



HOME

WINTER 2023



Working towards net zero in North Kesteven



Secured new funding to make our homes more energy efficient



Search Facebook for “NKDC Housing”



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL



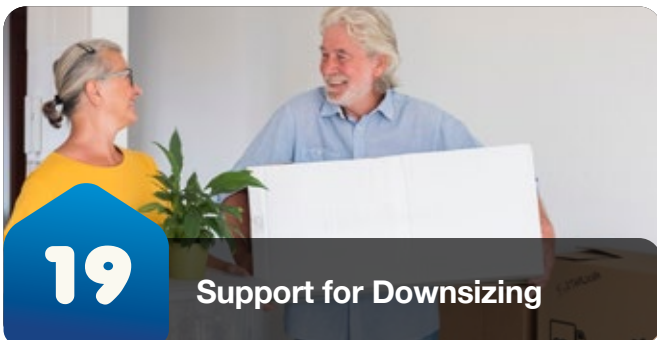
Discretionary Housing / Exceptional Hardship Payments

Help available for tenants with rent arrears.

If you're struggling with rent arrears, we can make a Discretionary Housing Payment in special circumstances to give you extra help with your rent or Council Tax or both.

To find out more and apply online go to Discretionary housing payments | North Kesteven District Council (n-kesteven.gov.uk) or call **01529 414155** and ask for Neighbourhood Services.

Please be aware that a Discretionary Housing Payment can only be made in **certain circumstances.**



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Produced in consultation with tenant representatives. At Home is produced by North Kesteven District Council.



WE'VE CHANGED THE WAY TO REPORT DAMP & MOULD.

For more information about this please turn to page 10.

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This document is available in large print, braille, audio tape, electronic formats such as CD, or in a different language. Our website is ReadSpeaker enabled. For a copy contact Resident Engagement on 01529 414155 or email tenant_participation@n-kesteven.gov.uk

HRA BUSINESS PLAN

We've put together our 30-year Business Plan. The plan makes sure we will have the funding, resources and skills to provide decent housing for tenants over the next 30 years. Some of the sections in the business plan include:

- Priorities over the next five years
- How we will repair and improve homes to keep them decent
- The cost of delivering services and how these will be funded.

You can find out more about the priorities on page 40 of the Business Plan.

If you would like a copy of the HRA Business Plan, it can be found on our website or you can request it by calling **01529 308046**.

The Business Plan was developed in consultation with Tenants. We carried out a roadshow and surveys to ensure your priorities were included.

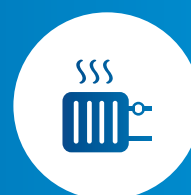
On page 105 of the Business Plan, you will find the delivery plan, which sets out the actions that will be taken to deliver the plan. We will keep tenants updated on how we are doing against delivering



these actions. The Tenants' Panel will help us to monitor delivery, if you want to join them with this please contact the Resident Engagement Team **01529 308046** or email **chris_morton@n-kesteven.gov.uk**.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2023

- Develop plans for Retro CO₂Sy Homes Improvement Programme
- Start the process of renewing our repairs contract
- Expanding tenant engagement to get more tenants involved



LOCAL OFFERS

A local offer is a way of tailoring housing services based on what tenants want locally. It is the standard of service you can expect from us as your landlord.

Our local offers cover the four key areas in housing regulation. Value for money with the rent you pay runs throughout:

- Your Home.
- Involvement and Empowerment.
- Your Tenancy.
- Your Neighbourhood and Community.

Our draft local offers have been developed with tenants. We held roadshows and carried out a survey to make sure we gained your views. As a result, we hope the draft local offers reflect the priorities that matter to tenants; however, we would like to consult you over the final draft and ask if these are still your priorities.



You can see a copy of the draft local offers on our website and take part in a survey at WWW.N-KESTEVEN.GOV.UK HOME > RESIDENTS > HOMES AND PROPERTY > INFORMATION ABOUT HOUSING IN NORTH KESTEVEN > HRA BUSINESS PLAN AND LOCAL OFFERS

Alternatively, we can send you a copy and a survey in the post. To request please contact the Resident Engagement Team on **01529 308046** or email chris_morton@n-kesteven.gov.uk.

The
Electoral
Commission



Find out more at

electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID

No ID? You can apply for free voter ID

Voter ID: A summary



On **Thursday 4 May 2023**, local elections are taking place within North Kesteven.

To vote at a polling station, you will need photo ID with you. A wide range of photo ID will be accepted, including passports, driving licences, bus passes and cards with a PASS Mark.

