

homing in

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

Winter 2023

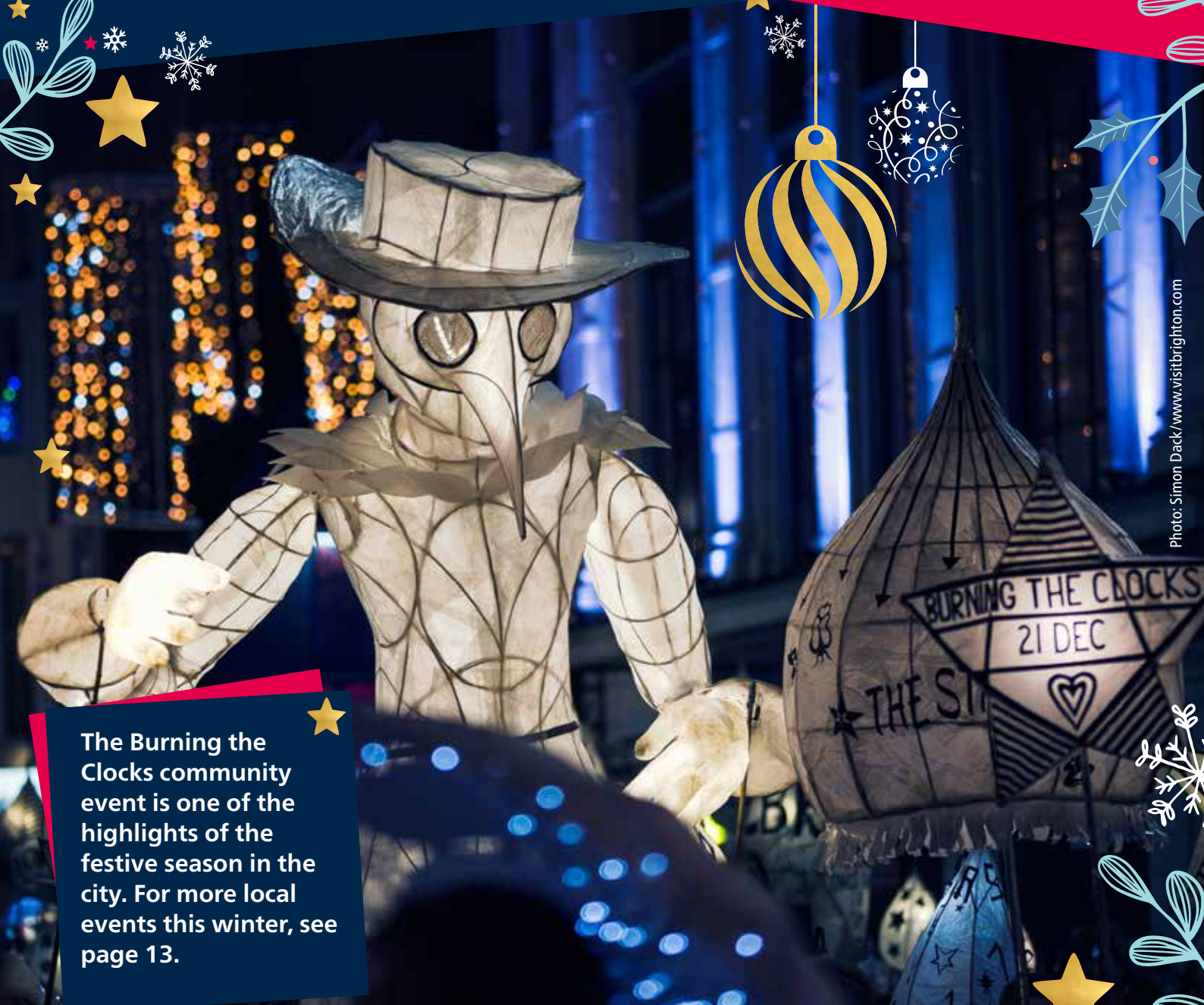


Photo: Simon Dack/www.visitbrighton.com

★ The Burning the Clocks community event is one of the highlights of the festive season in the city. For more local events this winter, see page 13.

★ In this issue

- More new council homes
- Fire safety update
- Tackling the repairs backlog
- Win a year of free leisure activities

Welcome to the winter issue of Homing In

In this issue there's news and information from across our housing services.

