

# homing in

[www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing)

Spring 2013



Walter Sargison pots on his Pelargoniums at Broadfields. Find out about his idea for a sheltered housing gardening competition this summer on page 11

## In this issue

Housing Benefit and Council Tax changes in April

Free training courses to help you and your community

New money advice service

Energy saving tips

Health walks celebrate ten years this spring



Brighton & Hove  
City Council



Councillor Liz Wakefield inspects solar panels on the Bristol Estate

# Challenges ahead

**Welcome to the Spring 2013 issue of Homing In. We have the latest on the government's planned welfare reforms and how they will be affecting many of you from April (see page 3). As a local authority we have had to make a lot of difficult decisions in the last few months, and are acutely aware of the impact that these changes will bring. This is why we have devoted many pages in this issue to the practical help and support that housing services can offer you.**

run for us by MACS - Money Advice and Community Support, a highly regarded national charity which has its southern base in Brighton & Hove. Their work has already helped thousands of local people out of financial difficulty with expert advice and practical help.

On pages 4 and 5 you will find good news from our new Social Inclusion Team, who have developed a raft of opportunities to help you get more involved in your housing services and your local community. Many of the new free training courses will provide a useful stepping stone for those seeking a return to work or a change in direction.

Don't forget to attend the City Assembly at Hove Town Hall on Saturday 18 May where you will have the opportunity to meet with our new Social Inclusion Team, the Money Advice Service and find out what's on offer for you.

**Councillor Liz Wakefield**



Advice on hand at the City Assembly

On page 6 you can read about our continuing programme to make your homes energy efficient to save you money on fuel bills. To complement this, we have already trained our first batch of volunteer tenant energy advisors who will be helping others to save money on their energy bills.

On page 7, we introduce our new money advice service, which is being

## New Scrutiny Panel underway

Over 25 residents will be going for the 12 places on the new Tenant Scrutiny Panel later this month. Applicants will be assessed by independent trained tenants from various housing associations with support from the council's Scrutiny Team. The scores will then be analysed by the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service, (TPAS), who will make the final decision. The chosen panel members will be trained to carry out thorough reviews of a wide variety of services and provisions within the housing service, with support from the council's scrutiny team.



A typical residents' meeting at the Housing Centre in Moulsecoomb

# Housing Benefit changes coming soon



## Check your Council Tax bills

The Housing Benefit changes for tenants with spare bedrooms will be coming in from April.

Under the new rules, any 'working-age' tenant (anyone aged under 61 and six months on 1 April 2013) who has spare bedrooms will have their Housing Benefit cut by 14% for one spare bedroom or 25% for two or more.

The number of bedrooms you will receive benefit for depends on who is living in your home. You are allowed one bedroom for:

- every adult couple (same or opposite sex)
- any other adult aged 16 or over
- any two children of the same sex aged under 16
- any two children under age 10
- any other child

Tenants with a disabled child can claim for an additional bedroom

where it is unreasonable to expect the child to share a bedroom due to the nature and extent of their disabilities.

You can also receive benefit for an additional bedroom if you or your partner need overnight care from someone who doesn't normally live with you, if you're receiving Disability Living Allowance at the higher or middle rate.

The government is looking at how this change affects disabled people and there may be further changes - visit [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/hbchanges](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/hbchanges) for the latest information.

The council's benefits team have written to all tenants affected and housing staff have been visiting to explain the changes in more detail.

**Following the government's decision to abolish Council Tax Benefit from April, the council is bringing in a Council Tax Reduction Scheme to replace it.**

The government is giving us less money to administer the benefit, meaning there is a shortfall of at least £2.5 million for the city. Although the council is funding this shortfall by £1 million, most working-age households will need to pay something towards their Council Tax. Pensioners are protected and will receive the same reduction they would have had under Council Tax Benefit.

The other main features of the new scheme are:

- working age people will have their benefit worked out on 91.5% of what they are liable to pay - this means they will usually need to pay 8.5% of their bill themselves
- the first £10 a week a single person earns in work will be ignored in the Council Tax Reduction calculation - double what was previously ignored under Council Tax Benefit
- there will be a discretionary fund to help the most vulnerable households in exceptional circumstances

We are also bringing in transitional protection for the first year, meaning that no one will have to pay more than £3 per week extra towards Council Tax than they would have paid under the national scheme.

