

homing in

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

Winter 2015



N Smith Electricals Apprentices on site at Robert Lodge. Electrician Jacob Kirby and plumber Adam Haggis are part of the team working on the new block of nine one-bedroom council flats, which should be completed next March.

In this issue

- Benefit changes ahead – what you need to know
- Work starts in the new year on 57 flats on Findon Road
- Big changes for Citywide Conference
- Spotlight on Service Improvement Groups
- Estate Development Budget



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Firm foundations

Here I am on site at Ardingly Street, Brighton, where we are now building five much needed affordable homes on council housing land used previously as car parking.

The scheme will be ready to welcome tenants by next autumn, when we'll be advertising the homes on Homemove, including a flat designed for a wheelchair user. This is the latest of six developments currently on site on council-owned land which will provide a total of 77 new homes.

We will also be starting work early in the new year on 57 affordable flats at the former Whitehawk library site on Findon Road. Read all about these exciting developments on pages 4 & 5.

With over 22,000 people on our Homemove register, it is paramount that we make best use of all pockets of council-owned land not being used to their potential.

Universal Credit has now begun to be phased in by the government. We have put together a helpful summary with advice and information on page 9. There's also the latest on mutual exchanges, which can help families who'll benefit from a smaller or larger home.



Councillor Anne Meadows, Chair of Housing & New Homes Committee.

Tracy John

The council's new Head of Housing Services, Tracy John, joined in September, from Norwich City Council where she worked as Head of Housing for seven years. Tracy has a wealth of experience having worked for Greenwich, Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark in a variety of increasingly senior roles.

Tracy said: "I am delighted to be joining Brighton & Hove City Council and the housing team to work with councillors, tenants, leaseholders and local partnerships to provide affordable and sustainable housing solutions for residents of the city. There will be challenges ahead, but with 30 years' experience of housing services and such a supportive, good willed and enthusiastic team, together I believe we will achieve the best for housing in the city."



Don't miss the Citywide Conference!

Have your say on the council's vision for housing over the next 30 years, meet the new Head of Housing Tracy John, and learn about the new Fairness Commission – an independent panel set up by the council to look at ways to make our city fairer – with housing as one of its key priorities.

Visit the Citywide Conference from 2.30 to 6.30pm on Wednesday 16 December at the Friends Meeting House in the Lanes, Brighton. There'll be refreshments and a number of information stands for you to browse.

Call the Resident Involvement Team on **01273 294651**, email rit@brighton-hove.gov.uk or visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/citywide-conference for more information.

The Fairness Commission will be holding a meeting in public about housing on 18 February 2016. Visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/fairness-commission for more information and details of future meetings.

Christmas is coming – don't forget to pay your rent!

Don't be tempted to put off paying your rent over Christmas. It's important to keep on top of your rent rather than be faced with arrears in the new year.

You can avoid the added expense of debt and worry by paying by direct debit which we can now set up over the telephone. It's the easy way to pay – your rent payments will simply be taken out of your bank or building society every month.

You will be fully protected and you can stop any time if you need to. You can also choose to pay through a standing order, which you can set up yourself through your bank or building society.

To find out more, call us on **01273 293065** or email rentaccounting@brighton-hove.gov.uk

You can also pay your rent:

- Online with a debit card using our secure server at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk - go to the payments section and select housing rents from the drop down menu.
- Calling our 24-hour automated payment line on **01273 291908** to pay by debit card.
- Using a PayPoint card at post offices and PayPoint outlets. To order a payment card, call **01273 293065**.
- Calling **01273 293224** during office hours – select option 2 to speak to one of our staff and pay by debit or credit card.

You can find all the information you need to make a decision on www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/rent



If you are having difficulty paying your rent or are worried about debt, call the Housing Income Management Team on **01273 293224** as soon as possible.

They are there to help and the earlier you contact them, the easier it will be.

Streets ahead

The council is planning ahead and preparing for the colder winter months.

1,400 tonnes of salt and 400 tonnes of grit have been stockpiled in preparation for gritting, with a contingency order of a further 500. Our fleet of gritting lorries will be kept on standby 24 hours a day, seven days week.

The council has to prioritise gritting all the major roads and bus routes.

We are unable to stretch our resources to every road, but we will do our best to make sure that the hillier areas of the city have a ready supply of salt and grit mix to clear your pathways and pavements.

There are over 400 grit bins for residents, which will be replenished during snow.



If you feel that you will need extra support during a cold snap, please contact us on **01273 293030**.

Struggling to cope?

Don't be tempted with a pay day loan! Get in touch with MAP (MoneyAdvice Plus) on **01273 809288 (Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 10am-3pm, Wednesday 5 - 8pm, Friday 10am - 1pm) for advice or to make a face-to-face appointment.**

The council has contracted MAP, as a local charity, to provide debt and benefit advice to council tenants and leaseholders. www.moneyadviceplus.org.uk

Green light for new homes in Whitehawk

Construction work will start in the new year on a new 57 flat scheme on the site of the former Whitehawk Library on Findon Road, which received planning consent in October. This is the largest scheme so far in the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme.

The scheme will contain two blocks of one, two and three bedroom flats, with five ground floor wheelchair accessible flats and lifts. Many local residents welcomed the use of this site for new council

homes during the 'Planning for Real' consultation held at the Whitehawk Library in March.

The Due East Neighbourhood Council is taking forward action on local community issues highlighted by the consultation, including parking.

As well as building much needed new homes, the development will bring substantial council investment in the neighbourhood for areas like transport and schools.



Robert Lodge

The new block of nine one bedroom council flats for single people or couples is taking shape, with the walls and windows now in place, kitchens and bathrooms being fitted and the lift being installed. The works should be completed in February or March.

The flats are being advertised for rent via Homemove for applicants with mobility needs who will benefit from the careful design, such as level access, wider doorways, higher level electric sockets and ease of adaptation for individual needs.

The flats will all have heating and hot water provided and a private balcony. They will be close to the

community facilities at Robert Lodge such as the lunch club and the communal garden. Secure mobility scooter stores with recharging points will also be available to rent.

The ground floor has one flat especially designed for full-time wheelchair users, inside and out. The remaining two ground floor flats are for residents who only rely on a wheelchair outside but would struggle with steps up to a flat.

There is a lift to the six flats on the first and second floors. Priority will be given to applicants

who are eligible through their mobility and will be downsizing, freeing up more badly needed family homes.

To apply for one of these flats, you will need to be registered on the council's housing register and make bids when they are advertised on Homemove. If you are not registered, you can apply online at www.homemove.org.uk/onlineform/brighton/.

If you require any help to do this, you can visit a housing office or library. For any other enquiry about Homemove, please call **01273 294400**.



New Homes for Neighbourhoods update

How do new homes help other residents and the council?

- Many tenants moving into new homes will release other council homes for letting, so that more people get the chance to move to a home that meets their present needs. The first tenants to move into the new homes on Preston Road transferred from other council homes, which have now been re-let.
- Local resident associations and residents have a say in the design of new developments and landscaping, and are involved in improving their neighbourhood. Residents and members of the Tenants and Residents Association at Robert Lodge were kept closely involved in the designs for the new flats and the landscaping of their improved communal grounds.
- Building new homes on unused or underused council housing land helps put an end to problems like flytipping and anti-social behaviour, and saves the council housing budget from the cost of dealing with them. Fly tipping has stopped at the disused Flint Close garages now that we are building four new homes on these sites.
- Replacing unused buildings with new homes stops the council housing budget losing rent on unlet garages or paying business rates on empty offices. Nine new flats are being built on the former Manor Place Housing Office site and plans for more homes are underway for the site of the old Selsfield Drive Housing Office.
- New homes bring in new income to the council in council tax, New Homes Bonus and new affordable housing payments from central government. The council expects to receive over £85,000 in affordable housing payments and New Homes Bonus from the government for the development of 57 flats on Findon Road.
- New apprenticeships and job opportunities are being created by companies working on the new homes. An apprentice site technician was recruited by contractors on the Brooke Mead extra care scheme in Albion Street, Brighton.
- Planning contributions for new homes can lead to extra investment in the neighbourhood, such as improvements to open space, sustainable transport and extra funding for schools. The Findon Road scheme will bring extra investment for such things in the Whitehawk area.



Bob McKenzie, Don Steadman and Angela Preston from the Robert Lodge Tenants & Residents Association, with Westridge Construction's Matthew Lidbetter in the landscaped grounds.

The council and contractors have been working with residents of Robert Lodge throughout the build, attending every monthly meeting and responding to all requests – much has been achieved as a result. Bob McKenzie, Vice Chair of the Robert Lodge Tenants & Residents Association said: “We have been consulted at every stage – it’s marvellous – the council have really listened to us and they have delivered!”

Planning contributions can also go towards secure cycle and mobility scooter storage, funding for art installations, nature conservation measures and other improvements to existing council estates. Robert Lodge residents will be able to rent new stores for cycles and scooters and are commissioning an artist to design a memorial for their communal garden.

Mears in the community



Mears has been awarded the Tenant Empowerment Organisation (TPAS) Contractor Accreditation Award for its commitment to and involvement in the local community.

TPAS visited Mears for a day in August where they held thorough interviews with staff, tenants, and sub-contractors, in what was called a 'Reality Check' exercise to see how consistent Mears has been.

Once all the evidence had been gathered, TPAS reported back that Brighton & Hove resident involvement was excellent, with a number of initiatives clearly supporting residents. These included, the very popular apprenticeship scheme, drawing most employees locally, the excellent DIY training offered to help residents gain confidence with decorating, and the delivery of the Estate Development Budget by Mears, which TPAS saw as an outstanding example of tenant empowerment.



Carl Boardman, Chair of Warwick Mount Residents' Association and Muriel Briault, Chair of North Portslade Residents Association at the TPAS meeting.



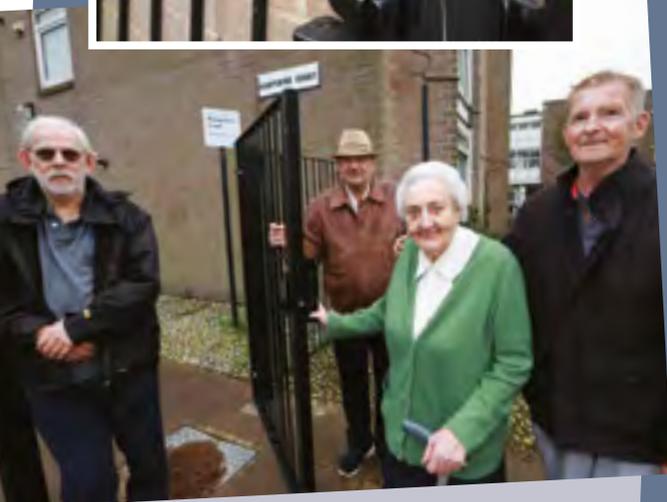
Resident action helps neighbours sleep more soundly

An Estate Development Budget (EDB) bid has made a difference to residents' lives at Hampshire Court. Martin Cunningham said: "Our association listened to residents whose lives were blighted by persistent trespassing, dog fouling, anti-social behaviour and rough sleeping in this part of the estate. We applied to the EDB to have security gates fitted and were successful. Residents are delighted and looking forward to being able to sleep more peacefully at night."

This is another example of residents working with the council to improve their estates. The Resident Involvement Team supported 63 resident associations and groups to achieve over 280 EDB awards this year. The next round of EDB applications for 2016/2017 are in and being worked on now.

Like the team's page at www.facebook.com/tenantandleaseholder to keep up-to-date with news and events. You can download the new Resident Involvement information leaflet, produced with our residents, from www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/resident-involvement

Residents are also updating the new Resident Involvement Handbook. If you would like to be featured in this handbook, talking about how being involved has made a difference on your estate, please call **01273 293265**, or email RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk by 18 December. The new handbook will be available online in the spring.



Residents of Hampshire Court George Coates, Martin Cunningham, Joyce Williams and Paul Davidson celebrating their new security gates built with an Estates Development Budget award.

Let's grow!

Residents from Seniors Housing Schemes across the city delighted judges with award winning gardens, large and small, this September at a prize giving held at Leach Court. The Mayor of Brighton & Hove, Councillor Lynda Hyde, announced the winners and presented the prizes.

Walter Sargison, Chairman of the Seniors Gardening Group, started the ball rolling last year when he set up the competition to promote the group and encourage more residents to get out in their gardens. He said: "This year the gardening bug has taken hold. I am so pleased to see so many different people coming together to share an interest in cultivating lovely green spaces, vegetable gardens and fantastic displays in pots and planters. We were so impressed with the courtyard garden at Lavender House that we have decided on a new category for patio and courtyard gardens."

Peter Huntbach, Older Persons Housing Manager, said: "Walter has done a remarkable job and I hope he continues. We now need more keen gardeners to join the group to take on fundraising and find sponsors so that there can be year round activities with guest speakers, garden centre outings and fun get togethers."

If you would like to get your hands dirty please contact Walter on 07769 185984.



Winners of the large garden category Sally Little, Joyce Hudson and John and Maureen Cooper from Elwyn Jones Court, with the Mayor Councillor Lynda Hyde.



Planters at Elwyn Jones Court.

Winners of the large garden category Elwyn Jones Court, second place was Woods House. Winners of the small garden category Lindfield Court. Second place was Lavender House, third place was Leach Court for their patio gardens. Highly Commended was Laburnham Grove. Manor Paddock House was commended for their mixed plot of vegetables and flowers.

PH Jones follow suit

PH Jones have been busy in the community. Many of their engineers have been volunteering their spare time to help residents – assembling flat pack furniture at Lavender House, gardening at Elwyn Jones Court and donating three skips for rubbish clearance from fly tipping throughout the city.

PH Jones also supported the council's Refugee Relief 2015 efforts, sorting through the donations and supplying a van.



Over £1,000 raised for Macmillan!

Seniors Housing residents have been very busy making coffee and homemade cakes to raise money for Macmillan.

Somerset Point residents baked and poured with help from scheme managers Nick and Ceris. They welcomed a big crowd from neighbouring schemes in Kemp Town and housing staff, and raised £353 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Muriel House in Hove made £421 from their coffee morning, with a further £237 raised in remembrance of Muriel House resident, Cecil Bateson, whose family wanted it donated to Macmillan.

Universal Credit is coming

Will it affect you?

Starting from December, a big change is coming to the way tenants receive their benefits.

If you live alone and make a new claim for Jobseeker's Allowance you may be required to apply for Universal Credit instead of Housing Benefit. This means that your rent will be paid directly to you each month instead of to the council as it is now.

You do not need to do anything at the moment, as the Jobcentre will tell you if you need to apply for Universal Credit when you first apply for benefits.

If you are told that you do need to apply you will be asked to

complete an online form by the Jobcentre. You should then contact the council's Income Management Team as soon as possible on **01273 293224** to let the council know that the way your rent is paid is changing. We can provide you with details of support agencies that can help.

Eventually, everybody of working age who currently gets Housing Benefit will get Universal Credit instead. People of pensionable age will continue to get Housing Benefit as they do now.

Want to help?

Would you like to volunteer with adults with learning disabilities or older people with additional needs?

Are you looking to get back into work and need some experience to help you get there?

You can:

- Help on an allotment with people with learning disabilities
- Assist people in their residential homes such as befriending
- Help out with activities such as computers, art or games

If you are interested or want to find out more, please contact:

Marina Slade on **01273 295961** or email marina.slade@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Staying Home, Living Well



CareLink Plus has launched a new project – Telecare Living Well – to help reduce the risk of hospitalisation for people living at home and help those returning from hospital to stay in their homes. The new project includes medication reminders, falls sensors, and reassurance checks, in addition to the personal alarm pendant.

As well as supporting people with telecare services, CareLink Plus is working closely with other teams within the council and other services across Brighton & Hove to help people maintain their dignity and live well, doing the things they enjoy, and getting out and about.

To find out more about Telecare Living Well, please drop us a line at LivingWell@brighton-hove.gov.uk or give us a call on **0300 123 3301**.

Get on at the Bridge!

Getting on at the Bridge is a new programme of free activities for older people in the Moulsecoomb area, based at the Bridge Centre on Lucraft Road.

Already very popular with all ages, the Bridge has been funded by the Peoples Health Trust to dedicate a range of activities to help older people in the community to get together, make new friends, learn new skills and have some fun.

Come along to our free weekly Hi-Tea Friday afternoons from 12 noon - 2pm at the Bridge to find out more. Free transport can be arranged too.

To let us know you can attend, call **01273 687053**

to speak to Holly Mitchell, the 50 Plus Project Co-ordinator.





Moving Up!

The council held another successful Swap Shop in Moulsecomb on 30 September.

We had 73 visitors to the event, many of whom are now signed up to the online matchmaking website, Exchange Locata.



Looking at the noticeboard for new homes.

The council negotiated a deal with House Exchange, a leading national matchmaking website, which led to several tenants being given free access to the service for the next six months.

Worthing Homes attended the event and were able to give advice to people wanting to move to their area.

Eleven households have now swapped after attending the events, with many more signed up online and offered advice to help them move.

Our next event will be held on Thursday 18 February 2016 in central Brighton, with a venue still to be confirmed. If you want to attend, please contact Nick Kitson on **01273 293354** or email nick.kitson@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Remember, the quickest way to find an exchange is to get online at www.exchangelocata.org.uk Housing Customer Services on **01273 293030** can help you with access to a computer.

Once a property has been found and both sides want to swap, it will need to be agreed by the council.

Tap into free help to pay your water bill

A range of financial help schemes are available from Southern Water.

WaterSure, Essentials Tariff & Single Occupier Discount

You may be eligible for a discount on your future bills if:

- You have a water meter and receive means tested benefits or tax credits, and use a large amount of water (eg you have three or more children under the age of 19 or someone has a medical condition)
- Your water charges are more than 5% of your household income (after deductions for housing costs)
- You live alone and Southern Water are unable to fit a water meter

Water Direct

If you have at least £50 arrears on your water account and claim working age benefits or Pension Credit, Jobcentre Plus can take a fixed amount from your benefits to cover what you owe.

NewStart

If you owe over £600 of water arrears or have not paid any arrears for two years, Southern Water will match any payments you make once you start to pay. So if you pay £30 for 12 months, Southern Water will credit your account with £360.

As long as you continue to pay, Southern Water will match your payments pound for pound until your debt has been cleared.

- Visit: www.southernwater.co.uk/difficulty-paying-your-bill
- Freephone **0800 027 0363**

Zero tolerance

If you are fed up with noise and anti-social behaviour from your neighbour you can do something about it.

The council's Tenancy Enforcement Team recently secured a one year court injunction under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, putting a stop to neighbours' months of misery and disruption.

The injunction ruled that over the 12 month period:

- No loud noise that can be heard outside the property
- No gatherings of more than two visitors between 8pm and 8am
- The dog must be on a lead at all times in a public area

If any of these rules are breached, the council has grounds to take possession of the property, which means the tenant could be evicted.

Richard Jordan-Penswick, Tenancy Enforcement Team Manager said: "Everything is settling down and tenants can enjoy a return to normal life.

"Without their co-operation and resilience I doubt we would have secured the court order. They kept diary records and produced statements, and some even gave live evidence in court. All of that was key in proving the anti-social behaviour. "We take anti-social behaviour very seriously and this latest success demonstrates the importance of working with residents to improve their quality of life."

The tenant is being supported by the council's Tenancy Sustainment Team.

To report anti-social behaviour, please call **01273 293030**.



Always keep a diary for evidence.

It's your call

A new free app by Self Evident brings a smart way to report hate incidents and anti-social behaviour to Sussex Police.

The app puts you in control by letting you:

- Collect legally sound evidence
- Record a reliable statement
- Attach digital evidence, such as images
- Send a report to the police from your smartphone
- Access support services



Get yours now

To learn more or to download, see the Apple appstore or the Android Play store and search for 'self evident'. You can also visit the Self Evident website at <https://witnessconfident.org/ads-list/190-hate-crime-sussex>

If you do need to report anti-social behaviour, please also contact us on 01273 293030 to let us know what has happened.

Bringing peace

The council often works with Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service to resolve issues between tenants. Recently they contacted us with some words of gratitude from a tenant who had been referred through the council to their conflict coaching to help cope with a problem neighbour.

"I would like to say thank you for your help, guidance and support through a very difficult time for us both. Your kindness and empathy gives us the strength and energy to find the path which we had lost. The two words of 'Thank You' cannot really express the gratitude we both feel."

A comprehensive range of services are on offer aimed at resolving conflicts and disputes, including local communities, families, tenant and landlord disputes and Seniors Housing. For fast, confidential and affordable help call Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service on **01273 700812** or visit www.bhims.org.uk

New diversity training

Seniors Housing scheme managers and housing staff have been receiving training through the council to raise their awareness of LGBT issues, and improve their knowledge of local organisations and the support that can be provided to older residents.