If you don't have what's needed, you can apply for a free voter ID document known as a Voter Authority Certificate

Visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID, call **0800 328 0280**, or scan the QR code to find out more, including:



The full list of accepted forms of photo ID



How to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate (if you need one)



How to register to vote and how to apply for a postal vote

There are elections in North Kesteven on 4 May 2023

Visit: www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/elections2023

Call: **01529 414155**

Email: customer_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk



HECKINGTON TREES

Well maintained communal gardens and accessible green spaces, and the benefits they bring, are important features to our housing sites. Since November 2022, we have been working with local volunteer led gardening groups such as Trees for Heckington and Heckington in Bloom, with a view to help improve the communal gardens and NKDC land on Willow Close and Osborn Way in Heckington.

Having gathered residents' feedback late last year, certain areas were highlighted as needing a bit more care and attention. Requests were received for improvements to existing areas (including trees and grass cutting), more colourful planting, possible seating and provision for wildlife. Over the winter months and into the New Year we have been working with the volunteer led gardening groups, while considering residents' views, to help improve these important communal green spaces.

Once the work in Heckington is underway, we'll be looking to see if other areas within North Kesteven have volunteer gardening groups, to see if they would like to get involved in a similar project to that



in Heckington. If you volunteer with a gardening group or know someone who does, please do get in touch – email: partnershipsteam@n-kesteven.gov.uk or call **01529 414155** asking for the Partnerships Team.

Sign up to have your garden waste collected

£40

for one bin to be emptied over 12 months

£8

each to empty extra bins (up to 4)

The cost to purchase a brown garden waste bin if you do not already have one is £35, changing to £38 after 1 April 2023.

Visit the website www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/gardenwaste and sign up with an easy payment by direct debit. Or call **01529 414155**.

Brown bins are good for hedge clippings, flowers, plants, grass, leaves, twigs, and weeds but should not be used for soil, grass sods and kitchen or general waste.

Garden waste cannot be placed into black general waste bins. Alternatives include composting at home or taking to your local household waste recycling centre.



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL

RENT RISE SUPPORTS IMPROVEMENTS

An increase in rent levels at a rate significantly below inflation will enable North Kesteven District Council to maintain its improvements programme for its homes.

The agreed 7% rise is the outcome of significant deliberation by councillors, balancing current financial circumstances and the need to keep delivering on the priorities agreed by tenants. This is the maximum allowed by Government, but lower than the 11.1% they could have risen by under the usual inflation-based formula.

In recognition of current cost of living challenges, the Tenants Hardship Fund is being more-than doubled to £60,000 and its eligibility criteria reviewed; which is part of a bigger package of practical and financial assistance in place.

Whilst mindful that times are hard for many, the Council has a duty

and responsibility to ensure it can maintain the quality and availability of homes for those in greatest need.

Other options for rent setting were considered but given the priorities agreed by tenants, the need for more energy-efficiency, a drive to achieve carbon-neutrality and the general increase in costs for materials, contracts and components, any other decision would have reduced the sums available for repairs and improvements.

Before the Government set the maximum allowable increase at 7%, the Council had consulted on a 6% rise which was supported by the Tenant Liaison Panel. The average weekly difference between a 6% and 7% increase is 87 pence.

At 7%, the average weekly social rent will rise from £87.15 to £93.25, which is exceptional

value for money compared to other local councils and housing providers. North Kesteven's council rents remain the second lowest in Lincolnshire.

Indicative rates are shown in the table, with precise figures notified in rent letters for the year from April 1.

Going for a 7% rise instead of 6% brings in an additional £164,700 a year, which over the 30-year span of the Housing Revenue Account's business plan builds to nearly £7m for the continued investment in the almost 3,900 quality homes, making them more comfortable to live in. This includes £20 million on retro-fitting a first batch of 600 homes to dramatically increase their energy efficiency and cutting our carbon impact. Having sound finances and adequate funds is vital for such projects.

Social rents applied over 48 weeks (HRA)

No of bedrooms	Current rent 2022/23	Average 2023/24 rents following 7% increase
1	£74.03	£79.21
2	£85.25	£91.22
3	£93.60	£100.15
4	£103.46	£110.70
Average rent	£87.15	£93.25

Affordable rents applied over 48 weeks (HRA)

No of bedrooms	Current rent 2022/23	Average 2023/24 rents following 7% increase
1	£92.00	£98.44
2	£112.89	£120.79
3	£144.62	£154.74
4	£162.77	£174.16
Average rent	£114.50	£122.52

Life has become more expensive for everybody as mortgage payments and other types of rent, energy costs, food and utilities all escalate. As we all face the consequences of this, the Council and its partners are pulling together a range of measures to help which can be found at www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/costofliving

For tenants struggling financially there is a range of practical and financial assistance initiatives in place, such as money and energy advice, hardship and discretionary funds and options around transfer and tenancy sustainment.