Council Tax bills will be going out this month and will have details of how much you need to pay.

## Worried about the benefit changes?

There are lots of changes to benefits and tax credits as part of the government's Welfare Reform Bill.

Are you getting everything you are entitled to?

Are you worried about how some of the changes will affect you or your household?

We're here to help – so get in touch with the Housing Inclusion Team or MACS (Money Advice & Community Support) for a free benefits check, financial health check or confidential, independent money advice.

### Housing Inclusion Team

Call: 01273 293317 or 293173  
email: [housinginclusionteam@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housinginclusionteam@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

### Money Advice & Community Support (MACS)

MACS Advice Line: 01273 664040  
[www.macss.org.uk](http://www.macss.org.uk)

You can also ask for someone to visit you at home by calling 01273 293030 or emailing [housing.visits@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.visits@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

**For the latest information on the welfare reforms, visit [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/benefit-changes](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/benefit-changes)**

# Want to make a difference?

**There are all sorts of ways to get involved in your local community and housing services...**

## Get on the database

You can be added to our database of tenants who want to be consulted on issues that interest them (all stored information is confidential).

## Join the 'Skills Bank'

When you register on our database, you can join the skills bank. We can help you build on your knowledge, skills and talent and use it in new ways, as well as helping us to improve our services. We can:

- Match make – putting people together to share and exchange their skills or interests
- Support you in developing 'how to' guides, practical tips and helpful hints for others
- 'Buddy you up' with experienced tenant and resident association members to help you set up your own or become active on your local association
- Help you to set up groups, activities or projects to improve your local community, such as bidding for funding with the Estate Development Budget
- Help you back into work or a new direction with volunteering opportunities

## Become a peer mentor

Do you have a special skill to share and like working with people? We offer free training and support to help you mentor others – whatever your 'thing' is; computers, running committees, fund-raising or writing reports – anything that can be used to help others make their voice heard and improve their housing services and their local community.

## Join an interest group

We are always setting up new groups to improve specific areas within your housing service. Is there an issue that directly affects you and your local community? Find out what is going on and join in – we could certainly use your knowledge!

## Be an estate inspector

Join your Neighbourhood Officer and others in your local community to help look after where you live. Each area is inspected four times a year when we go walkabout to see what needs repairing, tidying up and improving. It is a great chance for you to get things done on your estate and we offer full training.



**David Murtagh and Barry Kent carrying out an estate inspection**

## Be an Energy Efficiency Advisor

See page 6 for all the information.

## Join our Tenant Editorial Board for Homing In

Would you like to be involved with Homing In? We have two vacancies for the north and west areas.



**Barry Hughes, Tenant Editorial Board member, working on Homing In**

### Start or join a resident association

You can take things a step further and become formally involved in tenant participation by joining an existing tenant or resident association. If there is no group near you, you could consider starting your own. You don't have to be in a resident association to put forward a bid for the Estate Development Budget - why not get a group of local residents together to improve your local community? We will offer full training and support you as you set it up with help from our community grants scheme.

We will help you with arrangements and costs for travel, childcare and carers for all these options because we want you to make a difference to your housing services.

### You don't have to go anywhere to make a difference

For those who are short on time or prefer not to attend meetings, we are introducing 'five minute' groups where tenants will have a chance to respond by phone, email or post on certain issues. You can also 'like' our facebook page, tweet your views on our timeline, keep up to date on our website, and let us know what you think on our consultation portal.

 [www.facebook.com/tenantandleaseholder](http://www.facebook.com/tenantandleaseholder)

 [www.twitter.com/BHCCtenants](http://www.twitter.com/BHCCtenants)

<http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/portal>

We can offer free one-to-one computer skills training to help you make the most of having your say online.

For more information, contact the Resident Involvement Team and together we'll agree what support you'd like and what we can offer.

Email us on [RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or call 01273 294651.

Poplar Close tenants got together to improve the area



Alison Gray, who now runs Clarendon & Ellen Residents Association, put together a bid for EDB money

Alison was inspired by Ray Freeman's (Chair of Bristol Estate Residents Association) work to improve Bristol Estate with EDB money



Don't forget Brighton & Hove library service has free internet access and is still offering free training sessions for beginners. Call 01273 290800 or just pop into your local library and book a session.

