

Lighthouse

Combating Homelessness, Creating Opportunities, Promoting Change



Covid-19 update from
David Chaffey, Director
of Housing Services

Support Services
during Covid-19

Annual Snapshot
Survey Update

BHT Sussex In Bloom
is back!

BHT Crossword &
recommendations from
tv, film, radio & books

Editor's Note from Joe Ashdown, Housing and Performance Administrator

A warm welcome to the Summer 2021 edition of Lighthouse which is once more packed with a range of informative and enjoyable articles that I hope you will like.

Firstly, I should say that I am holding the editorial fort for this edition of Lighthouse as my esteemed colleague Alasdair has had to take some time off work after a recent bout of illness. Be assured, however, that Alasdair will be back to re-assume editorial duties for Lighthouse's Autumn newsletter.

Although BHT, like the world generally, continues to operate with COVID safety foremost in its thoughts, the arrival of summer has at least provided some light and encouragement for the weeks and months ahead. David Chaffey, Director of Housing Services, will provide an update later in this edition on how BHT is operating in COVID times.

On 22nd July, BHT Sussex' prestigious gardening competition "In Bloom" took place, with the help of Southern Land Services. The competition ran all day in Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton. We have details in this edition about the day and some photos for your delectation inside.

We also hear from BHT's Chief Executive, Andy Winter, about the reasons for the organisation's decision to recently change its name to BHT Sussex.

Plus, we have recommendations for the best TV and films to watch, books to read and podcasts to listen to, as well as a special summer crossword compiled by my good self.

Enjoy, and take care of yourselves.

Joe

Welcome to BHT Sussex



An Update from Andy Winter, BHT Sussex CEO on our change of name

In April, we officially changed our name from Brighton Housing Trust to BHT Sussex. As you may recall, in 2020 we merged with a care and support organisation based in Mid Sussex, Sussex Oakleaf. Since that time, we have been looking to review our name to more accurately reflect the work that we do.

The name/words 'Brighton and Hove' don't always go down well in Eastbourne, Hastings, Crawley, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill where we now provide services and housing.

I'm very grateful to the Tenants' Scrutiny Panel for meeting with me last year to explore the name change and also our Mission Statement

The current Mission Statement remains: "Combating homelessness, creating opportunities, promoting change". There has been some discussion about amending it to: "Changing lives across Sussex", but this has yet to be agreed with the BHT Sussex Board, which includes two tenants. We had an away day in June to consider these matters further. We will be in touch with updates.

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Front Cover: This view of Hastings Pier was supplied by our Housing Services manager, Katherine Pope.

Covid-19 Update

David Chaffey, Director of BHT Sussex Housing Services



David Chaffey, Director of BHT Sussex Housing Services, has had the difficult task of steering Housing Services through these difficult times. Here he gives us news of the latest developments in BHT Sussex affecting you, our tenants.

I hope this finds you well through what continues to be an incredibly challenging time for us all.

As we move out of the third national lockdown, BHT Sussex continues to adhere to all Government guidance and has retained all of the safety measures in place prior to July 19th as we work hard to provide you with as safe and effective a service as we possibly can.

Our Team is available to provide advice and support across our range of services but for now an in-person appointment can only be provided at our Brighton office and must be booked in advance, or we can visit you in your home if absolutely essential and providing all protective measures including social distancing are in place.

We continue to offer a full repairs service (including out of hours) through our experienced in-house team and our range of external contractors and all compliance work – gas, fire, asbestos and electrical safety - continues as legally required. Please do provide access for this vital work and if you have concerns, talk it over with us as arrangements can be put in place to keep you safe where an inspection or work is required.

At the time of writing we have just moved to Stage 4 of the Government's strategy for tackling COVID. Please speak to the Team or use our website for the most up-to-date information. The situation continues to change, and we will need to adapt accordingly.

If you need any help or support, please get in touch. We are here to assist or point you in the right direction if we cannot help directly ourselves.

David Chaffey

Support Services during COVID-19

Restrictions may have eased nationally, but we know many of our tenants have been struggling during the difficult past 18 months or so. Here are some resources that may be of some assistance for yourself, or for someone you know who may be facing difficulties.

