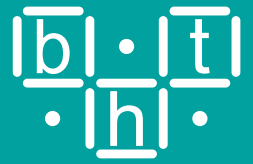




Combating Homelessness, Creating Opportunities, Promoting Change

# Lighthouse



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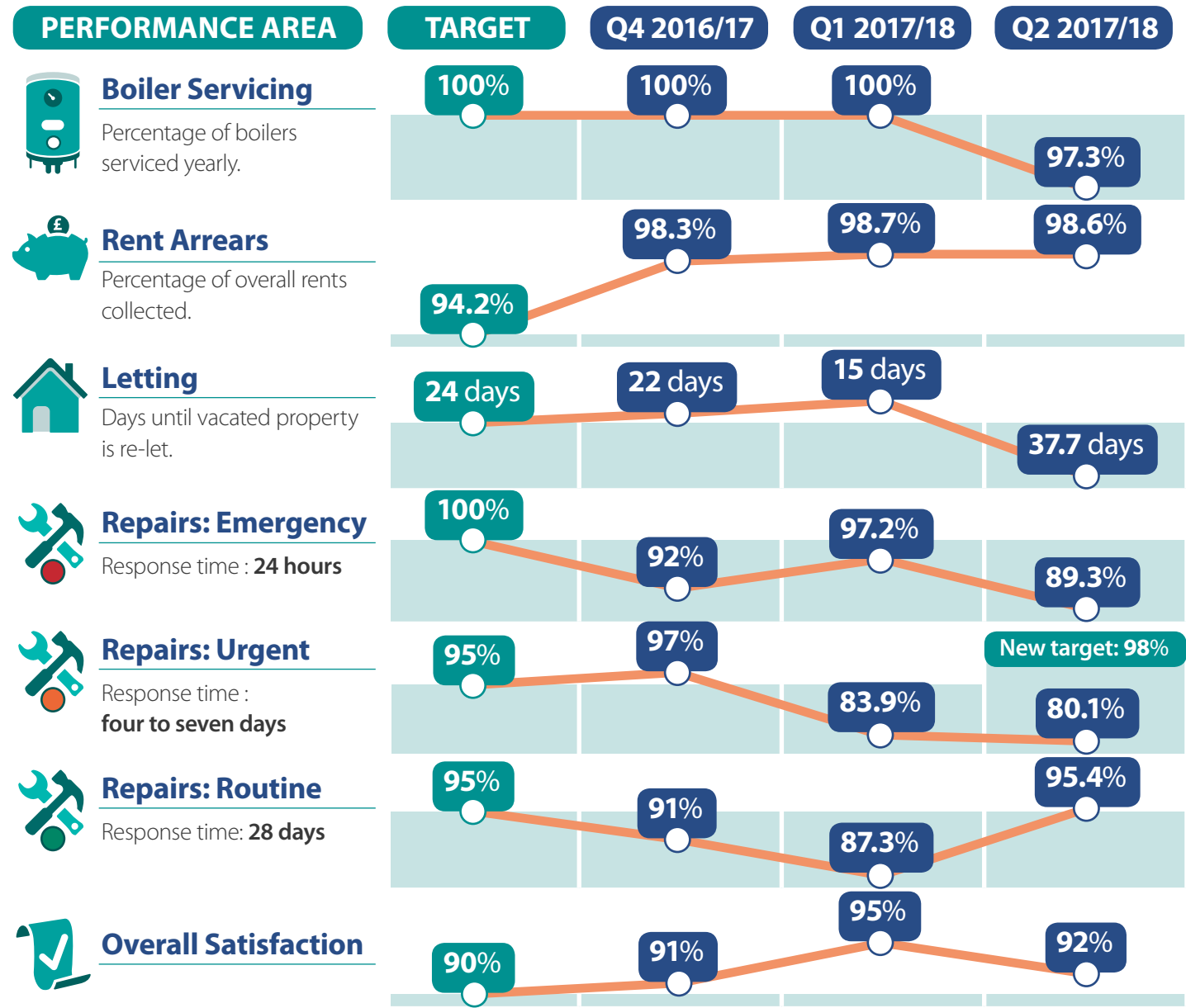
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# BHT Housing Services: How Well Are We Performing?



