



NORTH STAR

Creating homes, building futures

# CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

NOVEMBER 2022

[northstarhg.co.uk](http://northstarhg.co.uk)

# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS NORTH STAR?

North Star is committed to providing its tenants with excellent services. This document sets out our standards for the services we provide. These standards have been developed in partnership with tenants by asking what parts of our service are particularly important to them.

We are keen to make sure these standards continue to reflect what's important to you. We welcome any comments and feedback you might have that will help to improve our services. Please feel free to contact our customer services team on 03000 11 00 11 or [customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk). You can also get in touch with us through Facebook—[facebook.com/northstarhg/](https://facebook.com/northstarhg/) and Twitter—@NorthStarHG or through My North Star.

## OUR VALUES ARE AT OUR CORE:



CREATIVE

We create environments to enable people, places and communities to thrive. We believe many things are possible and that our energy brings about exciting change.

CONNECTED

We are connected to the world we live in. Therefore, we are relevant, informed and knowledgeable. We develop strong relationships that are based on integrity and trust.

COURAGEOUS

We challenge ourselves and others. We experiment, pioneer and we dare to be different.

# ACCESS TO OUR SERVICES

Our office hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday and you can contact us by phone 9.00am to 5.00pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 9.00am to 4.00pm on Thursday. You can also contact us by email [customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk) and by social media, Facebook or Twitter. We have an emergency out of hours service that can be accessed outside these times by telephoning our main number—03000 11 00 11

## We will:

- Say good morning/good afternoon and provide you with the operator's name and our organisation's name
- Respond to tenants letters and e-mails within five working days. If we are not able to provide a full response, we will contact you and let you know the reasons why
- Provide parking spaces close to the building for our disabled visitors
- Ensure our communication, letters and documents are accessible by offering:
  - Google language translation links on our website
  - Document translation services
  - Access to interpreters
  - Large print, braille and audio versions of documents and letters

# ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

- Respond to all cases of ASB
- **Category 1 - Serious (generally those of a criminal nature)**
  - Contact complainant within 1 working day
  - Arrange an interview within 2 working days
- **Category 2 - minor**
  - Contact complainant within 3 working days
  - Arrange an interview within 5 working days
- Close your case after 20 working days if we have had no contact from you and will inform you in writing of our intention
- **Hate Crime - Serious**
  - Contact complainant within 1 working day



# GETTING INVOLVED WITH US

## **We will:**

- Host a regular event to bring tenants and staff together. The event will let people know about the services they can receive and how to become an involved tenant
- Provide training and support to all our involved tenants to equip and support them with the skills and knowledge to influence our services
- Provide a range of opportunities for tenants to influence our services. Meetings will be held to suit all involved.

# HOUSING ESTATE SERVICES

## **We will:**

- Remove or paint over offensive graffiti within one working day and all other graffiti within two working days
- Report any littering, dumped rubbish or abandoned vehicles to the relevant organisation/agency within one working day
- Start our abandoned property policy within one working day.

# APPLYING FOR A HOME WITH US

## **We will:**

- We will process your application in line with Choice Based Lettings Policy (CBL) in the area you live. The timescales can differ depending on where you live. All applications will be processed within 28 days of it being received along with all associated documentation.
- Write to you within 10 working days confirming whether or not your application has been accepted. If it has been accepted, we will give you your banding priority and explain what this means
  - If your application has not been successful, we will write to you within 10 working days providing further details and how to appeal against the decision
- Respond to all Mutual Exchange requests within 10 working days.



