

homing in

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing

Summer 2012



Improving your housing services...

See pages 4-5 for details of important changes on the way

The RAW youth project for 11-16 year olds in Moulsecoomb celebrates 'Big Dish Out' funding success – read more on page 13.

In this issue

A service you deserve – transformation unveiled

Moving resident involvement forward

City Assembly report

Important Housing Benefit changes

It's easier online – latest news



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Moving forward

Welcome to the summer edition of Homing In.

As you will see it has been an extremely busy time with the transformation of our housing service, as outlined on pages 4 - 7. This would not have been possible without the help of tenant representatives from a number of working groups who helped us design a housing service you deserve.

It was a great privilege to officially declare the start of construction on the first new council homes in Brighton & Hove for decades. The development of 15 sustainable family homes will be named after former tenant Bryan Balchin, who sadly died last winter. Bryan's family are very pleased with such a fitting tribute to his tireless work and dedication for the benefit of others. I would also like to thank the tenant members of the BUNCH working group, who have been involved with every aspect of the project from the start. Without them it wouldn't have been possible to deliver this landmark scheme.

Tenant inclusion is at the heart of all our improvements this year, which is why resident involvement took centre stage at May's City Assembly (see page 3). You can

read more about the ideas for improving it on pages 6 and 7.

The serious impact of the government's Welfare Reform Bill was also on many people's minds during the assembly. The effects are already being felt by some tenants, and we are working hard to make sure you are informed as far in advance as possible. The latest news on forthcoming Housing Benefit changes can be found on page 10.

There's a lot happening in the city this summer to mark the Olympics, including the torch coming here – and People's Day on the same weekend.

I do hope that you will be able to join in.

Councillor Liz Wakefield,
Chair of Housing Committee



Chair of Housing Councillor Liz Wakefield with Tom Gillham, the council's Head of Property & Investment

Bristol Estate welcomes the new generation!

Solar panels are now in place as part of a major refurbishment of seven low rise blocks on the Bristol Estate. The photo-voltaic panels will help lower the costs of electricity for communal areas, along with new cladding to external walls which improves insulation of the building and saves money on heating bills. Windows and roofs have also been replaced, all adding to a much improved appearance. Councillor Liz Wakefield, Chair of Housing said: "As well as improving the structure of these buildings, we are also making significant energy savings as part of our commitment to tackling fuel poverty. I am looking forward to seeing more of these major improvement projects as we roll them out across the city."

The estimated carbon saving from the cladding is calculated at 226 tonnes per year in total, with heating and hot waters bills reduced from a potential £800 a year to a projected £236 (data provided by the Energy Saving Trust). It is anticipated that the solar panels will generate over 3100 kilowatt hours of energy per year for each block.



Chair of Housing Liz Wakefield with members of the BUNCH working group declares the beginning of the build at Bryan Balchin Court.

Our most inclusive City Assembly

More residents than ever were able to take part in the latest tenant and leaseholder City Assembly at Hove Town Hall in May, thanks to live webcasts of the event broadcast at a variety of community libraries for the first time.

The council Twitter and Facebook sites and live blog also made it possible for residents not able to come along to ask questions and have their say throughout the day.

Over 100 residents attended the assembly, which focussed on a presentation from tenant members of the Innovation Group. The group has been looking at how to increase and improve resident involvement in our housing service, further details

of which are included on pages 6 and 7. After lunch, residents had an opportunity to have their say on the Innovation Group's recommendations, in discussion groups on:

- a menu of ways residents can get involved
- support and training to get involved
- a code of conduct for residents
- the structure of resident involvement and working groups

Residents also appreciated an update on the government's changes to Housing and Council Tax Benefit. The council will be getting it touch with the tenants likely to be affected by the changes to give advice on what will change and the options available.



See page 10 for more information on the changes.

You can see the webcast and copies of all the presentations at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cityassembly.

And follow what residents thought of the assembly at www.facebook.com/tenantandleaseholder



Making a Difference!

The Community Participation Team have won the council's internal 'Big Difference' award for all their work in supporting tenant and resident associations and organising the City Assemblies.

The award is presented to council staff who go the extra mile to make a real difference to residents in the city.



The Community Participation Team: back row Michelle Johnson and Hannah Barker, and front row Peter Mustow and Jane White.