We have an update on fire safety work in our high-rise blocks of flats. We know there is work to do to rectify areas which currently don't comply with fire safety regulations and this is an absolute priority for us.

We also acknowledge the need to speed up of some of the areas that require specialist contractors and we are doing all we can to address all outstanding issues on the fastest timescales possible. We'll continue to keep you updated in Homing In.

We also have news of action we're taking to cut the backlog of repairs which built up over the pandemic, which we know is a big concern for tenants.

Other items include news from the Council Tenant Annual Conference. I enjoyed meeting residents at the conference in September and hearing more about projects making a difference on our estates.

We have information about advice and support available for people struggling with cost of living increases.

There are details of refuse and recycling collections



Councillor Gill Williams

over Christmas and New Year, plus a chance to win a year's membership to enjoy free activities at local leisure centres.

With best wishes for the festive season and 2024.

Councillor Gill Williams
Chair of the Housing & New Homes Committee

Tackling anti-social behaviour

Gates are going to be installed across Nelson Row in central Brighton to help prevent anti-social behaviour.

Nelson Row (pictured) runs between the Milner and Kingswood flats and the action is being taken following requests from residents.



They reported serious issues of concern in the area, in particular Nelson Row being used as a cut through by speeding and aggressive motorcycle riders, as well as gatherings of disorderly groups connected with drug dealing and misuse.

Incidents include 'near misses' by motorcycles of children going to the playground on Nelson Row.

The gates will be at the junction with Kingswood Street and the northern edge of the Milwood Centre.

Both gates will be opened for access to essential vehicles and emergency services, but will generally be closed and locked. The design includes unlocked accessible self-closing pedestrian gates to allow easy pedestrian access at all times.

A Public Space Protection Order for the gating scheme was approved by the Equalities, Community Safety and Human Rights Committee in October.

Please don't put off paying your rent

We know Christmas is going to be a difficult for many because of the continuing impact of the cost of living crisis.

But as the festive season approaches, it's important to keep paying your rent and not be tempted to put it off, to avoid starting 2024 in arrears.

There are a range of different ways to pay and help is available if you are struggling.

Direct debit or standing order

You can pay by direct debit or standing order and your rent will be taken directly out of your bank or building society account.

You can set up a direct debit online at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/rent or we can arrange it over the phone.

You can set up a standing order through your bank or building society.

To find out more about these and other payment methods call 01273 293065, email rentaccounting@brighton-hove.gov.uk or visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/rent

Other ways to pay

- Pay securely online with a debit card at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/pay and go to the housing rents section.
- Call our 24-hour automated payment line on 01273 291908 to pay by debit or credit card.

- Use a PayPoint card at PayPoint outlets.
- You can also pay your rent and check you're up to date with payments using our Housing Online service. To find out more and register for a Housing Online account, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingonline

Here to help

We're here to help, so if you are struggling to pay your rent or worried about debt, please call the Housing Income Management Team on 01273 293224.

For more information on help with the cost of living, see page 4.

New homes in Whitehawk

A block of 38 new flats in Whitehawk has been bought by the council to provide much needed additional council housing.

The development in Whitehawk Way, known as the Kubic Apartments (pictured), was built by a private developer but never occupied.

The flats are a mix of one, 2, and 3 bedroom homes, including 2 wheelchair accessible homes.

They will be let as council-rented homes to people on the city's housing register.

Some could be let to existing council tenants who want to downsize from a bigger property, and so help to free up larger family homes.

The purchase was completed in November and we hope residents will start moving in from the new year.

Find out more about new council homes in the city on page 6.



Support with the cost of living

Help is available for residents struggling with the cost of living.

Below is a round-up of some of the advice and support available if you're finding it hard to make ends meet. There's also more information on our website, including advice on saving energy and keeping your home warm, and health and wellbeing support, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support

- If you're facing a crisis and need help, the council can provide welfare advice, discretionary payments and other support. To find out more, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/benefits/help-and-support If you don't have access to the website, call the council's Community Hub on 01273 293117 option 2. The phonenumber is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4.30pm.
- If you're having problems paying your rent, please call the **Housing Income Management Team** on 01273 293224 or email incomemanagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- For benefits advice call the **Welfare Rights Team advice line** on 01273 291116, Monday to Wednesday from 10am to 1pm, or email welfarerights@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- If you're in a low income household and need help paying your Council Tax, you could get a Council Tax Reduction, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/ctr
- To check if your child is entitled to free school meals, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/free-school-meals or call 01273 293497.
- To find out about Holiday Activities and Food for children who receive benefit-related free school meals, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/HAF

Debt advice

- **Money Advice Plus** 0800 988 7037
www.moneyadviceplus.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice** 08082 78 78 15
www.cabrightonhove.org

A warm welcome

A weekly community café on the Bristol Estate is putting surplus food to good use.