### Come along to the next City Assembly on Saturday 18 May.

It's a great opportunity to see how satisfying it is to get involved in your local community and make a difference to your housing services. Meet the team and browse all the information about these opportunities while you are there. Call the team on 01273 294651 for more information.



Energy advice trainer Ian Hutchinson with trainee tenants Leon Delaney, Alison Gray, Edward and Lesley Cope



Our programme of cladding outside walls continues across the city



Solar panels are being installed to generate energy

# Working together to take control

To make sure your household is just as energy efficient as any new homes we build, Mears have been cladding outside walls, insulating loft spaces, installing solar panels and replacing old windows and doors to exclude drafts.

Our new Social Inclusion Team and Money Service has been set up to advise you on savings that can be made on your energy bills, ways to make fuel go further and how to keep warm for less. Training is also being given to tenants and housing staff to offer support and spread the word as Energy Advisers.

Ian Hutchison, from the National Energy Action Charity, who ran the first course in January, said: "The level of enthusiasm and commitment to help others was truly inspiring." Attendee Alison Gray, Chair of Clarendon & Ellen Residents Association agreed: "I can't wait to spread the news to other tenants, there are so many ways to save money and keep warm and I want to let people know."

Interested in becoming an Energy Adviser? Contact Kate or Holly from the Social Inclusion Team on 01273 293317 or 293173.

### What we are doing

- making your homes more energy efficient with our ongoing external improvements
- fitting new energy efficient boilers to all sheltered housing and communal blocks

- servicing your heating during our annual gas safety check

Our new independent money advice service MACS (Money Advice and Community Support) can help you save money on fuel bills.

Please use it! Call Holly or Kate on 01273 293317 or 293173.

### What you can do

- time your heating to go off when you are out for long periods
- save up to 10% of your heating bill by lowering the temperature in your home by 1°C
- if you are free to choose, check that you are getting the best deal from your energy supplier - it is often cheaper to have gas and electric from one supplier
- take energy readings yourself - estimated readings can lead to overpayment - and check your meter readings against your bill
- contact your energy provider if you are struggling with payments – they should help you sort out a way to pay
- save money by paying bills by direct debit

# Money worries? Help is at hand

**The changes to the benefit system will affect a significant number of council tenants this April. The council has been planning ahead to help. We have set up a new independent money and debt advice service with MACS, (Money Advice and Community Support), to offer support.**

## **We can**

- advise you on your finances
- provide specialist debt advice
- help you to open a bank account
- tell you about Credit Unions
- advise you on your benefits
- help you to save money online
- bring your bills down
- put you in touch with agencies to help further

## **Introducing you to MACS**

MACS has been successfully helping people cope with debt since 1995. They provide a confidential and impartial service with fully trained and experienced advisers. They know how stressful it is to struggle financially, and offer face-to-face and telephone help with benefits, debt, budgeting and planning for the future. Please use this free service by calling them on 01273 664000

Or call our Social Inclusion team on 01273 293177 or 293173, or email [HousingInclusionTeam@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:HousingInclusionTeam@brighton-hove.gov.uk) for more information. Check MACS out on their website too at [www.macs.org.uk](http://www.macs.org.uk)



**Credit Union Staff  
at the City Assembly**



**The Social Inclusion Team – here to help you**

## **Don't get bitten**

However tough you are finding it, borrowing money from a loan shark will make it worse. Loan sharks work outside the law, without a licence or conscience. They charge crippling amounts of interest and, if you can't pay on time, may resort to intimidation and violence. If you, or someone you know, is at the mercy of one of these people, please contact the Illegal Money Lending Team. They can help. They have been successfully tackling this growing nationwide problem for almost two years now. All calls are treated in complete confidence. Lines open 24/7 - call 0300 555 2222 or e-mail [reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk](mailto:reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk) or text [loan\(space\)shark\(space\) + your message to 60003](sms:loan(space)shark(space)+your+message+to+60003).

## **Open an account with the Credit Union**

Opening an account with your local Credit Union can be a great way of saving and borrowing at the same time – and it's safe. The East Sussex Credit Union is one of 400 community banks around the country, all covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. It's different to a high street bank because it is owned and operated by its members – you.

