

Issue Eighteen | Sep 2019

Lighthouse

Combating Homelessness, Creating Opportunities, Promoting Change
BHT's 50th anniversary year

Winners of BHT in
Bloom gardening
competition
announced

Brand new
BHT website &
environmental policy
launched

NEW Competitions &
Prizes to be won!

What's On in
Brighton, Eastbourne
and Hastings & free
things to do!

A look back – BHT at
Brighton Pride 2019

BHT New Tenant
Focus Groups
unveiled





Hello, and welcome to the Autumn 2019 edition of the Lighthouse newsletter. I'm Alasdair and I am editor of Lighthouse as well as BHT Tenant Involvement Lead.

This edition is full of news and other features- for example an article on the new BHT website, the unveiling of the new BHT Environmental Policy, and an update on the work of the BHT Tenants' Scrutiny Panel.

I really enjoyed seeing the wonderful gardens that tenants had carefully and lovingly put together in response to the *BHT in Bloom* Competition. I know you will really enjoy the article about the prize winners.

I was really pleased with the positive response we had from the survey we asked you to complete regarding the Summer edition of Lighthouse. As a result of your comments, we have made improvements – for example we will now be having a 'What's On' page in every edition of Lighthouse rather than just in the summer copy.

With this continual improvement in mind, we need your feedback again! Shortly after receiving your Lighthouse you will be sent a Lighthouse survey for you to complete. The process is simple and quick, and to make it worth your while we will be awarding a prize of a £10 shopping voucher to three lucky people who have kindly taken the time to fill in the survey.

We want to produce a 'must-read' newsletter that reflects what you would like to see!

All the best, Alasdair

Photo above - Your editor (in the brightly coloured check affair and the shades) being garish and extravagant on the BHT Pride Bus.

Front cover photo: Brighton's Madeira Drive in the late 60s. At this time BHT initiated its vision to combat homelessness, create opportunities and promote change – marking 50 years of BHT history. Since 1905, Madeira Drive has played host to many major events including the Brighton Marathon and Veteran Car Run (Photo courtesy of The Argus).



Why is our logo gold? This year is BHT's Golden Jubilee, that's 50 years of changing lives. Keep an eye on our website for news about how we will be celebrating our 50th birthday.

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The new BHT Environmental Policy

As Brighton Housing Trust celebrates its 50th anniversary, it is turning its attention to what the world will be like in another 50 years.

While housing is the biggest crisis facing the UK today, the threats posed by climate change present the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced. BHT wants to play its part in protecting the planet, and we need your help.

We are going to produce a new environmental strategy, not for the next 5 years, not for the next 10 years, but for

the next 50 years. The strategy will look at everything we do, from buying office supplies to the way we travel to work.

Most importantly, any new homes we build will be designed to have zero emissions, and we will also look at ways of improving the energy efficiency in our existing homes.

We will be exploring what information you, as tenants, might find useful to help you to reduce your carbon footprint, have warmer homes and cut your energy bills.

The people who live in the homes are usually best placed to know what is needed, which is why we are asking you to tell us what BHT's priorities should be in combating the climate crisis.

Please write to us at **144 London Road, Brighton, BN1 4PH** with any ideas or comments that you might have.

Bill Randall
Board member

Andy Winter
Chief Executive

Announcing BHT's new more user-friendly website

We are delighted to announce the launch of the new BHT website! It has been designed to be a lot more user-friendly, with a clearer structure, updated content, and improved functionality.

Along with the re-design, we have introduced a range of new content, including sections showing our impact, real life stories, useful info and much more. It is now

much easier to donate to BHT, and our supporters can make regular donations, one-off donations and access fundraising tools and resources, as well as sign up to different newsletters according to their interests.

Tenants should keep an eye on the Tenants Information pages for your account (My Tenancy) and the latest news and updates.

The website is fully responsive with mobile devices, making it easier to navigate on a wide range of web browsers and devices. Check it out today at **www.bht.org.uk**

Welcome Jo Smith

Tenancy Sustainment Officer



"My role is to help tenants to keep their homes and connect with the local area and services. I will be spending most of my time out and about meeting tenants and developing connections in the local communities. I believe in building relationships with tenants to establish how I can help with their journey."

As well as helping people keep their homes and establish themselves in the local community, I aim to connect people with local services such as training courses, local jobs and mental health services.