Sussex Surplus serves up tasty, healthy meals every Thursday at the estate's community hub, using fresh produce that might otherwise have gone to waste.

Volunteers (pictured) help to cook dishes and offer a warm welcome at the 'pay what you can' café.

Sussex Surplus is part of a charity called Feedback, for more information visit www.sussexsurplus.org



Warm Welcome directory

Check out our Warm Welcome directory for information about free indoor activities and places residents can go to across the city this winter to keep warm.

For details visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/warm-welcome

Winter Fuel Payment

If you were born before 25 September 1957, you could get between £250 and £600 from the government to help you pay your heating bills. The amount you get this winter includes a Pensioner Cost of Living Payment of between £150 and £300.

If you get a state pension, you'll receive the Winter Fuel Payment automatically and you do not need to claim for it. The payment is usually made in November or December. For more information, visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

See page 11 for energy saving tips and advice.



Prioritising fire safety in high-rise blocks

We've been reprioritising fire safety work in our high-rise blocks of flats following recent joint inspections by East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS), including bringing forward work already planned.

The health and safety of our residents and those who visit and work on our council homes is a key housing service priority.

Significant legislative and regulatory changes impacting the duties of social housing landlords, including the council, have been introduced following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

We are investing in building, fire and health and safety in council homes, in line with these new duties, including a programme of building surveys and enhanced fire surveys on our blocks.

In order to discharge their regulatory duties following an inspection of 5 council high rise blocks earlier this year, ESFRS served the council notices specifying the dates for completion of some aspects of fire safety work, ranging from October this year to September 2024.



The notices concerned work required in Clarendon House in Hove; Somerset Point, Hereford Court and Saxonbury in Queen's Park; and Nettleton Court in Hollingdean.

Since receiving the notices, we've been through our planned fire safety work on our 45 high-rise blocks and reprioritised the actions needed.

We have completed a number of the actions and are continuing to work closely with ESFRS to ensure full assurance and compliance with their requirements as soon as possible

We've also written to all residents in the 5 blocks to share the detail of the work required there.

We do know there is work to do to rectify areas which currently don't comply with fire safety regulations. This is an absolute priority for us.

We also acknowledge the need to speed up of some of the areas that require specialist contractors, and we are doing all we can to address all outstanding issues on the fastest timescales possible.

Keep fire doors closed

We'd like to remind residents in our flats of the importance of keeping fire safety doors closed.

Flat entrance doors and doors to stairways, communal landings and corridors are fire doors.

In the event of a fire, these doors are designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke. This helps you to leave the building safely if you need to.

If fire doors are jammed or propped open, it stops them functioning and causes a danger to everyone in the building.

For everyone's safety please do not wedge fire doors open. For more information, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/fire-safety-in-flats

- Please see page 10 for Christmas fire safety information.

Proposals for **100** new council homes

More than 100 new council homes could be built on 5 council-owned sites, in the latest phase of our New Homes for Neighbourhoods building programme.

The proposed developments include sites in Portslade, Hollingbury, Whitehawk, and Brighton.

A planning application has been submitted for 15 one and 2 bedroom homes at Windlesham House in Windlesham Close, Portslade.

A planning application is also about to be submitted for a mix of 28 one, 2 and 3 bedroom homes at the former Portslade Village Centre in Windlesham Close, along with a new community centre.

And an application will be submitted soon for 9 homes at the former Hollingbury Library in Carden Hill.

Designs for the following sites are being progressed in preparation for submitting planning applications:

- Around 39 homes are proposed on a former play area in Swanborough Drive, Whitehawk.
- Around 23 new homes are proposed at Oakley House, on the junction of Leicester Street and Edward Street. Oakley House currently comprises 6 council homes and a commercial tenant. If redevelopment of the site is approved, we will support the current tenants to find and move to new homes.



Images of proposals for Portslade Village Centre (above) and Windlesham House (right)



Our New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme has delivered 269 new council-rented homes since it started in 2013.

Work is currently underway on 4 new council homes in Frederick Street in the city centre and work is expected to start shortly on 3 new homes in Rotherfield Crescent, Hollingbury.

A further 264 homes - including 212 in the Moulsecoomb Housing and Community Hub project - have planning approval, and are progressing through the development process.

For more information, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/nhfn

Energy efficient homes in Coldean

Families will start moving into 127 energy efficient new council homes in Coldean in the new year.

The development in Coldean Lane is made up of one, 2 and 3 bedroom flats and will be called Denman Place.

It's the second project to be delivered by Homes for Brighton & Hove, a

partnership between the council and affordable housing provider, Hyde.

In addition to the council-rented homes, there are a further 115 flats at the site which will be available through Hyde as shared ownership homes.

Homes for Brighton & Hove was set up to provide much

needed low-cost homes for people in the city.

The partnership's first project was completed at Quay View in St James Square, off Wellington Road, Portslade in the summer, providing 49 council flats and 55 shared ownership flats.

For more information, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/hfbh

Action to reduce repairs backlog

We're taking action to tackle the backlog of routine repairs.

A specialist repairs company is being appointed to clear the backlog, while our own staff continue to work on emergency repairs and newly reported routine repairs.

This action was agreed by the Housing & New Homes Committee in September.

The company contracted to complete the outstanding repairs will be one that specialises in social housing repairs and will be supervised by our Repairs and Maintenance Team.

Since the pandemic, our repairs and maintenance staff have been working hard to catch up, and the average number of repairs carried out each day is now back to pre-pandemic levels.

However, we have seen an increase in the number of repairs being reported, particularly during the winter months, which means it has not been possible to clear the backlog.

Currently there's a backlog of around 9,000 repairs from the pandemic. As we have attended to urgent works first, some less urgent tasks have been waiting a long time for attention which we understand is frustrating for tenants.

We would like to apologise for the inconvenience and thank you for your patience and understanding.

The aim is for the repairs company to complete these repairs within a year. This will enable us to keep up with new repairs being raised and introduce improvements and changes to the repairs service.

If you have a repair or wish to provide an update, don't put it off. Please get in touch by:

- Completing our online form www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs
- Calling 0800 052 6140 (or 01273 294409 if calling from a mobile)
- You can also report repairs using your Housing Online account if you have one www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingonline

Repairs handbook

Just a reminder that our repairs handbook provides information about which repairs the council is responsible for, and which repairs are the responsibility of tenants. Visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housing-repairs-handbook

Welcome to our new apprentices

We're pleased to welcome 16 new apprentices who began their training in our Repairs and Maintenance service in September.

Ten are studying property maintenance (with plumbing) and 6 are electrical apprenticeships. The new recruits join 7 electrical apprentices already in the team.

Our apprenticeships are providing skills for local people and it's been great to hear feedback from tenants, staff and apprentices.

Apprentice Josh, who joined the team 2 years ago, said: "I really enjoy helping tenants in their

homes. The work is very varied, so I feel like I'm learning a lot. My colleagues are great to work with and take their time to teach me everything I need to know."

Katie, who joined last year, said: "The apprenticeship is a great way to learn, I get to meet different people and work with different trades."

John, an electrical supervisor, said: "The apprentices are valuable members of the team. They help create a



Some of our apprentices

great atmosphere with their enthusiasm and this is proven by the comments we receive from the tenants and electricians they work with."

Council Tenant Annual Conference



Residents from around the city took part in the Council Tenant Annual Conference at Hove Town Hall in September.

The conference is a chance to share ideas and views, and meet other council housing residents, councillors and council managers.

It's organised by tenants and leaseholders and was chaired by Chris El-Shabba, a tenant from Whitehawk.

Council leader Councillor Bella Sankey, and chair of the Housing & New Homes Committee Councillor Gill Williams, were among those who took part.

Themes this year included improving open spaces on council estates, and residents from 3 local groups gave inspiring presentations about community projects making a difference in their areas.



Sharing ideas and information at the conference

Albion Life shared their experience of setting up a popular community garden; Growing Hollingdean highlighted projects supporting community growing and wildlife; and Bristol Estate Leaseholders and Tenants Association explained how they've made improvements at their community hub with money from the Estate Development Budget.

There were also examples of other projects improving shared spaces on our estates, including a waste amnesty in Whitehawk, estates inspections, and a furniture recycling service run by the Estates Team.

The conference also focussed on the government's new Social Housing (Regulation) Act, including proposals for a



Council leader Bella Sankey



new national code of practice and consumer standards which housing providers will be expected to meet.

Residents discussed the draft consumer standards in workshop sessions and were encouraged to take part in national consultation on the proposals.

There were also stalls and displays sharing the work of local tenant and resident groups and opportunities for socialising and informal conversations over lunch.

Estate Development Budget

If you have an idea for improving your estate, funds could be available to help from our Estate Development Budget (EDB).

To find out more, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/EDB or contact the Community Engagement Team, email communityengagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call 01273 291518.

If you would like to get involved in planning next year's conference, email communityengagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call 01273 291518.

Bringing generations together

Students and seniors housing residents teamed up for an arts project helping to bridge the generation gap.

Eight local seniors housing schemes and students from Varndean College, Brighton College and Sussex University took part in the project, called 'With Age Comes'.

The residents and young people got together at workshops this autumn and chose favourite pictures of themselves from over the years.

These were used to create artworks and printed onto T-shirts, providing a great talking point and a chance to chat about the photos.



'With Age Comes' project bringing students and seniors together



The finale of the project was a chance for the residents, their families, and students to enjoy a circus cabaret show together at a local community venue – with the participants wearing their T-shirts.

The idea of With Age Comes was to help the different generations understand each other better, enjoy each other's company and promote mutual respect. It was organised by Circo Rum Ba Ba, a circus theatre company, in collaboration with Shared History, with Arts Council England funding.

The seniors housing schemes were teamed up with students from nearby colleges, helping to build community links. Workshops were also held at Somerset Centre day centre and Hove Methodist Church lunch club.

Happy 50th anniversary!

Residents at Ditchling Gardens seniors housing scheme in Brighton are celebrating the scheme's 50th anniversary.

They are holding a tea party in December and plan to add a new bench and plaque to their communal garden to mark the half century.

The residents are also supporting the local community by organising a collection of groceries for a nearby food bank at St Richard's Church in Hollingdean.

The idea of marking the anniversary came from the relative of a resident who realised it was 50 years since the scheme was built.

Val Redbourn moved to Ditchling



Collecting groceries for a food bank

Gardens in 1987 and has lived there the longest. She said: "It's a nice little community here and the 50th anniversary is definitely something to celebrate!"

The residents are bidding for funds from the Estate Development Budget for the bench and plaque and planning more improvements to the garden next year.

Seniors Housing

We have 24 council-run seniors housing schemes across the city, providing independent living for people aged 55 and over.

For information, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/seniors-housing, email seniorshousing@brighton-hove.gov.uk or ring 01273 293030 and ask for a call back from the Seniors Housing Team.



Christmas fire safety

Fire safety is important at every time of year, and the extra distractions of Christmas make it especially important to be vigilant during the festive season.

- Never leave burning candles unattended. Keep candles out of the reach of children, and away from decorations, cards, wrapping paper, fires, lights and heaters.
- Make sure you switch off inside and outside fairy lights and unplug them before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Don't overload sockets. Use only one plug per socket and always turn off plugs when they are not in use (except those designed to be left on, like freezers).
- Never leave cooking unattended and always turn off kitchen appliances when you finish cooking.
- Do not use bottled gas heaters.
- If you are using an electric blanket or heated pad, always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and remember to switch them off.
- Please keep communal areas and common ways clear in blocks of flats. Anything left in common ways poses a potential fire and smoke hazard and can block escape routes. This also means decorations and wreaths cannot be hung on the outside of flat doors.

Please also remember to take care if charging an electric bike or scooter and always follow the instructions. Only charge batteries when you're awake and at home and unplug when done. For information about charging e-bikes and scooters safely, visit www.esfrs.org/guide-to-fire-safety-for-e-bikes-and-e-scooters

For more fire safety advice visit the fire service website www.esfrs.org or call 0800 177 7069 to arrange a home safety visit.

News from the Leaseholder Action Group

By the time you read this, we will have had 2 Leaseholder Action Group (LAG) meetings this autumn, both in Craven Vale.

We've heard about the council's plans for works projects, the works going on in Craven Vale, the latest on repairs, news on RAAC concrete (none found), cladding, the Estate Development Budget, buildings insurance, and plans for Asset Management.

We are planning a Leaseholder Summit at Hove Town Hall, on Saturday 3 February 2024 from 9.30am to 1pm. This is a chance for all leaseholders to meet

each other, Housing & New Homes Committee councillors, and the council staff in charge of looking after our buildings. Among other items, we hope to hear about the plan for the works programme over the next 5 years. We will also have our formal AGM.

Please do book the date now. Full details will be sent out nearer the time. Please do come and make your voice heard - we aim to represent all

leaseholders, so please let us know your views and concerns.

To contact LAG, phone 01273 605225 (mornings or evenings best), email lag@clarend.com or look for B&H Leaseholder Action Group on Facebook. There is also a leaseholders' email group - email us if you'd like to join it.

Rosemary Johnson
LAG chairperson



Tips for saving energy

We know heating costs are a big concern for households this winter and these tips are from the Energy Saving Trust:

- If you are warm enough, try turning down your thermostat by one degree to save around £145 a year. (Heating your home to at least 18°C/65°F is important for your health and immune system, especially if you are 65 or over, have reduced mobility, or an existing health condition such as heart or lung disease.)
- Keep a gap between your radiators and furniture, and make sure curtains aren't hanging in front of radiators.
- It costs less to set your heating to come on when you need it, rather than keeping it on low all day.
- Remember to turn your appliances off standby mode.
- Remember to turn off lights when you leave a room.
- Avoid overfilling the kettle.
- Spend less time in the shower.
- If possible swap your bath for a short shower.

For more information, visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

There's information about help with energy bills on our website, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/help-with-energy-bills

There's advice on the NHS website about staying warm and well in winter, visit www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well



Our new gas contractor

PH Jones, part of British Gas, was awarded the contract earlier this year to look after all heating and hot water related repairs, maintenance and new installations.

Pictured are some of the PH Jones team at the Housing Centre in Moulsecomb.

If you have any problems with your boiler or heating this winter, please contact the Repairs Helpdesk online at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs or call **0800 052 6140** (or **01273 294409** from a mobile).

Helping elderly and vulnerable neighbours

Please check on your elderly and vulnerable neighbours to see if they need help with getting food, medicine or care during cold weather.

If you know people who need support, please contact our **Community Hub helpline** on **01273 293117** option 2. The phonenumber is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4.30pm.



Gritters are ready for action to keep the city moving safely this winter.

The council's winter highways service includes salt gritting, snow ploughing, pavement clearing and filling grit bins for residents to use.

During severe weather, we try to keep clear all major roads and prioritise bus routes and access to local hospitals.

If a grit bin on your housing estate needs refilling contact the Estates Team, email estateserviceteam@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call **01273 294769**.

How we've been doing

Here are some key performance results over the last quarter...

July to September 2023



Rent collection and current arrears

Our rent collection rate was 93.7%. To help improve rent collection, we are recruiting to one remaining Income Management vacancy, having recruited to 7 during the previous quarter.



Repairs and improvements

The proportion of 'Decent Homes' has increased slightly from 95.8% to 95.9%. The Repairs Helpdesk answered an average of 224 phone calls per working day, and we completed 126 repairs per working day (a total of 8,182 during the quarter, of which 3,268 emergency and 4,944 routine).



Customer services

Housing Customer Services dealt with an average of 88 phone calls and 104 emails per working day. The most common queries were about residents' parking and tenancy issues including anti-social behaviour.



Moving home

We let 173 homes, which includes 20 new homes let for the first time. The number of empty homes decreased from 175 to 142.



Estates service

The team completed 1,475 mobile response jobs, including lock changes and light bulb replacements, and 697 jobs to move bulky items.



Anti-social behaviour

Our officers responded to 113 new cases of anti-social behaviour.



Tenancy management

We've worked on 51 cases to support vulnerable tenants, including help with arranging benefit claims, repairs, and care packages.

Feedback about housing services

We want to know what you think about the service you receive so we can build on our successes and make improvements where they are most needed.

Please send your feedback to CustomerFeedback@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call 01273 291229. Whether you make a compliment or a complaint, your right to receive a good quality service will not be affected.

You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman for independent advice and mediation. If your complaint has not been resolved via the council's complaints procedure the Ombudsman will then liaise with you and the council to seek satisfaction.

For details, visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk, email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk or call 0300 1113000.

Dates for your diary

Area Panels

Area Panel meetings are a chance for residents to meet council officers and councillors to ask questions, share their views, and work with the council to improve housing services.

The next round of Area Panels will be held as follows:

Central 6.30pm Tuesday 26 March, Barnard Centre, St John's Mount, Mount Pleasant, Brighton, BN2 0JP

East 2pm Wednesday 20 March, venue to be confirmed

West 2pm Wednesday 27 March, Hove Town Hall (council chamber), Norton Road, BN3 4AH

North 6.30pm Tuesday 19 March, venue to be confirmed

These will be held in person, with the opportunity to also take part online on Zoom or join in by phone.

For more information contact the Community Engagement Team, email communityengagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call 01273 291518.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are available at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/area-panel-meetings

City events

Burning the Clocks

21 December

Winter solstice parade through the city centre, finishing on Brighton beach.



Royal Pavilion Ice Rink

Daily until 7 January

Christmas at the Booth Museum

2 December to 3 January

Christmas Mice at Brighton Museum and Hove Museum

Spot mice around the museums' galleries - from November until 1 January (Hove Museum) and until 2 January (Brighton Museum).

Find out about forthcoming events in the city at www.visitbrighton.com/whats-on and www.brightonmuseums.org.uk

If you have an event you'd like us to promote, please email homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call Housing Customer Services on 01273 293030.

Photo: Ray Gibson/www.visitbrighton.com



Whitehawk Way playground from above

Playground refurbishment brings joy for Noah

Local families are enjoying a new look playground in Whitehawk.

The top park in Whitehawk Way was transformed in the summer with new play equipment and a colourful makeover.

The playground includes fantastic accessible play equipment for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Noah, from Whitehawk, was the first child to enter the park and try out a new hammock swing, named 'Noah's seat' in his honour.

Noah has special educational needs and disabilities and loves visiting parks with hammock swings. His dad, Matthew, said: "We just want to give a big shout out and thank everyone involved for doing this amazing work, and sorting this park out so all the kids around here can enjoy themselves."

The makeover includes bright designs of birds on the surface of the playground, inspired by the names of nearby blocks of flats.

The refurbishment is part of an ongoing £3 million programme to improve park play areas across the city.

Other playgrounds refurbished this year include Woodingdean Central Park, Knoll Park, Rottingdean Recreation Park, and Woollards Field (Maggie's Corner).

The Whitehawk Way playground refurbishment was funded from the Housing Revenue Account. For more information, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/playgrounds



Noah enjoying the new hammock swing

Win a year of free leisure activities

Enter our free draw for a chance to win a year's membership to enjoy activities at local leisure centres.

The pass will give one person free admission to activities – such as exercise classes, gym sessions and swimming – at sports facilities managed for the council by Freedom Leisure.

It will be valid at the King Alfred Leisure Centre, Prince Regent Swimming Complex, Withdean Sports Complex, Moulsecomb Leisure Centre, Stanley Deason Leisure Centre, St Luke's Swimming Pool, and Portslade Sports Centre.

Simply answer the following questions, based on information in this issue:

- Where are gates going to be installed to help prevent anti-social behaviour?
- Which seniors housing scheme is marking its 50th anniversary?
- Name one of the local leisure centres managed by Freedom Leisure



Send your answers by email to homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk or by post to Homing In competition, Performance & Improvement, Housing Centre, Unit 1, Fairway Trading Estate, Eastergate Road, Brighton BN2 4QL. **Please include your name, address, postcode and phone number.**

The closing date for entries is 8 January 2024. The winner will be notified and their name published in next issue of Homing In.

The draw is open to all households who receive Homing In by email or post.

Leisure Card discounts

Did you know...residents on means tested benefits can get discounts at the seven leisure centres listed above.

Simply apply for a free Leisure Card to receive a discount of around 40% on selected activities, including swimming, badminton, and table tennis.

To find out more and apply, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/leisure-card or call in at your local leisure centre.

Congratulations

Thanks to everyone who entered our autumn draw to win tickets to *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* at Theatre Royal Brighton. The winner was M Terry from Brighton.

Free activities for young people

Check out a choice of fun, free activities for young people in Hangleton and Knoll.

The Hangleton and Knoll Project runs a regular weekly programme of activities, including football, street dance, boxing, table tennis and youth clubs. There are also trips and activities in school holidays.

These are all open to young people aged 11 to 19, and aged up to 25 for those with special educational needs or disabilities.

To find out more about what's on offer in 2024, visit www.hkproject.org.uk or call (01273) 706469.

Christmas & new year recycling & refuse collection dates

Your collection days change over Christmas and new year - please put your refuse and recycling out by 6am on...

| Usual day | Collected on... |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday 25 December | Wednesday 27 December |
| Tuesday 26 December | Thursday 28 December |
| Wednesday 27 December | Friday 29 December |
| Thursday 28 December | Saturday 30 December |
| Friday 29 December | Tuesday 2 January |
| Monday 1 January | Wednesday 3 January |
| Tuesday 2 January | Thursday 4 January |
| Wednesday 3 January | Friday 5 January |
| Thursday 4 January | Saturday 6 January |
| Friday 5 January | Monday 8 January |
| Monday 8 January | Tuesday 9 January |
| Tuesday 9 January | Wednesday 10 January |
| Wednesday 10 January | Thursday 11 January |
| Thursday 11 January | Friday 12 January |
| Friday 12 January | Saturday 13 January |

Collections return to your usual days from **Monday 15 January**

To check your collection days in 2024 and download your collection calendar if you have fortnightly recycling, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cityclean and put in your postcode.

Garden waste collections stop over Christmas and new year. The last collection will be on Friday 22 December, with the service resuming from Monday 8 January.

Recycle this Christmas!

Christmas trees

Christmas tree recycling sites across the city will be open from Wednesday 27 December until Monday 22 January. Please remove all decorations and the pot before leaving your tree.

To find your nearest site, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/christmas-tree-recycling. Don't leave trees on the pavement, road or beside a communal bin as this is fly-tipping and you could be fined.

Food and drink

Plastic bottles can go straight in your recycling box or bin, washed and squashed.

Rinsed drink cans and food tins can also go in your recycling, along with egg boxes, and cardboard sleeves for food packaging.

Please keep all glass bottles and jars (washed, with metal lids back on) in a separate recycling box so glass doesn't contaminate the other materials.

Wrapping paper and cardboard

Please only recycle wrapping paper and plain Christmas cards - foil or paper covered in glitter can't be recycled.

Flatten all your cardboard boxes and paper bags to make space in your recycling bins and boxes. Please keep all paper and cardboard dry!

Batteries & electrical items

Recycle batteries at your local supermarket or our household recycling sites.

Recycle used electrical items, including old tech, at a number of recycling points in the city or the two household recycling sites.

Batteries and electrical items are a fire hazard, so do not put them in your household recycling or rubbish.

Household recycling sites

You can also take your recycling to a recycling point or one of the city's two household recycling sites.

For all you need to know about recycling in Brighton & Hove, visit our A-Z of recycling at brighton-hove.gov.uk/recycling

Love our city

Useful contacts

Housing Customer Services

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

Repairs Helpdesk

Report online at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs
0800 052 6140 (local line 01273 294409)

Housing Income Management Team

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

Housing Benefit

housing.benefits@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 292000 or 01273 290333 for people
with speech or hearing difficulties

Community Engagement Team

For information about tenant and leaseholder groups
communityengagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 291518

Access Point for adult social care

AccessPoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk
01273 295555

Noise Nuisance

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/noise
01273 294266 or 01273 293541 for out of hours

Other useful contacts

Moneyworks Brighton & Hove

www.advicebrighton-hove.org.uk
0800 9887037 or 01273 809288

Citizens Advice Bureau

www.cabrightonhove.org
08082 787815

Help with domestic violence and abuse

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/domestic-abuse-help
Freephone 0300 323 9985

Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service

www.bhims.org.uk
01273 700812

Leaseholder Action Group

lag@clarend.com
01273 605225
www.facebook.com/groups/bhlag

Online services

Visit the council housing website to check out
all housing services at
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-housing

Pay online at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/pay

Go to the Housing Online system at
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingonline

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

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Housing Committee Meeting

Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 4pm

The meeting will be held in the Council Chamber,
Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ.

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

Agendas, minutes and webcasts of council
meetings are available at
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/council-meetings

If you have any comments or suggestions for
future articles, email
homingin@brighton-hove.gov.uk or write to
Homing In, Performance & Improvement,
Housing Centre, Unit 1, Fairway Trading Estate,
Eastergate Road, Brighton BN2 4QL or call
01273 293030.

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