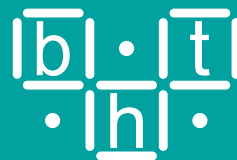


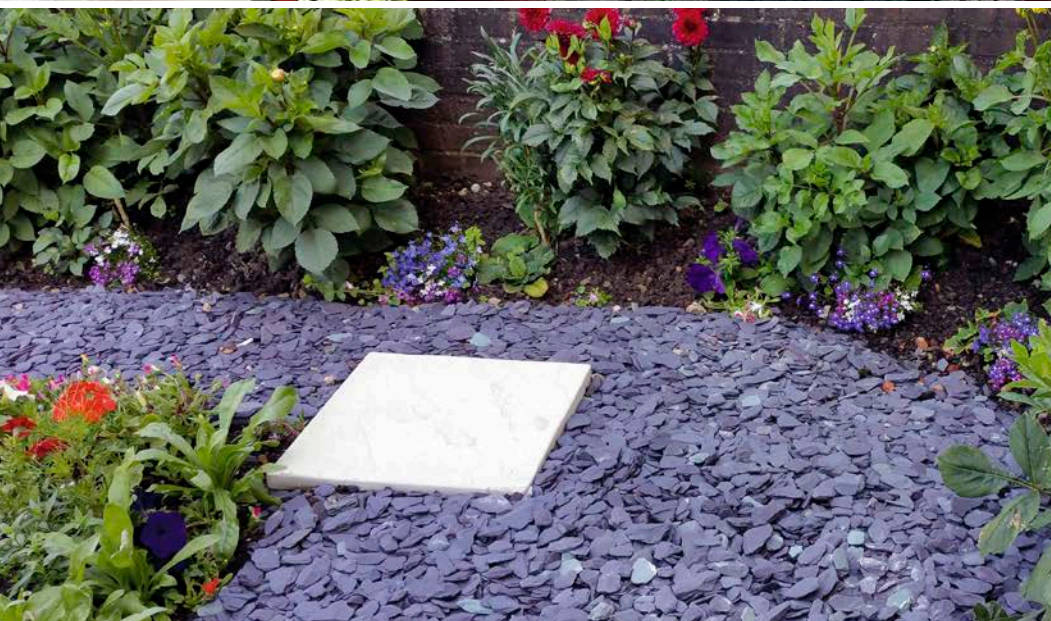


Combating Homelessness, Creating Opportunities, Promoting Change

Lighthouse



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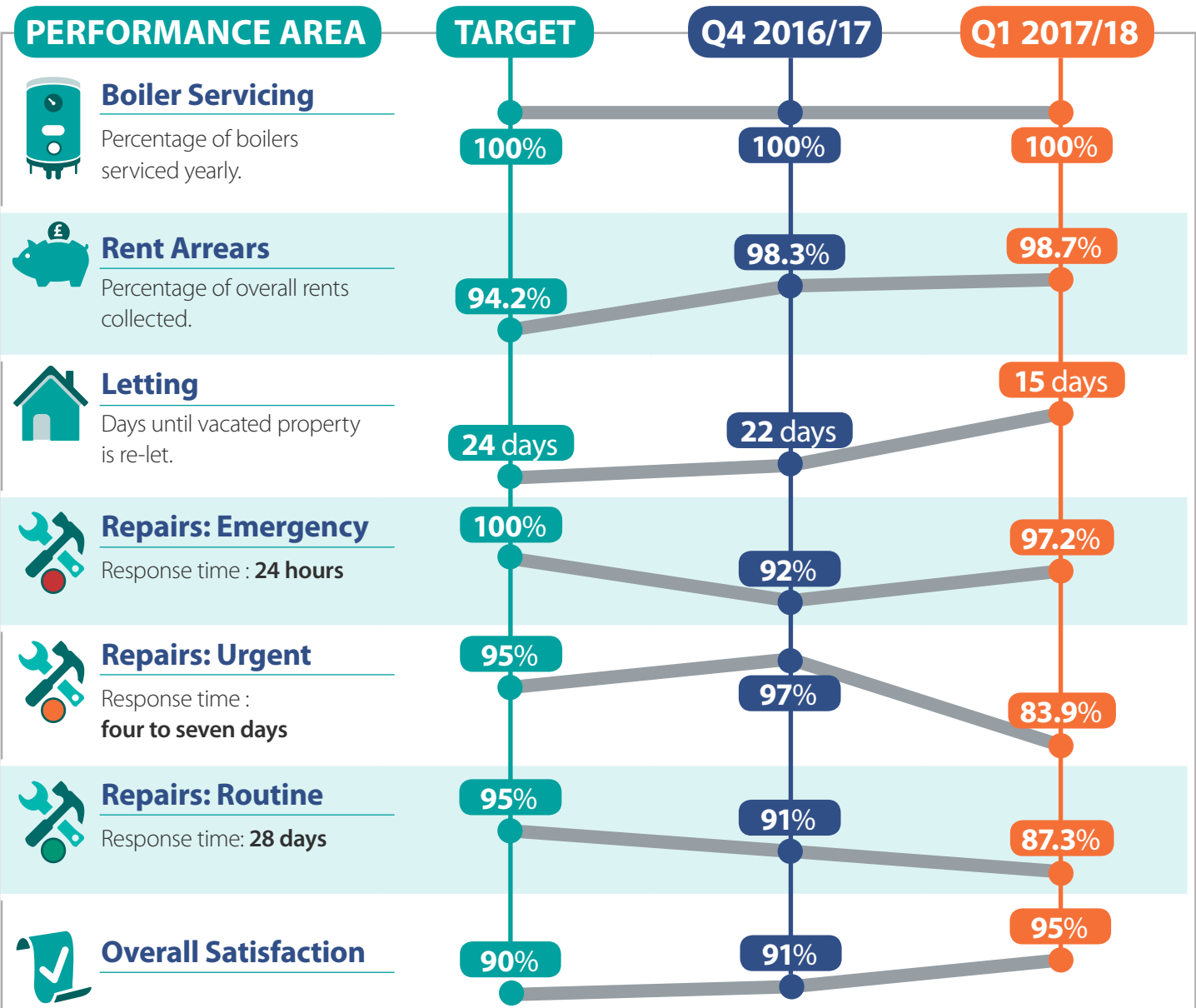
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BHT Housing Services: How Well Are We Performing?