Housing services the city deserves

We're introducing important improvements to your services this summer.

Responding to your feedback about how you'd like us to continue improving our customer services, we're changing the way we manage your homes and estates, and making it easier for you to contact us, so that we can deal with your enquiry as quickly as possible.

We've made great progress over recent years improving performance and making savings to reinvest in your homes and services. We set up the Housing Income Management Team to help tenants with rent difficulties and created a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Team, both of which have been very successful.

Now we are looking at our other services and responding to concerns that accessing them can be difficult and confusing. The improvements we're introducing will make sure that the whole service is organised in the most effective and efficient way, and allow us to continue improving our services over the coming years.

The biggest changes you will notice is how you get in touch with us and how we manage your tenancy.

A new customer service team will be your first point of contact for tenancy management and general housing enquiries by phone, letter or email. The team will be your housing experts, handling all your non-repairs enquiries, and will answer calls from across the city and staff receptions at housing offices.

A new single phone number for non-repairs enquiries will be introduced in the autumn to make it simpler for residents to call us. We will tell you what the new number is before we introduce it and will forward calls from our existing numbers while residents get used to the change.

We are also changing the way we manage your tenancies, with a group of staff responsible for a large geographic area, rather than a single officer for a smaller area. This will reduce reliance on single officers and result in a more responsive and timely customer service.

You will also be able to visit whichever housing office is most convenient for you at the time – including your local one of course – and receive a consistent customer-focused service.

Other improvements include:

- changing the way estate inspections are managed
- increasing support for the most vulnerable residents
- improving money advice and learning opportunities for residents
- increasing support for projects to improve sustainability, save energy and reduce carbon emissions

This restructure will also save money. We'll save around £146,000 this year and more in future years. This comes from reducing management posts, although we've increased the number of frontline staff.

Summary of the improvements

New Customer Service Team

The Customer Service Team will be your housing experts, able to handle all non-repairs enquiries. They will be your first point of call by phone, letter or email and will staff receptions at housing offices.

New Neighbourhood Management Team

The Neighbourhood Team will be area-based, with staff spending most of their time out on our estates. Their role will be similar to Community Wardens, with duties including routine tenancy visits, leading estate inspections and keeping an eye on areas such as car parks and garage sites.

We're also rolling out the 'Rate Your Estate' initiative which has worked well in improving the effectiveness of estate inspections during trials in Moulsecomb, Bevendean, Coldean and the Bates Estate.

New Tenancy Management Team

Tenancies will be managed by four teams working closely together to resolve issues and support residents.

- 1 The Tenancy Officer Team will deal with serious tenancy issues
- 2 The Tenancy Sustainment Team will help vulnerable residents keep their tenancies
- 3 The Anti-Social Behaviour Team will deal with serious cases of anti-social behaviour

4 The Re-housing Team will letting vacant properties and support people to settle into their new home

New Social Inclusion & Resident Involvement Team

Community Participation Officers will become Resident Involvement Officers and work as part of the new Inclusion & Involvement Team. We're improving support for tenant associations and for residents looking to get involved in other ways. We're also introducing new roles to improve support and advice for people having financial difficulties, and staff to work directly with residents to improve access to training and skills.

Improving delivery of planned works and sustainability projects

We're increasing project management support in the Property & Investment Team to continue improving value for money and customer service through partnerships. This will also give more support for projects improving energy efficiency to your homes and create savings for you.

Frequently asked questions

Who will be my housing officer?

While there won't be a role called 'Housing Officer', their duties will be continued by staff in new roles, primarily Tenancy Officers and Senior Neighbourhood Officers. These will be area-based and teams of staff will cover areas, reducing the reliance on single officers.

Will the area structure change?

We are reorganising services into three areas so we can distribute properties and workloads more evenly. However, this won't affect which housing office residents report issues to. The areas are not yet final but are likely to be as in the below map.

What's happening to housing offices?

Services will still be delivered from housing offices and you'll still be able to visit and make appointments. But the changes mean that you can do all you need in any of the housing offices. We're also looking at different ways you can visit us, such as teaming up with community libraries. We'll carry on looking at making better use of

our buildings to reduce costs, as we have at Lavender Street where we share with Children's Services, and in Whitehawk where we've moved to the Whitehawk Community Hub.

