

# homingin

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

December 2009



The Apprentice comes to Brighton & Hove: Mears to offer 200 trade apprenticeships over the next 10 years as part of repairs, maintenance and improvement contract with the council. L to R: Bradley King, Sean French, Trainer Nick Harrold, Alex Roles, Jack Puddick, Sam Instone.

## In this issue

Turning the Tide initiative tackles inequality

**Apprenticeships bring skills for life**

Community Crime Fighters improve estates

**Fire safety a top priority in tower blocks**

Your essential guide to sustainable living



Brighton & Hove  
City Council

# More than just a landlord!

Financial problems are a worry for most of us, especially at this time of year. Debt and low income can start a downward cycle leading to serious consequences such as relationship breakdown, unemployment and ill health.



As your landlord, the council is in a unique position to help. A new fast-track online benefit claims service has been set up along with advice on affordable credit, energy efficiency, low cost insurance and bargain furniture for all new tenants. To show our commitment to helping you live more sustainably, we have put together a four page feature in this issue full of really useful information to help you cut your food and energy bills, along with a page of financial advice.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reassure you that, despite reports to the contrary, the council is on track with the planned programme of repairs and maintenance and an expected 20,000 routine repairs this year. At the beginning of October, we had almost £14 million left to allocate

from a total budget of £31 million, which is a £3.5 million increase on last year. The service will operate on a priority basis, but all non urgent repairs have been scheduled in. We are preparing for the start of the new repairs contract and Mears are showing they take partnership working seriously. We are already seeing evidence of their commitment to the local community with the success of the new apprenticeship scheme which you can read about on page 5.

Finally, you'll see we've included a questionnaire with this issue asking you about the ways you'd like to get involved. Please do return it to help us continue improving the way we work with you.

**Councillor Maria Caulfield**

## Tell us your views

There are many ways you can be involved, and we want to know the best way to ask you about the things that matter in a way that is convenient to you.

We've enclosed a questionnaire with this issue so you can tell us which ways you prefer to be involved, from traditional ways like tenant meetings to using texting on your mobile phone.

Telling us what fits best for you helps us keep in touch to get your comments about the housing management service and ways to improve it.

So please complete and return this questionnaire in the envelope provided by 23 December 2009. No stamp required!

If you have any questions or queries about the survey, please contact John Austin-Locke on 01273 291008.

## Council and tenant meetings

**7 December** Housing management consultative committee, Hove Town Hall at 3pm

**17 December** Special housing cabinet member meeting, Hove Town Hall at 4pm

**6 January** Housing cabinet member meeting, Hove Town Hall at 4pm

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

Call 01273 291058 for more information. View reports and decisions at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

# Turning the Tide

Tackling social exclusion and anti-social behaviour in Brighton & Hove

A new scheme to tackle inequality in the most deprived areas of the city is being piloted in Moulsecoomb and Bevendean for the next nine months. 'Turning the Tide' has been introduced as a result of an inequalities review which revealed that Brighton & Hove continues to contain some of the most significantly deprived areas in England.

The review showed that many people living in these areas have to cope with a number of disadvantages. Many households have no-one in employment, many people have left school early without any qualifications, some are dependent on benefits, and there are often long-term health issues.

'Turning The Tide' aims to tackle these complex issues with a dual approach, offering family support and early intervention to resolve potentially serious problems, while enforcing tough anti-social behaviour legislation for persistent offenders. Practical help and the creation of real opportunities for change will provide tenants with the means to improve their lives and those

of their families, effectively improving the quality of life for everyone.

The council will be working much more with other agencies, running job searches, training, skills and business support and counselling towards change. As part of the council's aim to increase opportunities, 200 apprenticeships will be offered through the repairs and maintenance contract starting with Mears next April. There is more information about apprenticeships on page 5.

The pilot scheme will be carefully monitored and evaluated by tenant focus groups, and there are plans to extend it city-wide next year.