## Congratulations to our prize winners

Congratulations to David from Brighton who won a £50 shopping voucher in the quarterly prize draw for the repairs survey.

Have you had a repair carried out recently?

If so let us know how you found the service. Your feedback is vital in helping BHT to improve the service that you receive. You will also be entered into the quarterly prize draw.

Congratulations also to Liam from Brighton who won a £20 shopping voucher in the bi-monthly direct debit prize draw. You too could win a shopping voucher when you set up a direct debit to pay your rent.



## Christmas Opening Hours and Spare Keys

We would like to wish all our tenants celebrating Christmas, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The BHT Housing services office will be closed over Christmas and New Year from **Friday 22 December at 5pm** and will be re-opening on **Tuesday 2 January at 9am**.

Emergency repairs may be reported to BHT's out of hours contractors, by calling **G. Saunders & Son** in **Brighton** on **01273 555499**. Please note that these services will also be taking time off at Christmas, but they will respond to any messages that you leave.

Our contractors will have the contact numbers for BHT Senior Managers on call over the holiday period for any unforeseen emergencies.

We would recommend that tenants leave a spare key with a family member or close friend just in case they get locked out, as it will not be possible to get spare keys over Christmas and New Year, when BHT offices are closed.

## Interested in joining our Green Inspector team?

Are you passionate about your garden? Would you like to feed back and help improve how it's maintained by our contractors?

We now have seven Green Inspectors representing Blake Court, Walton Bank, The Causeway and Shanklin Court.

We are looking for more tenants across BHT's properties in Brighton and Hastings to get involved. The role will involve carrying out regular inspections to rate and comment on different elements of the gardening such as grass cutting, shrub beds, hedges, paved areas and weeds after the contractors have visited, then emailing/sending in the post the completed form back, once completed.

A full induction and training for the role will be provided. Your rating and feedback will then be used to help improve the gardening service received from our contractors.

For more information call **Juliet O'Brien** on **01273 645443** or send an email to [juliet.obrien@bht.org.uk](mailto:juliet.obrien@bht.org.uk)



*"I really enjoy the Green Inspector role as I take great pride about where I live and I like to contribute to my housing association. I would encourage others to get involved."*

Derry from The Causeway



# Winter’s Here. Are You Worrying About Your Fuel Bills?

BHT knows keeping warm over the winter is a drain on hard-pushed finances whether you use gas or electricity.

Fuel bills can end up taking a large chunk out of your income but **National Energy Action** (a charity working to end fuel poverty) have put together some money-saving tips:



## READ YOUR METER

Read your meter regularly to check how much you are using or if your prepayment meter is still in credit.

Meters are read from left to right. Unsure? Pop into your local office and we’ll explain.

## CHECK YOUR BILLS

If your bill is showing ‘E’ after the units used, your utility company has estimated your reading.

Contact them with the actual reading or you may receive a much larger bill than you were expecting.

## IN DEBT? CONTACT YOUR SUPPLIER

Struggling to get on top of it? Speak to your supplier now. If they know there’s a problem they can work with you to find a solution.

Ask to set up a payment plan but be realistic about what you can afford to repay. Suppliers must follow strict rules when working with people in debt. You don’t want to leave yourself short for other essential bills.

Some suppliers can assist with grants or assistance payments if you are in exceptional hardship. This depends on the supplier and individual but it’s always worth asking.

Get advice on energy debt from **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline** on **03444 111 444** or your local **Citizens Advice Bureau**.

## SWITCH SUPPLIER

You may save money by switching supplier.

You can do this at price comparison sites over the internet and make sure that the supplier offers you any discounts you may be entitled to such as the Warm Home Discount, which offers a saving of £140 on electricity bills for the winter period 2017-18. Those who receive the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit are eligible, as are some other low-income and vulnerable households. You can also ask for any special tariffs you need such as Economy 7 or Economy 10.

If you have a smart meter you should still be able to switch but you may lose the ‘smart’ functions of your meter.