Previous to this role I was working in mental health services in Brighton. I also have a lot of experience in support work and have worked with a variety of people across Brighton. In my spare time I play hockey for a local team and also play the odd game of squash and tennis!

"I will be working in Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings and am looking forward to meeting BHT's tenants and developing my new role."

We are proud to announce the winners of the BHT in Bloom competition 2019



Communal Gardens Section

One year ago, Chris Elliott was sleeping rough and drinking daily. He felt utterly hopeless and helpless. Today he stands one year alcohol-free, happily sharing a house in Brighton.

And as if that wasn't enough of an achievement, just last week Chris received the award for the winner of the Best Communal Garden in the annual **BHT in Bloom** competition.

Chris Elliott, who lives in a BHT move-on project for men and women recovering from addiction, has transformed a plain space into a bright, colourful and cared-for garden with the help of neighbours Mary Penegar and Del Rafferty, who live in the BHT flats next door.

Here, Chris tells us something of his journey over the last year: *"I attended a week-long community detox arranged by my brilliant keyworker at Pavilions (the alcohol and drug*

support organisation for Brighton and Hove). I spent 6 months in a BHT run rehab community, and now I am in Move On. My life is back on track and I have real hope for the future. I have to thank BHT and Pavilions for believing in me."

Chris says the colourful transformation of his garden has helped him transform his life, and says he is justly proud of his award: *"I never intended to enter the competition, but my keyworker encouraged me to do it. And now I've actually won it!"*

"I've never won anything in my life and the award was such a wonderful surprise."

Image p4: Chris Elliot receives his certificate from Bill Randall (BHT Trustee). Also pictured (l-r), Bernie Lynch (project Manager), Mary Penegar (neighbour and fellow gardener) David Chaffey (BHT Director of Housing Services) and your editor, Alasdair.

Image p5: Frances receives her certificate from Penny Laycock, BHT Housing Services Manager). Also pictured are Carey-Ann Burt (Frances' Housing Officer) and Alasdair, your editor.



Individual Gardens Section

The Individual gardens section of the **BHT in Bloom** competition was won by Frances White of Hastings, who has transformed an overgrown garden into a magnificent display of vibrant colour.

After many years of alcoholism, Frances gave up drinking following a serious accident. Since then, she has enjoyed a rich new life, and part of her adventure involves her passion for gardening. Three years ago her garden was a wilderness of weeds. Today it is a riot of colour cascading from trellises, arches and hanging baskets.

Frances says of her experience, *"for something to do after the accident and operation, I started working on the garden! Seeing the garden change has inspired me and given me a rich new life. I grow most of my plants from seeds and bulbs, and I get a real joy and a sense of achievement from seeing them grow and flower."*

"My favourite flowers are Passion Flowers and Fuchsias, though the Roses and the Honeysuckles are also beautiful and leave such a lovely scent in the air at night."

It's not hard to see why we were so impressed with the incredible work both these brave people have put into their gardens. The resurrection of these beautiful urban oases very much mirrors their own life journeys. I'm sure both their lives will continue to flourish in very different directions, but I doubt very much whether either will ever lose their passion for their gardens

Frances and Chris both win £30 gardening vouchers for their green-fingered achievements. The competition is sponsored by Southern Land Services, BHT's gardening contractor.



Become a tenant Green Inspector and improve your property grounds

As a Green Inspector you will report on the state of the gardens, but you can also make suggestions for improvements. You simply fill out regular inspection forms and send them to Alasdair at the London Road Office.

There's training and ongoing support, and then quarterly meetings where the inspectors meet, but it's OK if you can't make it. Send us your feedback forms monthly and you will have done your job.

Derry, a Green Inspector at The Causeway, Brighton, said, *"I like the area to be well kept, and BHT can't monitor the gardens all the time so I am their eyes and ears. I really enjoy it and would recommend it to others".*

Want to know more? Email Alasdair on a.tenquist@bht.org.uk or give him a ring on **07825425084**



Southdowns Court Community Day

David Routley, tenant at Southdowns Court in Saltdean, tells Lighthouse readers about his experience of the day...

The Southdowns Court Community Day dawned with heavy rain, meaning all the outside activities (like the visit of the local fire service, table tennis, free raffle, refreshments, and garden-based activities) had to be squeezed into the small foyer area.