Main council COVID-19 pages:

Brighton and Hove: brighton-hove.gov.uk
Hastings: hastings.gov.uk/my-council/covid19
Eastbourne: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/community/covid-19/

Current Alert Level and Guidance web pages:

Brighton & Hove: brighton-hove.gov.uk/covid-19-key-statistics-brighton-hove/
Hastings & Eastbourne: new.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/emergency-planning/coronavirus/

General help East Sussex:

new.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/groundswell.org.uk/coronavirus/

General help Brighton and Hove:

The Brighton & Hove COVID help Directory: covidbrightonhove.org.uk
Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (emergency food and foodbank info): bhfood.org.uk/resources/referring-to-a-food-bank/
Brighton and Hove Street Support: streetsupport.net/brighton-and-hove/

Support for women:

Hastings: nhs.uk/services/service-directory/refuge-hastings/hastings.gov.uk/housing/vulnerable/domesticviolence/wayfinderwoman.com/

Brighton and Hove:
Safehaven Women Workshops
Contact Jen Pringle: 07306014252
jen.pringle@stpetersbrighton.org

The 2020 Tenant Annual Snapshot Survey

In 2020 we asked you, our tenants, to tell us what you think about the housing service that we provide by filling in the BHT Sussex 2020 Snapshot Survey.

More of you completed surveys than ever before which makes the information a more accurate reflection of your views – thank you very much for taking the time. The results have now been processed and a report will soon be published and available to all. However, in the meantime, David Chaffey, BHT Sussex Director of Housing, picks out some of his highlights.

In the context of the pandemic this set of results is really pleasing, however we all recognise there is more to be done to deliver the service as you, our tenants, and we, would like to see provided. Closer relationships between staff and tenants were forged during COVID-19 as we were contacting residents on a regular basis to offer any assistance that we were able to provide.

The significant increase in 'satisfaction overall' reflects this (81% of tenants were satisfied, 6% higher than the result in 2019). Neighbourhood satisfaction has also increased by 5% and in part this also reflected our work supporting tenants during the pandemic and encouraging people to help each other. Our grounds maintenance and cleaning contractors also worked hard to keep neighbourhoods looking smart during the year despite the restrictions in place.

Your satisfaction with our repairs service also saw a marked improvement by over ten percentage points to 75% – however this is an area we are aware needs further improvement and our Scrutiny Panel will be working with us on this topic over the coming months. The 'quality of home' response has also increased, up four points to 76%. As we steadily make improvements through our major works programme to tenants' homes (like windows, kitchens and bathrooms) this figure will hopefully continue to improve.

'Being kept informed' and 'dealing with feedback and complaints' satisfaction levels continue to rise. As this is an area we have focused our energy on over the last couple of years the results are good to see but this remains an important area for us to concentrate on this year.

