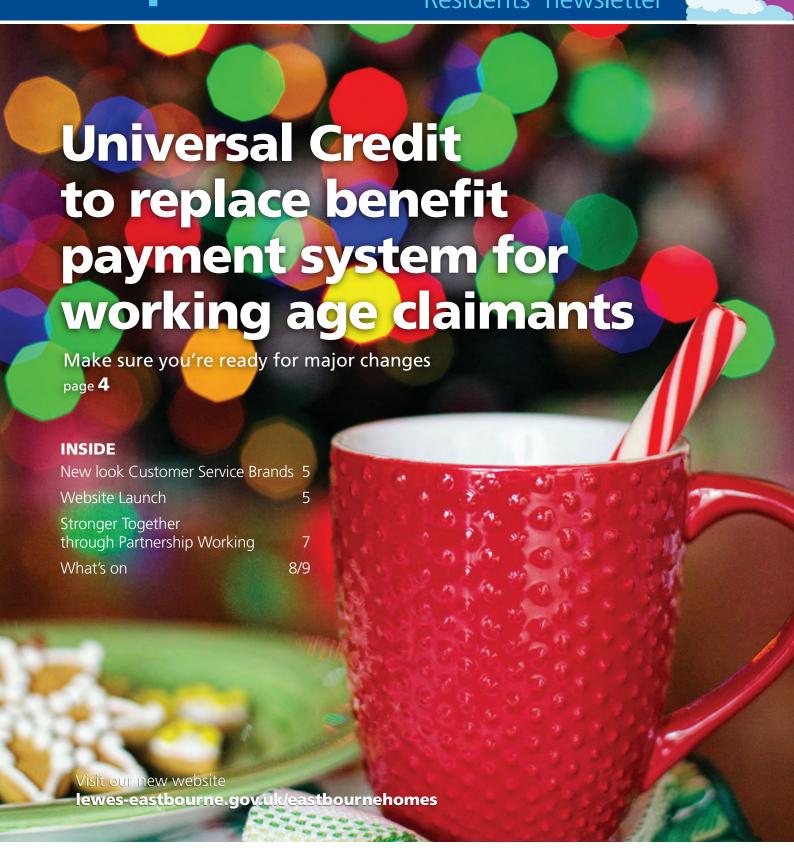
Winter 2017 Issue **54** 

## Openhouse Residents' newsletter









## Welcome to **Open House**



**Ian Fitzpatrick**Managing Director

Welcome to our Winter edition of Open House.

With the roll out of Universal Credit in Eastbourne having started in October, we have set out the changes on page 4. We know these changes can be confusing, so if you need assistance please use the contact details at the bottom of page 4.

I would also like to draw your attention to page 5, which introduces our new branding for our services, as well as the launch of our joint website. It has been another great year, which has had many challenges.

Season's greetings from myself and the Board of Directors.

#### **Ian Fitzpatrick**

Managing Director

#### Get in touch

T: 01323 410000

E: ian.fitzpatrick@lewes-eastbourne.org.uk W: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/eastbournehomes



## CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE (1 Grove Road) – Tel: 410000

Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th December - Closed

### Wednesday 27th, Thursday 28th and Friday 29th December:

Telephone lines open from 9:30am – 3:30pm and face to face enquiries open from 10am – 2pm (please note we will be operating a reduced service).

Monday 1st January 2018: Closed

Tuesday 2nd January 2018: Open as normal

## Eastbourne Homes Out of Hours & Christmas period contact information:

Our telephone number **01323 410000** will be in operation 24-hours-a-day, 7 days a week.

When the office is closed the number is diverted to our out of hours call centre. This is for any emergency matters such as a water leak, loss of heating, loss of power etc.

When the call is answered, you will be given some options to select. This is to ensure your call is sent to the correct team so that the issue can be dealt with by the correct contractor.

### This issue



#### Community

Stronger Together	
Through Partnership Working	7
Holocaust Memorial Day	9
Charities Benefit from Sunday Funday	10
NFA Photographic Competition 2017	10
Area Panel Information	11
Christmas Tree Recycling	12

#### **Business**

Customer Contact Centre (opening times over the Christmas period)	2
Out of Hours Contact Information	2
Paying your Rent/Direct Debit	3
Consultation	3
Court Closure	3
Universal Credit	4
A New Look for Customer First	5
Website Launch	5
Shared Ownership Homes	9

#### Wellbeing

Stay Put Policy	6
Polystyrene Ceiling Tiles	6
ifesaving Defibrillator	11

#### What's on

Around the Town 8/9



# Paying your Rent

Put paying your rent top of your Christmas list this year and don't let your spending snowball out of control.

We know Christmas puts a strain on your budget, but do think twice about delaying your rent or arrears payments. Every year, some people opt for a quick fix at Christmas – then struggle to catch up in the New Year.

If you really can't pay, contact us as soon as possible. We can help you maximise your benefits and refer you

Eta 7 46219)

Endange Company Paristrant Company Pa

to other agencies for support and financial advice.

But if you choose not to pay, we will take action and you could lose your home so....

Pay your rent before it's spent!

## Pay your rent the easy wayset up a Direct Debit today!

Direct Debits are an easy, simple and convenient way to pay your rent. It means that:



- You no longer have to worry about paying your rent on time.
- It costs nothing to set up and can be cancelled by you at any time.
- It costs Eastbourne Homes less to collect, and any money we save means there is more money available to help improve the service you receive.

#### We offer:

- Monthly Direct Debits, taken on the first of every month
- Fortnightly Direct Debits, taken on the Monday of every rent paying fortnight
- Weekly Direct Debits, taken on the Monday of every rent paying week

#### Pay your service charges by Direct Debit and get £10 credit!

Eastbourne Borough Council tenants and leaseholders who switch to Direct Debit for the first time and pay their service charges by Direct Debit continuously for 3 months, are eligible for a one off credit of £10. This applies to the first Direct Debit on your account only. If your Direct Debit bounces or is cancelled within three months, the credit will be removed.

Contact us on **01323 410000** to set up a Direct Debit over the telephone or go to:

lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/ payments/pay-your-rent/ to download a form.



## **Eastbourne Court Closure**

**Eastbourne Magistrate's Court** has now closed. Any future cases for gaining entry to a property or possession of property will now be heard at the Hastings Law Courts.

Residents who are required to attend court will need to arrange their own transport and should note that additional costs to our legal process causing additional recharges may be higher.



### Consultation

We will shortly be consulting on the Equality and Fairness objectives across Eastbourne and Lewes.

Visit the consultation link on the Council's new website:

lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/ consultations/consultation-onthe-councils-equality-objectives/



## Universal Credit to replace some benefits

Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC) is asking residents who claim benefits to take steps to ensure they are ready for major changes that came into force in October 2017.



The new system, called Universal Credit, came into force on 11 October. It means the majority of claimants of working age MUST have a bank account that can set up Direct Debits and their own email address. As

Universal Credit applications can only be made online it is also important that potential claimants are able to access the internet regularly.

If you are currently receiving Housing Benefit, the change does not necessarily mean you have to claim Universal credit now.

It is only if you have to make a **new** claim or have certain changes in your circumstances that you will have to make a claim for Universal Credit. If you are unsure what you need to do, contact us or the Jobcentre Plus.

Residents affected will not be moved

onto Universal Credit automatically, only when there is a specific change in their circumstances, but new and existing claimants are strongly advised to ensure they are ready to avoid any delay in getting their benefits as these will only be back-dated in exceptional circumstances.

EBC is working closely with a number of organisations to seek ways to ease the transition period for claimants.

Council leader David Tutt said council officers were ready to offer help and guidance on this new system which the council has been directed to introduce

on behalf of the government.

"We are working hard to notify our tenants and other residents who receive benefit payments that major changes are coming," he said. "Despite our best efforts, we know that a significant number will still be unprepared for Universal Credit. We will be on hand to introduce them to organisations ready to help get them started."

Cllr Tutt said drop-in advice sessions at 1 Grove Road will be running from October 11, between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday. Council officers will be on hand to explain the changes in greater detail and help people make the necessary changes.

The move to monthly benefit payments aims to streamline the current approach into one single payment of benefit. It replaces:

- Income support
- Working tax credit
- Child tax credit
- Housing benefit
- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support allowance

Eastbourne residents will have to claim and manage their Universal Credit (UC) payments online. People who currently get housing benefit will see this included with their monthly UC payment once they move onto Universal Credit. It must be used to pay rent.

People will not get any Universal Credit for the first seven days of their claim. In most cases, it will take at least six weeks to get their first payment.

There are three main groups of people who will NOT need to claim UC: people who are not of working age, people with three or more children and people who live in specified supported accommodation.

Further information and support is available through the following organisations:

Advice about benefits including how UC could affect you –East Sussex Benefits Helpline - 0333 344 0681 benefitseastsussex@harcuk.com

Making a Universal Credit claim – Jobcentre Plus

Request an advance payment – Universal Credit Helpline 0345 600 0723

If you have had previous difficulty opening a bank account – East Sussex Credit Union 0300 303 3188 info@eastsussexcu.org.uk

Help using a computer/setting up an email account/internet access – your local library

General information on the switch to UC can be found on the Department for Work & Pensions website at: www.gov.uk/universal-credit

## A new look for Customer First

We have updated our customer service brands to reflect the widening of their coverage, which will soon include Lewes district as well as Eastbourne, with a greater emphasis on high quality, modern online services.

CUSTOMER FIRST

You will start seeing the new Customer First and Neighbourhood First logos from early next year and the joint teams will be fully operational by April.

The newly created Homes First team will also launch in early 2018 – this is the brand under which our housing management services are

Customer First will continue to be your main point of contact with an increasing range of services available 24 hours a day online at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

The Neighbourhood First Team will continue their work in the community to hear first-hand about the issues that matter to people, and to allow more reporting of problems as they arise.







## **Stay Put Policy**

If you discover a fire or the smoke detector activates in your flat, you must:

 Alert others in your flat and make your way out of the building, summon the Fire & Rescue Services and then make your way to the fire assembly point.

#### If a fire starts in the common parts and you are not in your flat, you must:

 Make your way out of the building and summon the Fire & Rescue Services, then make your way to the fire assembly point. If the fire alarm sounds, but there is no fire or smoke in your flat and our smoke detector has not activated:

 Stay put and remain in your flat unless directed to leave by the Fire & Rescue Services or onsite coordinator. Once instructed to evacuate, you should make your way to the fire assembly point.

To support our residents' safety and meet with current regulations, the communal areas of your home have been fire risk assessed. Fire alarms and detectors are serviced by specialist



and regular safety checks and drills are carried out.
We are continually monitoring and considering improvements that would add to the safety of your home.



## Early types of Polystyrene tiles are a real fire hazard.

When they burn, they spread the flames quickly giving off toxic fumes and drip blobs of hot molten plastic, which can potentially cause terrible skin burns and also cause further spread of fire.

Although there are currently no regulations specifically banning polystyrene ceiling tiles that are already installed, it is highly recommended that they are removed or encapsulated with a suitable fire protection such as plaster board.

Under current building regulations, these would not be legal in new properties as walls and ceilings are now required to have a class 'zero' rated surface, banning the use of polystyrene. Later types of polystyrene tiles may have a fire retardant chemical additive, but it is still advisable to remove them.

Sometimes they were fitted as insulation but the thermal insulation achieved is very minimal.

As we have a duty of care for the safety of our residents, we are recommending that if you have polystyrene decorative tiles fitted on the ceilings or walls, you remove them. By removing the tiles you will reduce the risk of extensive fire damage to your home and contents and also the risk of burns from the dripping molten plastic.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact us on 01323 410000.

## Are you Winter Ready?

The UK's gas and electricity supply is more reliable than ever before, but severe winter weather can still cause damage and disruption.

Here are some steps you can take to be prepared in case you have a power cut or gas emergency:

- Know your free emergency numbers. In a power cut dial 105 or, for a gas emergency, dial 0800 111999.
- Prepare your home. Keep a torch handy and get your appliances serviced by a Gas Safe registered engineer to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. If you are an Eastbourne Homes Ltd tenant, these checks will automatically be completed as part of your annual gas safety checks carried out by BSW who can be contacted on 01444 836036.
- Register as a vulnerable customer. Vulnerable households can get extra support by signing up to the Priority Services Register. To find out more about the Priority Services Register or to sign up, visit: www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk or call 0800 316 3105.
- Keep your eyes open. Keep an eye on the weather forecast and, if you have a power cut or a gas emergency, check on your neighbours.

## Stronger together through partnership working

Consultation and feedback through the panels that are served by your housing team and neighbourhood advisors have led to some spectacular results this year.

The theft of bicycles led to your neighbourhood advisors creating a project to refurbish thrown away bicycles and make them available to low income households. This project was undertaken in partnership with Sussex Downs College.

Your feedback on dogs led to school events teaching youngsters how to behave around dogs, street meetings to promote cleaner neighbourhoods, free health care checks and chipping for dogs in our parks and seafront. In areas of concern we installed free dog bag dispensers. We would like to thank the PDSA and Dogs Trust for working with us to deliver these projects.

Your concerns about the environment where our budgets did not reach were helped along by a programme of clear ups through our partnership with the Probation Service.

Litter has always been an agenda item when discussing the environment. Through our community network, social media and partnership with the Marine Conservation Society we would like to thank the 140 people who turned up to litter pick our beaches in September this year.

In the school holidays, Neighbourhood First organised activities for young



people to reduce boredom-based bad behaviour and promote healthier options, which has improved the environment for residents by reducing reported crime. The activities were delivered and funded through partnership working.

Several housing panels have supported the purchase of remote cameras, which are used to combat and investigate fly tipping. In one deployment, it reduced fly tipping from three to four incidents per week to three to four incidents per three months

We have worked with the Environment Agency to improve water quality and they have sponsored equipment to help us deliver your wishes and address your concerns.

Your concern for East Sussex Wildlife Rescue Ambulance Service, a local charity that rescues injured wildlife, led to funding an inflatable boat to help with their work.

The importance of feedback and consultation cannot be overemphasised, and the above are just some examples of team and partnership delivery. However, let us not forget the hundreds of trees and plants that you and school children in Eastbourne have planted and the hundreds of bags of litter collected by volunteers.

We are stronger working together and you, our customers, are the basis of that partnership.

(Above) – Central & Archery panel handing over a boat to help a local wildlife charity (WRAS).

(Below) – 140 volunteers litter picking Eastbourne beach in September 2017.



## What's on around the town

#### **Eastbourne Homes**

#### **DECEMBER**

## Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Fri 1 December 10am to 12pm

#### **Board Meeting**

Thurs 14 December 5pm to 7pm

#### **Langney Area Panel meeting**

None in December

#### **Old Town Area Panel meeting**

None in December

#### **JANUARY**

## Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Fri 5 January 10am to 12pm

#### **Langney Area Panel meeting**

Thurs 25 January 6pm to 8pm

#### **Old Town Area Panel meeting**

Tues 30 January 2pm to 4pm

#### **FEBRUARY**

#### **Residents Voice Quarterly Meeting** - TBA

## Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Fri 2 February 10am to 12pm

#### **Langney Area Panel meeting**

Thurs 22 February 6pm to 8pm

#### **Old Town Area Panel meeting**

Tues 27 February 2pm to 4pm

#### MARCH

## Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Thurs 1 March 10am to 12pm

#### **Board Meeting**

Thurs 8 March 2.30pm to 5pm

#### **Langney Area Panel meeting**

Thurs 29 March 6pm to 8pm

#### **Old Town Area Panel meeting**

Tues 27 March 2pm to 4pm

#### Other Events Around the Town

#### **DECEMBER**

#### Little Christmas in Little Chelsea at Little Chelsea -

Fri 1 Dec 2017 - 4pm Onwards - Free entry

#### **Neon Noel at Little Chelsea**

Fri 1-Sun 3 Dec 2017, Fri 8-Sun 10 Dec 2017, Fri 15-Sun 17 Dec 2017 - Display times are 4.30pm, 5.30pm and 6.30pm

#### Motcombe Village Christmas Fair at Motcombe

Gardens Sat 2 Dec 2017 - 12pm to 5pm

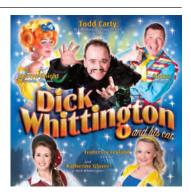
### Sunday Film – Around The World In 80 Days at Under Ground Theatre Sun 3 Dec 2017 - 2.30pm

#### Jingle All The Way at Royal Hippodrome

Wed 6 and Wed 13 Dec 2017 - 2.30pm

#### Dick Whittington and his Cat at Devonshire Park Theatre

Fri 8 Dec 2017 - Sun 14 Jan 2018



#### Oliver at Royal Hippodrome

Fri 8 - Sun 10 Dec 2017

#### **Christmas Market at Eastbourne Town Centre**

Sat 9 - Sun 17 Dec 2017 - 9am to 7pm



#### The Night Before Christmas at Royal Hippodrome

Mon 18-Wed 20 Dec 2017 - 10am, 1.30pm and Fri 22-Sun 24 Dec 2017 - 11am, 2pm

#### **Christmas Day Concert at Eastbourne Bandstand**

Mon 25 Dec 2017 - 10.30am to 12.00pm

#### **Boxing Day Concert at Eastbourne Bandstand**

Tue 26 Dec 2017 - 11am to 12.30pm

#### **JANUARY**

**New Years Day Concert at Eastbourne Bandstand** 

Mon 1 Jan 2018 - 11am to 12.30pm

Nicky's Family – Film Screening at Town Hall,

Eastbourne Wed 17 Jan 2018 - 7pm

WayfinderWoman Exhibition at DC1 Cafe & Gallery, 67-69 Seaside Road, Eastbourne Fri 12 - Fri 19 Jan 2018

Stargazing with Eastbourne Astronomical Society at Redoubt Fortress Sat 20 Jan 2018 - 5pm to 7pm

**London Philharmonic Orchestra at Devonshire Park** 

Theatre Sun 21 Jan 2018 - 3pm

**Holocaust Memorial Day at Tennis Centre,** 

Eastbourne Thurs 25 Jan 2018 - 7pm

**Old Town Food & Craft Market at Communitywise** 

Sat 27 Jan 2018 - 10am to 12.30pm

#### **FEBRUARY**

**Spamalot at Devonshire Park Theatre** 

Tue 6 - Sat 10 Feb 2018 - 7.75pm

**The Kite Runner at Devonshire Park Theatre** 

Tue 13 - Sat 17 Feb 2018 - 7.45pm

**Old Town Food & Craft Market at Communitywise** 

Sat 24 Feb 2018 - 10am to 12.30pm

Stargazing with Eastbourne Astronomical Society at Redoubt Fortress Sat 24 Feb 2018 - 6pm to 8pm

MARCH

**Eastbourne Half Marathon** 

Sun 4 Mar 2018 - 10am

London Philharmonic Orchestra

at Devonshire Park Theatre Sun 4 Mar 2018 - 3pm

Jimmy Osmond at Royal Hippodrome

Tue 6 Mar 2018 - 7.30pm

The Rat Pack:

Live From Las Vegas at Devonshire Park Theatre

Tue 6 - Sat 10 Mar 2018 - 7.30pm



## Shared ownership homes

Eastbourne Borough Council wants to build more homes to meet an increasing demand for housing.

One of the approaches the Council is taking is to identify sites where new

homes for shared ownership can be provided. This is an established scheme the Government has promoted across the UK to allow households to buy a percentage share in their home (between 25% and 75%) and then pay a rent on the remaining percentage.

The scheme allows shared owners to buy further percentage shares in their home at any time, and pay a reduced rent as a result.

One of the benefits of shared ownership is that it can act as a stepping stone onto the property ladder for those who cannot afford to buy a home of their own, particularly first-time buyers.

To be eligible for a shared ownership home, the following criteria must be met:

- Your annual household income can be no more than f80 000
- You should be unable to purchase a home suitable for your needs without assistance
- You cannot be a current home owner (or be named on the deeds of another property) either in the UK or abroad
- You must not have any outstanding credit issues
   To apply, you can fill out an online application form on the Help to Buy East and South East
   www.helptobuyese.org.uk where you will also find further information about shared ownership housing.

#### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

Eastbourne's Holocaust Memorial Day event will take place at 7pm, 25th January 2018, Tennis Centre, Eastbourne, BN21 4JJ

The event will commemorate those who suffered in The Holocaust under Nazi Persecution, and in subsequent genocides such as those in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The event will include:

- Opening speech by The Mayor of Eastbourne, Councillor Pat Hearn
- Presentation by Gaby Weiner, Author
- Performance by The International Voice Orchestra
- Film footage and various readings
- Closing speech from Stephen Lloyd MP

#### **Booking** is essential.

Book online at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/HMD

Please let us know if you have any access requirements.

## **Charities benefit from Sunday Funday**

#### Three local charities have benefitted from the Eastbourne Homes Area Panel Sunday Funday.

Around 300 people flocked to Sevenoaks Park in Langney during the summer to enjoy the fun and entertainment event.

More than £1,380 was raised and the money has been split between three charities: **Matthew 25 Mission** – a support centre for vulnerable people, **Gig Buddies** – a project that pairs up people with and without learning disabilities to go to events together and **Special Olympics Eastbourne** – which provides sports activities for people with learning disabilities

A presentation afternoon was held at Langney Village Hall in Etchingham Road so that representatives from each of the charities could receive their cheques. They were joined by members of the various Eastbourne Homes Area Panels,

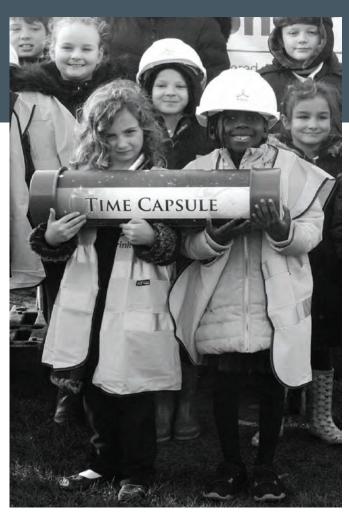


Robert Cooper from Hampden Park & Willingdon Trees Area Panel presents a cheque to members of the Eastbourne Special Olympics

which cover Langney, Hampden Park & Willingdon Trees, Old Town and Central & Archery.

Eastbourne Homes' New Initiatives Development Officer, Sarah Roberts, said: "The Area Panels have been hosting the Sunday Funday for several years now and this year's was the most successful ever. We were delighted to welcome members of the charities to our presentation as it gave us an opportunity to hear more about the excellent work they all do in the community."

## **Our House Our Street –**



The place we call home NFA Photography competition 2017

For the second year, Eastbourne Homes were finalists in the NFA photography competition, held at the annual conference of the National Federation of Almos in Birmingham.

The photograph of children from Oakwood Primary Academy in Willingdon Trees marked the burial of a time capsule in the footings of a new development of homes in Sumach Close.

Staff from Eastbourne Homes visited assemblies at the local primary school, to invite them to enter a competition to find a name for the new building and to talk to the children about burying a time capsule at the site. The theme of all the road names in the area is 'Trees' from Sumach to Maywood, Hazlewood and Ash and therefore the children wanted the name they chose for the flats to reflect this. We are happy to announce the new name of 'Pear Tree Court'.

Oakwood Primary Academy were delighted to be involved with the project and set the children to work. Each year group provided something for the capsule. From their investigations in the assembly and later in class, the children explored the idea of time capsules, and were intrigued to discover the possibility of giving children in the future a glimpse into the lives of a child from 2017. A daily newspaper, stamps, photos, Pokémon cards, money, some Emoji signs, a calculator and even a mobile phone have all been included and buried in the time capsule.

## **Area Panel Information**



#### **Langney Area Panel**

**Email:** langneyap@hotmail.co.uk

**Meetings:** Last Thursday of the month 6pm – 8pm **Venue:** Langney Community Centre, Etchingham Road,

Fasth some DN22 7DV

Eastbourne, BN23 7DX

Chair: Candy Vaughan – Vice Chair/Treasurer: Reny Pulling

Secretary: Ellen Duckett

#### Committee members:

Peter Wathern, Kashmiro, Mary Willouby, Jason Light, Sandra Germain, Roy Elliott

#### Neighbourhood Officers:

Theresa Ticehurst, Kim Barnes, Sara Cosham



#### **Old Town Area Panel**

**Email:** ehl.otap@gmail.com

**Meetings:** Last Tuesday of the month 2pm – 4pm **Venue:** Please note that monthly meetings are now held at St Marys Court, Brightland Road,

Eastbourne, BN20 8BQ

Chair: Cecile Slater – Vice Chair: Hubert Benjamin Treasurer: Alison Adam – Secretary: Simon Teague

#### Committee members:

Cecile Slater, Alison Adam, Hubert Benjamin, Monica Marchant

Neighbourhood Officer: Catherine Leyden



## Hampden Park & Willingdon Trees Area Panel

**Email:** hpwtap2@hotmail.com

**Meetings:** First Friday of the month 10am – 12pm **Venue:** Hampden Park Community Centre,
Brodrick Road, Hampden Park, BN22 9NR

Chair: Andy Evans – Vice Chair: Pam Edwards
Treasurer: Shirley McCall – Secretary: Robert Cooper

#### Committee members:

Andy Evans, Angela Kirby, Carol Carpenter, Olive Woodall, Pamela Edwards, Pat Hearn, Robert Cooper, Shirley McCall, Val Thornton

Neighbourhood Officers: Beth Sizer, Neville Nyatanga

### Lifesaving defibrillator outside Sutherland Court



A potentially lifesaving defibrillator is now available outside Sutherland Court in The Hydneye for all Hampden Park residents to use.

The Eastbourne Homes Hampden Park & Willingdon Trees Area Panel contributed £1,400 towards the scheme, which is part of Eastbourne Heartbeat Campaign being rolled out across the town.

A cabinet has been mounted on the wall of Sutherland Court to house the equipment and it is easy to take out in an emergency, although sessions are available for those who are interested in expanding their knowledge.

Eastbourne Homes' New Initiatives Development Officer, Sarah Roberts, said: "Situating the defibrillator at this location will make it available to many Hampden Park residents. We deliberately chose somewhere accessible and people shouldn't be afraid of using the

defibrillator as it is very user-friendly and actually talks you through the procedure. We'd like to thank our repairs contractors Mears for installing the equipment free of charge."

Cllr Alan Shuttleworth, Chair of Eastbourne Defibrillator Partnership, said: "It's great to see the Area Panel providing this lifesaving equipment to residents of Hampden Park. Cardiac arrest is a community issue, as both the impact and chances of survival lie within the community. The Eastbourne Heartbeat Campaign continues to build momentum and we're seeing more and more Public Access Defibrillators being placed around Eastbourne."

Sutherland Court is a sheltered

accommodation property managed by Eastbourne Homes. If you are interested in attending a HeartStart training course, you can contact Eastbourne Area Community First Responders on: heartstart@eastbourneresponders.com

Back row (I to r): Angela Kirby, Sarah Roberts,

Inez Mepham, Harry Williams.

Front row: Shirley McCall Ron Hastings