WHO ARE YOUR HOUSING OFFICERS AND HOW TO CONTACT

North 1

Housing Officer
Kate McCormack

AUBOURN
DODDINGTON
EAGLE
HADDINGTON
NORTH HYKEHAM
NORTH SCARLE
NORTON DISNEY
SKELLINGTHORPE
SOUTH HYKEHAM
STAPLEFORD
SWINDERBY
SWINETHORPE
THORPE ON THE HILL
THURLBY WHISBY

North 3

Housing Officer
Cherrie Heaton

BRANSTON
BRANSTON BOOTHS
DUNSTON
HEIGHINGTON
MARTIN
MARTIN DALES
METHERINGHAM
METHERINGHAM FEN
NOCTON
POTTERHANWORTH
SCOPWICK
TIMBERLAND

South 1

Housing Officer
Dominique Chisnall

CRANWELL
GREYLEES
LEASINGHAM
NORTH RAUCEBY
OSBOURNBY
SCREDINGTON
SILK WILLOUGHBY
SOUTH RAUCEBY
SWARBY
SWATON
THREEKINGHAM
WALCOT
WILSFORD
SLEAFORD
<i>BUTTLER WAY - BONNER CLOSE CHARLES STREET - CHARLOTTE STREET</i>
<i>CROMWELL CRESCENT - DUKE STREET - EASTGATE - ELMORE CLOSE</i>
<i>EMPIRE COURT - ES-LAFORDE GARDENS - FRANKLIN CRESCENT - GEORGE STREET</i>
<i>GRANTHAM ROAD - HUSSEY CLOSE - NEWTON WAY - PLAYGROUND COURT</i>
<i>RHODES AVENUE - RIVERSIDE CLOSE - ROBERTSON DRIVE - SIBTHORP COURT</i>
<i>ST GILES AVENUE - TENNYSON AVENUE - THE HOPLANDS - THOMAS COURT</i>
<i>WESTGATE</i>

South 2

Housing Officer
Hannah Robson

ANWICK
BURTON PEDWARDINE
EAST HECKINGTON
EWERBY
GREAT HALE
HECKINGTON
HELPRINGHAM
KIRKBY LA THORPE
LITTLE HALE
NORTH KYME
SOUTH KYME
SLEAFORD
<i>ALMOND WALK - BEECH RISE - BIRCHWOOD ROAD - CEDAR AVENUE</i>
<i>CHERRY CLOSE - CHURCH LANE - DAISYFIELD LANE - GREENFIELD ROAD</i>
<i>HAZEL GROVE - JUBILEE GROVE - LINCOLN ROAD - MANOR PLACE</i>
<i>NEWFIELD ROAD - NORTHGATE FLATS - ROMNEY COURT - POPPYFIELD LANE</i>
<i>SYCAMORE DRIVE - VICARAGE COURT - WOODSIDE AVENUE</i>

South 3

Housing Officer
Lisa Jackson

ASHBY DE LA LAUNDE
BILLINGHAY
CHAPEL HILL
DIGBY
DORRINGTON
RUSKINGTON
ROWSTON
TATTERSHALL BRIDGE
WALCOTT

North 2

Housing Officer
Les Ellington

BASSINGHAM
BECKINGHAM
BOOTHBY GRAFFOE
BRACEBRIDGE HEATH
BRANT BROUGHTON
CANWICK
CARLTON LE MOORLAND
COLEBY
HARMSTON
LEADENHAM
NAVENBY
WADDINGTON
WELBOURN
WELLINGORE

Call 01529 414155, ask for Neighbourhood Services and they will put you through to the Duty Housing Officer. In most cases the Duty Housing Officer will be able to help you; however, they can also arrange a call-back or visit from your Housing Officer if you need one.

WHAT IS NET ZERO?

North Kesteven District Council is working towards reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030. It's an ambitious target that will take commitment from our residents, landowners and local businesses, as well as the Council itself.

The term net zero means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere and the carbon removed from it. This balance – or net zero – will happen when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed. Three ways that help are to fit:



Solar Panels

Solar panels are fitted on houses to convert sunlight into electricity. The

electricity generated can be used to power homes and reduce people's energy bills.

