agreement or lease. You would continue to enjoy the same rights you currently have.
- Would not change the services you receive. You would still be able to contact the same housing and customer service team you currently deal with.
- Would not impact repairs, servicing and improvements to your home. These would still be done in the same way.
- Would not change to how you pay your rent. You won't need to notify Housing Benefit or the Department for Work and Pensions (Universal Credit) about this change.

During the coronavirus pandemic our priority is the wellbeing and safety of our customers and staff. The changes we're proposing would in no way impact the health and safety of customers or lead to disruption of the services you receive during this time.

What would the benefits be?

The aim of the proposed change is to make sure we continue to deliver excellent and consistent services to all our customers. While doing this we want to streamline our structure to reduce administration, make savings and raise more money to invest in improving existing homes and services as well as building new homes.

How would the organisation be run?

There would be no change. North Star would continue to be run by the same staff team and governed by the same Board members with appropriate skills and expertise to ensure North Star remains strong.

It would streamline some of the administration and decision making in the Group simply by reducing the number of organisations.

What would be different?

As a result of the simplification of the Group all tenants within the Group would have the same landlord: North Star. For tenants of Darlington Housing Association and Teesdale Housing Association this would be a change to the legal identity your landlord. For tenants of Endeavour Housing Association the legal identity of your landlord would remain the same but your landlord's name would change to North Star.



Changes to the legal structure of the Group would take place mostly behind the scenes and as previously mentioned, many of the things we think are important to you will stay the same.

What would stay the same?

If we go ahead, the proposed change to the structure would not affect your rights, tenancy or lease agreement or the way we set rents and service charges. The terms of your agreements would not change. We already work with customers to develop policies, procedures and services which would not change as a result of becoming one single landlord. Finally, we would continue to operate from our existing offices, local hubs and supported housing schemes.

What is the process for simplifying the structure?

There are a number of steps that we would need to take before the four housing associations could be brought together. The proposal to simplify the structure from four housing associations to one would only go ahead once the Board have been able to consider your views alongside other key factors.

Step One: We have already established a working group to work on the proposed changes which includes members of the Board.

Step Two: Consultation with tenants and other stakeholders such as funders and local authority partners. The purpose of this letter is to invite your feedback on the proposals. All comments received will be reviewed by the Board during July 2020.

Step Three: The Board will consider a detailed business case for joining the four organisations together along with your consultation response. The Board will only make a decision whether to proceed with the proposals after your views have been considered by them.

Step Four: If the Board decide to proceed with simplifying the structure, Teesdale Housing Association, Darlington Housing Association, Endeavour Housing Association and North Star Housing Group would merge to become one single North Star.

Step Five: We would notify you when the process has been completed and the new details of your landlord.

If this goes ahead, we hope to have all of the process and changes completed by the end of 2020.



We want your views.

This is an important change and your views are important to us, you can share your feedback by:

Emailing: feedback@northstarhg.co.uk

Commenting on our website: <https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/contact-us/comments-compliments-and-complaints/>

Writing to us: Endeavour House, St Marks Court, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6QN

Yours sincerely



Angela Lockwood

Chief Executive