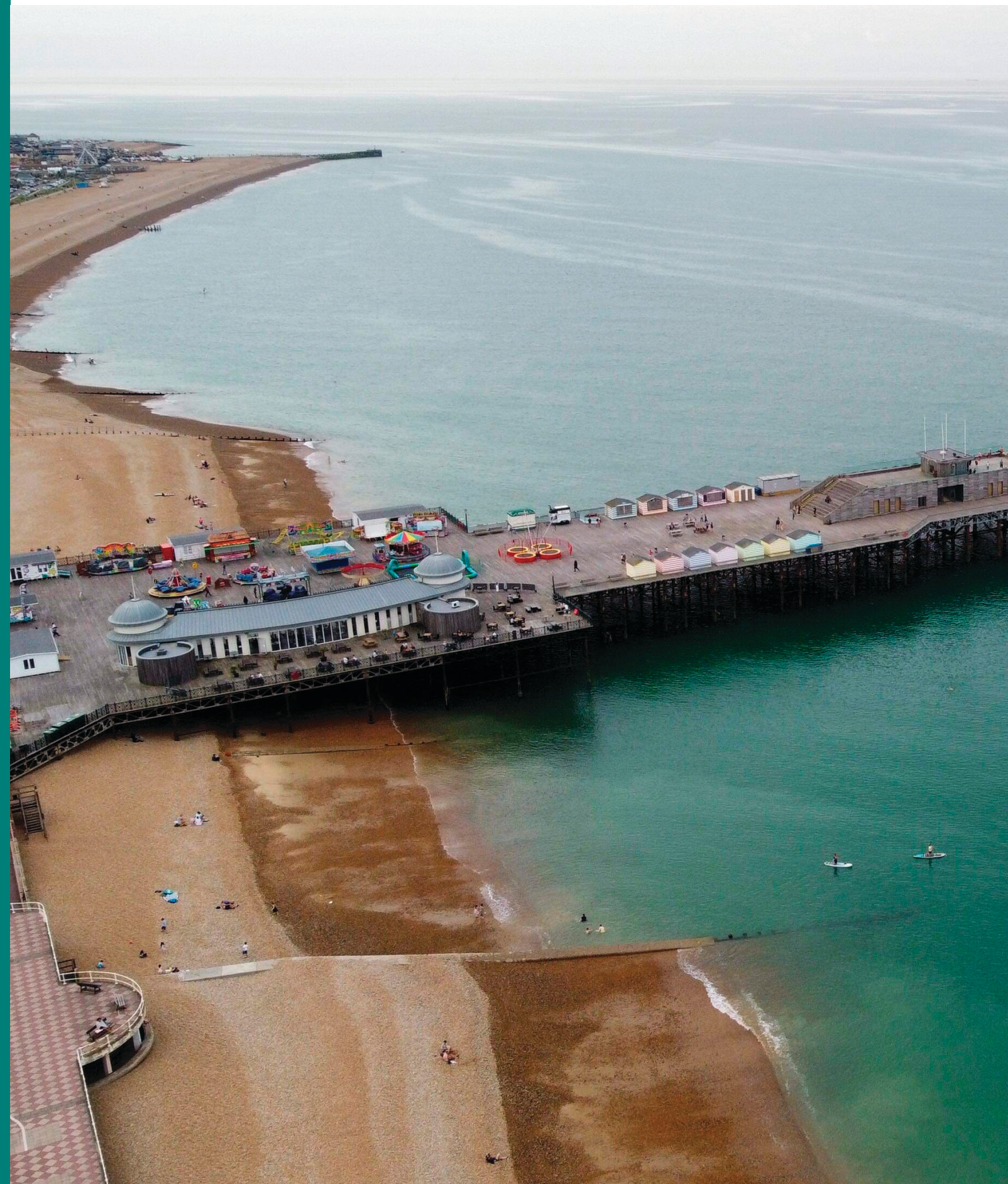
'Listen and acts on views' is now at a much improved 72% satisfaction level which indicates that our involvement work and its outcomes is clearly resonating with our tenants. Overall, this represents a decent outcome reflecting the dedication and commitment of our staff both to you our tenants and to their work in general. However it also tells us there is much to be done. None of this could be achieved without the fantastic input of our involved residents working with us to shape and improve our services to ensure they remain appropriate in a fast-changing world.

Thank you to all our involved residents and if you would like the opportunity to be involved with us please contact Alasdair Tenquist.

Regards

DC

A glorious aerial photograph of Hastings Pier and two paddle boarders
Taken by Katherine Pope, Housing Services Manager



BHT Sussex in Bloom is Back

Judges with Matt (and Melanie) proud gardeners at Springfield road

BHT Sussex in Bloom has become something of an institution amongst our tenants over the years, so we were extremely disappointed that we were not able to hold the competition last year.

However, the relaxation of restrictions this summer has meant we were delighted to be able to once again get the chance to view and judge some of the wonderful gardens that our tenants have been lovingly tending over the last year.

The competition, kindly sponsored by one of our landscaping contractors, Southern Land Services, rates each of the entrants' gardens according to a number of criteria, including Visual Impact, Design, and Plant Variety and Health.

The judges were Mark Bailey (Southern Land Services), Kelvin MacDonald (Trustee), Katherine Pope (BHT Sussex Housing Services Manager) and myself, Alasdair Tenquist (BHT Sussex Tenant Involvement Officer).

On 22nd July we all set out to inspect residents' gardens spread out in properties in Hastings/St Leonards on Sea, Brighton and Hove, and Burgess Hill. The judges had a wonderful day chatting with our green-fingered tenants, and were all blown away by the efforts, flair and imagination our tenants had put into each of their gardens.