'Turning The Tide' pledges to:

- address inequality
- introduce more robust management of anti social behaviour
- intervene early with problems
- create opportunities for positive change
- work with partners and agencies for change
- increase tenant aspirations



## Partnership workshops

**As part of the new Repairs and Maintenance Partnership, housing officers and tenant representatives were invited to a two day workshop with Mears employees in October.**

**The agenda addressed all the issues behind good partnership working, and gave tenants a chance to discuss their aspirations and objectives during the 10 year contract awarded by the council to Mears to improve and maintain the city's council housing.**

**Bryan Balchin, of the tenant Repairs & Maintenance Monitoring Group said: "The workshops were brilliant and educational, and I believe the new contract will be much better for tenants."**



**Great ideas flowing at the workshop**

# Ray does it justice!

Ray Freeman has been hailed by the government Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Group as a shining example of what can be achieved with a bit of enthusiasm, forward thinking and support from schemes like Community Pay Back.

As a Community Crime Fighter himself and Chair of the Bristol Estate Community Association, Ray works tirelessly for his community, carrying out numerous environmental improvement schemes, most of which have only been possible with the labour provided by the Community Pay Back scheme.

Over 1,000 offenders have worked on the estate to bring about significant improvements. Ray said: "The look and feel of the estate has changed massively since the project with offenders began. We have been able to get big things done on a very small budget to improve the quality of life of people who live here."

Ian Walker, of the national government Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Group, said: "The work on Bristol Estate is one of the most impressive projects I've seen and Ray is an inspiration. The projects he has organised have not only benefitted the environment, they have also reduced anti-social behaviour, vandalism and fear of crime on the estate – all priorities of the 'Justice Seen, Justice Done' national campaign."



**Joe Tuke, Director, Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Group congratulates Ray on his achievements at the Community Crime Fighter Training Day in Brighton this October.**

**"The work on Bristol Estate is one of the most impressive projects I've seen and Ray is an inspiration."**



**Adriana Whelan, Bristol estate tenant, working on the community allotment**

All work carried out through the scheme is in addition to anything done under the council's budget, and the community has benefitted from improvements that would not have otherwise happened.

Pay Back improvements to the Bristol Estate include:

- repainting internal storage areas, hallways, and porchways
- clearance of fly tipping and dumped rubbish.
- clearance of overgrown areas to make pathways accessible and safe.
- creation of waste land for a community allotment



**Ray at the redecorated storage area, which can now be used by tenants to keep the estate tidy.**

# The Apprentice comes to Brighton & Hove!

Five local lads have just started apprenticeships with Mears Group PLC. As part of the repairs and maintenance partnership contract starting in April, Mears will be offering a further 200 apprenticeships over the next 10 years.

The three and four year apprenticeships are offered in carpentry, plumbing, gas fitting, and multi-skills. Each apprentice spends four days on the job with a dedicated trainer and one day at City College each week leading to a GNVQ qualification in their chosen trade.

The apprenticeships will be based at the Whitehawk 'Our Neighbourhood' community office in Swallow Court. Chris El Shabba, tenant chair of the project, said: "Most of these lads have grown up on the estate. It's great to see them out and about, helping some tenants that have known them and their families since they were little."

**Trainers and their apprentices outside the Whitehawk community office in Swallow Court with Chris El Shabba (far left).**



## Taking a balanced view

**The council is piloting a new scheme to help working households in some of the most deprived areas of the city. Priority will be given to those in employment for a proportion of family homes as they become available.**

**Some parts of Brighton & Hove rate among the most financially depressed in the country, with the majority of people receiving benefit. In a bid to develop well balanced, more sustainable communities the council plans to let social housing to working people in these areas. The scheme will also help some of the many hard working families on low incomes in the city.**

**Homes available under this scheme will be advertised through the Homemove choice-based lettings scheme. In order to be eligible, households must be on the council's joint housing register. At least one member of the household must be working a minimum of 16 hours a week, and have been doing so for three months or more.**

## New tenancy agreement

Thank you! We received 2,400 responses to the consultation for changes to the tenancy agreement.

The resident focus group and council officers are now considering your comments. A report detailing the results of the consultation and a proposed final draft will be taken to Housing Management Consultative Committee in December and Housing Cabinet in January, with the aim of sending out the new agreement in early 2010.

# Innovative way to bridge the gap

Two years ago you voted to keep the council as your landlord, and we are committed to providing you with quality, modernised, safe and well maintained homes. In order to fulfil our promise, we have come up with a pioneering plan to help bridge the funding gap to improve the standard of your homes.

Together, the council and tenant representatives have worked on an original idea for a Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV). We're still working to set up a not for profit housing charitable company with a 12 member board made up equally of independents,

councillors and tenant representatives. The charity, named Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes, will lease up to 499 empty properties over five years, raising enough money to modernise 12,500 homes. The scheme will raise significant income, which we will be investing back in your homes.