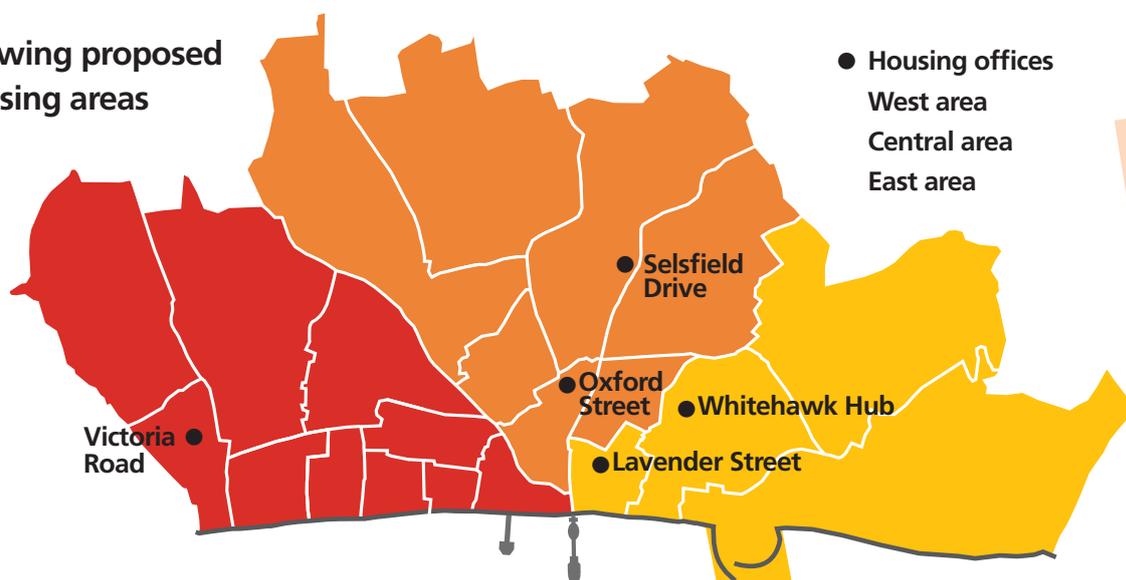
How have residents been involved in these changes?

The changes to customer access and the principles behind them have been developed with tenants and resident groups over the last few years. It's all part of how the council is continually looking to improve services and ensure value for money for residents. We've consulted widely with residents and resident groups on these new ways of working, including:

- events and questionnaires such as 'Tell us what you think?'
- customer satisfaction surveys, focus groups and resident 'mystery shopping' exercises
- feedback from resident representatives, meetings and working groups
- feedback from compliments, suggestions and complaints

Reports presenting the Customer Service & Access Strategy were put to the Housing Management Consultative Committee, which includes resident representatives and councillors, and were unanimously agreed.

Map showing proposed new housing areas



We are making it easier for you to join in

Over the years a number of highly valued residents have dedicated their time to bring about positive change by working with the council. Unfortunately it is still down to a small minority of caring and committed people to maintain this level of participation.

Although there are over 70 tenant and resident associations (TRAs) in Brighton & Hove, very few people actively attend. This leaves a small minority of tenant representatives sitting on most working groups, with large sections of the community unrepresented.

This situation is now being seriously addressed. Six months ago tenants and residents formed a 'think tank' called the Innovation Group to look at ways to open up tenant participation across the city. After a great deal of research, consultation and discussion, they presented their proposals at the last City Assembly to get more feedback.

This is a summary of their main findings...

Not enough people know what a TRA is and how it works

What could be done?

- a publicity campaign to communicate the role of TRAs targeted to attract new membership
- new members to receive induction training, including for example equalities and diversity awareness, and core training for specific roles and responsibilities such as chair, secretary and treasurer

- more training to enable an increase in self-supported tenant only meetings
- more community projects to capture the interest of existing and new members

Area Panels are not as focussed or effective anymore

What could be done?

- re-energising
- simpler organisation
- a wider brief
- more multi-agency working

There are not enough opportunities to join working groups

The membership of our working groups is largely restricted to tenant representatives, who are elected from Area Panels. This leaves little opportunity for involvement by residents who are interested in a topic but are not active members of a TRA.

What could be done?

A review of existing working groups linking them to the five main areas of housing work:

- tenant involvement and empowerment
- home
- tenancy
- neighbourhood and community
- value for money

Working groups should welcome new residents to work alongside elected tenant representatives on topics that interest them and provide an insight into the tenant movement.

Much more promotion of these new working groups with vacancies better advertised.

Some meetings have been badly affected by unreasonable behaviour

What could be done?

- a robust, agreed and enforceable code of conduct
- more clarity over roles and expectations of members to encourage mutual respect and understanding
- an independent panel to deal with some of the breaches of the code

There are not enough ways for residents to be involved in ways that suit them

Rate Your Estate, the Estate Development Budget, and mystery shopping are some ways people are involved, but more opportunities are needed.

What could be done?

- a 'menu of involvement' with a range of ideas to be promoted to all residents

- ‘The Five Minute Group’ – tenants can be involved in quick surveys by phone text or web to give ideas, feedback or suggestions

Scrutiny is one of the most important ways to hold the housing service to account and will play a significant role in the new resident involvement framework

What could be done?

The scrutiny panel is to have 12 members.

- full training, support and guidance will be given
- selection process for a mix of people
- time limited positions

TRAs need more training and support to help them attract new members

Training should be offered to all residents interested in becoming involved but, in particular, we need to attract young people and members of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community who are still under-represented. Housing has commissioned a piece of research to find the best ways to engage BME groups in the city, and we’ll publish the results and act on what we find.

What could be done?

- social media posts within TRAs – a recent young people’s focus group showed there is un-tapped interest and talent to improve communication through social media

- a percentage of Estate Development Budget (EDB) spend to be decided upon by young residents and families with children

Investing resources for greater participation

What could be done?

Better use could be made of funding initiatives to break down barriers, reimbursing care payments, provision of play or crèche facilities, help with transport, etc.

Grant provision to be more fairly distributed with a limit of £1,000 for a group.

TRAs to be encouraged and supported to explore and bid for external sources of funding for community projects.

Councillor Liz Wakefield, Chair of the Housing Committee, said: “The work of the Innovation Group has been invaluable – it has been meeting almost every week since November to put together such a comprehensive and considered report. I am looking forward to a movement where tenants are supported more by other residents in future years which will bring higher resident satisfaction, an increased sense of community and better relationships for all.”

If you’d like to tell us whether you agree with these points, go to www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/ri-options to have your say. Or you can call Trevor Jones on 01273 294651. We will publish the results in the next issue.

We’ll be asking whether we should:

- Introduce a code of conduct to clearly set out unacceptable behaviours
- Create an independent mediation board of trained officers and residents to hear appeals if code is not followed
- Support TRAs to explain their roles and aspirations to encourage involvement
- Improve training and induction for new and existing representatives
- Widen involvement training opportunities for all residents
- Draw up a TRA membership list to improve communications
- Expand opportunities for tenant involvement outside of TRAs
- Improve publicity for all involvement opportunities
- Communication between key working groups must be shared with other residents
- More support for community events and projects
- Re-energise, refocus and reorganise Area Panels
- Review working groups in line with main areas of housing work
- Regularly monitor and assess the work carried out by working groups
- Allocate a portion of EDB money for suggestions from young residents

DIY with EDB!

When Alison Gray moved to Ellen Street two years ago, she was shocked at the amount of rubbish in common ways, not helped by the state of the nearby storage area.

Alison said: "I know resources are scarce, so I looked at what other tenants had achieved for their estates, and contacting Ray was the best thing I did." Community Champion and Chair of Bristol Estate tenants' association, Ray Freeman, is well known for the transformation of his local estate. "Ray explained how I could bid for money to pay for materials through the council's Estate Development Budget (EDB) and put me in touch with the Community Payback Team who carry out the work for free."

Alison presented her wish list to tenant representatives at an area panel and was successful in her EDB bid for £2,000. This has paid for the newly painted garages and locker stores, garden make-over and deep clean of all public walk ways and storage areas.



Ray Freeman



Alison Gray with the payback team at work on the garages

"I have already noticed the difference in residents' attitudes. The fly-tipping has stopped as people begin to feel pride for where they live, and it works both ways with the Community Payback Team too, who have been brilliant. Not only do we get our make-over, the lads gain experience and make a connection with the community, which must help them."



Double yellow lines get a refresh

Mears can

Over 12,000 council homes to maintain over ten years means a lot of paint and a lot of empty tins. Environmentally conscious Mears has worked with Dulux to recycle almost half (42.5%) of its empty paint tins - streets ahead of the national average rate of just 7%. James Cryer, Partnering Manager for Mears said: "Dulux's unique recycling scheme offers the responsible solution."

New repairs handbook

A big thank you to residents for helping us to keep you updated on your rights and responsibilities with the new Repairs and Improvements handbook. It's available online via our website – www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housing-repairs or ask for a copy at any housing office.

If you would like a copy sent to you, please call 01273 293427 or contact the repairs helpdesk on 0800 052 6140.

Building relationships

Mears have held their first, highly successful 'business in the community' event, where local firms were invited to the Housing Centre in Moulsecoomb to find out about trade opportunities and gain advice on tendering for local supplies and contracts.

James Cryer, Partnering Manager for Mears, said: "We are into the second year of our ten year contract with the council, and recognise our commitment to use local firms for spot purchasing and specialised jobs. We held this event as part of our move to actively encourage these businesses to get to know us and build our relationships in the local economy. We look forward to more events of this kind in the future."

Perfect practice

Final year Brighton University Pharmacy students have gained invaluable first hand customer experience with Sanders House residents. Organiser of the 'Active Pharmacy' group, Lecturer Mike Ellis-Martin said: "We always find these visits work two ways – benefitting both our students and of course their 'potential clients' who may not always feel confident enough to voice concerns about their prescribed medications. We like to think that we have put some minds at rest and encouraged more people to seek the advice of their local pharmacist – it's what we are here for."

If you live in sheltered housing and are interested in events like this, please speak to your scheme manager.



Eileen Pomfrey, resident from Sanders House with student Emily Knight

Sharing and caring

Elizabeth House residents invited friends from neighbouring Philip Court and the WRVS Memories Past group from Portslade, to one of their regular gatherings. Scheme Manager, Margaret Bamber is the party planner, keeping the social calendar full and making sure the cost is fairly shared. "She never stops!" said Christine Cheal, daughter of residents Gwen and Ron.

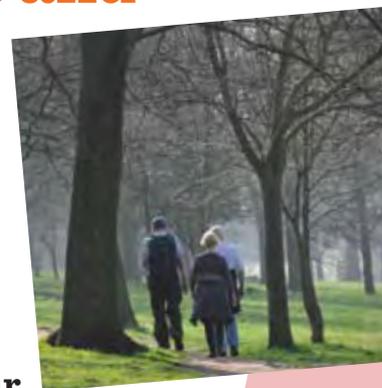


L to R Colin Cheal, Margaret Bamber, Tom Woodsford, Christine Cheal and Rosemary Cain

Summertime and the walking is easy!

The new Healthwalks programme is out with over 14 regular weekly free, short and sociable local walks all led by our friendly and supportive volunteers.

Walking is excellent gentle exercise and a great way to meet new people, especially good if you are recuperating or lacking confidence. All the walks are clearly graded so you can see how long they are, and if they include hills. Pick up a brochure at your local library or call us on 01273 292564 (large print available), or you can download a copy of the programme at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/healthwalks as well as get details of our programme of one-off and special walks throughout the summer by following the 'Special Walks' link.



David Bly and Doug Astle from The Cornerstone Services Group chat to Peter Benion Jones, Procurement Manager with Mears

Are you affected by the Housing Benefit spare bedroom rule changes?

It might seem a long way away, but if you are affected by the Housing Benefit changes in April 2013, you need to think about your options now, as it could ultimately mean that you might have to move.

Any working age tenant who has one or more spare bedrooms will have their Housing Benefit cut - 14% for one bedroom or 25% for two or more bedrooms from April 2013. The change does not affect people of pensionable age or living in sheltered accommodation.

The number of bedrooms you will be able to receive benefit for depends on who is living in your home and their ages.

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

You can be awarded an additional bedroom if you or your partner need overnight care from someone who doesn't normally live with you, but generally you must receive Disability Living Allowance at the higher or middle rate before this can be awarded.

We estimate around 1,000 people living in council housing are affected by this change.

What to do next?

Make sure you have told the council about who is living in your home. You can contact Housing or Housing Benefits in a number of ways:

Online:

using our change of household form at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/householdchanges or the benefits calculator at <https://brighton-hoveclaims.teamnetsol.com/>

By post:

Benefits Services,
PO Box 2929, Brighton, BN1 1LR

By email:

housing.benefits@brighton-hove.gov.uk
or
council.housing@brighton-hove.gov.uk

By telephone:

01273 292000

Options for tenants

There is no 'one-size' fits all, which is why we will be contacting all tenants affected by the changes, but here is a summary of options available:

- move to smaller accommodation
- do a mutual exchange
- rent out a spare room or take in a lodger (if you are a secure tenant – and you must get housing's permission first)
- pay the rent shortfall
- get help to maximise your income and prioritise your expenditure



You can find out more information at the following websites:

- www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/TIS (for details of our transfer incentive scheme)
- www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mutual-exchange (for details of how to do a mutual exchange)
- www.turn2us.org.uk/benefits_search.aspx (benefits entitlement check)
- www.direct.gov.uk/en/Dio1/DoltOnline/DoltOnlineByCategory/DG_172666 (the Direct Gov website's online benefit adviser)
- www.uswitch.com (to compare utility, broadband and credit card companies)
- www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/debtadvice (list of debt advice agencies)
- www.turn2us.org.uk/grants_search.aspx (list of charities and grants available)

Water still in short supply - despite the rain!

Even the wettest April since records began was not enough to lift the hosepipe ban. Brighton & Hove experienced such an exceptionally dry period over the last 18 months that Southern Water's restrictions are still needed to help safeguard the supply of water for essential domestic use. Groundwater levels – where we get most of our water – are still exceptionally low.

Council staff have already been told not to wash vehicles (other than to meet Health & Safety standards) until after the drought, and we hope that you will be able to do your bit too. Please report any dripping taps or leaky pipes as soon as possible and do not use a hosepipe to wash your car or water your garden.



But we're still blooming

This year City in Bloom will be run by a voluntary group with support from the council and local businesses.

The competition will be celebrating the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with a royal range of categories including best front garden, window box, hanging basket, community garden and best allotment – all possible without a garden of your own. Just make sure that your display is visible from the street for judging and remember it's one entry per household.

For an entry form call 01273 292929, go to www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cityinbloom or write to us at City in Bloom c/o Brighton & Hove City Council, Hollingdean Depot, Upper Hollingdean Rd, Brighton, BN1 7GA. The closing date is 29 June.



Good luck and don't forget to water wisely. Water early in the morning or late the evening, when the least water is lost through evaporation – watering cans still do a good job!

Hampshire Court

Here are some tips to help you save water:

- Turn off taps when you brush your teeth, shave or wash your hands, as this can waste up to six litres of water per minute.
- If you can – shower rather than run a bath. Every minute less spent showering will save you money and you can cut 30% of water usage with a water saving shower head.
- If you have space in your garden, install a water butt to capture rain.
- Don't overfill your kettle – it wastes energy by boiling more water than we need. Make sure that your dishwasher or washing machine is completely full before use.
- Replace worn washers on leaky taps.
- Around a third of the water we use goes straight down the loo, so using a water displacement device can help save water with every flush or fill an empty plastic bottle with water and place it in the cistern.
- Southern Water customers can save money on water efficiency products including water butts and garden mulch by visiting www.southernwater/discounts

Full details of the restrictions and of ways to save water are available at www.southernwater.co.uk/drought

It's quicker and cheaper online

Have you signed up for our Housing Customer online system yet?

It gives you secure access to your rent and other accounts 24/7, so you can check your balance at any time, not just when you receive your quarterly rent statement.

You can switch off paper statements, saving paper and money on postage. Register at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/tenants-online

Pay your rent, service charges, insurance and car park and garage rents online at <https://www2.brighton-hove.gov.uk>

or through the housing customer online system.

We are putting more forms online so you can report issues faster and have a record of your request. Visit our website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingonlineforms to see our range of forms.

If you have any ideas for further online forms, please email us at council.housing@brighton-hove.gov.uk



Like your new Facebook page?