Nevertheless, we felt that it was well organised and enjoyable. We chatted with BHT staff, like Andy Winter (BHT CEO) and David Chaffey (Director of BHT Housing Services). Two trustees, including Joan Mortimer, the Chair and the newly elected Independent Local Councillor, Bridget Fishleigh, kindly gave up their time to be there.

We also felt it encouraged a community spirit. Meeting other tenants isn't always easy with the physical layout of this building, and in many cases we chatted to tenants we'd not met before.

Some long-standing repairs were done on the day. Also, a member of the BHT Repairs Phone Team from Eastbourne was shown around the building, as we had often felt frustrated that the unusual layout of Southdowns Court was not fully appreciated by the Phone Team.

Many tenants felt that the real star of the day was the table tennis, hosted by the two really friendly Brighton Table Tennis Club members. Many tenants, from complete beginners to club members, really enjoyed playing the game.

Despite the rain, we felt that it was a successful event, and hope that BHT will one day run another Community Day event here at Southdowns Court, when the weather might be a bit kinder!

The BHT Tenants' Scrutiny Panel

Are you frustrated at some areas of BHT service delivery? Do you feel you have what it takes to act as part of a team to review different areas of BHT service with a view to improving them? Then a place on the BHT Tenants' Scrutiny Panel may be just the thing for you.

As a member of the BHT Tenants' Scrutiny Panel, you will produce a report and list of recommendations aiming to improve BHT performance in areas chosen by yourselves. Your report and recommendations will be presented to the BHT Board of Trustees to ensure best practice in service delivery. Two members of this Panel give you an idea of their Panel experience to date:

Charlie Green (Chair)

The TSP was formed last year back in November. We work with full support and training from BHT Staff. Our current concern is Universal credit, how it affects tenants, and whether BHT's response to this is satisfactory. Our task is to see if BHT can do things better!

We have a great team and are looking to recruit more members in future. I get a lot of satisfaction from taking part and am learning new skills I would have never thought possible.

David Routley (Panel Member)

I had two reasons for joining the Panel. I was becoming increasingly stuck in my flat and wanted an excuse to get out and meet some other like-minded people. Also, I wanted to give something back, as without BHT's help I would have been on the streets. This seemed a perfect opportunity!

I enjoy the meetings – there are interesting dynamics. Overall, I feel I've learnt a lot and grown as a result of the experience – and met some nice new people.

Want to improve the service delivery you get from BHT? Interested in joining the panel? Email Alasdair Tenquist on a.tenquist@bht.org.uk or give him a call on 07825 425084.

Congratulations to our prize draw winners

Congratulations to Mary from Brighton who won a **£20 Love to shop voucher** in the direct debit prize bi-monthly draw. You too can be in with a chance of winning a shopping voucher if you set up a direct debit. 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.

Congratulations also to Audai from Brighton who won a **£50 Love to shop voucher** in the prize draw for the 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.

Pride 2019



A small core team of staff volunteer every year to organise BHT's Pride bus. We hear from Brodie (Manager, BHT Shore House) about her experience...

I really enjoyed making some of the artwork for the bus this year, under the theme 'generations of love'. We focussed on the 1980's as this was a very eventful decade for LGBTQ+ people.

On the big day we arrived on Hove seafront stupidly early all dressed up and yawning to get the bus dressed. Everyone had really gone to town on their outfits and makeup up. A LOT of Day-Glo – Maureen O'Hare's pink wig being a highlight for me!

Once the parade got underway the crowd started going wild – clapping, cheering, blowing us kisses. Some even put their hand to their heart and shouted 'thank you' when they realised we were Brighton Housing Trust.

The deafening roar at the Clock Tower gave me goose bumps – as a gay person I find the feeling of being in the majority, just for one day, truly moving.

Everyone on our bus really got into the spirit, waving and interacting with the crowds. We were all hoarse and exhausted by the time we reached the park to de-rig. And then there was Kylie to look forward to...



Brodie (Manager, BHT Shore House) poses in front of the BHT Pride Bus

Shore House

Shore House provides accommodation and intensive one-to-one and group support to 20 people with mental health issues and complex needs. The service works proactively and flexibly with people, enabling them to move into more independent accommodation within an 18-month timeframe.