Win a £50 voucher by giving feedback on our repairs service

Congratulations to Joyce from Brighton and Brendon from St Leonards who both won a £50 shopping voucher for the quarterly repairs survey.

Have you had a repair carried out recently?

If so, how did you find the service? Your feedback is vital in helping BHT to improve the service that you receive. Please take five minutes to fill in the survey that you received in the post and you could be in with a chance of winning a £50 shopping voucher in our quarterly prize draw.



BHT in Bloom

Glorious flower display in ‘orphan space’ wins Les and Chris first prize.

Green fingered Les and Chris of St Leonards have won a £30 garden voucher – first prize in the BHT in Bloom competition ‘individual garden’ category.

During the past five years they have turned the path down the side of their large Victorian House where they live on the ground floor into a glorious garden, which gives them and their neighbours a great deal of pleasure.

Oleanders, Geraniums, Petunias and other blooms fill the former ‘orphan space’ with colour and variety: *“I buy most of my plants at Lidl,”* says bus driver Les. *“I love pottering about out here and water the plants and the herb garden every day.”*

Three runners up received a £10 gardening voucher. Andrea from St Leonards created a splash of colour that lights up her surroundings. The flowers were all grown from seed, including a stunning array of Dahlias and Sweet Peas: *“I love Dahlias,”* says Andrea. This fantastic display was built from scratch over 18 months.

Dean from St Leonards dug out the back garden his home, restoring and painting the rear fence and decorating the space with plants, lights and bird feeders. *“It shows what you can do in life with a little bit of work,”* says Dean, who was helped by his neighbours. The third of the £10 prize winners, Derry from Brighton, created a beautiful haven of flowers up and around his stairwell. This brightened up the area not only for himself but for all the other residents too.

The shared garden category was won by BHT’s Shore House project in Brighton with runners-up prizes going to BHT’s Recovery project, the Archway project and Move On clients John and Jason.

BHT’s gardening contractor Southern Land Services sponsored the competition.
It is hoped next year even more tenants will get involved.



YOUR FIRE SAFETY

Brighton Housing Trust takes its responsibility for fire safety in its properties very seriously and ensures suitable systems are in place so that the alarm is raised quickly in the event of any fire incident.

As a tenant there are steps that you can take that will increase your safety in the event of an incident occurring:

KNOW YOUR EVACUATION PLAN

Notices are displayed by the fire call points, advising what to do in the event of an alarm sounding. Familiarise yourself with the actions you should take, along with the location of the assembly point.

KNOW THE FIRE EVACUATION ROUTE

The best escape route is usually your normal way in and out of your home. Familiarise yourself with any alternatives. Signs are in place to show the best routes to fire exits.

DO YOU NEED ASSISTANCE IN EVACUATING THE BUILDING?

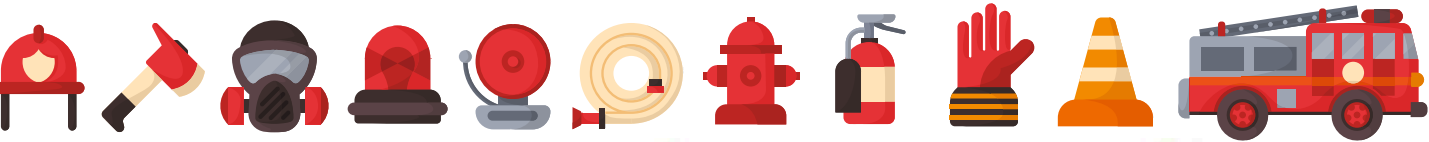
It is important that the fire brigade are aware of anyone who may have difficulties evacuating the building quickly or requires assistance to do so. Please let your Housing Officer know if you feel this applies to you.

KEEP PASSAGEWAYS CLEAR

Make sure communal corridors, staircases and fire escapes are kept clear of all obstructions. Speak to your Housing Officer if you have any concerns.

TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARMS

Smoke alarms should be tested weekly.



PREVENTING A FIRE

Below are the most common causes of house fires along with the steps you can take to help prevent them occurring :



APPLIANCES

Switch off appliances at night and only buy appliances from trustworthy sources.

KITCHEN FIRES

Take extra care when cooking with oil and never leave it unattended.

ELECTRICAL SOCKETS

Do not use adapters to overload sockets and have no more than one plug in each socket.

CIGARETTES AND CANDLES

Stub out cigarettes properly and dispose of them appropriately. Make sure candles are in a fireproof holder and don't light them near children, pets, curtains or other fabric.

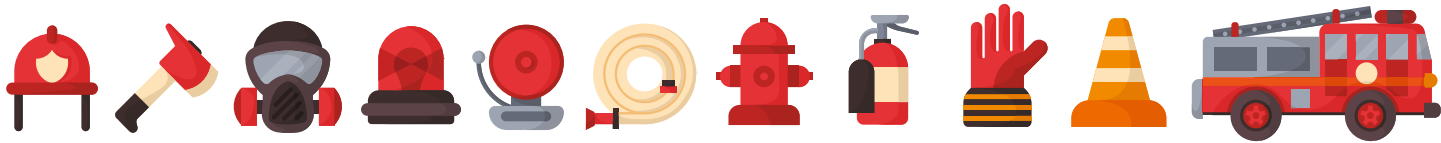
RUBBISH

Put all rubbish in the bins provided. Do not leave rubbish anywhere else.

GAS APPLIANCES

If you have a gas boiler, make sure BHT's gas maintenance supplier is given access to test it when required.

If the event of an emergency evacuation taking place, it is important to have up-to-date contact details for you to ensure that you are accounted for. Therefore, if your telephone number changes, please inform your Housing Officer or amend these details yourself on Mytenancy.



My Home
Contents Insurance

While BHT insures the building you live in, it is your responsibility – and in your tenancy agreement – to insure your personal possessions.

This is known as contents insurance and covers such things as damage caused by fire, theft, water damage, vandalism or floods to most of your household goods and contents. It also covers replacement of external locks if your keys are lost or stolen and the contents of your freezer.

We can help our tenants and residents obtain home contents insurance easily and at a price that is affordable. While many people often hope that nothing will happen to their belongings, sometimes things can go wrong unexpectedly.

With a special scheme called My Home arranged in conjunction with the National Housing Federation, BHT tenants can protect their belongings and gain peace of mind in the knowledge that should the unexpected happens they have cover.

Please visit www.thistlemyhome.co.uk to find out more.

You can also call on 0345 450 7288 or email them at: myhome@thistleinsurance.co.uk

My BHT Story:

Interview with Anthony

My name is Anthony and I live in Blake Court in Brighton and have been happily living there for just over a year. I am originally from Liverpool but I moved to Brighton.

With help from the BHT Advice Centre I managed to find temporary accommodation in a property in Brunswick Place. Although this was only meant to be temporary I ended up living there for six and a half years. The landlord then decided to sell the property and so I was forced to find somewhere else to live. Through another housing association I was able to get my tenancy in Blake Court which was subsequently taken over by BHT.

My flat is in a central location and the communal areas are clean and well maintained. The rent is very reasonable and I feel like my home is a secure place to live. My family come to visit me more often now as it is so much more of a home than my last property.

BHT has helped me so much, 100% in fact. From the moment I moved to Blake Court things have been great. Any maintenance issues have been sorted efficiently.

Win a £20 voucher by signing up to pay your rent by Direct debit

Congratulations to Conrad from Eastbourne, David from Saltdean and Andrew from Brighton who all won a £10 Sainsbury's voucher in our Direct Debit prize draw.

Each month, we hold a prize draw for tenants who have set up a Direct Debit to pay their rent. Your Housing Officer can guide you through the process step-by-step, so that you fully understand when and how often you will be making a payment and how much you will be paying. From next month this will be a quarterly draw with a £20 prize. Good luck!



Benefit News Corner

Help is at hand from BHT's Income Recovery Officers

Do you think that an Income Recovery Officer only deals with collecting rent that is due?

You would be wrong if you did.

We are also here to help you maintain your tenancy and rent account. That means knowing what is going on when things start going wrong. For example if your state benefit or Housing Benefit ceases, you are changing from one benefit to another or having financial difficulties preventing you from paying your usual amount of rent, such as illness or reduced working hours.

We are here to help you complete forms, and can liaise with other service providers on your behalf to discuss rent repayment plans. We will do all we can to keep you in your home.

Here are some comments from current tenants:

"I can't thank you enough for helping me with all this benefit paperwork – it was a minefield to me. I wish I hadn't buried my head in the sand. I just found the situation I had got myself into so overwhelming. You helped resolve it in a non-judgemental manner, which I was not expecting."

So please remember, we are here to help. The sooner we are aware of a problem which may put your tenancy at risk, or prevent you maintaining your rent account, the quicker we are able to resolve the issue.

For advice about your rent account: Brighton and Eastbourne tenants can contact Julie Schofield on 01323 340018 and Hastings tenants can contact Shirley Campbell on 01424 445354.

The benefits of using MyTenancy

"I find MyTenancy really useful for getting up-to-date rent statements and reporting repairs."
said Colette from Walton Bank.

You can manage many aspects of your tenancy online through your MyTenancy account which can be accessed 24/7, so this is the easiest and quickest way to get in touch with us.

Simply log in at www.mytenancy.co.uk and you can:

- report repairs and view progress of a repair request
- check your rent account and print your statement.
- let us know about any changes to your personal details or household members
- find out who your Housing Officer is and contact them
- contact us about your tenancy

If you do not have your login details please contact us on 01323 340018 or if you have forgotten your password you can reset it on the **MyTenancy login page** at www.mytenancy.co.uk



Welcome to Henry

Henry is on the BHT intern programme working as a Tenant and Client Involvement Intern in the Housing Services team.

He has been responsible for a variety of tasks including leading on improving the Client Action Network website, publishing articles on the website, promoting services offered by Tenant and Client Involvement, assisting in the production of Lighthouse newsletter and visiting other BHT services to interview clients for articles.



Henry's hobbies include sea fishing, reading, attending music events, science and nature and countryside walks. He says:

“ Due to a long term health condition I have been unemployed since 2010. The BHT intern programme has given me valuable work experience and boosted my confidence which had taken a significant battering. I feel like my prospects for future employment are now much greater and that I have many more opportunities than I had before embarking on the intern programme.

Henry's Guide to Foraging for Mushrooms and Other Food

Autumn is a great time of year for foraging. Blackberries, chestnuts and hazelnuts can all be found quite easily by looking in hedgerows and woodland.



Since my childhood growing up in the countryside I have foraged for wild food, but probably my favourite type of wild food foraging is of mushrooms (or fungi). There are many varieties of wild fungus here in the UK that are edible and found growing at this time of year. Four common species are the field mushroom, the horse mushroom, the puffball and the parasol, all of which are delicious to eat if you are a mushroom fan.

Mushrooms can be found in a variety of habitats from open fields to dense woodland. The field mushroom, as its name suggests, is found in areas of open grassland and is probably the most familiar of the edible mushrooms to many people. Recreation grounds and parks may often have these fungi growing on them in quite high numbers.

A note of caution must be raised at this point. There are also species of wild mushrooms in this country that are poisonous and should obviously be avoided. Some of these species are not deadly but can still cause very unpleasant symptoms if eaten and there are a few species out there which can be fatal if eaten, often with no cure or antidote for the toxin.

The death cap and the destroying angel are two such deadly species. When foraging for wild food, you must be able to correctly identify what you are picking, otherwise you should not eat it.

Never eat any wild food without multiple sources of positive identification.

www.wildfooduk.com/mushroom-guides