Spring 2019 Issue 57

Den House Residents' newsletter



Important information on rent for Universal Credit claimants

See page 3

INSIDE

New Head of Homes First - Gary Hall	3
Get Involved	
Gas Appliance Servicing	<u> </u>
In Your Area	6

Visit our website: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/eastbournehomes

Credit









Welcome to **Open House**



Ian Fitzpatrick Managing Director

Welcome to our spring edition of Open House.

Following our Tenant Involvement consultation last year, we have set up new ways for you to have your say on what we do and what matters to you. Even a small amount of your time can help make a difference. See page 5.

If you are claiming Universal Credit, please read the important information regarding your rent on page 3. I would also like to remind everyone of the importance of checking your fire alarms every month and our annual gas appliance servicing, covered in this issue.

This leads me to introduce our new Head of Homes First, Gary Hall. Gary brings a wealth of experience in housing and a fresh pair of eyes. Gary's vision is to take every opportunity to work with you and his teams to ensure Homes First provides a modern, proactive service.

We look forward to working with you!

Ian Fitzpatrick

Managing Director

This issue



Community

Get Involved	5
Gas Appliance Servicing	5
In Your Area	6
Fire Safety in Your Home	9

Business

New Head of Homes First	(1)
Area Panel Information	7
Tenant Incentive Scheme	۶

What's on

Around the town 10/11



CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE 1 Grove Road Tel: (01323) 410000



Find us on Facebook: **Eastbourne Homes Ltd**



Follow us on Twitter: @ebnhomes

If you have any suggestions for the next edition of Open House or would like to list an event in our What's On section, please email: tenant.involvement@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

In March, the Eastbourne **Homes Board** bid farewell to Candy Vaughan. Candy joined the



the Service and Performance Committee.

We would like to thank Candy for the huge amount of passion, time and commitment she has given to supporting Eastbourne Homes and its residents, and we wish her all the very best for the future.

Important information for anyone claiming Universal Credit

If you claim Universal Credit, the last week of the financial year will be a rent free week. If you claim Universal Credit which includes Housing Costs you are required by law to inform the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that the week commencing Monday 30 March 2020 will be a rent free week for you.

The DWP will recalculate the housing element of your Universal Credit payments for the year. If you owe outstanding debt to the council, we will still expect you to pay this during the rent free week.

Paying your rent on time is important and a condition of your tenancy agreement. We do understand however that sometimes people get into difficulty with their finances and may need some help and support. We are here to help and if you are struggling with your rent payments, please contact us on (01323) 410000.



Gary Hall HOMES FIRST New Head of Homes First

I am Gary Hall, the new Head of Homes First. Though originally hailing from Nottingham, my home for the last 27 years has been Wrexham in North Wales.

I have worked exclusively in social housing since graduating and worked my way up from

my first post as a Housing Management trainee to senior roles at Wrexham County Borough Council and then Stoke on Trent City Council. My most recent role was in leading regional housing teams at Clarion Housing Group, the UK's largest Housing organisation, with over 125,000 properties.

I am a passionate believer in ensuring staff have the right environment to develop and that tenants, residents and elected members all feel part of what we are looking to achieve. I aim to lead Homes First with the passion I have brought to all of the roles I have held throughout my career. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

gary.hall@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

Do you want to get involved and make a difference?

Eastbourne Homes



Do you have the skills we are looking for?

If so, we need YOU!

We are looking to recruit a Resident **Board Director (Non-Executive)** on the Board of Eastbourne Homes.

Eastbourne Homes Limited is eager to ensure that the members of its Board of Directors have a range of experience to provide effective challenge to the organisation. So, if you are able to demonstrate skills such as: professional management, legal, economic development, commercial or financial acumen and have some knowledge or experience of housing issues, and a real commitment to making a difference for the residents in the community we serve; then a role on the Board may be an ideal new challenge. Please note that in respect of a leaseholder; any applicant must currently reside in their leasehold property.