Our top priority is to improve your homes and ensure tenants have modern kitchen and bathroom facilities. We think we have identified the right route to achieve this and are determined to press ahead quickly. Keep an eye on future issues of Homingin for further updates.



## Tenant Services Authority – the new regulator for council landlords

From 1 April 2010, the council expects to have a new regulator for our landlord services – the Tenant Services Authority or TSA. This body already supervises housing associations and aims to raise the standard of services for all social housing tenants, no matter who their landlord.

The TSA has now published its new regulatory framework for social housing in England for formal consultation. Its key message is the need for landlords to work more closely with their tenants, involving them in shaping services, agreeing local standards, in checking performance and in co-regulation – tenants, landlords and the TSA working together to ensure standards are met.

From its 'National Conversation' with tenants around the country, the TSA has developed a set of national minimum standards for all social landlords. These are for tenant involvement and empowerment, home, tenancy, neighbourhood and community, and value for money. Landlords will be expected to work with tenants to develop local standards for service delivery, prioritising those things that matter most in their area.

Although the TSA was not set up to cover leaseholders, they should be included in arrangements and benefit from improvements.

A summary of the TSA's proposals has been sent to all tenant and resident associations. For more information visit the TSA website at [www.nationalconversation.co.uk](http://www.nationalconversation.co.uk) or call 0845 230 7000.

## Home contents insurance

**Pay your premium when you pay your rent or by standing order**

- No claims excess
- No minimum security requirements
- Tailored cover for tenants
- Insure your personal belongings from as little as 63p for the over 60s and from 95p for under 60s per week

**Can you afford not to?**

**The benefits speak for themselves.**

**Contact 01273 293303 for more details and an application pack.**

# Letting limits remain

The Housing Management Consultative Committee has made a decision to keep limiting lets on flats in Livingstone House, Philip Court, Ardingly Court, Nettleton Court, Dudeney Lodge and Hampshire Court to residents aged 50 or over. Bungalows not currently housing people with mobility problems may also soon become available to those who have found that their family homes are now too big for them and would like to downsize.



## Tenants are digging it!

Residents of Penshurst Place have worked together to create a garden they can be proud of. It all started earlier this year, when resident, Sam Marmont, noticed how untidy the surrounding outside space had become, with people dumping their rubbish and dogs' mess everywhere. Environment Improvement Officer, Matt Easteal helped Sam and her team of volunteer residents to prepare a large area for planting and donated wild flower seeds, while staff from the local housing office at Manor Place arranged for resurfacing of pathways.

The project has created a very attractive and usable outside space, which Sam continues to maintain with great enthusiasm. Apart from the obvious benefits, this project has also encouraged others in surrounding blocks to develop their own gardening groups.



Green space at Sylvan Hall Estate

## Ground breaking news

We know that many of you have been asking to become more involved with the green spaces and communal areas on your estates.

With this in mind the Estates Services Monitoring Group, which consists of elected tenant representatives, will be working with housing and parks teams to look at new ways to improve the current grounds maintenance service, bringing it up to a three star standard.

More responsibility will be given to residents to ensure their grounds are clean, tidy and attractive which includes opportunities for conservation, wild flower planting, food growing and the provision of allotments.

If you're interested in becoming involved, contact your local community participation officer.

## Community spirit in Coldean

Coldean residents, community workers, and staff from local services gathered for the first Coldean Community Conference earlier this Autumn.

This free community day gave participants the opportunity to reflect on all the achievements of the last year and plan for the future.

The council supported the event, which was organised by the Trust for Developing Communities and the Working Together Project, which provides a platform for residents to find out more about local happenings, share views, and get involved in local community groups and projects. If this appeals to you call Kalisha Le Coutre on 01273 676416.

# Don't forget to put the rent on your Christmas list!

If you are having difficulty paying your rent or are worried about debt, call the arrears helpline on 01273 293224.

Every year around 50 council tenants in Brighton & Hove lose their homes for not paying their rent. Hundreds more are taken to court to recover money they owe in rent arrears.

The council never wants to prosecute or evict people, and most tenants do pay regularly. But with Christmas around the corner, it can be all too easy to fall behind.

It's important to set money aside for the rent before the festive rush for presents and food. Keep on top of payments rather than be faced with arrears in the New Year. If you have difficulty with the rent, talk to us as soon as possible.