You don't need to worry about credit ratings and it doesn't matter whether you have a job or money behind you. You can start off with as little as £5 and you can save up to £15,000. The more you save the more you can borrow at competitive rates – much cheaper than 'payday' loans or door step lenders.

Find out more at [www.eastsussexcu.org.uk](http://www.eastsussexcu.org.uk), call their helpline on 01273 234858, or drop in to the East Sussex, Credit Union at Community Base, Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG.

# We made it!

**Brighton & Hove will soon be boasting the first house in the country to be made from waste material from local building sites and recycling centres.**

This ambitious environmental project has been supported by the council and Mears since it began three years ago. The construction of the 'Waste House' will highlight just what can be achieved by re-using and recycling. Students from the University of Brighton and City College are developing the sustainable design with a team of local architectural, construction and environmental experts. Lead Architect, Duncan Baker-Brown, said: "Mears have been great – they have believed in this project from the start."

Mears apprentices will help to assemble the structure which will feature the latest eco technologies

and serve as a prototype for environmentally friendly and energy efficient construction.

A new intake of 10 apprentices started last September, and we will be following their progress in the next issue.

Partnership Manager for Mears in the community, James Cryer, said: "The Waste House provides an exceptional opportunity for our apprentices to learn new skills, work as a team with designers and architects, and most importantly, be a part of one of the most pioneering projects in sustainable building design."

The Waste House will be officially opened by Kevin McCloud in the summer at the University of Brighton.



Architect Duncan Baker-Brown, Mears Partnership Manager, James Cryer, Waste Recycling Consultant Kat Fletcher and the team on the first day of the build.

## Tidy aerials!

**New communal aerials will work all free digital channels and Sky subscription services. Redundant satellite dishes and aerials will be removed to improve the appearance of your homes. You should receive a letter from us soon, explaining when we will be removing the equipment. If you have any questions, call us on 01273 293030.**

## Helping hands

**Residents at Somerset Point want to say a big thank you to Mears for brightening up their homes.**



Caring commitments made it impossible for Lily Busby to decorate, so the team came to her rescue. Lily said: "They were fantastic, so efficient, tidy and polite. I just can't fault them - thank you!"



Edward Parker said: "Mears helped me choose this lovely wallpaper. I wanted something really bright and cheerful – and this is spot on!"

'Papa Jack' Cranston moved down from Edinburgh 12 years ago to be near his family, and with five grandchildren he is always busy! A back injury meant he was unable to decorate himself so he called in the team. He said: "They painted the whole living room and it's made all the difference. They were 110% brilliant!"



The internal decorating scheme opens in April for those eligible. Call 01273 293030 or email [housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk) for more information.



The restored glass panels in the old fire station in Ditchling Road

## A window on the past

New tenants at Ditchling Road are living in a fascinating part of Brighton's history. The building, which once served as a Victorian fire station, now boasts five self contained flats. Mears restored the original stained glass panels in the entrance porch as a constant reminder much to the delight Audrey Back from Surrey. By coincidence, Audrey arrived at the property mid refurbishment last summer, hot on the trail of her great grandmother who lived at the house as a little girl

in its fire station days. Dave Pendergrass, Project Manager for Mears, said: "We gave Audrey and her son Austin a tour before the new tenants moved in. They were delighted to see that many features have been preserved, including the beautiful stained glass in the porch."

Austin Back said: "It was so wonderful to see my mum standing outside the house, exactly where her mum had stood as a child over 100 years ago!"

## Uplifting news

We have listened to you and are putting new measures in place to speed up all lift repairs as our lift replacement programme continues. Thank you for being so patient!

We are replacing problem parts in old lifts before they fail and building up a better local stock of spares, both of which will significantly reduce emergency break downs and lift closures.

Lifts to be replaced in 2013 -14 are Thornsedale, Theobald House, Hereford Court, Nettleton Court, Sanders House, Philip Court and one block in Leach Court. Changes in the schedule of replacement do occur occasionally according to need.



Tyson Place residents celebrate their new lift!

## Open all hours!

We know leaks and breakages don't always happen in office hours, which is why we make sure we are here 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer your call. When the repairs helpdesk closes, the telephone service immediately switches to our 'out of hours' national contact centre. Although the call handlers may not have the same level of local knowledge, they are trained to diagnose repairs and are in contact with the local out-of-hours repair team to deal just as well with your emergency.

So remember, you can call our repairs team 24/7 on freephone 0800 052 6140.

The Repairs Helpdesk team will answer from Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm week days and Saturdays from 8am to 1pm. The national repairs centre is open for calls the rest of the time (including bank holidays).



# Better safe than sorry

**Although most residents in high rise blocks have fitted their own smoke detector alarms, there are still a significant number without one of these potentially life saving devices.**

Don't be a statistic – contact the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, (ESFRS) for a home visit. They provide a complete safety check of your home, expert advice on how to make it safer, and

a free battery-operated smoke detector for your home. The batteries have a ten year life and can be replaced on request by the fire service

We will ensure that your detector is checked every year during your annual gas safety check.

Call the ESFRS on 0800 1777069 or visit their website [www.esfrs.org](http://www.esfrs.org) and follow the link to free smoke alarms & home safety visits.



## Fire facts

- More people die in fires caused by smoking than by anything else – put that cigarette out, right out.
- More than half of accidental fires start in the kitchen – be extra careful when using cooking oil or fat fryers and never leave a pan unattended on the hob.
- Do not overload electrical sockets.
- Candles are a growing cause of fires - always secure them in a stable holder and keep away from materials. Don't leave them alight when you are going out.
- Mobility scooters and bicycles left on landings can block escape routes in case of fire, especially as the lift will be out of use. The council is providing more and more scooter stores as the demand for them increases.

### Should a fire start in your block, remember this:

If the fire is inside the flat, the occupants of that flat should leave immediately. If the fire is elsewhere in the building, all other residents should stay in their flats until told otherwise by the emergency services.

## Protect your belongings for under £1 a week!

Protect yourself against loss caused by fire damage, theft, vandalism, smoke and water damage, from as little as 95p a week for tenants under 60, and just 64p a week for tenants aged 60 and over.

For further information, email [rentaccounting@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:rentaccounting@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or call 01273 293303.

You can choose to pay weekly, monthly or annually, and you can pay by standing order, by debit card on our 24 hour payment line on 01273 291908, online at [ww2.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://ww2.brighton-hove.gov.uk) (select the 'Tenants insurance' option), or at housing payment offices.



# Get watering with Walter!

**Walter Sargison has been gardening all his life, but since he retired and moved to Broadfields seven years ago, he has never been busier, improving the communal garden and growing beautiful varieties of Pelargoniums from seed.**

"Being out in the fresh air, getting good exercise, watching your plants grow for everyone to enjoy is so rewarding," said Walter. "It is so important to have a focus in life, and I can't think of anything more positive than growing these glorious flowers for our gardens."

Walter wants to spread the word and share the fun. "I am looking for keen gardeners to join a new gardening club I'm setting up and take part in a competition to find the best garden, large and small, in our sheltered housing schemes this summer."

If you want to help Walter get his club off the ground, please contact him on 07796 627563 or write to him care of Broadfields, Brighton, BN2 4QE. All competition entries will need to be registered with Walter by 30 June. Judging will start in mid-July.



Walter with his Pelargonium collection and the competition trophies in the Broadfields greenhouse - bought with a successful EDB bid by the residents

# Game On!

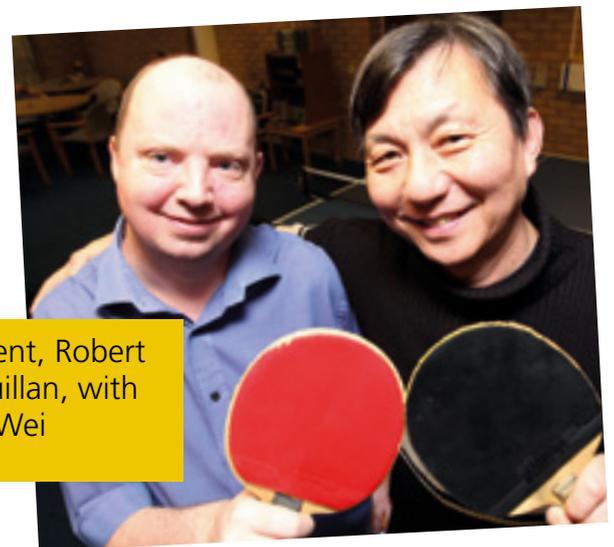
**Residents of Elwyn Jones Court have been honing their table tennis skills with former UK Chinese champion player Wen Wei as part of a pilot project set up by Brighton City Table Tennis Club and supported by the council's Active for Life team.**