Contact Brodie on brodie.hall@BHT.org.uk for more info.

Brighton Mayors Lunch – Celebrating National Volunteer week

The first week of June celebrates National Volunteers week

To mark the event, Brighton Mayor Councillor Alexandra Phillips invited BHT staff, volunteers, and CEO Andy Winter to pop in for lunch. BHT receives the generous help of over One hundred volunteers and interns giving over of 7000 hours of their precious time every year. Charlie Green (tenant) attended the day as a volunteer with BHT.

"Having been a member of Brighton's Choir with No Name which partnered up with BHT last year, It was nice seeing



some of the volunteer staff again. After introductions, all the volunteers had their photo taken with the Mayor handing individual Certificates as to mark the occasion.

Lunch consisted of a truly scrumptious spread of Sandwiches and nibbles. After lunch, we were invited into the Council Chambers where Andy shared a few thoughts.

I'm sure everyone else would agree, that this was a really lovely way to be appreciated."

YOU said, we did: BHT's new round of Tenant Focus Groups are unveiled

We are always looking for feedback on the way in which BHT delivers its service. One of the ways we do this is to create Focus Groups.

Using issues you raised in last year's **Snapshot Survey**, the Focus Groups will review BHT's performance in these areas and come up with recommendations for improvement

Focus Groups really do make a difference. For example, out of last year's Starter Tenancies Focus Group, all new Community Housing Tenants have year-long starter tenancies, including regular visits from their housing officer to help them sustain their tenancies. So that is why we are asking you to join one of this year's groups. There are three of them:

Interested in Joining a group?

Email Alasdair Tenquist on a.tenquist@bht.org.uk or call on **07825 425084**

New BHT Website Group

Regarding the new BHT website, the group will assess to what extent the new website is fit for purpose and put together some suggestions for improvements.

The Neighbourhood Group

BHT neighbourhoods should be ones where tenants live harmoniously together with their surrounding community. This group will analyse the extent to which the concept of neighbourhood is being properly encouraged within BHT and make recommendations for improvements.

The Communications Group

This group will look at current BHT forms of communication, compare this to best practice and come up with recommendations for improvements.

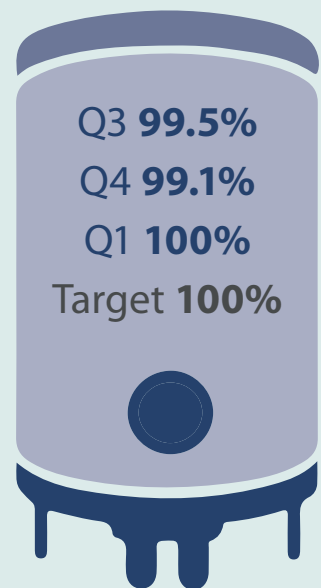
BHT Housing Services

How Well Are We Performing?

Q3 Oct-Dec '18, Q4 Jan-Mar '19, Q1 Apr-Jun '19

Boiler Servicing

Percentage of boilers serviced yearly



Repairs: Routine

Response time: 28 days

Q3 **94%**

Q4 **96%**

Q1 **93%**

Target 95%



Rent Arrears

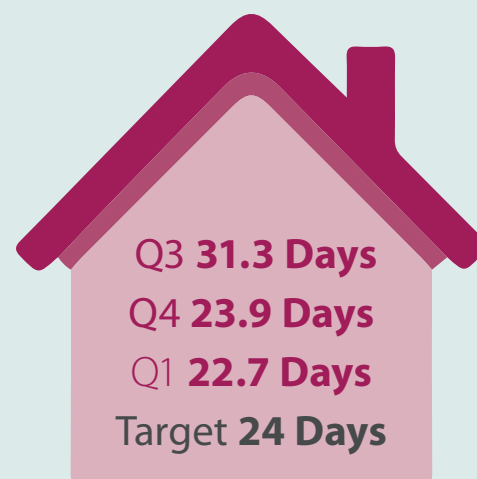
Percentage of overall rents collected



Q3 **98.5%** Q4 **98.1%**
Q1 **97.3%** Target **94.2%**

Letting

Days until vacated property is re-let



Repairs: Urgent

Response time:
Four to seven days

Q3 **92%**

Q4 **92%**

Q1 **95%**

Target 95%



Overall Satisfaction



Q2 **97%**

Q3 **93%**

Q4 **97%**

Target **90%**



Repairs: Emergency

Response time: 24 hours

Q3 **98%**

Q4 **97%**

Q1 **95%**

Target **100%**



What's On

We hope you have had an enjoyable summer. Below we have a list of what's on and free in YOUR area. We also have a list of exciting fundraising events that you can get involved in.