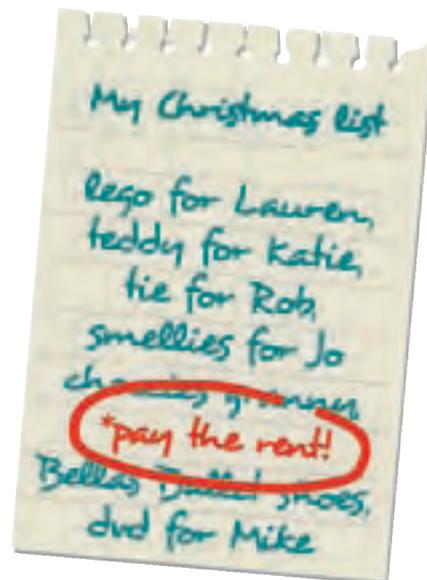
You can pay your rent in a number of ways, including:

- at housing offices and paypoint outlets if you have a paypoint swipecard. To order a swipecard, contact your housing office or the Rent Accounting team on 01273 293065
- by direct debit. This is the easiest way to pay, and you

**“Every year around 50 council tenants in Brighton & Hove lose their homes for not paying their rent.”**

will be entered into a monthly incentive scheme and could win £100. Pick up a leaflet at your housing office or contact the Rent Accounting team on 01273 293065

- over the internet with a debit card using our secure server at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk).



gov.uk Go to the payments section and select 'Housing Rents' from the drop down menu.

- by telephone with a debit card. Call our 24 hour automated payment line on 01273 291908. You can also call your housing office during cash office opening hours.

Further information about paying your rent is available at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/rent](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/rent)

## Don't get bitten by sharks!

Christmas is coming, just the season for loan sharks. Unlicensed money-lenders often prey on the most vulnerable, charging very high rates of interest and causing people to fall into huge debt.

If you're caught up with loan sharks, contact your housing officer and they can put you in touch with the right agency to resolve the situation before it gets worse. Remember, loan sharks are breaking the law and if they

are operating without a licence, cannot make you pay.

A better bet is an organisation like The East Sussex Credit Union, a co-operative, not-for-profit organisation which provides low cost, flexible loans. Visit them at Community Base, Queens Road, Brighton, or call 01273 234858, check their website on [www.credit-union.org.uk](http://www.credit-union.org.uk) for opening hours and more information.

# Cut your bills!

Here are some energy and power saving tips to help you save money, reduce your carbon footprint and live a more environmentally friendly life.

## Around the home

### Loft insulation

Without loft insulation as much as 15% of your heating costs are lost through your roof. Insulating your loft is a simple and effective way to reduce your heating bills.

If your loft has not been insulated, please contact the **repairs helpdesk on 0800 052 6140** and we can advise you when you are on the programme.

### Stop standing by

Appliances in standby mode account for around 10% of UK household energy use - so switch off, or better still, unplug your devices when they're not in use.

The average household has up

to 12 gadgets left on standby or charging at any one time. Items left on standby use up to 85% of the energy they would use if they were fully switched on.

You could save 5 to 10% of your electricity bill by turning items fully off.

### Charging costs you

Charging up laptops, phones, electric toothbrushes and power tools for longer than necessary is a waste of money and energy. Unplug charging items once they are fully charged.

### Switch off as you go

No matter what type of lighting you are using, always turn the lights off when you leave a room.



### Lower your thermostat

Most people are comfortable with living room temperatures of around 18 to 21°C. Try lowering your thermostat and see if your home is still sufficiently warm.

An adjustment of just 1°C can save up to 10% on heating bills, which could be up to £65 per year.

**“An adjustment of just 1°C can save up to 10% on heating bills, which could be up to £65 per year.”**

### Use your programmer for your heat and hot water

Set your heating and hot water to come on only when you need it. For your heating, you might consider how long it takes your home to heat up once you've got your heating on, then set it to come on for that many minutes before you want your house warm in the morning. It takes roughly the same amount of time for your house to cool down once you've turned the heating off, so you could use that as a guide for the time to programme your heating to go off.



### Draw your curtains

About 10% of heat loss from our homes is through the windows. Closing your curtains at dusk will help keep the heat in.

### Showering saves time and money

Having a shower not only saves on water, it also saves on the energy used to heat the water. According to the BBC's water saving tips, taking a five minute shower every day rather than a bath uses a third of the water and will save 400 litres of water a week.