Board meetings are held quarterly. Board Directors are also required to serve on at least one Committee (meeting quarterly).

The positions are unpaid, but expenses will be reimbursed. Application closing date: 1 May 2019 - Interview by a recruitment and selection panel: during mid-June 2019 with dates to be confirmed.

Please contact:

Jane McCarthy-Penman, Company Secretary on (01323) 436404 or email:

jane.mccarthy-penman@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk for an informal chat and recruitment pack.

Homes First Tenants' Conference

Around 100 tenants attended our first Joint Homes First Tenants' Conference for Eastbourne Homes and Lewes District Council.

The free event held on January 23 at the View Hotel Eastbourne gave an opportunity for tenants to take part in workshops, visit information stands, meet other tenants and staff, and learn more about the council's Homes First and Neighbourhood First services.

Workshops included advice on how to avoid being scammed, reducing energy bills, team building, healthy cooking on a budget and planting and using garden containers.

We had some fantastic feedback from those attending the event - 100% of tenants who completed a feedback form said the day was either as very good or good. Comments included: "I had a brilliant day. I feel so grateful to be a council tenant and feel so well looked after." A tenant who attended the Energy Saving Workshop commented: "Fabulous energy saving tips. I learnt a lot and may now be able to sort out some of my problems." Another who attended the Cooking on a Budget Workshop said: "It was very informative and fun."



Eastbourne Homes "Tenant of the Year", Hazel Lewis (pictured below, left) was presented with an award to recognise over 20 years of community work she has carried out at Archery Court. Since joining the scheme, she has hosted weekly coffee mornings and organised numerous other events, such as Christmas dinners.

We would like to thank everyone who came to the conference and helped to make the day such a success. Particular thanks go to our generous contractors and Area Panels, who donated some amazing prizes for our free tenants' raffle, including a tablet, a Kindle and lots of shopping vouchers.

















Spring 2019 ISSUE 57

Get Involved

HOMES FIRST

In April, Homes First is launching a new three-year Tenant Involvement Strategy. The strategy was put together following our consultation during the summer of 2018. We received hundreds of surveys, completed by tenants telling us how they would like to get involved and in what service areas. Thank you to everyone who gave us their views, they really do matter!

The strategy sets out different ways you can volunteer with Homes First to influence decisions that will affect your homes and communities. This includes:

 Armchair Advisers – give us feedback from the comfort of your own home

- Chat Café meet up to discuss with us what matters most in your community
- Youth Voice
- Equality and Diversity Voice
- Retirement Housing Forum
- Leaseholders Panel
- Tenant-led "Scrutiny team" working with senior managers
- Virtual Involvement of Tenants and Leaseholders (VITAL)

We'll also continue to support some existing involvement groups, such as Area Panels and Residents Voice. You don't need any experience, as training and support will be provided. Any amount of time you can give, large or small, will make a difference!

If you'd like to get involved, please contact the Tenant Participation Team on **(01323) 487249** or email:

tenant.involvement@leweseastbourne.gov.uk

Gas Appliance Servicing

Our responsibilities

We have a statutory responsibility to ensure that gas piping and appliances in our tenant's homes are inspected once a year by a Gas Safe registered engineer to ensure that they are safe and not defective.

So how do we do this?

We have a record of properties that are piped for gas and have gas appliances (including LPG appliances) installed. Each year, our contractor will call on those properties to carry out an inspection of the pipework and service the landlord's appliances. You will receive a copy of the Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) certificate within 28 days once the inspection has been made.

What you need to do?



Our contractor will contact you with an appointment to carry out the inspection and service. If this is not a convenient time for you, you can reschedule the appointment by contacting the contractor directly. The inspection and service must be undertaken within 12 months of the previous inspection date otherwise the property will not be compliant with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations.

As stated in your tenancy agreement, you must permit our contractors and agents access to inspect and service the appliances and any related equipment.