# YOUR HOME-REPAIRS

## We will:

- Ensure your new home meets our Lettable Standard
- Offer a range of ways for you to report a repair including:
  - **Email** [customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk)
  - **In writing:**  
North Star  
St Marks Court  
Thornaby  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS17 6QN
- Prioritise getting your repair right first time
- Carry out emergency repairs within 24 hours, urgent repairs within three working days and routine repairs within 30 working days. You can find examples of what we mean by emergency, urgent and routine repairs in the tenant handbook, available on our website or in writing by request
- Prioritise work which impacts significantly on your health and safety
- Tell you before work begins if it is unlikely to be completed in one visit. We will make follow up appointments and keep you informed until the work is complete
- Provide an emergency repair service outside of office hours that can be accessed by calling 0300 011 0011 or email [emergencyrepairs@orbisprotect.com](mailto:emergencyrepairs@orbisprotect.com)
- Service all gas appliances every year
- Service heating systems each year
- Test electrical systems every five years
- Check smoke alarms and CO2 alarms every year
- Provide copies of all relevant certification of any servicing work



# PLANNED MAINTENANCE

- A surveyor will undertake a stock condition survey of your home every seven years
- Develop and follow a detailed five year planned maintenance programme
- Include tenants in the decision making process on prioritising any planned improvements
- Publish the planned maintenance programme each year
- <https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/your-home/planned-home-improvements/planned-maintenance-programme/>
- Inform you in writing of any work due to be undertaken in your home
- Where possible offer you a choice in the design and materials for any work to be undertaken in your home
- Decorate any external paintwork and internal communal areas every five years





# AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS

- **Offer you a range of ways for you to request an adaptation including:**

- By e-mail [adaptation@northstarhg.co.uk](mailto:adaptation@northstarhg.co.uk)
- Through our Customer Services Team on 0300 11 00 11
- In writing
- In person

- Respond within five working days of receiving your request
- Consider carrying out minor adaptations (such as grab rails) based on your own self assessment
- Involve you in the design and delivery of the adaptation
- Work with other partners to maximise the use of grants and external funding to help us provide as many adaptations as possible



# IF YOU WISH TO COMMENT ON OUR SERVICES

We welcome you telling us how you feel about the service we have provided and we want to make it easy for you to do this. The feedback we receive helps us to develop and improve our services in the future.

**You can make a complaint, compliment, comment or suggestion by:**

- Contacting our Customer Services Team on 0300 11 00 11
- In person
- Visiting our website  
<https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/contact-us/>
- In writing  
<https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/contact-us/>

- By email on  
[customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk)
- Through social media, Facebook or Twitter
- By replying to a text message or email after you have received a service from us
- Completing a complaints form - available on request and on our website
- Through another person such as an advocate/ representative (family friend / guardian)

**Once you have made a complaint, we will:**

- Acknowledge your complaint within two working days and inform you of the person dealing with it
- Investigate and respond to your complaint within 10 working days
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, we will let you know how to request a review of the decision





# MEASURING HOW WE ARE DOING

**Tenants' Voice Scrutiny Panel told us that they thought the following standards were most important to tenants:**

- Respond to letters and e-mails within five working days
- Acknowledging complaints within two working days by your preferred communication method and informing you of the person dealing with it
- Investigating and responding to your complaint within 10 working days
- Satisfaction with how we manage Anti Social Behaviour complaints
- New tenant satisfaction with the standard of the property when they moved in
- Overall satisfaction with the last repair carried out
- Getting your repair right first time
- Publishing a planned maintenance programme each year

We will let you know how we are doing against these standards annually by publishing them on our website and in our annual report to tenants.





## North Star

North Star brings together the skills, resources and values of Endeavour, Teesdale and Darlington Housing Associations.

We are a strong organisation with a clear vision of what we want to achieve for the people who live in our region – creating homes, building futures.

## GET IN TOUCH

 03000 11 00 11

 [customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk)

 [www.northstarhg.co.uk](http://www.northstarhg.co.uk)

@northstarhg

 /NorthStarHG

### Visit / Write:

North Star, St Marks Court, Thornaby,  
Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6QN

14a Redwell Court, Harmire Enterprise Park, Harmire Road,  
Barnard Castle, County Durham, DL12 8BN

Please note that all calls to our Customer Services Team are monitored and recorded.

<https://www.northstarhg.co.uk/privacy-statement/>

Creative

Connected

Courageous