Kelvin MacDonald (BHT Sussex Trustee and Chair in waiting) said the following of his experience of the day:

'I so valued meeting BHT Sussex residents and staff and seeing the inspiring gardens that they have created. Their skills, commitment and pride is infectious and heart-warming. Congratulations to everyone.'

The prizewinning entries will be decided shortly and will be notified over the coming weeks. There will be a prize giving ceremony at the winning entry in due course. The event will be publicised in local press and in the Autumn edition of Lighthouse.

We will be covering this in the next edition of Lighthouse



A wonderful peace corner at Debbie's garden in St Leonards on Sea

when you will be able to see the amazing winning entries. In the meantime we all want to extend our congratulations to all the entries, who made the day one to remember.

Alasdair [Alasdair Tenquist, BHT Sussex Involvement Officer]



We came across this surprise guest in David's garden in Brighton

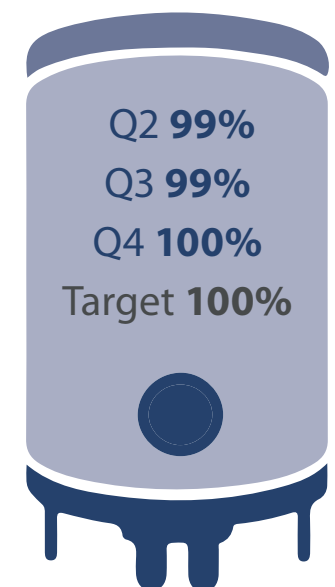
BHT Housing Services

How Well Are We Performing?

Q2 Jul-Apr-Jun 2020, Q3 Oct-Dec 2020, Q4 Jan-Mar 2021

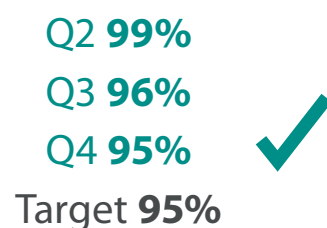
Boiler Servicing

Percentage of boilers serviced yearly



Repairs: Routine

Response time: 28 days



Rent Arrears

Percentage of overall rents collected



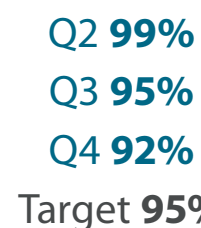
Letting

Days until vacated property is re-let



Repairs: Urgent

Response time: Four to seven days

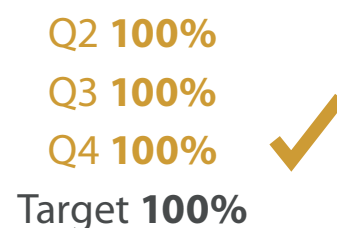


Repairs: Overall Satisfaction



Repairs: Emergency

Response time: 24 hours



Brighton Choir With No Name Update

For a little while now, The Brighton Choir With No Name have been meeting in person in a socially distanced, outdoor setting.

More recently, we've been rehearsing in the Open Market, where the brilliant acoustics have created a great spectacle for passing members of the public.

However, the great news is that we are now looking forward to returning to St Paul's Church in West Street Brighton. We will be busily rehearsing for our upcoming

gigs, including (we hope) our annual Christmas Gig at the Brighton Dome. We will be meeting in person, but also we will continue to be livestreaming for those unable to make it to the venue.

The lifting of most of the restrictions is great news for enlisting new members. The government specifically mentions easing of restrictions for choirs, so we should be able to take on new choir members very soon! We continue to liaise with local services, including other musical groups, community settings and the Probation Service, so expect the Choir to be filling St Luke's with fantastic songs and fun over the coming months!

If you are interested in joining the livestream or joining in person, please do get in touch alex.procter@bht.org.uk.

If you are interested in joining the livestream or joining in person when we return indoor, please do get in touch with Alex on alex.procter@bht.org.uk

A Tenant's story

Steve, one of our Brighton tenants, tells us something of his experience of the Astra Zeneca COVID-19 Vaccination

The wife and I had our first vaccination jabs against Covid-19 a while ago at the Brighton Centre. We both had the Astra Zeneca jab!

Did it frighten or bother me with all the hype about it? Not in the slightest!

I know conspiracy theories have been circulated about these jabs but I'm still here! And we didn't notice anything different about it to any other jab we have. I was more nervous about a security guard there who was there to make sure everything ran smoothly.

We had to go to the Brighton Centre. It was well organised and we were able to park nearby in Churchill Square. If you drive, you could park for free in the bottom floor of Churchill Square car park for an hour for people having the jab. Don't use the car park behind the Grand Hotel. It's expensive!

You then had to walk to the entrance to the Brighton Centre on Kings Road and we were inside almost

immediately. You should allow for an hour, but it is a well-oiled schedule, so you HAVE to be there on time. But it didn't take as long as I thought.

The queues weren't very long and we were inside very quickly and you then joined another line of sectioned off lines with the barriers between them (like you find in the Post Office).

The vaccination areas were sectioned off in area numbers. I had area 51. Area 51? Yikes! I'm going to whisk off by extra-terrestrials!

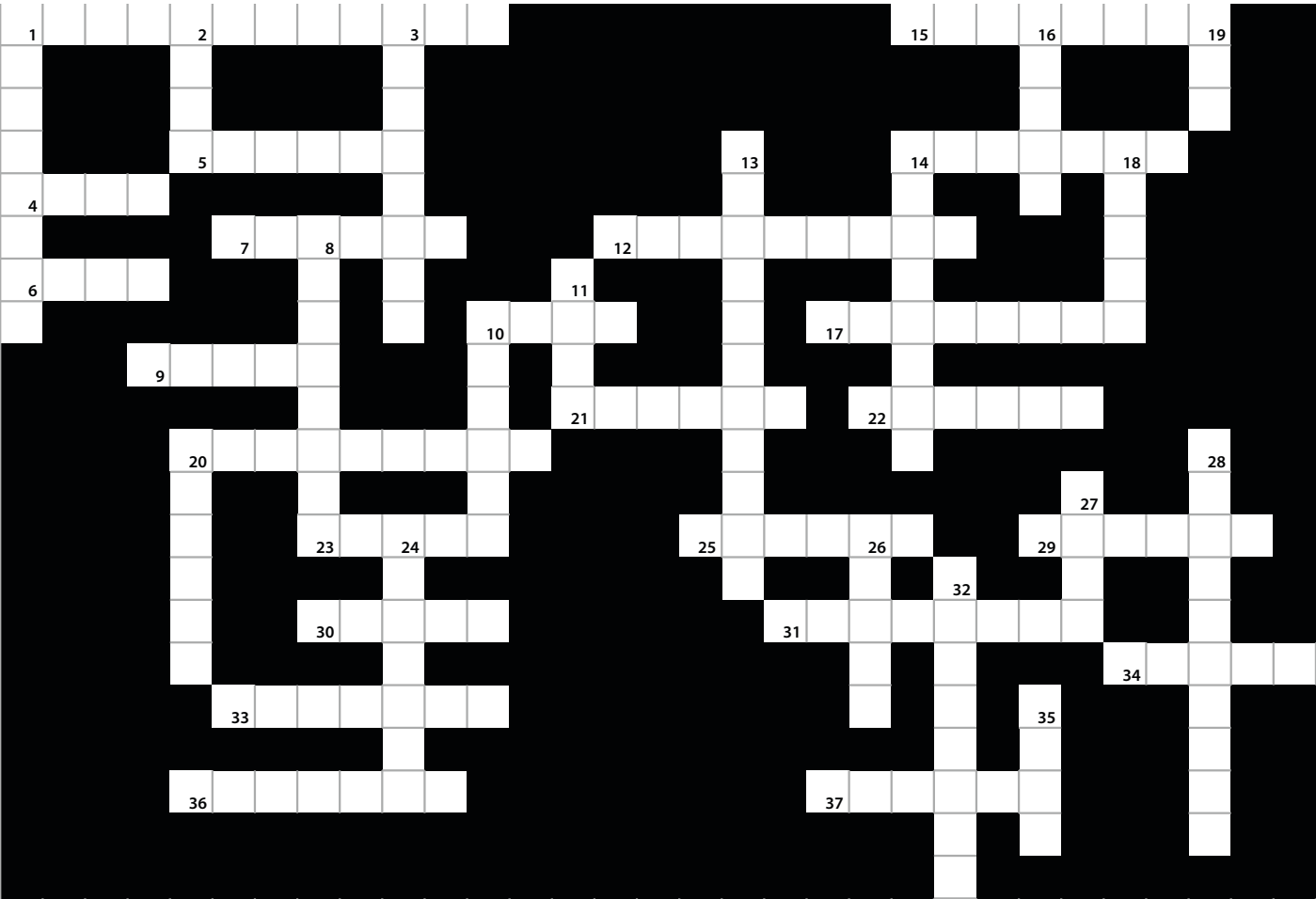
Anyway, there's nothing to worry about having this jab as they're very thorough and very professional.