# What Can You Expect From BHT as a Tenant?

## Our new Service Charter explains everything

‘Your Service Charter’ is a leaflet recently produced by BHT to explain what you can expect from us as a housing association, as well as outlining what your responsibilities are to BHT as a tenant.

The leaflet covers topics ranging from the condition of your property, repairs, your rent account, getting involved with BHT and how to make a complaint if necessary.

Look out for the charter leaflet which will be sent out to all tenants in the post over the next few weeks.



## CHANGING HOW YOU USE YOUR GAS AND ELECTRICITY

Don’t leave your heating or water on Constant. Set it for those times of the day when you may need it most like morning and evening. Unsure? Then give us a call.

Guidelines for the living room is 21° C and other rooms 18° C, unless you have a long term disability, young children or are an older person and feel you need the extra heat. However, you should avoid overheating your rooms.

- close your curtains and doors at night to keep warmth in
- turn off lights and appliances you aren’t using and use energy saving bulbs if possible

### In the kitchen:

- put a lid on pans when boiling liquids as this saves energy and reduces condensation
- if you have a washing machine use the 30°C setting to save money

### In the bathroom:

- showers are still much more economical than baths
- to cut down on condensation and mould open the nearest window for a while to let out any steam



# Alone at Christmas?

Local activities over the Christmas period in Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings:

BRIGHTON	
CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH:	Salvation Army, 1-6 Park Crescent Terrace, Brighton, BN2 3HD
25 December 2017, served at 12noon. You'll need to book in advance as numbers are limited.	
01273 607095	www.salvationarmy.org.uk/brighton-congress-hall
REAL JUNK FOOD PROJECT CHRISTMAS LUNCH:	St Luke's Prestonville Church, 64 Old Shoreham Road, Brighton, BN1 5DD
Wednesday 27 December 2017 from 12.30pm to 2pm.	
The <b>Real Junk Food Project</b> is a delicious meal created from food that would otherwise go to waste, just pay what you feel it's worth. All are welcome.	
01273 557772	www.realjunkfoodbrighton.co.uk
THE REAL JUNK FOOD PROJECT LUNCH IS ALSO HELD WEEKLY ON:	
Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12noon:	
St Luke's Prestonville Church, 64 Old Shoreham Road, Brighton, BN1 5DD	01273 557772
Thursdays from 12.30pm:	
Hollingdean Community Centre, Thompson Road, Brighton, BN1 7BH	01273 236160
(Five minutes from Moulsecomb station)	
Fridays from 1pm:	
One Church, Gloucester Place, Brighton, BN1 4AA.	01273 694746
EASTBOURNE	
ROTARY CLUB CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH:	Our Lady Ransom Church, 2-4 Grange Road, Eastbourne BN21 4EU (opposite Town Hall).
25 December 2017 from 1.30pm to 4.30pm. You'll need to book in advance as numbers are limited.	
01323 723222	www.eastbournerotary.org.uk/
FREE EVENING MEAL:	Salvation Army Citadel, 141 Langney Road, Eastbourne, BN22 8AG
Tuesdays from 6.30pm to 7.30pm	
01323 640382	www.salvationarmy.org.uk/eastbourne-citadel
MATTHEW 25 CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH:	Brodie Hall, Seaside, Eastbourne, BN22 7NN
25 December 2017, served at 12noon.	
01323 726960	http://ctfe.org.uk/the-matthew-25-mission/



## Tenants' Focus Groups Tackle Three Important Areas

In last year's tenants' survey, three topics were identified as key areas of service improvement.

Following this, we held a series of focus groups in October and November on different topics where we invited tenants to come and share their views, opinions and suggestions for improvements. These included: How you would like to get involved as a tenant, what is your experience of our repairs service and what is your experience of the Complaints Procedure.

In the first focus group, ideas discussed included setting up tenants' associations or tenants' area panels, better use of noticeboards, energy fit homes, solar panels, feedback about future plans for modernisation of flats and mutual exchange within the trust.

For the repairs focus group, tenants weighed up the pros and cons of in-house handymen versus contractors. They also expressed an interest in having a tenant representative at the quarterly meetings with contractors.

