

Issue Twenty | April 2020

Lighthouse

Combating Homelessness, Creating Opportunities, Promoting Change

COVID 19 – Making
changes to keep you
safe

Updates from the
Scrutiny Panel & The
Choir With No Name

BHT in Bloom
Gardening Competition

BHT Crossword &
Raspberry Muffin
Recipe



I’m Alasdair and I am editor of Lighthouse as well as BHT Tenant Involvement Officer, and I am excited to present another newsletter which I hope you will enjoy.

However, as you will of course be aware, the main item on everyone’s mind is the Coronavirus. There is a BHT statement in relation to this across the page.

We are also aware that this is an important year for BHT, as we merge with Sussex Oakleaf from April 1st. Inside, Andy Winter, BHT CEO, gives you an update on this fantastic development for the organisation.

We understand these are difficult times so please do get in such with us if you have any queries.

Stay safe and healthy everyone!

Alasdair

Merger with Sussex Oakleaf

As advised in previous editions of the Lighthouse newsletter, BHT is merging with Sussex Oakleaf from April this year. In these trying times in the middle of the COVID 19 outbreak, I’m sure you will have other things on your minds. However, for BHT and Sussex Oakleaf this is an exciting development. Sussex Oakleaf are a wonderful organisation that works in West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. It is best known for its work with people with mental health problems.

What will this mean to you as tenants of BHT? The answer is very little. Over the coming months we will be consulting on a possible name for the merged organisation but, for the time being, we will still be called Brighton Housing Trust.

One benefit from the merger is that it will strengthen our finances which will allow us to invest more in maintaining your homes.

It has been decided that I will be the Chief Executive of the merged organisation.

Andy Winter

**Chief Executive
Brighton Housing Trust**

We are pleased to say that the BHT Annual Snapshot Survey results have now been processed and will soon be available to access via the BHT website

We are always aiming to improve the quality of our feedback. The BHT Annual Snapshot Survey is an ideal means of doing this.

The 2019 Survey results will be published in a report which will be available to download via the BHT website very shortly.

A free prize draw incentive was offered to all those taking part in the survey - two £50 shopping vouchers for tenants. The winners of these will be announced shortly.

Look out for the 2020 Annual Snapshot Survey which will be arriving in the latter part of this year. The more feedback we receive from you, the more we will be able to develop a service that truly reflects what you need.

Front cover photo:
Eastbourne Pier is one of the finest examples of a Victorian pier, rebuilt after a major fire in 2014. The photo shows the original pier, built in 1870.

Contents

- 3 BHT General News
- 4 – 5 BHT Tenant Involvement
- 6 BHT Housing Services News
- 7 Community Days & Crossword Puzzle
- 8 BHT Contact Numbers, Allpay & Prize Draw Winners

BHT Announcement regarding COVID 19 Outbreak

Our first priority is the safety and well-being of you our tenants, our staff and contractors.

We are following Government advice in line with announcements from Public Health England and our Local Authority partners. We are following Government advice to ensure the safety of staff, contractors and tenants.

Worried about paying your rent?

If you are worried about how you’ll pay your rent because of the impact of coronavirus, we’re here to help and make sure you feel secure in your home. If you’re unwell or can’t work because of coronavirus we want to reassure our customers that no one will lose their home. We know you’ll do your best to pay your rent and we can offer help if you’re in financial difficulties. We can also give guidance on claiming benefits so please get in touch. Recent Government announcements mean we need to take further measures to help delay the spread of coronavirus and minimise the risk to you and the rest of the population.

Key changes

- We’ll only be completing emergency repairs
- We’re contacting vulnerable tenants to offer reassurance, advice and support where possible
- We’re minimising face to face contact where we can, and our contact with you will be via telephone or email
- We have temporarily suspended lettings and mutual exchanges

We’ve made the difficult decision to cancel all but emergency repairs until further notice. We may only be able to make your home safe by putting temporary measures in place. In these circumstances, we’ll return and complete the full repair once the Government’s advice changes. We’ll make sure you always have essential services, particularly our vulnerable customers.

