

OpenHOUSE

Residents' newsletter



HOMES FIRST has now been launched!

The new housing services team.
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Visit our new website:
lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/eastbournehomes



Working in partnership with Eastbourne Homes

Welcome to Open House



Ian Fitzpatrick
Managing Director

Welcome to our Spring edition of Open House.

The Homes First Team (new housing team) officially launched on the 1st March 2018. See page 3 for further information.

I am pleased to advise that we have jointly procured a new service contract for cleaning, as detailed on page 3. Thank you to those residents who took part in the procurement process.

By now, you will have received your rent increase letter. Please do get in touch with the team if you have any queries or require assistance.

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

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It is with great sadness that we pay tribute to one of EHL's Board Directors, the late **Allen Gales**.

Allen, was appointed to the Board five years ago and Chaired our Audit and Risk Committee.

Allen had a real passion for making a difference to the community and ensuring the company delivered services that were value for money.

Allen will be greatly missed by his colleagues, however his legacy will continue.



HOMES FIRST

Lewes and Eastbourne
Councils
working together for you

HOMES FIRST delivers housing services on behalf of Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils, working in partnership with Eastbourne Homes Limited.

Our services include:

- Housing advice
- Homelessness services
- Tenancy management
- Asset management and repairs
- Private sector housing
- Tenant participation

To find out more, visit:
lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/housing

HOMES FIRST

A new way of delivering housing services is being launched in March across the borough.

Homes First is the new housing services team that will deliver a more efficient way of working for Eastbourne Homes, Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council.

This new initiative is part of a wider sharing of services between the two councils and Eastbourne Homes, designed to maintain and improve frontline services.

People living in Council owned stock in the Borough will remain residents of Eastbourne Homes Limited, who deliver housing management services on behalf of Eastbourne Borough Council.

The Chair of Eastbourne Homes Board, Roger Eastwood said: "I am delighted that we are launching Homes First, which will enable us to run stronger and more efficient services whilst continuing to put our residents first."

For more information, visit:
lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/housing



The team will offer a full range of housing services including housing advice, homelessness services, tenancy management, repairs and maintenance, and private sector housing.

HOMES FIRST

Homes First has just completed the procurement of a new service contract, which shall provide cleaning services for our blocks of flats and sheltered schemes in Eastbourne and Lewes.

The contract is being awarded to a company called **Just Ask Estate Services Ltd** who are the company currently providing cleaning services for our Eastbourne residents.

The new contract will be for an initial term of five years and Homes First

will have the option to extend the contract by up to a further five years subject to satisfactory performance reviews.

We would like to thank the tenants and leaseholders from Eastbourne and Lewes who gave up their time to join the procurement project team. They worked alongside our staff and procurement consultants PML Group to develop the specifications and service standards for the contract, and they also participated in the evaluation of the tenders we received from bidders.

We are pleased to be continuing our relationship with **Just Ask Estate Services Ltd** and look

forward to them providing the same quality services to our Lewes residents as they have been providing to our residents in Eastbourne for the last eight years.



Get online to jump the queue!

Did you know the fastest way to report, apply or pay for something with the council is now via its website?

The new shared website: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk has been live since November 2017 and has already helped tens of thousands of people skip the queue and get their requests sent straight through to the right team. It has the added benefit of being available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, unlike the council offices, which are closed outside normal working hours.

Of course, the council team is always happy to speak on the phone with anyone who cannot get online or who needs a little extra support.

The council is also able to accept reports directly via:

- **Twitter at @EastbourneBC**
- **Facebook at 'Eastbourne Borough Council'**
- **and through the updated Report It app, which you can download from: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/Report-It**



Work of the Investigations Team

We are often asked 'What is housing fraud?'

The simple answer is that Eastbourne Borough Council has an allocations policy that determines who can apply to live in social housing within Eastbourne, and which of the applicants are offered housing based on an assessment of their needs. It is fraud for anyone to try to obtain social housing by deception or by misrepresenting their circumstances. Once a tenant of Eastbourne Homes, it is fraud for the tenant to sub-let all or part of their home. Also, if the tenant no longer occupies the property as their main or principal home, the Council

may end the tenancy to ensure that the property is available once more for people in genuine need of a place to live.

Working closely with colleagues in Homes First, it has been one of our priorities to deal with cases of tenancy abandonment in which properties lie empty after tenants have moved elsewhere because their family circumstances have changed or they have needed to change jobs. These situations are a common feature of modern life, but it is not acceptable for tenants who are experiencing these changes to think that they can keep their property permanently empty while they lead a new life elsewhere.

Applying the same investigative techniques also allows the team to identify properties that are sub-let, and the Council will always take strong action against those tenants who feel it is acceptable to abuse social housing in this way.

Since January 2017, the Investigations Team has also been operating a new regime of checks on Right to Buy (RTB) applications to prevent and detect fraud,

and protect the Council against money laundering. This is being done because specific pieces of legislation mean that the Council must ensure that each application is valid and that homes are not purchased through the scheme using the proceeds of crime. The checks involve the Council obtaining additional information from applicants, and the information enables the Investigations Team to confirm the identity of the applicants and that they live in the property as their main and principal home, and that the purchase funds are from a valid source. Where the checks have been verified, the RTB application can proceed as normal to the tenant successfully purchasing their home.

Report a fraud against the Council

If you want to report a fraud to us, all the information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality. You don't have to give us your name and contact details; however this can be useful if we require further information from you. You can report a suspicion of fraud in the following ways:

- By free telephone call to our hotline, on **0800 731 7039**
- Online, using our reporting form at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/about-the-councils/report-fraud/



Rent Changes for 2018/19

Eastbourne Borough Council has been following the Government's guidance for rents for social housing since December 2001.

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 requires rents on social housing properties to be reduced by 1% per year for four years from 2016-17.

For 2018/19, Eastbourne Borough Council Cabinet has recommended to full council that the rents for social and affordable housing are decreased by 1%.

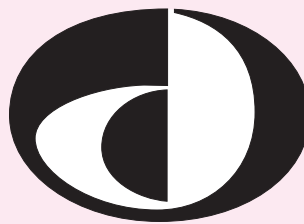
You will receive a notification letter to advise you of the new rent for your property from 2nd April 2018. If you pay a service charge for communal areas, water, heating or council tax, your notification letter will include the new charges for these items too. The letter does not include any Housing Benefit that you are entitled to.

If you receive Housing Benefit, we will let you know how much rent you will need to pay. If you have any questions about your rent or Housing Benefit or if you feel that the increase will cause you problems, please call on 01323 410000 or visit 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW.

If you are a garage tenant of Eastbourne Homes, we have recommended to full council that your Garage rent should increase by 4% (CPI as at September 2017 plus 1%). You will receive a rent increase notice which will inform you of the new rent to pay from 2nd April 2018.



Direct Debits are an easy, simple and convenient way to pay your rent.



DIRECT Debit

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 three 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.



NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST

Your council in the community

Neighbourhood First is a team of advisors who work with communities to improve their neighbourhood



They act as the link between the council and the community, and work alongside a range of volunteers, groups and other council staff to maintain the quality of the environment.

Our Neighbourhood Advisors can help



and assist you to try and resolve a range of issues, such as:

- Dog fouling
- Fly-tipping
- Littering and street cleaning
- Abandoned vehicles
- Fallen trees

Our advisors are available to speak with residents and attend community, town and parish council meetings to find out what matters most to our communities.

You can find out more about the work of Neighbourhood First at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/Neighbourhood-First

They carry out a range of inspections on our streets and open spaces to make sure the environment is well maintained. They can also give advice on access issues to local businesses.

Neighbourhood First is a service delivered by Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils. The councils have joined up to create two customer-focused and cost effective organisations delivered by a shared workforce. To get in touch, visit: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/contact-us

Garden waste collection service

From 1st April Eastbourne Borough Council's garden waste collection service became a paid service costing £52 per year.

By signing up to the service you can save yourself the time and effort of taking your garden waste to the tip.

You can even split the cost of the service by sharing a garden waste wheelie bin with a neighbour.

To join the service or find out more visit:

lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/GardenWaste



Opening of Pear Tree Court, Sumach Close

Thirteen families moved into their brand-new flats in time for Christmas after the official opening of Pear Tree Court in Eastbourne on 4th December.

The 13 one- and two-bedroomed flats in Sumach Close, Hampden Park, were opened by Eastbourne Mayor Councillor Pat Hearn after completion of the £2 million development, which is managed by Eastbourne Homes.

Members of the Eastbourne Homes board were joined at the opening by children from Oakwood Primary Academy, who buried a time capsule in the footings of the site at the start of the year and contributed to the naming of the development.

Councillor David Tutt thanked the children for their contribution to the project and developers Trinity Homes.



He said:

"This is a fantastic development and I would like to thank everyone involved for ensuring it is completed in time for Christmas. It couldn't be a better present for the families who will be



£1.2million boost for new homes in Eastbourne

Eastbourne Borough Council has been successful in securing £1.2million from the government's housing infrastructure fund.

The grant will help the council bring forward the development of 102 new homes at the recently acquired site in Bedfordwell Road.

This well-known location runs parallel to the railway line at Whitley Road Bridge and includes the disused pump house which will also be renovated.

Councillor David Tutt, Leader of Eastbourne Borough Council, said: "I am delighted that council officers have secured this funding, it is

excellent news and will help deliver an important local housing project."

The first phase of works is due to start in late February and will focus on site preparation including land remediation works.



What's on around the town

Eastbourne Homes

MARCH

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Friday 2nd March 10am to 12pm

EHL Board Meeting

Thursday 8th March 2.30pm, at the Town Hall

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tuesday 27th March 2pm to 4pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thursday 29th March 6pm to 8pm

APRIL

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Friday 6th April 10am to 12pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thursday 26th April 6pm to 8pm

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tuesday 24th April 2pm to 4pm

MAY

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Friday 4th May 10am to 12pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thursday 31st May 6pm to 8pm

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tuesday 29th May 2pm to 4pm

JUNE

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Friday 1st June 10am to 12pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thursday 28th June 6pm to 8pm

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tuesday 26th June 2pm to 4pm

Residents Voice Quarterly Meeting

TBA

Other Events Around the Town

MARCH

We stared at the moon from the centre of the Sun exhibition at the Towner Art Gallery

Until Sunday 8th April 2018 10am to 5pm

Easter Holidays crafts and trail at the Redoubt Fortress

Saturday 31st March to Sunday 15th April

APRIL

Eastbourne Remembers exhibition at The Pavilion

To Sunday 4th November



Easter Bunny Hunt at Herstmonceaux Castle Gardens and Grounds

Sunday 1st April

Sunday Film – Gunfight at the OK Corral at the Under Ground Theatre

Sunday 1st April

Traditional Easter Concert at Eastbourne Bandstand

Sunday 1st April 3pm

Thoroughly Modern Millie at the Devonshire Park Theatre Tuesday 3rd to Saturday 7th April

The Mayor's 60's Night with Southern Spirit at the Under Ground Theatre Friday 6th April



The Best of Derren Brown at the Devonshire Park Theatre

Tuesday 10th
to Saturday 14th April



**Culture and Cake
– The Story of
Hana Mullerova
at the Redoubt
Fortress**
Saturday 21st April

**Science Week –
May Half Term at the
Redoubt Fortress**

Monday 28th May
to Friday 1st June



The Motown Collective at Eastbourne Bandstand
Saturday 28th April 8pm to 9.30pm

Splash Point Jazz Club at the Fishermen's Club
Wednesday 30th May

MAY

Wuthering Heights at the Devonshire Park Theatre
Wednesday 2nd May

**Magnificent Motors
at Western Lawns**
Saturday 5th
to Sunday 6th May
11am to 5pm



**Guns N Roses Tribute Show
at Eastbourne Bandstand**
Saturday 5th May 8pm to 9.30pm

**The Yeoman of the Guard
at the Devonshire Park Theatre**
Thursday 10th to Sunday 13th May

**Castle Connections at Herstmonceux Castle Gardens
and Grounds** Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th May



**Beer and Cider
by the Sea
at the
Western Lawns**
Friday 25th to
Sunday 27th May

**Eastbourne Sunshine Carnival
at Eastbourne Seafront**
Saturday 26th May 2pm

JUNE

Little Mix Tribute Show at Eastbourne Bandstand
Friday 1st June 8pm to 9.30pm

**The Case of the
Frightened Lady
at the Devonshire
Park Theatre**
Monday 4th to
Saturday 9th June



Eastbourne Triathlon at Western Lawns
Sunday 10th June 7am to 2pm

**Culture and Cake – Eastbourne's Saxon Treasures
at the Redoubt Fortress**
Saturday 16th June

**The International
Eastbourne
at Devonshire Park**
Friday 22nd
to Saturday 30th June



**Lee Mead – 10 Years Anniversary Tour
at the Royal Hippodrome**
Sunday 24th June 19.30pm

Pink and Lady Gaga at Eastbourne Bandstand
Saturday 30th June 8pm to 9.30pm

Please see full listings at: www.visiteastbourne.co.uk

Holocaust Memorial Day commemorated in Eastbourne



Eastbourne people came together to mark Holocaust Memorial Day with two special events that remembered those who suffered under Nazi persecution and in subsequent genocides.

Organised and sponsored by Eastbourne Borough Council, the first event was a film screening of "Nicky's Family" at the Town Hall. The documentary retold the true story of Sir Nicholas Winton's extraordinary efforts to rescue 669 children just before the outbreak of World War II.

The second main event at the Tennis Centre, with the theme "The Power of Words", was hosted by Carolyn Heaps, Faiths' Champion for the Council, and opened by The Mayor of Eastbourne Councillor Pat Hearn.

The main speaker was Gaby Weiner, Visiting Professor at Sussex University, who spoke about her family arriving as refugees in Britain.

Two children, Jess and Rosie Copeland, narrated excerpts from Anne Frank's diary and there was a performance from The International Voice Orchestra.



Eastbourne MP Stephen Lloyd closed the event that was also attended by Chair of Lewes District Council Councillor Stephen Gauntlett and Chair of East Sussex County Council Councillor Michael Ensor.

Leader of Eastbourne Borough Council Councillor David Tutt said: "Tragically, since the Holocaust, genocides have continued to happen in Cambodia,

Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. Events like Holocaust Memorial Day remind us of how important it is to remember those who have suffered and to learn lessons from the past so that we can create a better future.

"We were delighted with how well attended both events were and the feedback we have received following the events has been extremely positive."

Equality and Fairness

Eastbourne Cabinet has now approved a new Equality and Fairness Policy and set of Equality Objectives for 2018 to 2021, following wide consultation with local residents and organisations.

The majority of those who responded to the consultation were in favour of the new policy and objectives.

A full consultation report can be found at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-on-the-councils-equality-objectives/

The agreed policy and objectives can be found at: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/community/equality-and-diversity/

Cabinet also considered a review of the work carried out in 2017 and agreed an Action Plan for 2018. A Gender Pay Gap review is being carried out and will be published shortly. The Plan also includes an action to commemorate the centenary of the Representation of the People's Act 1918 which extended the right to vote to all men over the age of 21 and to some women over the age of 30, and the anniversary of the 1928 which introduced full suffrage to all men and women over the age of 21.



Area Panel Information



Langney Area Panel

Email: langneyap@hotmail.co.uk
Meetings: Last Thursday of the month 6pm – 8pm
Venue: Langney Resource Centre, Etchingam Road, Eastbourne, BN23 7DX

Chair: Candy Vaughan – **Vice Chair:** Peter Wathern
Treasurer: TBC – **Secretary:** Ellen Duckett

Committee members:
 Candy Vaughan, Peter Wathern, Kashmiro Atkins, Margaret Willoughby, Jason Light, Sandra Germain, Ellen Duckett, Roy Elliott, Tom Hastings

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: 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, Simon Teague

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, Robert F. Cooper, Shirley McCall, Pat Hearn, Olive Woodall, Gous Choudhury, Pamela Edwards, Miss Angela Kirby, Val Thornton, Carol Carpenter, Lucy Marchant

Neighbourhood Officers:
 Beth Sizer, Neville Nyatanga

You said, We did

In December and January, we held formal residents meetings at the Eastbourne sheltered schemes as a response to concerns and the tenants requesting to meet with the management teams.

The meetings were well attended and well received, and tenants raised a number of queries regarding: tenant involvement and representation, scheme improvements and maintenance, team structure, partnership working etc.

We will be organising regular planned meetings, going forward.

Loan Sharks

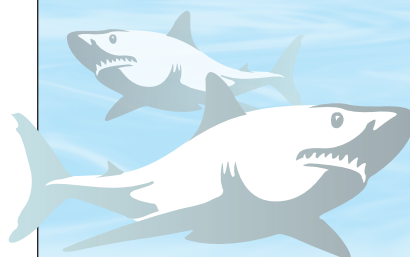
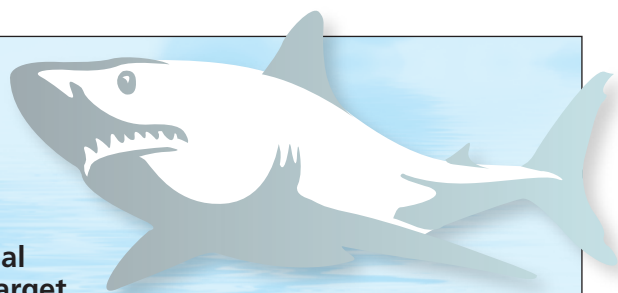
Loan sharks are illegal lenders who often target vulnerable people.

They charge high interest rates, are not registered businesses and give little or no paperwork to confirm their arrangements. They are also known to use illegal action to collect money they have lent, such as threats of violence or taking away your credit cards or valuables.

Some loan sharks threaten their victims by saying that they will be prosecuted and sent to prison if they don't pay. This can't happen, as unauthorised lenders have no legal right to recover debt. If a lender isn't registered with the Finance Conduct Authority (FCA) they are breaking the law if they lend you money.

You can check if a lender is registered with the FCA by checking their website at: www.fca.org.uk

If you are in debt or have been approached by a loan shark, you can speak to Citizens Advice Bureau on **03444 111 444** or the Illegal Money Lending Team on **0300 555 2222**.



Fun for all the family!

Eastbourne Homes Area Panels

would like to invite you to

Sunday Funday

Sunday 8th July 2018

Sevenoaks Park

12pm - 4pm

Sevenoaks Road, Langney, BN23 7LT

Free Parking

Everything
50p

Fun Dog Show • Bouncy Castle
Sumo Wrestling • Plate Smash
Stalls and Refreshments • Burgers
Hot Dogs • Ice Cream and Cake

All proceeds
go to local charities – TBC



Eastbourne Homes