The project brings young and old together to play Ping Pong and enjoy each others company. Patcham High Citizenship students have been visiting regularly since November, and now it's become rather serious with one resident, 81 year

old Peggy Blake, making a rally with Wen Wei of 208 consecutive shots!

Citizenship teacher, Tim Holtam, said: "Ping Pong is an ideal activity for all ages. People really come out of themselves and with Wen Wei on board we are seeing some real competitive spirit!"

The council's Active for Life team are now working with a number of sheltered housing schemes across the city to run the 'Social Ping Project' which encourages older people to enjoy the social, physical and mental benefits of taking part.



Resident, Robert McQuillan, with Wen Wei

**Social Ping is now being held at:**

**Portslade Village Centre on Mondays at 2pm**

**New Larchwood, Coldean on Tuesdays from 11am**

**Patching Lodge, Kemp Town on Thursdays from 10.30am**

The free one-hour sessions are for any ability. Come along and have a go!

Contact the Active for Life team on 01273 292729 for more information.

# Many happy returns for Healthwalks!



Ten years ago Healthwalks started with four regular walks led by a handful of willing and enthusiastic volunteers. Today there are over 50 regular volunteers leading 16 different walks. The reason Healthwalks now attracts over 1,000 local walkers a year is the range of benefits it brings - improved physical health, better mental health and wellbeing, new friendships and a greater understanding and appreciation of the beautiful green spaces our city has to offer.

If you'd like to try a Healthwalk, you can download the current programme from [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/healthwalks](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/healthwalks) or you can order one of our leaflets by calling 01273 292564.



## Growing together

Local people celebrated the planting of the first of 200 fruit trees, which will grow to become the new Whitehawk community orchard over the next three years - there is a lot of work to do! 88% of local residents, when asked, were in favour of the orchard so it is hoped that there will be plenty of new volunteers coming along to get involved with this exciting project.

If you would like to help to clear land, plant and maintain the trees at the orchard on Race Hill, please contact Helen Starr-Kedde on 01273 431700 or email [helen@bhfood.org.uk](mailto:helen@bhfood.org.uk)

The joint project is being run by Brighton & Hove Harvest, Brighton Permaculture Trust and community development organisation Serendipity, with support from the council.



Top: Local people and volunteers at the launch of the orchard

Left: Ethan and Finlay at the apple press outside Swallow Court, Whitehawk

# Caring community

**Staff initiatives at the Housing Centre in Moulsecomb raised £200 for two great local causes. The money will be split equally between the Moulsecomb Forest Garden & Wildlife Project and the 'The Bevy', a new project to revive an old empty pub as a community hub.**



The Moulsecomb Forest Garden & Wildlife Project offers a chance for people to get together in the fresh air and improve their local environment while learning new skills and building confidence.

Apart from its work with local schools, the project helps people of all ages who will benefit from their help. Volunteer organiser, Warren Carter said: "It's great to know our work is appreciated. There is something for everyone here – gardening, carpentry, cooking and just enjoying the

outdoors. All these activities have been helping people to get their lives back on track in so many ways. Come and see for yourself!"

**For more information, call 07988 837951 or email [info@seedybusiness.org](mailto:info@seedybusiness.org)**

The Bevy is an exciting new community project to re-open the Bevendean pub as a not for profit co-operative venture. Plans include a community kitchen, play areas, a vegetable garden,

meeting space for groups at a family pub in the heart of the local community. Chair of Housing, Councillor Liz Wakefield said: "This is a real grass roots project organised by a group of local residents who want to put heart back into the community." The council has already visited the Bevy as part of our Big Alcohol Debate to discuss its pioneering role. A number of health promotions are planned including health MOTs, healthy eating for families, exercise classes, stop smoking groups and cycling clubs.