In Brighton

Open Mike Night at The George Payne

Every Thurs at 8.30pm, 18 Payne Avenue Hove

Gaming Retro-Bution at The Railway Inn

Station Road, Portslade, 31 Oct; 28 Nov – a huge selection of retro consoles & games available to play

Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run 3rd Nov

In Hastings

Hastings 10K 9am, Sun 6 Oct, Hastings Seafront

Hastings Bonfire Society Procession

Sat 19 Oct, 7.15–10.15pm, Starts Robertson Street

In Eastbourne

The Redoubt Fortress, Royal Parade, Eastbourne

Every Sat and Sun – an excellent place for those interested in history, the military or great buildings

The Story of Eastbourne, 248 Terminus Road, Eastbourne

10am-5pm, Tue to Sun until 31st December – history from the Iron Age woman and child



Eastbourne and Lewes Walk Fest

Eastbourne Bonfire Society Procession along seafront, starting at Eastbourne seafront – October 5th, 7.30pm start

Towner Art Gallery

10am–5pm, Tue to Sun, Devonshire Park, College Road, Eastbourne

BHT Fundraising Events

See BHT website for details of all the events below

Choir with No Name's Big Christmas Singalong

Wed 4th Dec, 7.30pm at the Brighton Dome. This BHT sponsored choir is for people who are homeless or have experienced homelessness. To celebrate Christmas, the group return with their London and Brighton choirs for the musical highlight of the festive season!

World Homeless Day

Raise awareness of homelessness in Sussex by fundraising in your school or workplace on the 10th October. Contact BHT and get your free fundraising pack today!

BHT's Festive Collections

Fri 20th and Sat 21st Dec, various sites across Brighton and Hove. Join our annual Christmas collections to help raise funds for First Base centre for rough sleepers

Contact Us

Out of Hours

Emergency Repairs

01273 555499

Brighton Housing Trust Head Office and General Enquiries

144 London Road
Brighton BN1 4PH
01273 645400
info@bht.org.uk

Rents and Repairs

01323 340018

rents@bht.org.uk

repairs@bht.org.uk

MyTenancy

www.mytenancy.co.uk

Report a repair or check your
rent statement on-line

Housing Officers

Jenny Bojczuk

01273 645486

07825 055503

Housing Officer post
to be filled soon

07824 306591

Kate Knight

01273 645454

07826 874849

Tenant Involvement

Alasdair Tenquist

01273 645443

07825 425084

Our mission: Combating homelessness; Creating opportunities; Promoting change.

Our values: Empowering People; Inspiring Change; Collaboration;
Delivering Excellence; Being Accountable.

Support and Emergency Numbers

Emergency out of hours support numbers

Out of hours services are for urgent medical treatment, i.e. if you cannot wait until the next day to be treated. Call NHS 111 if you need medical help fast, but it's not a 999 emergency. You will be assessed, given advice and re-directed to the local service that can help you best.

- **Mental Health Rapid Response Service** (formerly BURRS) Phone: 0300 304 0078 anytime.
For urgent mental health support out of hours
- **The Samaritans Phone:** 116123 24 Hour Confidential emotional support for anyone in a crisis.
- **Out of hours GP services:** Phone your GP surgery. Your call will either be automatically diverted or you will be given another number to ring. If you have a minor injury or illness, you are advised to go to the Brighton Station Health Centre, Queens Road.
- **Dental emergencies** – dental helpline: Phone 0300 123 1663. Lines open Mon–Fri 8.30am–4pm, or for out of hours difficulties, Phone 0300 024 2548. Operates from 5.30pm–10.30pm weekdays and 9am–5.30pm on weekends and Bank Holidays.
- **Late opening pharmacy services:** Late Night Pharmacy, 98 Dyke Road, Mon–Sun 9am–10pm; ASDA Brighton Marina Store Pharmacy, Tues–Fri 24 hours; Westons Chemist, 6 – 7 Coombe Terrace, Lewes Road Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm.