



Welcome new staff
Christmas meals,
Food banks and support
Cookies recipe
Fire safety
Wellbeing guide
Environmental Corner
Christmas Wordsearch



A note from the editor

Whilst many of us are counting down days to Christmas, there are those who might be less thrilled about what comes upon us, to say the least.

That is why on the pages of this issue designed by Jude Fletcher (Involvement Administrator) we share with you a few tips hoping you will find them useful.

Among some of our regular columns you can read a warm-hearted Wellbeing Guide from Jon Bailey (our new Trainee) – how to keep one’s cheer on despite challenges. I have tried to keep mine up by starting each day with a 20-minute walk before work. It helps to stay alert through the day and gives a chance to observe amazing sunrises (or rain soaks). It also saves on a bus fare, but you will find better money saving tips as well as where to turn for extra support inside the issue.

And if you are looking to immerse yourself in a festive magic we recommend an event by a local homelessness charity Choir With No Name. They will perform at Brighton Dome on 19 December at 7.30pm.

Whatever you decide to do this season we hope you stay warm with Mary’s (Environmental Officer) tips; we hope you stay safe with David’s (H&S Manager) advice, and we hope you stay entertained and nicely treated with Joe Ashdown’s puzzle and Charlie Green’s biscuit recipe. Merry Christmas from Housing Services Team to every one of you!

Anna Kuzan
(Involvement Officer)

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Please welcome our new Housing Officer **Daisy Fellowes**

I joined BHT Sussex in April this year and started out as an administrator working in the East Sussex Floating Support Service, I came into this role after having just over 1 year off work on maternity leave. I enjoyed my time working in admin but knew that I always wanted to go back into the world of housing. My career in housing started 5+ years ago when working for the Council and then moving on to a role as senior project worker for the YMCA DLG transitional housing team. I have always enjoyed working in housing and feel very grateful to have my new position as the Housing Officer for Brighton at BHT Sussex which I started back in September of this year.

At weekends I spend time with my family at our farm and going for walks along the seafront where we live!

Please welcome our new Client Trustee on the Board **Mary Davies**

I was born in Brighton and spent much of my childhood in beautiful Sussex. I trained in Health Through Occupation at the University of Brighton.

Following a shattering mental health breakdown and descent into addiction, I became effectively homeless and sought the help of BHT Sussex. With the help of BHT Sussex Addiction Services, I was restored to physical and mental health.

I now volunteer for the addiction services, sharing my passion for gardening and creating nurturing environments. I am a trained recovery coach with Cascade Creative Recovery and am thrilled to have been given the opportunity to be Client Trustee on the board of BHT Sussex. I am so grateful to BHT for saving my life, and giving my precious daughter back a healthy mum, who can be present in her life. It's an honour to be able to contribute to this transformative organisation. I look forward to bringing my wealth of lived experience to this role.



Please welcome the new
Involvement Project
Trainee
Jon Bailey

I've recently joined the Client and Resident Involvement Team as a Trainee. I'm 47 and lived in Brighton for around 7 years. In the last few years, I have experienced for myself the homelessness process here in the city and I'm an advocate for change for the homeless community.

I'm also part of the Brighton and Hove Common Ambition project, which brings together people with lived experience of homelessness, frontline providers, and commissioners through co-production within homeless health services.

I live on my own in the Brighton area, with my pug dog Mr Ted. I love listening to music, reading, and writing.

I look forward to speaking with you over the next few months.



Please welcome the new
Involvement Project
Administrator
Jude Fletcher

I feel very lucky to have been born and raised in Brighton and Hove, I love this city. I live with my two dogs (Buster and Tinker), my sister and her cat (Sprout) in Hove.

I am returning to work after a prolonged period of ill health. However, in my time off I have been involved with two charities that are very important to me. The first is the Hangleton and West Blatchington Food Bank and the second is Justlife - a homelessness charity based in Brighton and Manchester. Volunteering for these two amazing organisations has been instrumental in helping me prepare for my return to work. I'm very much looking forward to becoming a part of the team at BHT Sussex.

Christmas Meals, Food and Support

We know that times are harder than ever, so here are some details of places where you can get a Christmas meal, food and/or support.

Sat 16th	Hove Methodist Church - Christmas Carol Singing with the Martlets Choir outside Hove Methodist Church on St Patricks Road, 4 - 5.30pm. Everyone welcome. Hot dogs, hot drinks. All donations will go to Action for Children & The Martlets.
Tues 19th	Hove Methodist Church - Chomp Christmas Party (feeding families on low income/school meals during school holidays). FREE, 11.15 - 1pm. We have a magician followed by Christmas buffet. Booking is essential as places are limited - text Rachel 07813 707929
Fri 22nd	Hove Salvation Army - 1 - 3pm an afternoon of Christmas fun and activities for all the family. This will include a pick & mix lunch, dressing up corner, crafts, games, and storytelling. FREE.
Sat 23rd	Sussex Homeless Support - Xmas Meal and other services at 1pm in Old Steine
Mon 25th	<p>Hove Salvation Army - Drop -in from 10.30am to 3.30pm. There will be a service with carols, a traditional Christmas lunch (veggie option available) served from about 12.30pm. After lunch there will be activities like quizzes and games. Everyone welcome. FREE.</p> <p>Hove Methodist Church - Free Christmas Day Lunch. Hove Methodist Church, Portland Road, Hove, have provided a hot dinner to 100 plus people on Christmas Day for over 50 years and this year is no different. Guests are welcome from 12.15pm onwards, lunch with all the trimmings is served at 1pm followed by entertainment and carol singing. The afternoon is rounded off with hot drinks and Christmas cake, a visit from Father Christmas and Christmas present. The guests head home around 3.30pm. Transportation will be provided by volunteers who can bring and take home our guests in BN3 & BN41 areas surrounding Hove. Booking a place - If you are going to be on your own or know someone that will be on Christmas Day please contact JJ in the church office on 01273 324600 or office@hovemethodistchurch.co.uk to book a place. FREE.</p>
Sat 30th	Sussex Homeless Support - Meal and other services at 1pm in Old Steine

Food Banks

Brighton

Brighton Food Bank

Tel: 01273 609484 – Option 1

Email: foodbank@bhcm.org.uk

Website: www.brightonfoodbank.org.uk

Clarendon Food Bank

Tel: 07706 324851

Email: clarendonfoodbank@weareemmanuel.com

Website: www.instagram.com/clarendonfoodbank/

Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project

Tel: 01273 671213 / 01273 601211

Email: bucfp.food.project@gmail.com Website: bucfp.org

Hastings

Hastings Food Bank

Tel: 01424 869352 (Hastings Citizens Advice Helpline for a referral)

Email: info@hastings.foodbank.org.uk

Website: hastings.foodbank.org.uk

The Pantry

Tel: 01424 444 691

Email: etc.pantry@btinternet.com Website:

etcsussex.weebly.com/the-pantry.html

Eastbourne

Eastbourne Food Bank

Tel: 01323 409925

Email: admin@eastbourne.foodbank.org.uk

Website: eastbourne.foodbank.org.uk

Support

Helplines

Samaritans
Freephone 116 123

**National Suicide Prevention
Helpline**
Freephone 0800 689 5652

Mind
(NOT free) 0300 123 3393

**Campaign Against Living
Miserably**
Freephone 0800 585 858

Age Concern
Freephone 0800 019 1310

LGBT+ Switchboard
(NOT free) 01273 359 042

Decorate Your Space Competition



Wherever it is that you call home, we'd LOVE to see your festive creations!

So send in pictures of your Christmas home for a chance to win a £10 gift voucher.

Send your entries to Anna or Jude
Email: anna.kuzan@bht.org.uk
jude.fletcher@bht.org.uk

One entry per person/household, entries must be received by Monday 15th January, the winning entry will be shown in the next Lighthouse Magazine. Good luck!