**For more information or to support this new community venture and buy a share, visit [www.thebevy.co.uk](http://www.thebevy.co.uk)**

## Boost for drug and alcohol services

More projects aimed at improving services for communities and individuals affected by someone else's drug or alcohol misuse are coming on stream in Brighton & Hove.

A series of support sessions for adults and children affected by another adult's substance use, called Children and Adults Talking Together (CATT) is to be run by local charity Oasis, and planning has begun for this year's June conference for families, friends and carers affected by someone else's substance use. Work continues to produce a DVD for the Youth Offending Service to look at the effect of young people's drug and alcohol use on others.

The schemes are being done as part of the Communities and Families Tackling Addiction (CAFTA) project, funded with money granted to the city council from the European Union Interreg IVA 2 Mers Seas Zeen cross-border co-operation programme 2007-2013.

Keep up to date on the CAFTA project by visiting the new Safe in the City website at [www.safeinthecity.info](http://www.safeinthecity.info)



**Oasis volunteers at last year's Recovery Walk in Brighton & Hove**

# Tough going

Between August and December last year, the Anti-Social Behaviour Team opened 13 new cases involving intimidation, drug dealing and noise, and closed 23.

Richard Jordan-Penswick, Tenancy Manager with the team, said: "Working with the police, we successfully resolved drug dealing activities in two flats by gaining 'closure orders' to end the tenancies, and we have obtained an injunction banning a drug dealer from another block of flats in Brighton. We have also taken a nuisance neighbour to court twice for breaking her agreement to stop behaving in an anti-social way towards neighbours.

"We have evicted tenants from four other properties, including a household where the children caused serious and continuing nuisance to their neighbours, a tenant who took part in



Tenants at Tyson Place celebrate after drug dealers are ousted following their joint work with council and police last year

serious racist abuse and an assault of his neighbour, and a tenant who was operating as a prostitute from her tenancy. Although we aim to work with tenants causing anti-social behaviour so that they do not lose their tenancies, we will take legal action to end a tenancy when problems continue. Acts of anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated."

To report anti-social behaviour, call 01273 292735, email [communitysafety.casework@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety.casework@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or visit any housing office. All reports are treated confidentially.



Rescue dogs Truffles and Wispa are seeking a new home

## Keep your pet safe!

We know how important pets can be which is why the council have a team of dedicated officers on hand to offer you advice and support. We are also joining a number of other local authorities by following the latest guidance from the RSPCA to encourage responsible pet ownership. One of the biggest problems that animal welfare officers have been tackling since 2008 is stray dogs – the number has doubled to 400 over the last five years, with only half of these strays being returned to their owners and the remaining 200 placed in over burdened rescue homes.

We are proposing compulsory micro chipping for dogs to help stem the number of strays on your estates and streets. Micro-chipping your dog automatically enables the authorities or police to trace them back to you.

We have been offering discounted neutering schemes for both cats and dogs for some years to reduce the other growing problem of irresponsible breeding. However, it is continuing to increase, with many more abandoned and unwanted puppies and kittens rescued by our team. Again, we are proposing a statutory 'No Breeding' policy for all pets, which should come into force along with compulsory micro-chipping by the summer.

Chair of Housing Councillor Liz Wakefield said: "The council is supportive of pet ownership and we do help people to keep their pets when they are experiencing problems. But it is equally important for the community as a whole that tenants are clear about the penalties for disregard of legislated animal welfare."

**For more information, please check your tenant handbook or call 01273 293030.**

# Broadening horizons for Broadfields

Broadfields resident Kath Davis contacted Rose Rickford at the Resource Centre for advice when fellow residents decided they would like a shared computer. Kath said: "The Resource Centre has been so helpful in the past and they came up trumps again. Rose recommended we apply to the Big Lottery Fund and we have just received £1,313 from them to pay for a new computer with web cam and a package of training, which will be given on site by SCIP, a local non-profit social enterprise specialising in IT."

Rose is delighted at the news and hopes it will encourage more tenant and resident associations to apply. She said: "We help all local community groups to fundraise for good causes. We keep an up-to-date directory of funding contacts and can match organisations and groups with funders. I know Kath is looking forward

to 'Skyping' family members, and I understand one resident is going to use it to find a new job. The internet will open up a whole new world of opportunities to the residents of Broadfields. It's very exciting!"