The power made from the panels must be used at the time, as the electricity cannot be stored, unless a battery system is fitted. When the panels are not generating or the amount of power needed from the homes is greater than the amount being made, the electricity will be taken from the power grid.

Solar panels are also known as Photovoltaics or PVs.



Wall and loft insulation

Wall and loft insulation adds an extra layer between the inside and the

outside of a building. In the winter it helps keep the warm air in and in the summer keeps the hot air out, meaning your home remains a more comfortable temperature all year round.



Heat pumps

A heat pump captures heat from outside and moves it into your home.

It uses electricity to

do this, however the amount of heat delivered into your home is much greater than the amount of electricity used to power the system. As a heat pump captures heat that is already present in the environment, the system itself does not burn any fuel and therefore emits no carbon dioxide.

CO₂SY HOME IMPROVEMENTS

We've recently secured funding that will allow us to carry out work to our homes to make them more energy efficient.

In December our Executive Board supported a plan for a £20m project that will see over 600 homes fitted with energy savings measures. These measures may include:

- Solar panels
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- Insulation improvements

This will reduce the amount of energy needed to heat a home, which will lower the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere.

The work will begin in 2024 and take until 2030 to complete. We are currently identifying which homes to carry the work out to. The homes chosen to receive improvements will be selected through lowest

performance and consideration, for the best possible carbon and energy-saving benefits. We will let tenants know if their homes is chosen.



Our ambition is to carry out this work to even more homes than the 600 initially identified and we are in the process of applying for additional Grant funding, which would allow us to do this.

The energy efficiency improvements are another step towards North Kesteven District Council's aim to become Net Zero by 2030.

The Tenants' Panel will be monitoring our progress on delivering the improvements. If you would like to help them with this task then please call **01529 308046** or email **chris_morton@n-kesteven.gov.uk** for more information.

CONDENSATION, MOULD & DAMP

Damp

Damp can be caused by water moving up through a wall or leaking through a wall. Signs of damp can include damp patches on walls, ceilings or floors.

Damp can be caused by an issue with your home such as:

- Leaking pipes, wastes or overflows
- A faulty roof
- A faulty or blocked gutter
- Leaking in around window frames.

If you have any of these repair issues at your home, please report them to Kier Services on **01529 416399** as soon as possible.



Damp can also happen when there is condensation in your home. Condensation is a natural process and is caused by a difference in air and surface temperatures. Too much condensation in your home can cause damp and mould. To reduce the condensation in you should look to reduce the amount moisture produced in your home. You can do this by:

- Cover pans with lids when cooking
- Use extractor fans where fitted
- Allow for air circulation
- Open trickle vents fitted on windows
- Increase the heating to raise the temperature of the air and cold surfaces
- Ask for the loft insulation to be inspected to check it is at sufficient levels.
- Ensure there is space between walls and large pieces of furniture which allows for air to circulate
- Dry washing outside on a line or put it in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open slightly or a fan on.
- Tumble dryers should have a vent or hose to outside of the house
- Closing kitchen and bathroom doors when the rooms are in use to prevent moisture from reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms that are cooler and more likely to get condensation
- Ventilating cupboards and wardrobes. Avoid putting too many things in them, as this stops the air circulating
- Check that any wall vents have not been covered up. If so try to uncover them or contact us for advice.

These tips will reduce the amount of moisture produced in your home and lower the risk of mould.

If you do notice damp and mould in your home, then you should call our Repairs Team on **01529 414155**

Ventilate to Remove Moisture

Your home can be ventilated without being cold or making draughts. You can do this by:

- Keeping a small window ajar or a trickle vent open when someone is in the room and particularly ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when you are using them. You might not need to leave the windows open all day but just for a period of time.
- Keep your home warm in cold weather, keep a low background heating on all day, even when there is no-one at home. If your home is warmer, condensation is less likely to occur as this will keep the building warm so there are fewer cold surfaces for the moist air to form condensation. Insulation and draught proofing will also help keep your home warm and reduce fuel bills.

If you have problems with damp or mould please contact our Repairs Team on: **01529 414155** they will arrange to make an inspection of your home and then carry out any necessary work or advise you as necessary. Always on hand if you have ongoing problems or need further advice.



Turning Thermostat Down

Many people don't realise that you can save hundreds on your energy bill just by turning down the thermostat. According to experts, reducing the temperature by just one degree can save you over £100 a year.