If our contractor is not given access, we will commence legal proceedings to obtain a court injunction, which will allow us entry to the property. We will also seek to recover all costs in connection with obtaining the injunction. The cost of obtaining an injunction and attending the Law Courts is approximately £1,200.

Why must I have gas appliances serviced?

In addition to the legal requirement to inspect the pipework and service the gas appliances, it is also in your best interest to ensure that your home is safe.

An annual inspection and service also ensures that the appliances are running as efficiently as possible, keeping energy bills down. Unsafe gas pipework and defective gas appliances are a danger to you, your family, visitors and neighbours.



What if I don't have gas central heating or use gas for cooking?

If your home is piped for gas, you must have an annual inspection. It makes no difference if the gas supply is live or not, or whether the gas pipework is connected to a meter or to appliances.

What if I smell gas?

If you know where the main gas stop tap for your property is located (usually at the gas meter), turn the supply off immediately, open windows and call the gas network supplier on **0800 111 999**.

What happens if I take over the property from another tenant?

If you undertook a mutual exchange, we should have been informed and a gas safety inspection made. You should ensure that you are given a Gas Safety Certificate when you take over a property. If you are in doubt, please let us know.

Call: (01323) 410000

In your area... What's been happening







Here are some details of the projects funded by the Area Panels:



Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees

Winchester House Holly Place, Hampden Park

Residents at Winchester House celebrated the completion of a four-year art project, which was funded by Eastbourne Homes' Hampden Park & Willingdon Trees Area Panel. Compass Community Arts Project Director Fenya Sharkey oversaw the impressive mosaic project, which has now been put up in the communal gardens. The artwork consists of four panels representing the seasons at different areas in and around Eastbourne. A special event was held to mark the end of the project and was attended by Winchester House residents and their families, Stephen Lloyd MP, Fenya Sharkey, local councillors, members of the Area Panel and Eastbourne Homes staff.



Hampden Park Area Panel also funded an Afternoon Tea for retired residents.

Winchester House and Hampden Park Community Centre

Two new defibrillators have been installed, funded by the Area Panel supporting "Eastbourne's Heart" programme.



Maywood Road and Hazelwood Avenue

Two new dropped kerbs have been funded by the area panel to

assist disabled people and those with pushchairs cross the roads in these two busy areas.

COMING SOON - Rubbish Amnesties

The Hampden Park Willingdon Trees area panel are also funding two large rubbish amnesties in conjunction with Kier the waste disposal contactor. On 13 April 2019 in Willingdon Trees and on 27 April in the Hydneye area a large refuse truck and lorry will be available from 10-2pm for you to dispose of large bulky items such as sofas / furniture.

Langney Area Panel

The Langney Area Panel has supported Bright Sparks Childrens Nursery by purchasing some cooking equipment to be used with the children.

The Panel has also supported the purchase of defibrillators and its chair, Candy Vaughan, represented the Area Panel's contribution to the Defibrillator programme in Eastbourne at the Heart

Awards on 26 October 2018 at the ceremony in Manchester. Whilst Eastbourne Homes Limited were not winners, they were commended.

The Langney Area Panel have also helped provide start up funding for the new Langney Library. The library is being run by volunteers and the funding has gone towards the broadband and computer set-up equipment (shown below).





Old Town Area Panel

Old Town Area Panel have supported the JPK Project, helping people with learning difficulties move into their own newly furnished accommodation. Funding has enabled the project to furnish three bedrooms for residents.

The Area Panel has also purchased some new trees to replace some of those recently lost due to Dutch Elm Disease, which will improve the image of the area and also help reduce pollution, storm water run-off and reduce traffic speeds.