I did feel a bit fluey and achy afterwards for a few days and I thought to myself, if I got worse, I'd contact the doctors. But after a couple of days I was fine.

I don't leave my flat very often but I still felt I had to have this jab as I wouldn't like to think I could be a carrier and I'd passed it on someone else. We all have to do our bit to make our society better and safer. And that includes having this jab.

So there's nothing to worry about! They warn you about feeling a slight prick of the needle, but as someone who's constantly having tests done with needles, I didn't notice or feel anything.

So, please have the jab!



BHT Summer Crossword

(Answers on the back page)

- Across**

 - 1. Red summer fruits served with cream (12)
 - 4. Hexagonal structure where bees are kept (4)
 - 5. Outdoor gathering where food is eaten (6)
 - 6. Location where a bird lays its eggs (4)
 - 7. Powdery substance that can trigger hay fever (6)
 - 9. Popular fruit grown on a tree found in gardens (5)
 - 10. Seaside structure that houses leisure attractions (4)
 - 12. Large insect with colourful wings (9)
 - 14. Colloquial name for white bird found in urban coastal areas (7)
 - 15. A prolonged period of hot weather (8)
 - 17. Where more time is spent during the summer months (8)
 - 20. Activity carried out in the outside space of homes (9)
 - 21. Ball sport played in summer on courts (6)
 - 22. Location that breaks up for six weeks in summer (6)
 - 23. Colourful summer flowers that grow on bushes (5)
 - 25. Fort structure that children make with sand on the beach (6)
 - 29. A dock where private boats are moored (6)
 - 30. Container used to keep drinks at a suitable temperature (5)
 - 31. A trek along mountainous areas of land (8)
 - 33. Activity that involves an overnight stay away from home (7)
 - 34. Stony or sandy area of land found next to the sea (5)
 - 36. Rumbling sound that accompanies lightning during a storm (7)
 - 37. Liquid applied to the skin as protection against sunburn (6)
- Down**

 - 1. Accompanies blue skies in good weather (8)
 - 2. Striped buzzing insect found in gardens (4)
 - 3. Cool dessert often served in a cone (8)
 - 8. Evergreen garden shrub with purple flowers (8)
 - 10. Items that can be grown either indoors or outdoors (6)
 - 11. Structure that is pitched outdoors for a short stay (4)
 - 13. The larva of a moth (11)
 - 14. Summer event that occurs on 21st June (8)
 - 16. Thin branches of a tree that often fall to ground (5)
 - 18. East Sussex town that is popular for summer walking trips (5)
 - 19. Large family of trees often found in urban areas (3)
 - 20. Small round fruits that have black and white varieties (6)
 - 24. Visitors enjoy to be beside it in the summer (7)
 - 26. Small tree with purple flowers (5)
 - 27. Green open space used for gatherings and exercise (4)
 - 28. Worn to protect the eyes from direct sunlight (10)
 - 32. Activity that can take place in the sea or in a pool (8)
 - 35. The hours of daylight are like this in summer (4)

Top picks of books, films, shows and podcasts

What’s on to watch, read (online) and listen to – BHT Sussex Housing Services staff Joe, Alasdair, and Katherine give you some of their favourite What’s On they have been watching or reading during the lockdown. All of these are widely available free at the moment.

Podcasts

We Didn’t Start the Fire (Joe)

Hosted by Katie Puckrik and Tom Fordyce, this podcast is a homage to the Billy Joel song “*We Didn’t Start The Fire*”. Each episode focuses on a person or subject that is mentioned in the lyrics to this song to discuss their relevance. This is a very informative post-war history podcast which provides some very interesting insights.

The Rest is History (Alasdair)

Well known historians Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook manage to make history not only entirely “*relatable*” but also fascinating and fun. They are as at home discussing Nero, Hitler or Oliver Cromwell as they are conspiracy theories and the novels of Bernard Cornwell.

Books

Watching the English by Kate Fox (Joe)

This is a book by social anthropologist Kate Fox which observes the everyday habits and quirks of English people. This is a really enjoyable and amusing read and many of Kate’s points about things we take for granted are really well observed.

A Rising Man (Alasdair)

This is the first in the Captain Sam Wyndham series by Abir Mukherjee, an author with family connections in India but brought up in Scotland. Sam Wyndham is a former Scotland Yard detective and is a new arrival to Calcutta. Desperately seeking a fresh start after his experiences during the Great War, Wyndham has been recruited to head up a new post in the police force. These stirring and entertaining mysteries brilliantly recreate colonial Calcutta, and are full of lively, colourful historical details.

TV Shows

Blitz Spirit with Lucy Worsley (Joe)

The historian Lucy Worsley explores the lives of six people who lived, worked and volunteered during the Blitz of 1940 and 1941. The programme uses some archive film which captures moments from that period. Lucy’s fun and quirky personality helps to make the topic engaging and the programme also dispels a few myths associated with the Blitz and how it is sometimes glamourised.

Unforgotten (Alasdair)

Follows a team of London detectives, led by DCI Cassie Stuart (Nicola Walker) and DI Sunny Khan (Sanjeev Bhaskar), as they solve cold cases of disappearance and murder. Each series consists of six episodes. Brilliant and edge-of-the-seat plots and sub plots, and I love the characterisation of the main protagonists.

Mare of East Town (Katherine)

This series on Sky Atlantic has had me hooked. This is a crime drama series with an ensemble cast and stars Kate Winslet as a Philadelphia based detective Mare Sheehan who is investigating the murder of a teenage mother. The story centres around Sheehan leading the investigation while also confronting problems in her personal life. The drama is gripping

Contact Us

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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 & Saltdean
Holly Apps 07824306591 / 07824306591

Tenant Involvement

Alasdair Tenquist
01273 645443 / 07825 425084

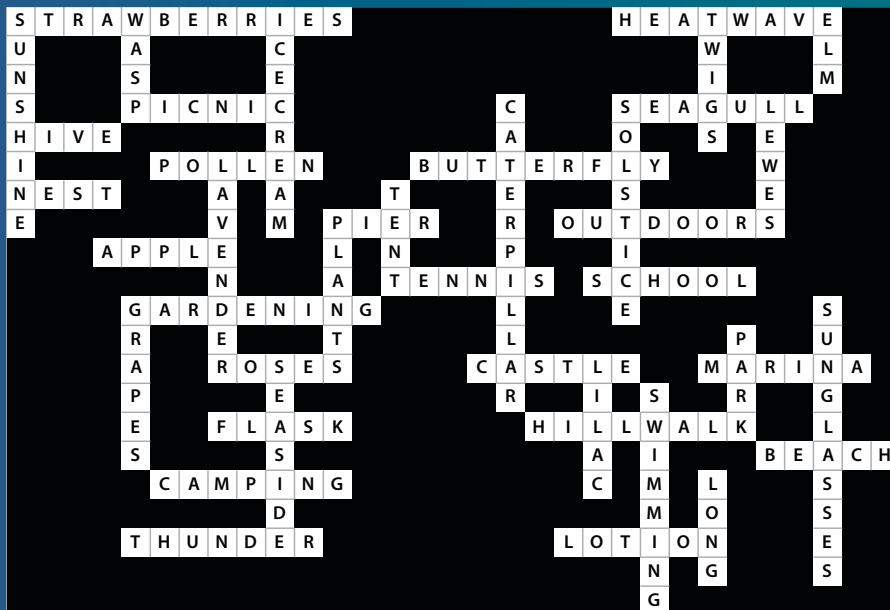
Out of Hours Emergency Repairs
Redman Howard 07493223016

Gas emergencies
0800 030 4425

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

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

Crossword Answers



Congratulations to our prize draw winners

Congratulations to Renate from Brighton who won a £20 shopping 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 Anne from Brighton who won a £50 shopping voucher in the prize draw for the repairs satisfaction 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.