In the complaints focus group, tenants suggested improvements to the wording of the Complaints Form, a reduction to the number of days it takes to respond to a complaint, and an idea for an online tracking system showing how a complaint is progressing.

Thank you to the tenants who got involved in the focus groups. Your ideas and suggestions are being reviewed and will be presented in a report early in the New Year.

HASTINGS	
SURVIVING CHRISTMAS – CHRISTMAS DAY AND BOXING DAY LUNCH AND ENTERTAINMENT:	Salvation Army, St Andrews Square, Hastings, TN34 1SP
Monday 25 December and Tuesday 26 December from 10am to 4pm.	
07802 451940	www.survivingchristmas.co.uk
CHEAP HOT LUNCHES (£1 PER PERSON):	Seaview, Southwater Road, Hastings, TN37 6LB
Monday to Friday from 1pm.	
01424 717981	www.seaviewproject.co.uk/
SALVATION ARMY FOOD PARCELS:	Salvation Army, St Andrews Square, Hastings, TN34 1SP
Thursdays from 10.30am to 12.30pm.	
www.salvationarmy.org.uk/Hastings-Citadel	

# Christmas Quiz

If you like a puzzle, here is a festive quiz to keep your brain occupied.

When unscrambled, all of the phrases below spell out the titles of some famous Christmas related movies. To help you to identify the movie, we have also provided the year that the movie was made and the name of one of the stars that appeared in the movie. See how many you can identify. Good luck.

1. UNDERFLOW SITE FAIL (1, 9, 4) – (1946, James Stewart)
2. A LEMON HOE (4, 5) – (1990, Joe Pesci)
3. THERMOPLASTIC PUMA CARS (3, 6, 9, 5) – (1992, Michael Caine)
4. ALE ATTACHES SUN (3, 5, 6) – (1994, Tim Allen)
5. CUT OVAL ALLEY (4, 8) – (2003, Colin Firth)
6. IT HARMS WITCHES (5, 9) – (1954, Rosemary Clooney)
7. NORTHWESTER HALTS COMIC HIGHS (3, 3, 6, 5, 9) – (2000, Jim Carrey)
8. IT WHEN JELLY GALA (6, 3, 3, 3) – (1996, Arnold Schwarzenegger)
9. IN OILY HAND (7, 3) – (1942, Fred Astaire)
10. PLANT DISGRACE (7, 6) – (1983, Eddie Murphy)
11. ARMCHAIR THRUSTS (6, 9) – (2011, James McAvoy)
12. UPHOLSTERER ENDED HORNED RIDE (7, 3, 3, 5, 8) – (1998, Whoopi Goldberg)

## Results of the tenant annual snapshot survey in the next issue

Thank you to all the tenants who responded to our annual Snapshot Survey.

We've received a fantastic response this year and will be publishing the results in the next issue of the newsletter, together with details of how we plan to use your feedback to improve services and to announce the lucky winners of the prize draw.

## Barry and Henry both win awards

Two colleagues from BHT's Housing Services won awards at this year's annual BHT Staff Conference.

Congratulations to Hastings Handyman, **Barry Smith** who won a **Special Recognition Award**, and to Tenant and Client Involvement intern, **Henry Schwaiger** who won **Intern of the Year Award**.



## Major Improvement works planned for BHT properties

This year we've taken a detailed look at the condition of all BHT properties and have created a 30-year plan of improvement works.

The plan will cover a number of external repairs and will also include new kitchens and bathrooms, external decorating and making homes warmer. Tenants benefiting from any of these improvements during this financial year will be notified six weeks in advance of works commencing to give plenty of time to prepare.

Work will begin early next year and we will be in contact where appropriate in the New Year.

For further information please contact our Repairs Team at [repairs@bht.org.uk](mailto:repairs@bht.org.uk)

Christmas quiz answers 1. A Wonderful Life 2. Home Alone 3. The Muppet Christmas Carol 4. The Santa Clause 5. Love Actually 6. White Christmas 7. How The Grinch Stole Christmas 8. Jingle All The Way 9. Holiday Inn 10. Trading Places 11. Arthur Christmas 12. Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer