

**Lewes District/Eastbourne
Tenants' Conference—
Wednesday 25th March 2020—
Plumpton Racecourse**

- Meet Homes First Staff and contractors
- Free raffle with fantastic prizes
- Meet TOLD Committee members
- Free lunch and travel provided
- Workshops on: Promoting Active Communities, First Aid in the Home plus using a defibrillator, Resolving Issues With Your Neighbours and Health Walks
- Find out what tenant scrutiny have done to improve services

To book your place please see enclosed flyer and booking form.



A word from the Chair

Seasons Greetings to everyone

TOLD want to make sure that information that is sent out by Homes First makes sense to you. We are also keen to ensure that people with sight, hearing or communication difficulties can access our services along with those where English is not their first language

If you have an eye for detail and are passionate about communicating well, then the council would like your input.

They are now recruiting Communication Advisors. As a member you can attend meetings or make contributions from the comfort of your own home. For more info contact them at

Tenant.Participation@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk or call 01273 487249



Ken Healey winner of the 2019 Tenant of the Year

Nominate the Tenant of the Year

Do you know a tenant in your community that goes the extra mile? They might be a great neighbour and drop in to make sure you are OK, or offer to do your garden for you, or run a group for the local young people. Then if you do, nominate them as "Tenant of the Year".

The winner will be decided by an independent panel and announced at our Conference. Details of how to nominate can be found on the conference booking form inside. The closing date for nominations is 28 February 2019

TOLD AGM report

We held a really successful AGM in September at which a new committee were elected.

Debbie Twitchen was re-elected as our Chair, John Langley remains as Vice Chair. David Nicholson continues to be our Secretary and Sue Wells is Treasurer. Additional Committee members are Sylvia Gibbs, Rob Hallett, Anthony Howard, Cathy Blight, Andi Mindel, Reny Pulling, David Pickbourne and Richard Jenaway.

Alex Bassey from LDC Property Services team gave a really helpful presentation on tackling condensation in the home and Ade Oke from LDC talked about how tenants can apply to have large scale external improvements to their communal areas such as improved parking areas.

Debbie reported that it had been a difficult year for TOLD with lots of large scale changes happening, such as the introduction of joint services between LDC and Eastbourne Homes. She had concerns that the service to tenants had not benefitted from the changes. She reported that TOLD will be working closely with the new Homes First tenant group "TIE" and the new Tenants Scrutiny team to ensure that services to tenants across Homes First can be improved.

Tips on how to avoid being scammed



Fraudsters use clever schemes to trick millions of people every year.

- ◆ Never give out your personal information to someone you don't know. Fraudsters often pretend to be someone you trust like a family member, bank, charity or government official. If in doubt talk to a friend or phone the police on 101.
- ◆ Never send money, hand over your bank cards or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request – whether it comes as a text, a phone call, an email or knock at the door.
- ◆ Your bank will never ask for your PIN code.
- ◆ Do online searches. Google a company, product name or even a phone number to see if other people have reported them as scams.
- ◆ Don't pay upfront for a promise. If someone claims that you've won a prize but asks you to pay a fee first, it's undoubtedly a scam.
- ◆ Talk to someone. Before you give up your money or personal information, confide in someone you trust. Con artists want you to make decisions in a hurry. Slow down, check out the story, and talk to an expert or a friend.

Do you qualify for £140 towards the cost of winter fuel?

Keeping your home warm in winter is important



for health and wellbeing, but heating bills can be a big worry.

Help may be available as energy companies are currently announcing details of their 2019/20 Warm Homes Discount, which adds a credit of £140 to eligible customers' accounts.

You may qualify for this extra help, but you must apply early - details of how to apply will be on your energy provider's website. It is also worth checking out energy tariffs from Your Energy Sussex, a local council-supported energy supplier.

To find out more visit www.yourenergysussex.org.uk or call 0800 952 0001.



What do you think of repairs to your communal areas?

Our new Homes First tenant led Scrutiny Team have started their investigation into the communal repairs service.

Basically that's any repairs to property that are shared with other tenants, such as communal hallways, community rooms and external works to blocks of flats.

The team have looked at information provided by the council's Homes First team, setting out how the current service is provided. They are now doing a "reality check" to see if the service provided meets tenants needs.

As part of the reality check they plan to interview staff and tenants and to attend block inspections. **They would also like the views of tenants who report communal repairs.**

So, if you have reported any repairs to your communal areas in the last twelve months and would like to tell us about your experience, please go to the following online link and take a very short survey: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CommunalRepairs/> or call the Tenant Involvement staff on 01273 487249 and tell them your views. Survey closes on 12 December

Once the scrutiny review is complete, the team will be sending a report with recommendations to Homes First Senior Leadership Team. The team then intends to report back to tenants on agreed actions at our Tenants Conference on 25 March next year.



Pictured above: the Tenant Scrutiny Team working on your behalf

You can also find up to date news via our website - www.told.org.uk and our Facebook page - www.facebook.com/Tenants-Of-Lewes-District-





Tenant and leaseholder newsletter survey

The council are looking to streamline their housing publications by creating a new Homes First magazine to incorporate elements of Tenants Voice and Open House (Eastbourne tenants newsletter). This will enable key information to be communicated to tenants and leaseholders in both Lewes and Eastbourne at the same time.

The new newsletter will also include independent local sections relevant to Lewes and Eastbourne written by tenants, so we will maintain our independent voice.

Before making any changes they wish to consult with you to find out what you enjoy reading. You can complete the whole survey on line www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/consultations/housing-news-survey/ or complete the short version below, return to Tenant Involvement Service, 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes BN7 2TA.

The council are working towards reducing their carbon footprint and improve accessibility by increasing their use of email contacts and so are asking for your updated email addresses where you have one.

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Panel will be reviewing the results in the New Year.



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1. Please tell us what articles and information you find most helpful or enjoyable to read. Please tick as many as are relevant to you

Updates from tenant and leaseholder groups	Money and benefits advice	
Housing services and new builds	Crosswords, quizzes and other similar games	
Council services e.g. waste & recycling, council tax, Neighbourhood First	Safety advice	
Opportunities to get involved in council decision making	Grants and funding opportunities for tenant or leaseholder projects	
Events for tenants and leaseholders	Other (please specify):	

2.. Do you support the idea of a new Homes First magazine ? If not please tell us why.

3. How would you like to receive a new housing newsletter in the future?

Paper copy	Electronic copy	
Other format such as large print (please state font size required) or in a different language		

LDC Annual Report to Tenants/Calendar 2020

You will find enclosed with this Tenants Voice, LDC's Tenants Annual Report for the financial Year 2018-2019, which also includes a useful wall calendar for 2020.

We hope you will find the report interesting. As well as providing information on LDC's housing performance, it contains a list of useful contact numbers and information about how to get involved, and the difference you can make. The calendar includes key dates which may be of interest to you such as tenant meeting dates, estate walkabouts, bank holidays etc.





Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I am writing to you about issues I have had with the access password for those with sight limitations, learning issues, non English speaking, vulnerable or at risk in any way. I am a blind tenant and have set up a password, that is used when I have a visit from anyone to do with the Council. This has worked well when dealing with Mears but I recently had a range of work done by a number of sub contractors, who worked to a high standard and were friendly and understanding BUT none of these sub contractors were aware of the password system. Now, for me this is not such a worry as there is usually someone around with me who can verify who is at the door but my concern is that for other tenants.

Dear Editor

I am writing to you too say thank you to the staff at Southover House. I recently had to visit to discuss my change in circumstances. I was very happy with the way the member of staff completed my information change in a professional and sensitive way taking any concerns or worries away with one visit

Your chance to bid for the Environmental Improvement Budget 2019/2020.

What can the Environmental Improvement Budget be used for?

- Improving external lighting and security lighting repairs to walkways, pathways and other hard landscaping
- Enhancing landscaping features around homes
- Improving rubbish storage and disposal systems
- Investment in community projects
- Improving car parking on LDC land
- Renewing playground and recreational areas
- Improving recycling facilities



Before

Mercread Road Flats , Seaford

After



How do I apply?

- You need to complete Environmental Improvement form 2019/20 and return to Tenant Involvement by Dec 31st 2109
- Have a chat with a member of LDC Staff
- Think about the practicalities
- Contact other tenants, leaseholders and members of the community to see if they support your suggestion



St David's Court, Peacehaven
Before and After





Successful Estate Walkabout

Fifteen local residents along with council officers from the following departments, Neighbourhood Housing, Property Services, Open Spaces, Waste Services, Just Ask (cleaning contractor), Neighbourhood First and Tenant Involvement, and a number of local councillors, met for an estate walkabout which took place on the De Montfort Estate in Lewes.

At the event the residents were able to raise ongoing difficulties, and to discuss solutions to long-standing problems with Waste and Recycling, cleaning of communal areas, play areas, parking and anti-social behaviour. Several solutions to fly tipping and improved provisions for the three Estate waste and recycling areas were discussed.

It was agreed to supply additional dog waste bins around the Estate, and additional waste bins in the children's playgrounds.

The new cleaning contractors came under fire, nine months into their new contract, and assured tenants they have resolved their initial service provision problems, and will be providing a better standard of work from now onwards.

Alex Bassey, will be revisiting the Estate to explore improving playground areas and to investigate the possibility of converting an old shed on the Estate into a community centre.

A member of Litter Free Lewes offered to organise a litter pick with residents before winter sets in, and via social media, this was arranged for 9th November.

Longer term improvements especially regarding parking provision were highlighted, and the residents look forward to working with the Council to increase the number of parking bays on the Estate. Tenants also asked that the system of parking permit provision be monitored so that permits were registered against vehicle registration details to prevent widespread misuse of permits.

It was also raised that an Estate of this size would be well served by an on-site janitor – recently, due to Council budget cuts, the resident janitor was retired, and it was agreed by all that the Estate would benefit from this post being reinstated.

After the walkabout an action was agreed and the council committed to carrying out the actions agreed. The action plans can be found on the TOLD website, www.told.org.uk.



Thank you to Andi for contributing this article

Estate Walkabouts 2020

As a result of the successful first walkabout at De Montfort a number of others are planned to take place during 2020. All tenants living in those areas are invited to join LDC staff, as well as other stakeholders such as local councillors, police etc.

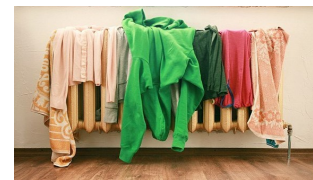
Walkabouts will take place at the locations, times and dates shown below. The events will take place regardless of the weather.

Estate walkabout area	Date and time	Meeting point
Ringmer	20 th March 2020 from 11:00	Meet at the entrance to Broyleside Cottages
Hythe Crescent - Seaford	19 th June 2020 from 11:00	Meet at the green on Walmer Road, opposite the entrance to Hythe Crescent
Lewes - Landport estate	22 September 2020 from 11:00	Meet at Landport Community Room, 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes
Lewes - Malling estate	22 November 2020 from 11:00	Meet at the park, Old Malling Way



Tips on the best way to avoid condensation

- * Avoid drying clothes indoors or over radiators if possible
- * Try to keep the temperature inside your home constant
- * Ensure that any tumble dryers are properly vented
- * Make sure any extractor fans are switched on and well maintained



If you still have problems contact the Council on 01273 471600 Option 2 who will

- * Survey your home to find out why it still has problems
- * Check that your heating system is working correctly and is fit for purpose
- * Check that all your windows and ventilation systems are working
- * Arrange an air management survey and follow through with any recommendations
- * Wash away any remaining mould





Thank you to everyone that entered the last Word Search. The winner was Sharon Chambers from Telscombe.

Please see below for your chance to win a £10 shopping voucher.

Hidden in our word search are words associated with Winter



See if you can find and ring them all.

The words may read forwards, backwards, vertically, horizontally or diagonally.

BOOTS
COAT
FREEZING
GLOVES
HAT
ICE
ICE FISHING
ICE SKATING
MITTENS
SCARF
SKIING
SLEDDING
SNOW
SNOW BALL
SNOWBALL FIGHT
SNOWFLAKE
SNOW BOARDING
SNOWMAN
TOBOGGAN
WINTER

Once you have found them, send your completed entry to the Editor, Tenants Voice, 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes, BN7 2TA by the **end of January 2020**. One lucky winner will be picked at random. **Please make sure you include your name and address**