An emergency repair is something that needs to be fixed straight away as it poses a risk to your health, safety or security. This could be a gas leak, electrical fault, major damage to the structure of your home, a serious security problem such as a front door that cannot be locked, or the loss of essential services such as water or electricity.

We’ll also be completing our annual gas services closer to the due date rather than six weeks in advance. We’ll contact you nearer the date that your gas service certificate expires to arrange to carry out the check. We’re also minimising electrical testing for the time being. Please be reassured that we’ve not made this decision lightly. If you are concerned that your boiler or the electrics in your home are unsafe please call us on 01323 340018.

When completing repairs we will ensure your safety, and the safety of our staff. When arriving at your home, we’ll ask you pre-screening questions to check if you or anyone in your home is self-isolating and/or has any of the coronavirus symptoms. We’ll wear personal protective equipment and bring cleaning materials. We’ll ask you to keep out of the room or area where we’ll be working, to ensure the safety of you and our staff. If self-isolating at home, please let us know when reporting a repair or re-scheduling an appointment.

If you have a routine repair booked in we’ll be in touch very soon to let you know this has been cancelled. We understand this may be disappointing to hear but we want to reassure you this is for your safety. Your repair will be rescheduled when safe for you and us to do so.

Following Government updates our contact with you will be via telephone, text and or email. All our other services are continuing and our support services are available if you need advice regarding changes in your income or employment status. Things are changing daily so we’ll continue to publish updates on our website and update you regularly by email.

Help us stop the spread of Coronavirus

Please use the latest information about Coronavirus (COVID-19) which is available on the Government website and from the NHS website. From now on if our staff need to visit they will check whether you are happy for them to enter your home. Where we can we will contact you by phone rather than visiting to minimise any risks. Please ensure we have your updated mobile phone details.

If you are self-isolating (this means when you are staying at home to stop the risk of the coronavirus spreading) It is really important that you let us know before we enter your home so we can plan for any potential work or support that may have been arranged. Contact us on 01323 340018 or info@bht.org.uk.

Scrutiny Panel update

The Panel is currently continuing to put together its findings on the impact of Universal Credit on BHT tenants, and the extent to which BHT’s current policies and procedures are appropriate.

The tasks completed to date include statistical arrears analysis, and surveys and interviews with tenants. Now this all needs to be put together into the final report.

Charlie Green, the Chair, presented the work so far to the Board’s subgroup, the Operations and Personnel Committee, where it was very well received.

Sadly given the restrictions on group meetings as a result of the Coronavirus, Scrutiny Panel meetings are being

put on hold until the restrictions ease. However, we are optimistic the report will be completed later this year and you will be notified when it is available on the BHT website.

Interested in being part of the Scrutiny Panel? Contact Alasdair on a.tenquist@bht.org.uk or call **07825 425084**.

The Choir With No Name

Run in partnership with BHT

We are a small charity, founded 10 years ago for people affected by homelessness. We’d been joyously meeting once a week at One Church Brighton, and ended last year with two amazing Christmas gigs at Brighton Dome and Cadogan Hall in London.

However, due to the **COVID 19 outbreak restrictions** we have had to make the difficult decision to stop rehearsals and postpone gigs for the time being.

Our main focus now is on keeping in touch weekly with each of our members, reducing isolation and making sure they feel supported in the coming weeks. We’re looking to set up a ‘virtual choir’ online- BCWNN: Live Lounge,



sending out musical activity packs to offline members, and setting up local choir Facebook and Whatsapp groups.

To find out more and keep in touch with the latest developments, just look at our website at www.choirwithno.name.org/choirs/brighton-choir

Or you can contact me – Alex Procter, the choir manager on 07825 079132



Obituary Michael Green – Eco Warrior and former BHT Tenant

Michael Green was a tenant in Eastbourne with a passionate desire for the survival of the planet and his ethical–vegan–eco-warrior stance was known to many people across the world. His life was about getting people to see the possibilities of change and had dynamic focus.