Seniors Housing Officer Jayne Halls, said: "The training was really useful and, despite the fact that our city is one of the most tolerant and open places, it made me think about how difficult it can still be for an older person moving into essentially shared living.

"Anything we can do to ensure all our residents get the most out of Seniors Housing is very much to the good."

The training was carried out by the local Switchboard Older LGBT Project in partnership with national organisation, Stonewall Housing. Seniors Housing residents are also hoping to set up their own LGBT residents group with help from Switchboard.

For more information on the LGBT group and awareness training, contact Switchboard on **01273 234009** or email **helen.bashford@switchboard.org.uk**



Seniors Housing Officer Jayne Halls at the training.

Your journey to employment

Are you receiving disability benefits or have long term physical or mental health conditions? Would you like the support of a friendly inclusive and focussed group to help you find your way back into work, training or study?

The Fed Centre for Independent Living has received government funding to run six week courses to empower people to overcome barriers to getting work while offering them ongoing support.

Four months ago John (not his real name) joined the course. He was very unsure about being part of a group because he has Asperger's syndrome, a type of autism. With encouragement from the Fed, John did join and found he enjoyed the safety and inclusivity of the group, within weeks he began to flourish. Soon he felt ready to volunteer with a busy organisation where he helped in reception, meeting and greeting members of the public, arranging room bookings and dealing with visitors being signed in.

John's manager said: "He is a real team player – very willing to learn, keen and enthusiastic. He takes everything in like a sponge. He has really developed."

The volunteering has helped John gain the confidence to start a work trial with a leading national bank which could well lead to paid employment.

All this, in under four months, is a huge achievement for John and an excellent demonstration of the way the Fed supports people to move towards work at their own pace.

If this sounds good for you, contact your work coach at the jobcentre for more information and to request a referral.

One of the journey to employment groups in action.



Our performance highlights

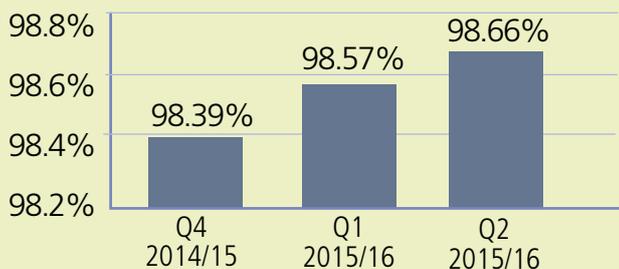
July - Sept 2015



Rent collection and current arrears

- Rent collection rate has increased to 98.66% (highest since March 2013)

Rent collected as proportion of rent due for the year



Customer services and complaints

- An average of 192 phone calls answered by the Housing Customer Services Team every day
- 31 formal complaints dealt with (at Stage 1)

Empty homes

- 148 homes let in an average of 20 calendar days taken, excluding time spent in major works

Tenancy fraud

- Four properties taken back
- 64 cases under investigation

Seniors Housing

- Nearly 500 individual wellbeing calls made to residents every day
- 97% of residents living in schemes offering regular social activities

Estates Service

- An average of 215 cleaning tasks completed every day
- 98% of bulk waste removed within seven working days

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

- 80% victim satisfaction with closed ASB cases
- Eight cases resulted in tenancy legal action and one ASB perpetrator evicted

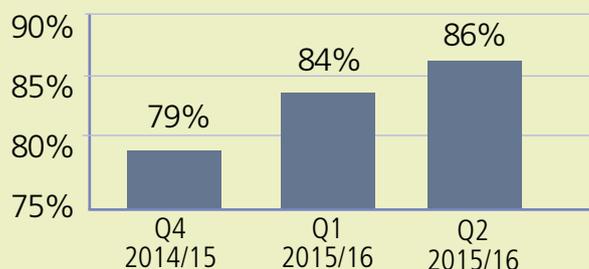
Repairs

- 100% gas safety compliance
- 86% of calls to repairs helpdesk answered within 20 seconds

8.690 repairs completed



Repairs Helpdesk - calls answered within 20 seconds



Whitehawk 'winter' in Christmas advert

Winter came very early to Wiston Road and Swanborough Drive in Whitehawk during filming for this year's John Lewis Christmas advert. The streets can be seen in full Christmas mode through a telescope in the company's 'Man in the moon' ad.

Although filmed in the summer, the houses were decorated and the area was covered in 'snow' to create a special seasonal scene.

The filming highlighted the area's lovely views and gave some local children an early opportunity for

playing in the 'snow' once filming was complete.

The campaign is also intended to raise money and awareness for Age UK.

If you've not seen the advert yet, you can watch it by searching for 'John Lewis' on www.youtube.com.

baby boogie

Music and rhyme sessions for pre-school children and their parents and carers at a library near you.



For further information go to www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/libraries

 Brighton & Hove City Libraries

 @BHLibraries



Hangleton Library 01273 296904
Fourth Thursday of the month
10.15 - 10.45am

Hollingbury Library 01273 296908
Second Thursday of the month
10.15 - 10.45am

Hove Library 01273 290700
Second & fourth Thursday of the month
2.15 - 2.45pm

Jubilee Library 01273 290800
First & third Monday of the month
10.15 - 10.45am

Patcham Library 01273 296912
Second Tuesday of the month
10.15 - 10.45am

Portslade Library 01273 296914
Third Tuesday of the month
10.15 - 10.45am

Saltdean Library 01273 296920
First Tuesday of the month
2.15 - 2.45pm

Westdene Library 01273 296922
Third Tuesday of the month
2.15 - 2.45pm

Whitehawk Library 01273 296924
First Tuesday of the month
10.15 - 10.45am



A clean sweep

The Neighbourhood & Community Service Improvement Group has been busy talking to council departments that provide services to council homes

Ann Ewings, the group's chair, said: "We drew up a list of ten departments which provide services to council properties, rubbish collection, gardening, that sort of thing. We then invited the manager responsible for each of these areas to our group meetings where we had a really useful exchange of information regarding their methods of operation and what residents would like to see."

The group has now gathered all the information they need and will soon be making

recommendations to improve how services are carried out.

The Neighbourhood & Community Group is one of five Service Improvement Groups:

- Home
- Neighbourhood & Community
- Tenancy
- Business & Value for Money
- Involvement & Empowerment

If you would like to find out more or become involved in any of the other Service Improvement Groups, please contact Resident Involvement Officer Rebecca Mann on **01273 292365** or email rebecca.mann@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Housing staff Robert Keelan and Rebecca Mann.



Group members Ted Chapman, Muriel Briault and Ann Ewings on the Sylvan Estate.



Lorna Faith Matyszak-Gander MBE, FMA

It is with sad hearts that we write this tribute to a wonderful lady who did so much for the whole area of Whitehawk, across the city and the many BME community groups she was connected with.

Her demise has left a large hole in the city as she had a quick wit, was a fountain of knowledge and a great believer in helping anyone she could. She was a great listener and her words of advice were always carefully considered before they were given.

She will be remembered best for her legacy in Whitehawk where she raised her four children. Known as Nanny Faith to the youngsters and Mum to many of us who knew her. Devoted to helping regenerate the area, she was a very independent and private person, but her kindness always shone through.

She will be missed, and the biggest tribute we can give her is to see the work she started carry on.

Her funeral was attended by some 150 people from all groups, including council staff and councillors at the Crew Club which was dear to Faith. We had a wonderful party at her request, celebrating her life. She would have been pleased with it.

Chris El Shabba, Chair of the City Assembly and Lyn Bennett of Manor Farm Tenants and Residents Association.



Safe space for art

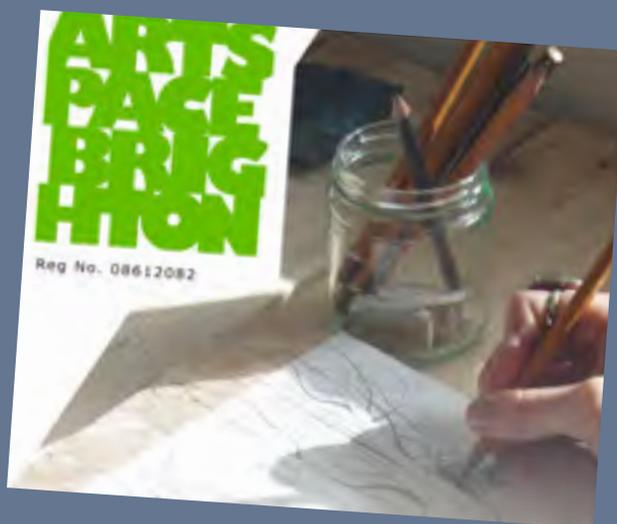
Artspace Brighton is running a new fully equipped art and craft studio on the Bristol Estate offering creative workshops and studio placements to people with mental health issues as part of their recovery process.

The studio provides the opportunity for people to really get creative in a safe and friendly environment, developing new skills with the help of trained artists, and building social networks in a supportive community.

Rather than teaching one type of art, Artspace is all

about you deciding what you want to do whether it's drawing, painting, collage, or craft work. Whatever your preference, staff will be there to encourage you and help you achieve some wonderful art work. There will also be a number of workshops running in a range of techniques including painting, printmaking and drawing.

The studio is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am - 5pm.



There is a membership fee of £10 per day or £5 per half day.

Please contact artspace.brighton@gmail.com for a referral form or call the studio on 07472 248297. You are also welcome to visit the studio to see if it is for you.

Christmas & New Year recycling & refuse collection dates

Usual collection day	→	Holiday collection day
Friday 25 December 2015	→	Monday 28 December 2015
Monday 28 December 2015	→	Tuesday 29 December 2015
Tuesday 29 December 2015	→	Wednesday 30 December 2015
Wednesday 30 December 2015	→	Thursday 31 December 2015
Thursday 31 December 2015	→	Friday 1 January 2016
Friday 1 January 2016	→	Saturday 2 January 2016

If we miss you, please leave your collection out and we'll pick it up as soon as we can

Usual collections resume from Monday 4 January 2016

Please recycle all your wrapping paper (but not foil) this Christmas!

And all your card, tins and cans (rinsed), plastic bottles (rinsed, lids removed) and glass bottles and jars of course. Please remember to keep your glass in a separate recycling box or bag so it doesn't contaminate the other materials. **Thank you for recycling!**



Christmas tree recycling sites across the city will be open between **28 December 2015** and **15 January 2016** – to find your nearest site go to www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/christmas-tree-recycling



Recycling wheelie bin trial

We are trialling a new way to collect recycling from around 4,000 households in the Hangleton and Portslade area.

We've delivered grey wheelie bins to homes in the area for recycling paper, card, cans and plastic bottles.

All glass will be recycled separately in the black boxes the households already have.

We hope that the wheelie bins will make it easier for residents to recycle. If the trial's successful, we'll look at introducing the scheme to other suitable areas of the city.

There will be no change to recycling or rubbish collection days.

For more information, go to www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/recycling-trial



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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 the Housing Customer online system at <https://housingcos.brighton-hove.gov.uk>

Information about money matters, tax, benefits and more www.gov.uk

Homemove website www.homemove.org.uk

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

Follow us on twitter.com/BHCCtenants

Like us on facebook.com/tenantandleaseholder

Useful contacts

Housing Customer Services

housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 293030

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 (local line 01273 294409)

Rise (charity helping people affected by 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 120 3710

Tenant Disability Network

tdnbhcc@yahoo.co.uk
01273 936934

Noise Nuisance

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

Housing & New Homes Committee Meeting

Wednesday 13 January 2016

Wednesday 2 March 2016

Meetings will be held at 4pm at the Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton, BN1 1AF.

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

You can view webcasts of all council meetings on www.brighton-hove.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

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

If you have any comments or items, email homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk 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!

Over 200 residents now only read Homing In online. Email housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk to add your name and we'll email you when it's up on our website.

Translations

Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office

- ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في المربع وحدها إلى مكتب البلدية. Arabic
- অনুবাদ? মূলতঃ কোন বিষয়ে কোন বিষয়ে অনুবাদ করতে চান? Bengal
- ಅನುವಾದ? ಯಾವುದೇ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಯಾವುದೇ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಅನುವಾದಿಸಲು ಬಯಸಿದರೆ? Cantonese
- ترجمه؟ لطفاً در مربع مربوطه علامت بزنید تا بتوانیم به شما کمک کنیم. Farsi
- Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au council. French
- অনুবাদ? আপনি কোন বিষয়ে কোন বিষয়ে অনুবাদ করতে চান? Mandarin
- Humaczenia? Zaznacz 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 varınız. Turkish
- other (please state)

This can also be made available in alternative formats, eg large print, Braille, audio or BSL. Please contact us to discuss options.