Most households will regularly set their thermostat above 22°C, especially in the winter. The average households' bills have risen to £2,500 a year from £1,971 after the energy price guarantee came into effect. This increase affects millions on dual fuel energy tariffs, although the exact amount you pay will depend on your usage. Therefore, reducing your gas and electric use is one way to cut down your bill.

When it comes to your thermostat, The Energy Saving Trust recommends you should set it to the "lowest comfortable temperature".

Cost of Living Support Campaign

Keep an eye out on our Housing Facebook page with up-to-date information on how to combat the costs of living during these times. This will be a place where practical advice, helpful videos and tips and tricks can be shared with our other tenants. You can also find details of support available on our website [**Cost of Living Support Stretch it, Save it, Share it | North Kesteven District Council \(n-kesteven.gov.uk\)**](http://Cost of Living Support Stretch it, Save it, Share it | North Kesteven District Council (n-kesteven.gov.uk)). For more information please search 'Cost of living' on the Council website.



Energy Advice

Are you worried about the cost of heating your home through winter? You can make an appointment with the NKDC Domestic Energy Officer, Brenda Walukiewicz for help and advice. This is a FREE independent service to help you to:

- Deal with your utility supplier for any bill or metering issues
- Check if your tariff best meets your needs
- Advice on how to best use your heating and energy within the home
- Make sure you are on the right water tariff

When making contact it is useful to have your latest energy bill to hand.

Telephone: **07816 294646**
or **01529 308098** (Monday Thursday)
Email: **Brenda_Walukiewicz@n-kesteven.gov.uk**

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR TOP TIPS

Being a good neighbour can make your community friendlier and safer. By looking out for each-other you can keep you and your neighbours safe.

1. Put rubbish in the correct bins and ensure bins are put out on collection day (and brought back in following collection)
2. Ensure any bulky items for disposal are kept in your property until ready for collection
3. Take responsibility for the behaviour of both your children and visitors to your home
4. Speak to neighbours if you are aware that you may have caused excessive noise. Acknowledging that it may have caused annoyance and apologising, can help resolve matters
5. Keep your home and garden clean and tidy
6. Keep hedges and trees trimmed and pruned to ensure they don't overhang onto public footpaths and private gardens
7. Keep pets under control do not allow them to poo in public areas and gardens
8. Park vehicles with consideration to your neighbours. Try to avoid parking at dropped kerbs, outside garages, or in a way that prevents wheelchair users and prams from using the pavement. Do not block any entrances or disrupt access for emergency services
9. Keep pets under control do not allow them to foul public areas and gardens
10. Remember that domestic bonfires are not illegal, however if you do decide to have one, let your neighbours know beforehand. Additionally, only burn clean dry material, as damp material can cause a bonfire to become very smoky

IN THE EVENT OF AN ISSUE WITH YOUR NEIGHBOUR:

Try to discuss this with them in a polite manner. Consider if there is anything you are doing that could be contributing to the problems.

Where appropriate, you may wish to report the concerns to North Kesteven District Council, or, where a crime is committed, to Lincolnshire Police. If you have not been able to resolve the issues between yourselves, if your neighbour lives in a rented property then you may wish to raise your concern with the landlord.

Keep a record of what is happening.

You can also seek civil redress by speaking to a solicitor about the issue.

Remember that North Kesteven District Council must work within the legislation available to them and therefore may not be able to assist in every situation.



RESPECT FOR STAFF

Our staff aim to provide a responsive, helpful and polite service to all customers. They expect to be treated with courtesy in return.

Action will be taken against any person who use unreasonable language in person or over the phone or use threatening behaviour towards staff, contractors or any other Council representatives.

TENANCY SUSTAINMENT OFFICERS

Tenancy Sustainment Officers work within Neighbourhood Services and work hand in hand with our Housing Officers.

Their main purpose is to support you to access and sustain your tenancy. This can be done by encouraging and helping with your independence, quality of life, health and well-being.

Tenancy Sustainment Officers achieve this by providing advice, information and support on a wide range of issues including:

- **Housing applications**
- **Welfare rights**
- **Apply for benefits**
- **Accessing the job market/training**
- **Personal finance and budgeting**
- **Hoarding**
- **Life skills**
- **Promotion of personal independence**

CASE STUDY

The Tenancy Sustainment Officer received a referral for a tenant with rent arrears as their Housing Benefit had stopped and they didn't know why. They didn't have any family to help.



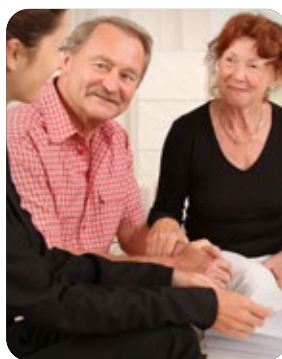
When the Tenancy Sustainment Officer visited, their assessment highlighted the resident didn't have access to the internet, was living in an unsuitable home for their needs and also possibly entitled to Attendance Allowance.

An application was made for Attendance Allowance which was awarded. This highlighted the resident was also entitled to Pension Credit which the Tenancy Sustainment Officer also helped them to claim.

The tenant also wanted to downsize to a smaller home, so the Tenancy Sustainment Officer supported the tenant to register on Lincs Homefinder and bid on bungalows on their behalf. Eventually they were allocated a bungalow.

The tenant informed the Tenancy Sustainment Officer how they had previously worked in an industry that had a charity for former staff members.

The tenant was helped to make an application. This was successful and the money paid for removals and carpets to be fitted in the new bungalow. The Tenancy Sustainment Officer also contacted the stroke association and managed to obtain a mobility scooter to aid the resident's independence.



Adult Social Care were contacted, and the resident was then put on a more suitable care package.

The aim of this service is to provide a tailored support package and offer long-term support to all our residents. To find out more, please call **01529 414155** and ask for Neighbourhood Services.



RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT PLAN



We've just agreed our new Resident Engagement Plan. This sets out how we will engage residents over the next two years from 2023 to 2025.

The new plan has a focus on:

- Expanding digital engagement.
- Working with tenants to monitor performance and standards.
- Reviewing how we send out information to tenants.

TENANTS' PANEL UPDATE

The Tenants' Panel is a group of tenants who work with us to make sure we are providing a good service. Their role is to monitor our performance, raise issues for tenants in their area and provide feedback.

Over the next year the panel will focus on:

- Working with us to renew the repairs contract
- The standard of homes when they are let
- Monitoring Kier Services' and Aaron Services' performance.

We have vacancies on the panel, so if you are interested in helping them with their work, please contact the Resident Engagement Team on **01529 308046** or email chris_morton@n-kesteven.gov.uk

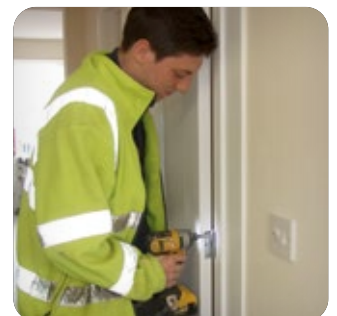


PERFORMANCE 2022/23 YTD TO DECEMBER (Q3)

We measure our performance in all areas across housing and collect a range of satisfaction information.

This allows us to see where we need to make improvements and makes sure we are transparent to residents.

- 'Emergency repairs completed in time' was **100%** (against target of **99.5%**)
- Satisfaction with Repairs **89.66%** (with a target of **98.5%**)
- Rent Collected as **96.12%** of Rent Due December 2022 (with a target of **97.5%**)



CONSIDERING AN ELECTRIC CAR?



Are you thinking about buying an electric car? Electric cars are a great way to reduce CO2 emissions but before you buy one, it's worth considering how you will charge it at home.

Please be aware:

- **Council tenants must get permission from us to install a charging point**
- **You will need to arrange and pay to have the work carried out privately**
- **You must use a qualified electrician to carry out the work.**

You can apply for permission by calling us on **01529 414155** or sending an email to neighbourhood_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk

We will usually grant permission but will need to check a few things first, for example that your electrics will support the charger and the installation will meet the permitted development criteria. After you complete the work, we may need to check it's all been done safely.

TENANCY POLICY

We have developed a new Tenancy Policy. The main changes will see:

- All new tenants will start on an Introductory Tenancy
- Flexible Secure Tenancies no longer being offered
- Transferring all existing tenants on a Flexible Secure Tenancy to a Secure Tenancy

Implementation dates for these changes are yet to be confirmed.

For more information you can find a copy of the policy on our website or contact the Neighbourhoods Team on **01529 414155**.



SAFETY IN THE HOME



Electric Fan Heaters

These heaters provide a quick way of heating small spaces. However, please consider these safety precautions:

- Do not use an extension lead with a fan heater
- Never leave fan heaters on when you are not at home
- Do not run a fan heater when you are sleeping



Oil-filled Radiators

Oil-filled radiators require very little in the way of maintenance or service. Faulty electrical wiring or a faulty power switch can be repaired by a qualified electrician.



Gas Boilers

We must carry out a service on your boiler every year. This is an important safety check that will keep you and your home safe. You must allow us access to carry out the service. The service is carried out by Aaron Services.



Smoke and Carbon Dioxide Detectors

We have fitted smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to all our homes. If haven't got one of these or yours isn't working, please call Aaron Services straight away on **01205 591979**. You should test them once a week.



Other Appliances

If you have medical items stored at the property (e.g. oxygen tanks). These items are usually provided with safety guidelines. The storage of such items may require you to inform your Housing Officer, your home insurance provider and the fire service.

BOGUS CALLER ALERT

We have been advised that tenants are being contacted via phone calls from the 'Housing Disrepair Team'. The caller informs that they were aware the tenant had issues reporting repairs to NKDC and offering the opportunity to claim compensation.

When the tenant advised that they had no such problems, the caller hung up immediately.

Following the call, the tenant immediately went to Google and found that this is a scam doing the rounds throughout the country.

Thank you to the tenant who brought this to our attention in the hope that their experience is shared and to highlight another scam doing its re-occurring rounds to other vulnerable tenants.



RECEIVE THE AT HOME MAGAZINE VIA EMAIL

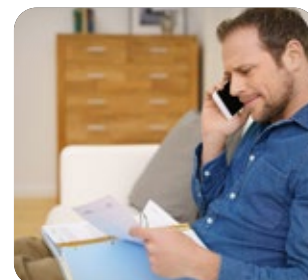
If you would prefer to receive At Home via email please contact the Resident Engagement Team on **01529 308046** or email **chris_morton@n-kesteven.gov.uk** to request. We will then stop sending you the paper copy and send it straight to your inbox instead.



HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

If you're unhappy with our service, you can make a formal complaint to us by:

- Sending an email – feedback@n-kesteven.gov.uk
- Visiting our website – www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/feedback and fill out our form
- Sending a letter – **FREEPOST NKDC**
- Calling Customer Services – **01529 414155**
- Visiting our Sleaford Customer Service Centre
- Contacting your local councillor.



COMPLAINT TIMELINE

Acknowledgement

We will confirm your complaint within five working days.



Stage 1

A full response will then be provided within 15 working days (Housing and Property Services aim to respond within 10 working days, in line with the requirements in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code). If you are unhappy with this response, you can ask for further investigation. This will move your complaint to stage 2.



Stage 2

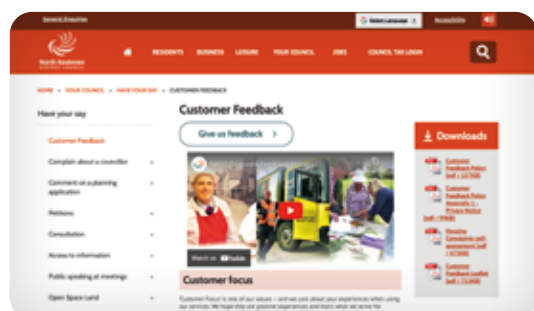
We will then investigate and provide a full response within 15 working days. If you are unhappy with this response, you can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman on:

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Telephone: **0300 111 3000** (lines are open Monday to Friday from 9:15 to 17:15)

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time during the complaints process for advice and support.



Further information

A full copy of our complaints policy can be found on our website www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/feedback or contact us on **01529 414155** to request a copy.

Each year we carry out a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, a copy can be found on our website via the Customer feedback Page and you can request a copy by calling the Resident Engagement Team on **01529 308046**.

ELECTION ID

Photo ID needed to vote in elections on May 4

Anyone wanting to vote in person at the local elections to be held on May 4, to elect District and Parish or Town Councillors, will need to take with them a form of photo identification.

This is a change being introduced by the UK Government for all of England and will apply across all of Lincolnshire's local district and parish elections.

It will also apply to all future elections, including any general election held after October this year.

Acceptable forms of photo ID are:

- Passport
- Photo driving license, including provisional license
- Blue badge
- Certain concessionary travel cards
- Identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- Biometric Immigration Document
- Defence identity card
- Certain national identity cards

Expired ID can still be used, so long as you are recognisable within the photo and your name remains the same.

The full list of which forms of photo ID will be accepted, is at: electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or call their helpline on **0800 328 0280**.



If you don't already have one of these accepted forms of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document. You can do this from January 16 at **voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk**.

Alternatively, you can complete a paper application form and send it to the electoral services team at North Kesteven District Council. Call on **01529 414155** to request a form or for help in applying.

Postal voting is not affected by this change as verification for that is done by signature and date of birth. Residents are being urged to make sure they are ready to vote in May by checking they have an accepted form of ID now, and to apply early for the free voter ID, known as a Voter Authority Certificate, if necessary.

Registration

Anyone who wants to have their say in the elections this May must also be registered to vote. It only takes five minutes to register online at **www.gov.uk/register-to-vote**. Voters wishing to apply to their Council for free ID should first make sure they are registered to vote.

You now need
photo ID to
vote at a
polling station

Downsizing Your Home

Are you in a property that is larger than you need?

Are you finding your current home too expensive to manage and meet your rental payments?

Have you thought about moving and downsizing but not known how to go about it or thought it too stressful?

Many existing North Kesteven District Council tenants as they get older find themselves in accommodation that no longer meets their needs and in some cases their finances.

There are lots of reasons why accommodation becomes unsuitable such as needs for adaptations due to ill health, having spare bedrooms that affect finances due to the extra charges associated with the spare room subsidy, location when tenants may no longer be able to drive, causing them to lose independence and become more isolated in certain areas, or even no longer being able to cope with the upkeep both internal and external of a larger property.

In some circumstances adaptations are not always the best option due to cost, making the best use of housing stock and considering whether your needs could be better met by providing you with a move to a more suitable property.



Often the very thought of moving, particularly when you live alone and have little support can be a daunting prospect and it may be that this is what sways your decision to stay within your present home and not consider the option of transferring to more appropriate accommodation.

Here at North Kesteven District Council we want to support our tenants in making sure you are aware of the options available to you in the event that you might have difficulties in your present home.

What you may not be aware of is the help that can be available to make a move to more suitable accommodation possible for you:

- **Transfer incentive Scheme:** This is a scheme for North Kesteven District Council tenants wishing to downsize, that subjects to eligibility you could receive a £600 cash sum for each bedroom you are giving up with an additional amount towards your moving costs
- **Support from Tenancy Sustainment Officer:** this is where we can provide an officer to support you with a move, making necessary arrangements, providing advice and assistance where required, support you to clear your property, arrange your move and generally aid the process associated with a move.
- In some cases, subject to circumstances, we may also be able to arrange redecoration of new property, support with removals etc..
- If you feel that you might wish to consider moving and would like some additional advice or information, please contact either your Neighbourhood Officer or **housingoptions@n-kesteven.gov.uk** or Tel: **01529 414155** for further information.

COUNCIL ENQUIRIES



ASK FOR THE DEPARTMENT YOU REQUIRE



General Phone: 01529 414155
Emergency out of hours: 01529 308308
Emergency repairs: See box below

Address: North Kesteven District Council
District Council Offices,
Kesteven Street, Sleaford,
Lincolnshire NG34 7EF

Minicom: 01529 308088

Website: www.n-kesteven.gov.uk

Email: customer_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk

Facebook: Search Facebook for "NKDC Housing"

Repairs Team:

- Handyman
- For repair problems
- Damp & Mould

Duty Neighbourhood Officer:

- Your rent
- Tenancy issues
- Gardening Scheme
- Improvements to your home

Income Management Team:

- Domestic Energy Officer
- High level rent arrears
- Rent arrears from former tenancies
- Collection of other Housing related charges

Community Safety Team:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Community Safety Advice

Resident Engagement:

- Getting involved
- Become a Tenant Representative
- At Home magazine

Complaints:

Contact any officer and let them know you wish to make a complaint

Housing options:

- Housing Advice
- Homelessness
- LincsHomefinder Housing Register
- Allocations

Property Services:

- Improvement works
- Capital works liaison
- Decorating Scheme

Housing Support Team:

- Renting a Garage
- Booking a communal room
- Parking permits

Benefits and Money advice:

- Council Tax
- DHPS

Waste Collection:

- Collections
- Missed bins

Wellbeing Service:

- Support for over 18s

REPAIRS

Kier Services 01529 416399

For general building repairs, brickwork, joinery, plumbing or electrical including electrical heating.

Aaron Services 01205 591979

For all other heating repairs and appliance servicing.

Are you on Facebook?

We are getting social!

NKDC now has a Housing Facebook page. This page is available for NKDC tenants only.

The NKDC Housing Facebook page serves as an additional communication tool where we can share information, respond to queries, highlight events and signpost you to relevant agencies. It's also a place where we share pictures, videos, quick polls, questionnaires and other housing information.

The group is for Tenants only, it is hoped that this opportunity will allow us to further improve communication between NKDC tenants and the Council.

Join our group!

Search for "NKDC Housing"

and get chatting with us about all things housing/tenancy related. You will need to ask to join the group and an administrator will check your details and approve your request.