But Michael was also an artist and used recycled items as the tools for his creativity. Michael’s friends are keen that others are aware of his passion, particularly if they share it.

Charlie’s raspberry and white chocolate muffins

Charlie, a regular contributor to Lighthouse, gives us another of his favourite recipes – yummy muffins



I had one of these about eight years ago when a work colleague had brought them in and shared them round. White chocolate is one of my childhood favourites and with the raspberries, they’re delicious and so easy to make!!

Note you will also need a 12-hole muffin tin and cases.

Ingredients

- 300g plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 150g golden caster sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 225ml milk
- 50g butter (melted)
- 100g fresh raspberries
- 100g chopped white chocolate

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C/180C fan/Gas mark 6 and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cases. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl and stir in the sugar.

Crack the egg into a separate bowl and whisk in the vanilla extract, milk and butter. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry and add the raspberries and chocolate, take care not to overmix.

Spoon the mixture into the cases and bake for 25 to 30 minutes and bake until well risen and just firm to the touch.

BHT In Bloom competition

It’s that time again – BHT in Bloom!

When Social Distancing means that we have to spend more time at home than we ever have before, why not use that time to create something beautiful in your garden or patio space? Here we look at one of last year’s winners and encourage you to follow her example and put those green fingers to work.

The BHT In Bloom competition judges last year were staggered by the quality of the gardens they saw. BHT tenant Frances White of Hastings won the Individual Garden Competition. She transformed an overgrown garden into a magnificent riot of colour. Frances says of her experience, “*Seeing the garden change has inspired me and given me a rich new life.*”

The competition is upon us again! There are two categories in the competition: best individual garden/ indoor plants and best communal garden. You’ve got until June 30th to get your entry in which will have to be via email or text (contact details below). I will then contact you to take down the details we require. You could win a £30 B&Q voucher as a winner (or a £10 B&Q voucher for three runners up).

We have not as yet set a date for the judges to visit, but it is likely to be late August or early September. We will keep you all updated.

Please contact Alasdair Tenquist on **01273 645443** or e mail on a.tenquist@bht.org.uk for more details. The competition is sponsored by Southern Land Services.



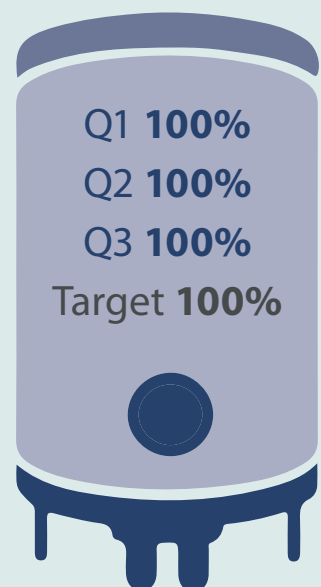
BHT Housing Services

How Well Are We Performing?

Q1 Apr-Jun '19, Q2 Jul-Sep '19, Q3 Oct-Dec '19

Boiler Servicing

Percentage of boilers serviced yearly



Repairs: Routine

Response time: 28 days

Q1 **93%**

Q2 **95%**

Q3 **95%**

Target **95%**



Rent Arrears

Percentage of overall rents collected



Q1 **97.3%** Q2 **97.2%**
Q3 **97.1%** Target **94.2%**

Letting

Days until vacated property is re-let



Repairs: Urgent

Response time:
Four to seven days

Q1 **95%**

Q2 **93%**

Q3 **90%**

Target **95%**

Overall Satisfaction



Q4 **93%**

Q1 **97%**

Q2 **97%**

Target **90%**



Repairs: Emergency

Response time: 24 hours

Q1 **95%**

Q2 **97%**

Q3 **95%**

Target **100%**



Would you like a Community Day at your property this Summer?

Restrictions put in place by the Coronavirus mean that it is highly unlikely we will be holding any Community Days at properties in the coming months. However, we are hopeful that come late Summer/early Autumn we will be able to hold at least two Community Days

Community Days are one of the events we love the most at BHT Housing Services. It's a chance for us to see tenants in a different light over some tasty food and drinks. Follow that up with some great fun games from Table Tennis to

Whack the Rat! (for anybody interested) that's a recipe for a fun afternoon getting to know your BHT Housing Services staff. Usually Andy Winter (CEO) and at least one Board member are present so do come with your burning questions.

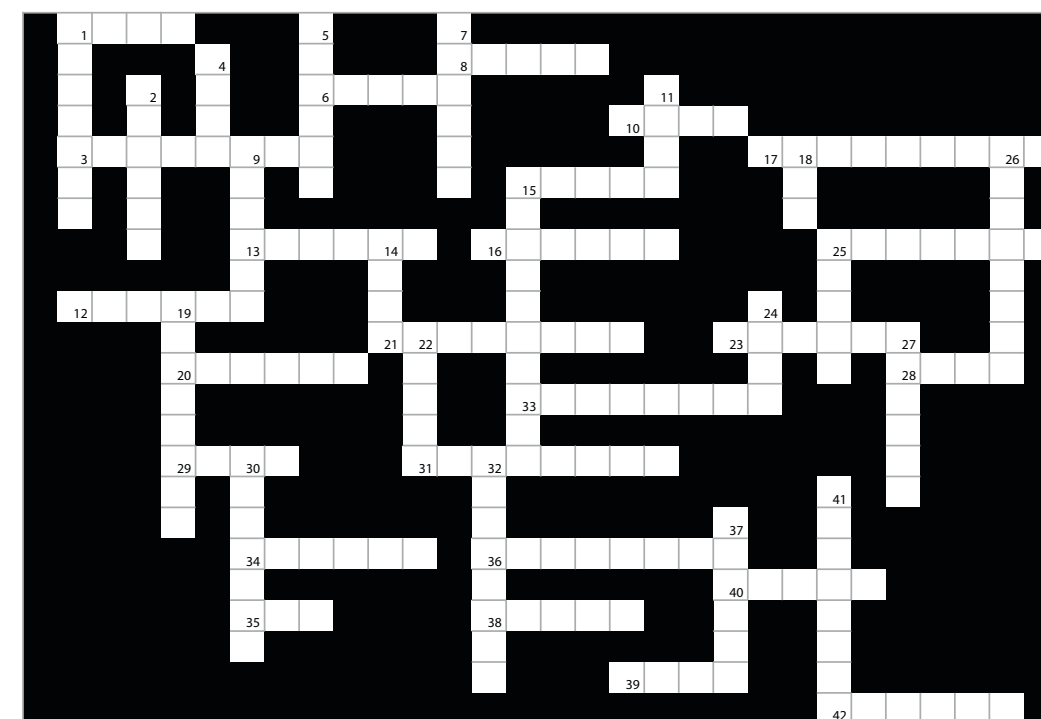
If you think your property might be due a Community Day, please either call one of your Housing Officers, using the phone numbers on the back page.

BHT Crossword

(Answers on back page)

Down

1. A mass of flowers that grows on a tree or bush (7)
2. Spring plant from which saffron is obtained (6)
4. Land dwelling amphibian (4)
5. Flowers associated with Amsterdam (6)
7. Festival that takes place in early spring (6)
9. Animal that features in Watership Down (6)
11. Something you can fly when the sun is out (4)
14. Oval shaped food hunted at Easter (4)
15. Public Holiday at the start of Easter weekend (4,6)
18. Item worn on head to protect it from the Sun (3)
19. Plant with purple fragrant flowers (8)
22. Game bird with colourful eggs considered a delicacy (5)
24. Where birds set up home (4)
25. What are sown before a plant grows (5)
27. What the Sun generates on a pleasant spring day (6)
30. Time in March when day and night are of equal length (7)
32. Yellow flower associated with St David's Day (8)
37. Brightly coloured segments of flowers (6)