The Resource Centre is an independent charity offering practical support to community and voluntary groups by providing:

- affordable equipment for hire
- low cost printing
- access to computers
- information on how to set up and run a group
- up-to-date funding information

Check them out on [www.resourcecentre.org.uk](http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk), call 01273 606160 or visit them at 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 0GY. Open Tuesday to Friday 9am - 4pm.



Kath Davis and Rose Rickford



## Thanks for the memories

Over 30 local people got together and shared fond recollections of the Level at a special Memory Day at the Phoenix Centre last month. Many brought their old photos and memorabilia to the delight of everyone there. A special thanks to the East Brighton Bygones group and to the volunteers who helped set up the exhibition and recorded interviews, which will be archived and used in future community projects about the Level.

If you have any photos of the Level between the 1940's and 1960's you would like to share for future events, please get in touch with the Parks Projects Team on 01273 294737.



Beryl Tucknott and Fiona Stokes with tea towel showing Sussex v Kent Cricket game on the Level in 1840



# Online services

Visit the council housing website at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing)

Pay online at [ww2.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://ww2.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Go to or register for the Housing Customer online system at <https://housingcos.brighton-hove.gov.uk>

Information about Money Matters, Tax and Benefits [www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits)

Homemove website [www.homemove.org.uk](http://www.homemove.org.uk)

Check out all housing online services at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingdoitnow](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingdoitnow)

# Useful contacts

## Housing Customer Services

[housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
01273 293030

## Housing Benefits

[housing.benefits@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.benefits@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
01273 292000

## Housing Income Management Team

[housing.incomemanagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.incomemanagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
01273 293224

## Repairs Helpdesk

[BHCC.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk](mailto:BHCC.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk)  
0800 052 6140

## Rise (Charity supporting those suffering Domestic Abuse)

[www.riseuk.org.uk](http://www.riseuk.org.uk)  
01273 622822

## Carelink Plus Alarm Service

[CareLinkPlus@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:CareLinkPlus@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
01273 673105

## Citizens Advice Bureau

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/brightonhovecab](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/brightonhovecab)  
0845 1203710

## Tenant Disability Network

email: [tdnbhcc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tdnbhcc@yahoo.co.uk)  
01273 936934

## Noise Nuisance

[www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/noise](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/noise)  
01273 292929 or  
01273 292229 for out of hours emergencies)

# Council & Tenant Meetings

## Housing Committee:

Wednesday 8 May

Wednesday 19 June

Meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall at 3pm.

## Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee:

Tuesday 26 March

Tuesday 28 May

Meetings will be held in the Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall at 4pm.

All council meetings are open to the public – and you can submit public questions.

**The agenda and minutes will be available on [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)**

If you have any comments or items, e-mail [homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk), call 01273 291496 or write to Homing In, Communications Team, Room G10, Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove BN3 2LS. Homing In is produced by Brighton & Hove City Council's communications team and the Tenant Editorial Board.

## Save paper and get Homing In online

Email [housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk) to stop receiving a paper copy of Homing In and we'll e-mail you when it is available on our website.

# Translations

Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office.

ترجمه؟ این کادر را علامت بزنید و به هر یک از ادارات محلی ببرید. Arabic

অনুবাদ? বাংলা ভাষায় চিহ্ন দিন। প্রতিটি স্থানীয় সরকারি কার্যালয়ে নিয়ে যান। Bengali

¿Traducción? Marque esta casilla y lleve a cualquier oficina local. Cantonese

ترجمه؟ این کادر را علامت بزنید و به هر یک از ادارات محلی ببرید. Farsi

Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au council. Hindi

是否需要翻译? 请在表格中勾选, 并带到任何地方政府的办公室。Mandarin

Humaczen e? Zaznacz to okienko i zwróć do któregośkolwiek biura samorządu lokalnego (council office). Polish

Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadrícula e leve a uma qualquer repartição de poder local (council office). Portuguese

Terjümmesi için kareyi işaretleyiniz ve bir semt belediye bürosuna veriniz. Turkish

other (please state)

**This can also be made available in large print, Braille, or on CD or audio tape**