### Rechargeable batteries

They save energy and the slightly higher cost is recovered in the first five charges. Recharging costs are also minimal. In the UK, we throw away over 650 million batteries every year, polluting the soil and filling landfill sites.

**Energy efficient lighting**  
Lighting can account for 10 to 15% of your electricity bill so energy saving light bulbs can cut your costs considerably. Traditional bulbs waste a lot of energy by turning it into heat but energy saving bulbs work in the same way as fluorescent lights.

They may be a bit more expensive, but they last over 10 times longer and use up to four times less energy, typically saving around £45 each over the lifetime of the bulb. With savings like this, changing bulbs is a sound investment.



### Time for a cuppa?

Save electricity, water, money and time by boiling only the amount you need – but make sure the water covers the kettle's element.



### Cooking up a stew

Slow cookers use much less energy than conventional ovens, and make cheaper cuts of meat more tender and succulent.

### Put a lid on it

Keeping a lid on a boiling pan of food will help the water or food heat more quickly and, therefore, use less energy.

### Hang out to dry

Household appliances that give off heat such as tumble dryers use lots of electricity. Always put your washing through the fast spin so they are as dry as possible, then hang them out to dry. Turning off the tumble dryer is a 100% energy saving solution.

Electric tumble dryers are commonly the second biggest energy user in the home, after the fridge. They are obviously used a lot less, but still use a huge amount of electricity when switched on. Try to line dry clothes or use an indoor clothes hanger.



## In the kitchen

Your washing machine and tumble dryer are two of the appliances in your home that use the most energy. When using the washing machine, between 85 to 90% of energy is used just to heat up the water, so dropping the water temperature of your wash could significantly decrease your energy consumption. Using a warm wash over a year could cut your consumption nearly in half.

Wait until you have a full load and save energy, or use the 'half load' function if you have one. Remember one full load uses less energy than two half loads.

## Water saving tips

We use an average of 150 litres of water per day on the following:

- 45 litres to flush the toilet
- 40 litres to take a shower
- 20 litres washing our clothes
- 45 litres on general use, including cooking

### To reduce the amount of water you use

- take a shower rather than a bath
- save rain water in a water butt - great for watering your plants, and washing your car
- store water in the fridge to save running the tap throughout the day for a cool drink
- put a displacement device in your toilet cistern to use less water in flushing
- when buying a washing machine or dishwasher, look for one that uses less water and use the economy option
- wash your car with a bucket and sponge rather than a hose
- report dripping taps so that the leak can be stopped

## Going local

Brighton & Hove has a wide range of growing local projects including the Whitehawk Community Food Project - a friendly co-operative welcoming helpers on Thursdays and Sundays from 12 noon. No experience is necessary, just an interest in growing and a willingness to learn.

Visit [www.thefoodproject.org.uk](http://www.thefoodproject.org.uk) to find out more.

Harvest Brighton & Hove is a project aimed at encouraging local food growing and consumption around the city. They would like to hear about your own projects such as community allotments and other communal growing ventures. Call Ann on 01273 431700 or email [ann@bhfood.org.uk](mailto:ann@bhfood.org.uk). If you would like to get involved as a volunteer, or just keep up to date on all these exciting projects visit [www.harvest-bh.org.uk](http://www.harvest-bh.org.uk)

The council want to put together a database containing information about all the tenant sustainable projects going on around the city, so it would be great if you could let us know if you are planning a project with organisations such as Harvest. You may decide you want to do your own thing, growing food in your own garden, or with other people on areas of council land near your home. If so, we would still like to hear from you. Equally, if you know of any land near you that might be perfect for a vegetable plot, please call Tamsin Dye at Brighton & Hove City Council on 01273 293425.

If growing your own isn't your thing, you can still support local produce by buying locally. Visit the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership website [www.bhfood.org.uk](http://www.bhfood.org.uk) for helpful information or check out the council's website for details of our regular farmers' markets at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

## Useful contacts

### The Green Centre

39 Manor Hill, Whitehawk, Brighton, BN2 5EL  
Tel: 01273 687700  
Runs projects and workshops, provides information and advice on all issues to do with protecting and respecting our planet.