Across

1. Colour of the sky on a clear day (4)
3. Bulbous plant with white flowers that grows in spring (8)
6. Young farm animals born during the spring (5)
8. Fourth month of the year (5)
10. Tiger is a variety of this type of colourful flowering plant (4)
12. Being solar illuminated (6)
13. Colourful headgear worn at Easter (6)
15. Birds collectively known as a 'Gaggle' (5)
16. Substance in flowers collected by bees (6)
17. Sweet food traditionally eaten at Easter (9)
20. Word pertaining to the season of spring (6)
21. Burrowing rodent with red and grey varieties (8)
23. Yellow/green grassland found near a river (6)
28. Where people choose to go over the Easter break (4)
29. Wild animal with antlers and hooves (4)
31. Beetle with a red body and black spots (8)
33. This is increased when the clocks go forward in spring (8)
34. Purple type colour found on a rainbow (6)
35. Large tree from which acorns grow (3)
36. Poisonous plant with pink flowers (8)
38. Fowl birds that live in ponds (5)
39. Striped insects that produce honey (4)
40. Thin branches of a tree often found on the ground (5)
42. Outdoor space that can be used when spring begins (6)

Contact Us

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

Brighton Housing Officer:
Kiri Black 01273 645454 / 07826874849

Hastings, Eastbourne
and Saltdean
Kittie Ogden 07824306591

Tenant Involvement

Alasdair Tenquist
01273 645443 / 07825 425084

Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

01323 340018
(Details of emergency out of hours
service provided by our contractors)

Gas emergencies

08000304435
(Robert Heath)

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

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

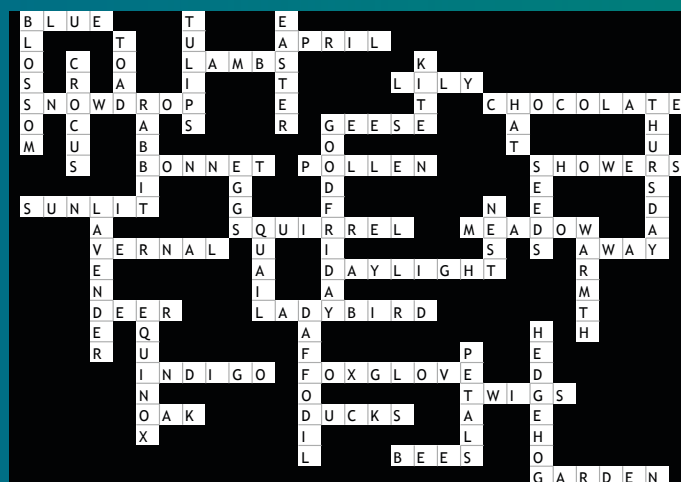
Allpay

There are new payment options available for you under the COVID-19 restrictions.

We are now able to provide you with the means to pay by phone so you don't have to leave home at this time. To do this simply call 0330 041 6497 (remember to have your Tenant Reference number which begins with the first few letters of your surname).

You can still of course pay your rent using your Allpay card at Paypoint and Post Office outlets as well as continuing to to pay by setting up a Direct Debit. Contact your Income Recovery Officer about Direct Debits.

Crossword Answers



Congratulations to our prize draw winners

Congratulations to Steven from Brighton who won a £20 Love2Shop voucher in the direct debit prize bi-monthly draw simply for setting up a Direct Debit with BHT. Your Housing Officer can guide you through the process step-by-step.

Congratulations also to Colin from St Leonards on Sea who won a £50 Love2Shop 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? We need your feedback, so fill in the survey you receive in the post and you could win a £50 shopping voucher in our quarterly prize draw.