Welcome to all our new followers! We want to reach as many council tenants and leaseholders as possible so please like our page and share with your neighbours and friends. It's full of information about tenant associations, the latest events, meetings and community news.

You can use it to:

- spread the word about your latest success
- post images of achievements, community events, special moments
- put your point of view across online in real time
- get your questions answered
- use it as a free notice board for your association

www.facebook.com/tenantandleaseholder

New online Homemove application form

Following a dramatic rise in the amount of people bidding for properties online, it made sense to complete the process, so now you can also register with Homemove for housing online.

Paper application forms will still be available, and they can be collected from council offices or sent to you by the Homemove Team.

If you have recently applied, don't worry – your current application is still valid.

To apply online, just go to www.homemove.org.uk/onlineform/brighton to register.

The Big Dish Out

Teenagers from Moulsecomb and Bevendean have been able to decide for themselves how best to spend the £19,000 youth budget for their local community. Favourite projects were shortlisted and put to the vote at the 67 Centre, Moulsecomb among much excitement earlier this spring.

The money was divided up into big and small 'pots' with larger organisations including Albion in the Community, BMEYPP, Active Life and Rythmix receiving awards of £3,000 each. A number of smaller groups, clubs and activity projects were awarded pots of £750 each, including Falmer Girls Football, The B-TEEN Bulletin and the RAW youth project for 11-16 year olds which meets regularly in Moulsecomb, as featured on the cover. Raw project leader, Janet Carden, said: "We rely solely on good will and donations, so the money is a wonderful boost for us. We are looking forward

to a full year ahead of great activities and sport for everyone to enjoy. This will mean we can go ice skating at Guildford, swimming at the Triangle and have our long awaited trip to Thorpe Park!"



14 year old Ryan Denyer from the B-TEEN Bulletin group.



People's Day

bringing the city's communities together

Saturday
14 July
11am-5pm

Celebrate the many diverse communities that make Brighton & Hove so vibrant!

Showcasing live music, dance, drama, food, sport, nature, healthy living, relaxation, local history, exhibitions, technology, and much, much more.

New Road, Jubilee Street, Pavilion Gardens, Victoria Gardens

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/peoplesday

People's Day is supported by: National Trust, Holiday Inn Brighton, Guide2Brighton, Joogleberry Acts, Micarmo



Independent mediation service

Problems with neighbours can have a huge impact on our health and wellbeing. If you are facing a difficult situation over noise, pets or mess, or anything else, it is bound to make you feel stressed and anxious, particularly if it is ongoing and you don't know how to resolve it.

The Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service offers practical help from qualified independent and impartial mediators who will work with both parties to find a workable solution. Mediation gives a safe and confidential space for everyone to talk, it allows for a fresh starting point, from which to move forward.

For more information about the Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service, call them on 01273 700812 or email mediation@bhims.org.uk

Help at hand

The council's Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) is continuing to develop its Communities and Families Tackling Addiction (CAFTA) project after winning funding from the European Regional Development Fund. The project links young people, families, communities and local services to shape the project's activities with the overall aim of reducing the harm caused by substance misuse. If you would like to know more visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cafta



The best number is zero tolerance

Brighton & Hove has become the UK's first zero-tolerance city for LGBT hate crime as a new LGBT Community Safety Forum has been set up to tackle LGBT hate crime in the city.

Councillor Liz Wakefield, Chair of Housing said: "The council supports this powerful partnership which will be working closely with the police to stamp out LGBT hate crime, which we know too often goes unreported on our estates and our streets."

The first step forward has been to create a new confidential helpline number to report instances of hate crime on **01273 292735**.

The service is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm (not including public holidays). All calls will be responded to within one working day, in line with the council's victim and witness standards.

Don't forget you should still call 999 in an emergency situation, you can also contact the police on 101 (their non emergency number).

If you prefer, you can also report online at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/report-asb

Or email the casework team direct on communitysafety.casework@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk – this inbox is checked throughout the day and officers receive a notification when a report of hate incident or anti-social behaviour has been received and the customer receives an automatic response to their email.

You can also report a hate crime on the Sussex Police website at www.sussex.police.uk/contact-us/report-a-crime-or-incident/report-hate-crime/

For information about the national charity Victim Support, you can visit www.victimsupport.org or phone 0845 3030 900 (weekdays 9am-9pm and weekends 9am-7pm).

London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay

You are invited to welcome the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay to Brighton & Hove on Monday 16 July.

The official London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay celebrations will be at Sussex County Cricket Ground. The spectacular celebration to mark the torch arriving in the city will feature music, dance and cultural performances as well as showcases of local talent. Free tickets for the event were made available in early June - but if you missed out, there's lots else on offer!

Get involved

Take part in one of Same Sky's free flame making workshops across the city and then bring your flame to the Hove Park festivities:

Date	Time	Where
16 June	12 noon - 4pm	Churchill Square ground floor
23 June	12 noon - 5pm	Take Part in Preston Park
30 June	12 noon - 4pm	Take Part Local, Crew Club, North Whitehawk
30 June	9am - 1pm	Take Part Local, Portslade Sports Centre
30 June	12 noon - 4pm	Take Part Local, The Level, Brighton
30 June	10am - 2pm	Take Part Local, Moulsecoomb Leisure Centre
1 July	11am - 4pm	Hollingdean Park
1 July	11am - 12.30 pm and 1 - 2.30 pm	The Terraces, Rottingdean
1 July	1 - 4pm	The Manor Gym, South Whitehawk
14 July	11am - 5pm	People's Day, New Road, Brighton

Special flame making workshops for young people aged 9 – 16 years will be held in the city's libraries:

Date	Time	Where
Mon 18 June	3.30 - 5pm	Jubilee Library Woodingdean Library
Tues 19 June	3.30 - 5pm	Hove Library Moulsecoomb Library Patcham Library Whitehawk Library
Wed 20 June	3.30 - 5pm	Portslade Library
Thurs 21 June	3.30 - 5pm	Coldean Library Hangleton Library Rottingdean Library

Torch festivities in Hove Park

The council has teamed up with local community arts charity, Same Sky to celebrate the arrival of the Olympic Torch in the city. Hove Park will be decorated for a family picnic from 4pm including free sports and arts activities. At 6.15pm the park will be a top viewing point to see the Olympic Torch bearer running through. As night falls, your flames will be illuminated and the dramatic Sky Dome evening show will start at 9.30pm.

In addition:

- Look in the local press for celebratory flame activities to do at home
- Pupils across the city will be given the opportunity to enter a competition to design images based on the Olympic values and Brighton & Hove landmarks. The winning images will be used on giant flame-like flags, to decorate Hove Park.
- Buy a creative kit to make two 3D flames to bring along to the event.

A 'Design & Build weekend' will be held for volunteers from community, sports and cultural groups to work with Same Sky's artists making sculptures based on iconic Brighton & Hove or sporting imagery to decorate Hove Park.

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/2012
www.samesky.co.uk
www.london2012.com



Pulse Photography



Online services

Visit the council housing website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing

Pay online at 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

Homemove website www.homemove.org.uk

Check out all housing online services at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingdoitnow

Council & Tenant Meetings

Housing Committee

Wednesday 20 June at 4pm

Wednesday 26 September at 4pm

Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee

Tuesday 4 September at 3pm

All meetings take place in the Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall. They are open to the public and you can submit public questions.

The agenda and minutes will be available on www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

Useful contacts

Housing Benefits

housing.benefits@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 292000

Housing Income Management Team

housing.incomemanagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 293224

Repairs Helpdesk

BHCC.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk
0800 052 6140

Rise (Charity supporting those suffering Domestic Abuse)

www.riseuk.org.uk
01273 622822

Carelink Plus Alarm Service

CareLinkPlus@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 673105

Citizens Advice Bureau

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/brightonhovecab
0845 1203710

Job Centre Plus

www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk
0845 604 3719

Noise Nuisance

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/noise
01273 292929 or
01273 292229 for out of hours emergencies)

If you have any comments or items, email 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 housingcos@brighton-hove.gov.uk to stop receiving a paper copy of Homing In and we'll notify you when it is available on our website.

Translations

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

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

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

需要翻譯? 請在這方格內划勾, 並送回任何市議會的辦事處。Cantonese

ترجمه؟ لطفاً 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? 请在这方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。Mandarin

Тлумаченне? Zahnaczn to okienko i zwróć do któregokolwiek biura samorządu lokalnego (council office). Polish

Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadrícula 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 CD or audio tape