### The Brighton Peace and Environment Centre

39-41 Surrey Street, Brighton, BN1 3PB  
Tel: 01273 766610  
Email: [info@bpec.org](mailto:info@bpec.org)  
Web: [www.bpec.org](http://www.bpec.org)

Aims to raise awareness and understanding of social justice, peace, sustainable development and environmental protection matters by providing information, education and positive practical solutions to global problems.

### The Energy Saving Trust

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)  
Website offers a huge amount of information and advice on ways to save energy.

# Save on your food bills too!



Did you know that the average Brighton & Hove resident throws away around 152kg of food each year – about the same size as a sumo wrestler!

With Christmas coming up, it's a good time to think about cutting down the food you buy.

Food waste costs the average household around £420 a year, and for families it rises to £610 a year.

And with fruit and vegetables, rice, pasta,

bread and dairy products among the top wasted food, it's clear that most could have been eaten.

If everyone halved the amount of food waste they threw away, which should be easily achievable, it would result in a 15% reduction of our residual waste, reducing our impact on the environment and our collection and disposal costs.

## What you can do:

- try to reduce unnecessary waste, shop sensibly, store your food properly to delay it going off and try to use up 'left-overs'. Food waste represents 35% of the average household bin in Brighton & Hove
- have a go at composting garden waste and vegetable peelings at home to create your own compost!

## Festive recycling!

- The amount of wrapping paper estimated to be thrown away in the UK at Christmas could stretch around the equator nine times or to the moon if each sheet was laid end to end. A lot of this can be recycled so get it in the box!
- 13,350 tonnes of glass are thrown out in the UK during the festive season, from champagne and sherry bottles to mincemeat and cranberry sauce jars. Recycling all of them could save 4,200 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Just give them a rinse in your leftover dish washing water and recycle them with your other glass.
- In the UK approximately 250 tonnes of Christmas trees that could have been recycled are thrown out. Chipping and composting means they can be used as mulch or soil improver, so drop yours off at one of the places listed above. Alternatively you could buy a living tree that can be planted in the garden when you've finished with it.
- An estimated 500 tonnes of Christmas tree lights are discarded in the UK over the Christmas period. Recycle them at the small electrical goods points at the city's two Household Waste Recycling Centres.

For more tips go to [www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com)

## Sprucing up doesn't have to cost a fortune

Equipping your home can be an expensive business but local charity 'Furniture Now!' can help. The charity collects unwanted furniture and offers a wide variety of good quality items available at a reasonable cost to those in need of help. If you are on a low income, they will only charge what it costs to supply to you and free delivery can be arranged.

Find out more on [www.furniturenow.org.uk](http://www.furniturenow.org.uk) or call 01273 487377.



# Christmas refuse and recycling collections

## Normal Collection

Friday 25 December	Tuesday 29 December
Monday 28 December	Wednesday 30 December
Tuesday 29 December	Thursday 31 December
Wednesday 30 December	Sat 2 January 2010
Thursday 31 December	Monday 4 January
Friday 1 January 2010	Tuesday 5 January
Monday 4 January	Wednesday 6 January
Tuesday 5 January	Thursday 7 January
Wednesday 6 January	Friday 8 January
Thursday 7 January	Saturday 9 January
Friday 8 January	Monday 11 January
Monday 11 January	Tuesday 12 January
Tuesday 12 January	Wednesday 13 January
Wednesday 13 January	Thursday 14 January
Thursday 14 January	Friday 15 January
Friday 15 January	Saturday 16 January

Normal collections will resume week commencing 18 January 2010. Collections may be subject to change. Please check [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cityclean](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cityclean) or call 01273 292929.

## Holiday Collection

Tuesday 29 December
Wednesday 30 December
Thursday 31 December
Sat 2 January 2010
Monday 4 January
Tuesday 5 January
Wednesday 6 January
Thursday 7 January
Friday 8 January
Saturday 9 January
Monday 11 January
Tuesday 12 January
Wednesday 13 January
Thursday 14 January
Friday 15 January
Saturday 16 January

## Household waste recycling sites opening times

### Brighton & Hove household waste recycling sites

Wilson Avenue & Old Shoreham Road

Mon 21 December	Open
Tues 22 December	Open
Wed 23 December	Open
Thurs 24 December	Open til 1pm
Fri 25 December	Closed
Sat 26 December	Closed
Sun 27 December	Open
Mon 28 December	Open
Tues 29 December	Open
Wed 30 December	Open
Thurs 31 December	Open til 1pm
Fri 1 January 2010	Closed
Sat 2 January	Open
Sun 3 January	Open