Christmas Cookies

These cookies are made for cutting out into shapes because they hold their shape when baking

Ingredients

225g / 1 cup unsalted butter, softened (or use salted, skip salt)
220 g caster/superfine sugar
(granulated/ordinary white sugar is ok too)
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1 large egg (55-60g / 1.9-2oz)
450 g flour, plain / all purpose
3/4 tsp baking powder
3/4 tsp salt



Instructions

1. Preheat Oven to 180°C / 350°F (160°C fan). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Beat butter and sugar in a large bowl until creamy.
3. Add egg and vanilla, beat until completely combined.
4. Add flour, baking powder, and salt.
5. Start mixing slowly, then beat until the flour is incorporated – it will be clumpy.
6. Dust work surface with flour, scrape dough out of bowl. Pat together then cut in half, then shape into 2 discs.
7. Roll out to 1/4" thick (2 £ coins) for soft cookies, sprinkling with flour under and over the dough so it doesn't stick.
8. Use cookie cutters to press out shapes and use a knife or spatula to transfer shapes to prepared baking sheets. (Keep dough that doesn't fit in the oven in the fridge).
9. Bake for 10 minutes, until the surface is pale golden and the edges are just beginning to turn light golden.
10. Allow cookies to cool completely on trays before removing.

Decorating

- Icing sugar
- Melt chocolate then dip the surface into chocolate.
- Dot with icing sugar and decorated with silver balls
- Dust with icing sugar

Serve plain! They are sweet vanilla biscuits so they are lovely eaten just as they are.

Christmas Wordsearch

C	D	U	C	G	O	S	E	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y
E	H	T	I	N	S	T	O	C	K	I	N	G	C	B
I	L	R	S	C	A	R	O	L	S	G	R	A	H	O
P	A	S	I	K	C	A	R	R	T	O	W	N	E	D
E	A	R	Y	S	A	N	T	A	C	L	A	U	S	E
C	I	H	T	U	T	Y	O	N	E	E	P	A	T	O
N	H	O	I	J	A	M	I	N	A	L	R	D	N	T
I	T	L	V	O	R	B	A	F	C	U	V	V	U	E
M	I	L	I	A	O	M	T	S	B	Y	C	E	T	L
U	N	Y	T	R	W	S	M	I	L	K	R	N	S	T
T	S	H	A	O	N	L	G	O	E	S	A	T	I	S
R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	G	A	H	C	O	T	I
E	L	S	A	P	O	I	P	C	A	R	K	I	L	M
E	A	R	D	O	T	G	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S
N	O	T	I	S	U	H	A	N	G	E	R	D	A	L

Environmental Tips from our Environment Officer

Look after your home to prevent mould

Now it's getting colder and we're mostly spending time indoors, it's important to look after the indoor environment in our homes, to keep the air healthy and stop mould forming. Mould growth is usually the result of condensation, when warm damp air – caused by showering, cooking and drying washing contacts cold surfaces like external walls, tiles, mirrors. To prevent mould, it's important to ventilate your home. Breathing causes condensation too – so opening your bedroom window for about twenty minutes, and wiping any condensation off windows, when you get up reduces condensation and the potential of mould in the bedroom.

Mould is most likely to form where there is little air movement – e.g. behind cupboards or appliances against cold walls. Make sure a window is open and /or extractor fan running in kitchens when cooking, bathrooms when showering and any room where you are drying laundry. Using heating to warm rooms up for an hour every day, opening windows for a short time each day and leaving a gap between furniture/appliances and walls will make it less likely. If you do see black mould starting to form – remove it straight away. Wipe down the affected area with a mould remover (don't scrub it when dry as this spreads spores).

There are many mould removing products available – make sure you wear gloves and keep a window open when using them. You can also use a solution of half water, half white vinegar – leaving the vinegar to soak on the mould for about an hour before cleaning it off

If you have done your best to prevent mould and think you have damp in your home contact the repairs team: repairs@bht.org.uk See also BHT Sussex leaflet [BHT-Housing-Services-Condensation-and-mould-growth-4pp-DL-fold-RGB.pdf](#)

Create a low-cost Christmas

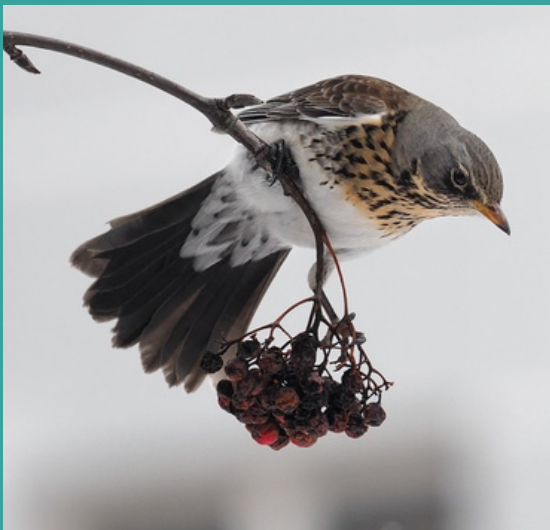
The festive season doesn't have to cost the earth – you can sparkle up your home at a low cost without making waste. Before we had plastic tinsel and trees, the short days of winter were a time to bring the outdoors in. If you have a garden or are near open space or parks look out for evergreen leaves. Bay leaves and rosemary can be used to decorate and in cooking. Other plants like sprigs of holly and ivy can be used to decorate too. Colourful paperchains can be made from magazines, old books, or packaging. For added sparkle, clean and keep tin foil eg mince pie tins. They can easily be turned into decorations by cutting into shapes and threading into strings to hang up. Lots more ideas – from second hand gifts to reusable cards and wrapping can be found on [hubbub](#) and other websites.

Reuse and repair

Make one of your new year resolutions to reuse and repair items – like clothing, bags, and electrical goods. There are repair cafes in some neighbourhoods - for example, in Hollingdean on the first Saturday afternoon of every month volunteers are at the community centre to help you repair items like radios, bicycles, gardening tools and clothes – with tea and cake!



Winter wildlife



While it's tempting to hibernate like a hedgehog, – winter walks are great for spotting wildlife. If you live by the coast – Brighton and Eastbourne piers at dusk are home to spectacular displays of starling murmurations. In parks and fields small birds often flock together to feed in winter, and you might see visitors from colder countries like redwings and more blackbirds than usual. Also, in January foxes are mating – so you might hear the nighttime calls of foxes looking for romance and defending their territory!

Fire Safety

The Christmas period is nearly upon us, and whilst fire safety is important all year round, there are lots of extra fire hazards in the home at this time of year which you should be aware of.

BHT Sussex wants everyone to have a safe and happy Christmas, and has produced a list below of possible hazards, and what you can do to remove or manage the risk.

- Keep candles away from Christmas trees or anything else that could catch fire. Never leave them burning unattended
- Check electrical decorations such as Christmas tree lights conform to British safety standards and always switch them off before you go to bed or when you leave your home
- Do not attach decorations to lights or heaters. They can overheat and catch fire.
- Do not overload plug sockets
- If you use an extension lead, ensure it is fully unwound, and never run it under a carpet or rug
- Never plug an extension lead into another extension lead (this is known as daisy chaining)
- Do not leave cooking unattended, it is safer to take pans off the heat and turn the hob, oven or grill off
- Ensure any visitors you may have are aware of your properties fire escape plan

You should be aware that BHT Sussex has implemented a total ban on e-scooters and e-bikes being used, stored or charged within any of its properties or on any BHT Sussex land. A zero-tolerance policy has been adopted.



Electric Blanket Safety

Electric blankets can be a great, cost effective way to keep warm, but it is essential that they are used with care. Before using an electric blanket please take time to check the blanket is safe to use.

Your blanket should be replaced with a new one if:

- The blanket fabric is worn or frayed
- Scorch marks are visible on the fabric
- Wires are poking through the fabric
- There is damage to any part of the electrical cord
- The control buttons make a buzzing noise when switched on and/or give off a smell
- The connector fitted to the blanket is damaged or overheating

6 Top Tips

1. Unplug blankets before you get into bed, unless it has a thermostat control for safe all night use
2. Never use an electric blanket if you have an air flow pressure relief mattress, or use Emollient creams
3. Never use a hot water bottle at the same time as using an electric blanket
4. Do not buy second hand electric blankets
5. Check regularly for wear and tear and replace every 10 years
6. Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded to prevent damaging internal wiring.

General fire safety

- Check heat or smoke detectors once a week
- Keep all exits and emergency access to your building clear, this includes both communal corridors and within your home
- Know how to isolate the gas, electric and water supply
- Ensure you know your buildings fire escape plan



Wellbeing Guide

Christmas isn't always the best time of year for everyone. Sometimes life can turn this normally joyous event into a difficult or lonely time for some. So, we thought we'd share some advice on how to look after your wellbeing.

Don't feel pressure to spend money that you don't have on gifts. With the cost-of-living crisis most people cannot afford presents. You could craft something instead.

Check in with yourself regularly. Make sure you're mentally healthy, and if you're not, try and work through any negative thoughts by concentrating on the happy ones. Please refer to our list of helplines to find someone to talk to.

Social media is both a curse and a blessing. It can be a negative influence when you see everyone posting about Christmas and how much they've spent, the good times they're having, etc, when you're not. Try to take a break from them over the Christmas period, even just for a few days so you don't feel pressure to be having a great Christmas like everyone else.

Try saving up some of your favourite TV shows to watch over the festive period. Television can be a great tool to keep your mind off things that are bringing you down. Although I wouldn't recommend Eastenders!

Most of us love to have a Christmas dinner on the big day. Why not budget for something that you really love, it doesn't have to be traditional.

If you know someone that is likely to be on their own this Christmas and they live close to you, why not see if you can buddy up. Whatever you decide to do doesn't need to be lavish or extravagant, just a simple arrangement to spend time with each other over the Christmas break. Even if it's just to spend time at each other's homes watching TV, or playing cards, or to have a cup of tea/coffee. Chances are that person will be so grateful to not be on their own over Christmas, and it could lead to a good friendship afterwards!

Finally, remember, Christmas is really only one day. Whatever you do or don't do it will be over by the next day, so make yourself the priority and look after yourself first of all.

Keep Your Belongings Protected with Contents Insurance

Why do you need contents insurance?

In the event of a fire or flooding at your property, it is important to have contents insurance in place to protect any valuable items that may have been damaged or destroyed in the process which you can then make a claim for.

The *MyHome* contents insurance scheme that is provided by the National Housing Federation (in conjunction with Thistle Insurance) is a scheme specifically designed for tenants living in social housing. A *MyHome* contents insurance form is provided by BHT Sussex's Housing Officers to new tenants when they complete their sign-up.

What does it cover?

Items such as electrical appliances, furniture, carpets and clothing. In fact, it should cover all of the important items that are kept in your home. Accidental damage, flooding and burglary are all covered. Even small items such as lost keys or freezer contents are also covered. This insurance is provided on a 'new for old' basis.

Is contents insurance right for me?

Look around your home and make an inventory of all the belongings you keep there, and then make a list of how much it would cost to replace them. You will be surprised at what you own and how much it would cost to replace those items.

How do I pay?

There are flexible, regular pay-as-you-go payment options and it is quick and easy to apply, which you can do either by post or over the phone. Premiums are calculated on the basis of your postcode, age, level of cover required and preferred payment method. There will be no excess to pay on your first claim.

How do I find out more?

If you are interested in applying for MyHome contents insurance, you should speak to your Housing Officer about this. Alternatively, further information can be found by either visiting the National Housing Federation's website:

<https://www.housing.org.uk/about-us/Suppliers/my-home-contents-insurance/> or

Thistle's website at www.thistlemyhome.co.uk.

There is also a contact email address of myhome@thistleinsurance.co.uk. You can receive a free quote by calling the MyHome team on 0345 450 7288.

Contact Us

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 online

Housing Officers

Brighton Housing Officer:
Daisy Fellowes
01273 645454
07826 874849

Hastings, Eastbourne &
Saltdean:

Toyah Thomas
07824 306591

Involvement Officer

Anna Kuzan
01273 645443
07500 972509

Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

Redman Howard
07493 223016

Gas emergencies

Robert Heath Heating
0333 014 1000

Issues with fire alarms and detectors

Eastbourne Alarms
01323 729420

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

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

Wordsearch Answers

