



LET US HELP: BHT's Housing Services Launch Drop-ins

As part of the service provided by BHT Housing Services to our tenants, we have started drop-in sessions at your local BHT office where you are able to raise any queries or concerns that you have regarding your tenancy with your Tenancy Officer.

You will also be able to make arrangements to set up regular rent payments.

The sessions take place on a weekly basis, at the following times, at these locations:



BRIGHTON, with Tenancy Officer **Jenny Bojczuk**

Mondays between **9am** and **1pm**, at **144 London Road, Brighton BN1 4PH**. For further information, please call **Jenny** on **01273 645486** or email her at jenny.bojczuk@bht.org.uk

EASTBOURNE, with Tenancy Officer **Louise Matthews**

Mondays between **10am** and **12noon**, at **Highlight House, 8 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne BN21 3UH**. For further information, please call **Louise** on **01323 340018** or email her at louise.matthews@bht.org.uk

HASTINGS, with Tenancy Officer **Lynn Webb**

Mondays between **9.30am** and **1pm**, and **Fridays** between **9.30am** and **1pm**, at **Renaissance House, London Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 6AN**. For further information, please call **Lynn** on **01424 445354** or email her at lynn.webb@bht.org.uk

Satisfied With Your **REPAIRS?**

Have you reported a repair to BHT Housing Services recently? If so, you should have received a repair satisfaction questionnaire in the post shortly afterwards.



BHT values the feedback we collect from tenants about the service they receive, and these questionnaires enable us to monitor the performance of our work contractors.

When you have a repair carried out in your home, big or small, it will be very helpful if you can **complete the questionnaire and return to us in our free post envelopes**. The questionnaire is simple to fill out and should only take a few minutes to complete.

These should then be returned to **BHT Housing Services at Suite 14 Highlight House, 8 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UH** or emailed to repairs@bht.org.uk

Universal Credit **EXPLAINED**

In June 2015, the Government introduced Universal Credit, a new type of benefit designed to support people who are unemployed or on a low income. From this date, anyone eligible to claim Jobseeker's Allowance who lives in the Job Centre areas of Newhaven, Lewes or Eastbourne will be claiming Universal Credit.

Universal Credit will be rolled out in Brighton and elsewhere over the next year.



Universal Credit is a single monthly payment for people in and out of work, which brings together some of the benefits and tax credits you may previously have been entitled to. This is then paid directly into your bank account every month.

Benefits that Universal Credit is replacing include Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit, and Housing Benefit.

Where Universal Credit is different to previous benefits is that it is paid monthly into a bank of your choice. If you get help with your rent then this will be included in your monthly payment, meaning you are then required to pay this directly to us as your landlord.

If you live with your partner and you are both entitled to benefits, you will receive one monthly joint payment. You will usually get your first payment one month and seven days after making your first claim.

There are no limits on the number of hours per week you can work if you are claiming Universal Credit, but the amount you get will reduce once you start earning more money.

If you were already claiming benefits before June 2015, you should continue to claim these as normal and you will be told when you need to do anything differently. However, if your circumstances change, such as moving address or getting a new job, then you may be asked to claim Universal Credit instead.

For further information about Universal Credit and how this may affect your current benefit situation:

Call your **Rent Officer** at **BHT Housing Services** on **01323 340018** or email rents@bht.org.uk

USEFUL RESOURCES



UNIVERSAL CREDIT WEBSITE www.gov.uk/universal-credit

MONEY ADVICE SERVICE www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU www.citizensadvice.org.uk/

Brighton: citizensadvice.citizensadvice.org.uk/brightonhovcab.htm

Eastbourne: www.eastbourncab.co.uk/

Hastings: citizensadvice.citizensadvice.org.uk/citizensadvice1066.htm

Service **IMPROVEMENTS**

Upcoming plans to improve your experience of BHT as your landlord will include:

- ✓ The introduction in the autumn of **MyTenancy**, which will allow you to **manage your tenancy on a computer or smart phone**. You will be able to check your rent account, report repairs and monitor the progress of the repair.
- ✓ The introduction of **AllPay** later in the year, allowing you to **pay your rent at any shop displaying the AllPay sign**.
- ✓ The setting up of a **BHT Housing Services Facebook page** which will allow both you and BHT to **share information and views**.

How To Tackle **CONDENSATION**

Condensation is a common problem in properties, particularly in the winter months when walls are colder than the air inside your house.

The air inside your home **contains a lot of moisture** meaning that when warm water vapour hits the cold surface it condenses, producing water droplets.

The following steps can be taken to reduce the amount of condensation in your home:

When washing or cooking, use your kitchen and bathroom extractor fans.

When taking a shower, close your bathroom door and open the window as soon as you have finished so the warm, moist air can escape.

When cooking, put the lid on boiling pans, close the door to the rest of the house, and open the kitchen window. Alternatively, use your microwave to steam your vegetables.

If you dry your washing indoors, keep it in one room, shut the door, and open a window.

Open your windows for approximately ten minutes every morning. This will get rid of stale, moisture filled air, and will let in fresh, dry, clean air.

Wipe around all of your windows each morning to get rid of the worst of the moisture and to prevent mould from forming.

Keep heating on low all the time (but no less than 15 degrees Celsius).

HOW MUCH MOISTURE IS IN YOUR HOME?



Washing clothes
1 pint

Bath or shower
2 pints

Ironing
2 pints

Cooking
6 pints

Drying clothes
9 pints

Rent Arrears

REDUCED

The majority of tenants either pay their rent on a regular basis and on time, or make sure that they continue to receive housing benefit.

BHT is now taking a harder line on rent arrears and will evict tenants if they have arrears and do not co-operate with us to reduce them.

If you think you are getting into arrears, do phone your **Rent Officer** on **01323 340018** and we will try to help you sort things out.

Tenants' CHARTER

In the autumn we will be preparing a Tenants' Charter, setting out the rights and responsibilities of all tenants, with the aim of encouraging mutual respect between neighbours.

What do you think should be included in the Tenants' Charter? If you have any ideas to contribute please send them to your Tenancy Officer.

BHT Secures First Closure Order in BRIGHTON

In partnership with Sussex Police and Brighton and Hove City Council, we were able to secure the first ever Closure Order of a property in Brighton and Hove.

The tenant of the property, or his visitors, had been responsible for a lot of anti-social behaviour.

The Closure Order was granted by a local magistrate, and makes it a criminal offence for anyone to enter the property, other than the tenant or a representative of BHT. The order lasts for an initial period of three months.

BHT is to take a more robust approach to anyone who causes anti-social behaviour and disturbs the peace for their neighbours. This action will include applying for further Closure Orders and evicting any tenant responsible for anti-social behaviour.

How To Make a Perfect TUNA PASTA

As part of an occasional series, the BHT Housing Service newsletter will be providing ideas for possible recipes for you to try out when you have the chance.

In this first edition, here is a simple recipe for Tuna Pasta.

Ingredients:

- 1 x can of tuna
- 1 x can of sweetcorn
- 1 x can of chicken or mushroom soup
- 1 x onion – finely chopped
- 1 x garlic clove – chopped
- Some chopped mushrooms
- 500g packet of pasta (any small shape)

Method:

Put all ingredients in a pan just up to boiling. Turn off. Cook a good helping of pasta.

Once the pasta is cooked, mix all of the ingredients together, grate some cheese on top and bake for 15 minutes in the oven at 180/200 degrees Celsius until the cheese has melted.

If you have brought the mixture to the boil and it is still hot then you could bake under the grill for five minutes just to melt the cheese.

This should make a meal for two days, depending on how much pasta is used.