# Christmas tree recycling sites

## Brighton

Bevendean Upper/Lower Ave Shops  
Brighton Household Waste Recycling Site  
Coldean Lane  
Dyke Road Avenue  
Hazledene Meads  
East Brighton Park  
Wilson Avenue  
Hollingbury Park North  
Ladies Mile Road Mackie Avenue junction  
Plainfields Avenue field  
Montpelier Crescent  
Preston Park Stanford Avenue & Preston Drive entrances  
The Pepper Pot Queens Park Rd  
The Level Union Road  
Kemp Town Upper Bedford Street  
Wyevale Garden Centre Warren Road

## Saltdean

Saltdean Lido car park

## Woodingdean

Central Park  
Happy Valley car park

## Hove

Brunswick Square North entrance  
Hove Park end of Orchard Rd  
Hove Museum  
Hove Household Waste Recycling Site  
St Ann's Well Gardens off Nizells Avenue  
Wish Park

## Portslade

Easthill Park  
Hangleton Park  
Victoria Rec Car park



# Working to give you more choice

Brighton & Hove Federation of Disabled People collected two prestigious awards last month when they were voted Public Service of the Year and won Best Community Initiative Award in the first Public Service Awards.

The federation is a user-led organisation that promotes independent living for all. Over 40 volunteers work on a variety of projects, including the award winning 'Accessible



City Guide'. Shana Witcomb (pictured with Project Leader Jane Binns) is one of a team of volunteers carrying out reviews for the guide which gives online information on local hotels, restaurants, attractions and events for disabled people, as well as general events which aim to be accessible.

Shana said: "Lots of venues have their own information online about the accessibility of their building, but that means searching through a lot of websites to plan where to meet or go out. We have tried to create a one-stop shop, so a wide range of information about accessibility is all in one place. As Accessible City Guide volunteers, we're not recommending places to go, just giving information that we feel will be of help so that people can make an informed choice."

If you are interested in volunteering contact Jane on 01273 208934 or email [cityguide@bhfederation.org.uk](mailto:cityguide@bhfederation.org.uk).

To find out more about the range of services on offer visit the Disability Advice Centre, open weekdays 10am – 4pm at 6 Hove Street, BN3 2DF or call 01273 203016.

## Sylvan Voice goes cyber!

As active chairman of the Sylvan Lodge Residents Association, Barry Hughes, produces the estate newsletter, Sylvan Voice. Always ahead of the game, he has now created a community website.

Barry said: "When you think that 70% of UK households are internet users, that would mean at least 115 flats out of the 165 flats on the estate are probably on-line!"

Barry took up the offer of a free web building course with SCIP, and is now scouting for talented bloggers to help him build on the website. "It helps if you have experience, but the main thing is that you are enthusiastic. Take a look at [www.sylvan-voice.com](http://www.sylvan-voice.com). We still have a way to go, but thanks to SCIP's support we are up there and with contributions from our community we can only get better."

If want to find out what IT training SCIP can offer, visit their website at [www.scip.org.uk](http://www.scip.org.uk)

## Housing office Christmas opening hours

**Thursday 24 December (Christmas Eve)**

Normal working hours

**Friday 25 December**

CLOSED

**Monday 28 December**

CLOSED

**Tuesday 29, Wednesday 30, Thursday 31 December**

Normal working hours

**Friday 1 January 2010**

CLOSED

From **Monday 4 January 2010**

Normal working hours

# Homemove – all you need to know

## What is choice-based lettings?

Rather than the council allocating properties, this scheme enables tenants and new housing applicants to bid for the properties themselves. All available properties are advertised on the homemove website and in a fortnightly free magazine. If you have applied for our housing register as a home seeker or transfer applicant, you automatically become a member of the scheme. You can apply to be a member at any time by filling in our housing application form. Once you have sent us all the information we ask for we will write to you with your registration date and number, and banding.

## What are the bands?

Band A: an urgent need to move, Band B: a high priority to move, Band C: an identified housing need, Band D: no other housing need but interested in affordable social housing.

## How will the bands affect my housing application?

We will give you the reason for your banding when we contact you. If you don't agree you can appeal in writing.

## How are homes allocated?

The advertisements tell you all about the properties, and you can bid if you are eligible. All bids are recorded in priority order by band and time on the register. Once the bidding is closed we will contact those at the top of the shortlist to offer the property. You can bid via the homemove website, by telephone, by text message or by posting a special voucher.

## How many bids can I make?

You can bid for up to three properties in every fortnightly cycle.

## Once I've made a bid can I change my mind?

You can change or withdraw your bid or refuse the offer. You will not be penalised and are free to bid again.

## How do I know if my bid is successful?

We will contact you to make an arrangement for you to view. You can make your decision when you view the property or within 24 hours of viewing – no longer.

# Fire safety comes top

Over 1,700 new high security fire doors have now been fitted in 20 out of 28 high rise blocks, as part of the council's targeted work across the city. We have been working closely with East Sussex Fire & Rescue prioritising tower blocks and sheltered housing schemes, as well as medium and low rise blocks.

In a bid to keep safety high on the agenda, a new Fire Risk Safety Working Group now meets regularly to ensure that lessons learned from the Lakanal House fire in South London is shared quickly with fire and rescue authorities, tenants and leaseholders.

Councillor Maria Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "This has been

a huge piece of work that is testament to the council's commitment to improve fire safety for tenants. Despite having a range of different building types that require tailor-made solutions to improve fire safety, the programme is seeing council homes fire safety steadily enhanced."

If you have any enquiries on fire safety issues, contact your housing office.

East Sussex Fire & Rescue offer a free home safety visit, which includes the installation of free smoke alarms. Call 0800 177 7069 or use the online booking service at [www.esfrs.org](http://www.esfrs.org)

Check the Fire Kills website <http://firekills.direct.gov.uk> for constantly updated fire safety information.



## Choice-based lettings

If you are applying for a council or housing association home or are a current tenant wanting to move, homemove will give you more choice about where you want to live. Available properties are advertised fortnightly in a free magazine and on the homemove website.

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



## Useful contacts

### Housing Offices

Central (Lavender Street) **293260**  
Community Participation Officer  
Trevor Jones **293265**

### Brighton East

Whitehawk (Manor Place Office) **293200**  
Moulsecoomb (Selsfield Drive) **293171**  
Community Participation Officer  
Peter Mustow **296639**

### West

Victoria Road **293377**  
Community Participation Officer  
Jane White **293374**

### North & East

Oxford Street **293230**  
Community Participation Officer  
John Bain **292365**

Repairs Hotline **0800 052 6140**  
or text 'repairs' to this number:  
**07786 2043522**

There is a voicemail option for  
tenants calling out of hours

Carelink **673105**

Housing Benefit **292000**  
Housing Income Management Team  
**293224**

Noise Patrol **293541** (operates weekends  
Fri/Sat & Sat/Sun between 10pm & 3am)

Noise Nuisance **292929** (or out of office  
emergency **292229**)

Police **0845 6070999**

Community Safety Team **291099**

Women's Refuge **622822**

Victim Support **234009**

Community Resource Centre **606160**

Community Grants **296746**

Estates service **293170**

Abandoned vehicles **292929**



**Crew Club under 11's rehearse for their Christmas video performance, which will be shown to older people at the Crew Club Christmas lunch in Whitehawk.**

**Homingin** is produced by Brighton & Hove City Council's communications team and the newly elected Tenant Editorial Board: Barry Hughes (North & East area), Sue Hansen (Brighton East area), Chris Kift (Central area), and Beverley Weaver (West Hove & Portslade area).

Contributors to this issue include: Ray Freeman, Chris El Shabba and John Stevens. If you have a story or an item to include in the next issue, please email [homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk), call 01273 291496 or write to Homing In, Communications Team, Room G11, King's House, Grand Avenue, Hove BN3 2LS.

## Translations

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

ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في الرقعة وخذها إلى مكتب البلدية. Arabic

অনুবাদ? বক্সে টিক চিহ্ন দিয়ে কাউন্সিল অফিসে নিয়ে যান। Bengali

需要翻译? 请在下方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。 Cantonese

ترجمة؟ لثقا این مربع را علامتگذاری نموده و آن را به هر یک از دفاتر شهرداری ارائه نمایید. Farsi

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

需要翻译? 请在下方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。 Mandarin

Tłumaczenie? Zaznacz to okienko i zwróć do któregośkolwiek biur samorządu lokalnego (council office). Polish

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

Tercümesi 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 audio tape