Members also enjoyed a Christmas social

Area Panel information



Langney Area Panel

Email: langneyap@hotmail.co.uk

Meetings: Last Thursday of the month 6pm – 8pm

(No meetings in August and December) Langney Village Hall, Etchingham Road,

Eastbourne, BN23 7DX

Chair: Candy Vaughan

Venue:

Vice Chair/Secretary: Peter Wathen Treasurer: TBC

Committee members:

Candy Vaughan, Peter Wathern, Kashmiro Atkins, Margaret Willoughby, Jason Light, Sandra Germain, Roy Elliott

Neighbourhood Officers:

Theresa Ticehurst, Kim Barnes, Lisa Cole



Old Town Area Panel

Email: ehl.otap@gmx.com

Meetings: Last Tuesday of the month 4.30pm – 6.30pm

Yenue: JPK Project, Church Street, Old Town

Eastbourne BN21 1HP

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:

Rebecca Philcox



Hampden Park & Willingdon Trees Area Panel

Email: hpwtap2@btinternet.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: TBC

Treasurer: Shirley McCall - Secretary: Robert Cooper

Committee members:

Andy Evans, Robert Cooper, Shirley McCall, Pat Hearn, Olive Woodall, Pamela Edwards

Angela Kirby, Val Thornton, Carol Carpenter, Lucy Marchant

Neighbourhood Officers:

Ade Akerejola, Bryony Clarke



Central & Archery Area Panel

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding our first meeting of the Central and Archery Panel on 25 April 2019 at New Derby House, Seaside, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 6NP from 10am -12pm.

We are keen to get more members involved to help Eastbourne Council shape the services it provides in the central and archery area, and to support tenants and the local community through administering the capital funding allocation on behalf of central and archery tenants.

Please contact tenant.involvement@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk or ring (01273) 487249 if you are interested – if the time and venue are inconvenient, let us know and we can rearrange things.

New Homes First Tenant Scrutiny Team

Help us improve our service to you

We are looking to recruit tenants to join a new **Homes First** tenant scrutiny team.

The team works with Homes First service managers to carry out in-depth assessments of our housing services and makes recommendations to our senior management team for improvements on:

- new procedures for tackling anti-social behaviour
- procedure for tenants to view multiple hard to let properties to help reduce the

time that these homes are vacant

 on the job training for staff in the customer service centre to be supported by written guidelines to help answer customers gueries.

To be part of our scrutiny team, you will need to come to meetings, take part in **training sessions,** and commit to one or



two hours a month. In return, you can **develop valuable skills**, meet new people and help improve our service. This is provided **free** with **transportation paid**.

To get involved, or for more information, call: (01273) 487249 or email: tenant.involvement@lewes-eastboume.gov.uk

Tenant Incentive Scheme



The tenant incentive scheme offers council tenants living in properties that are too big for their needs the chance to downsize to a smaller home.

- Is your home too large?
- Do you have a spare room?
- Would you like help to move?
- Would you like to reduce your household bills?
- Is your garden too big to manage?

Current Property Size	New Property Size	Maximum Incentive Payable
4 bed house	Sheltered studio	£4,000
4 Bed house	1 bed flat	£3,000
3 bed house	2 bed house	£1,000
3 bed house	1 bed flat	£2,000
2 bed flat	1 bed flat	£1,000
1 bed flat	Sheltered studio	£1,000

In addition to the grant we will pay removal expenses of up to £500.

For more information or advice please visit our website:



lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

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

- 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

Contact us on (01323) 410000 to set up a Direct Debit, or to download a form: lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/payments/pay-your-rent/



Scams presentation

St Mary's Court residents recently attended an informative presentation given by National Trading Standards Scams team members from East Sussex County Council

Elizabeth Bowring and Laura Putland visited retirement housing schemes around Eastbourne and were able to show residents the types of scams used by criminals, how they target vulnerable people and some of the serious consequences that can result.

As well as advice on how to avoid becoming a scam victim, the team gave important information about how to report these crimes and where to get advice.

To report a fraud contact: Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040

To get advice contact: **Citizens Advice Consumer helpline** 03454 04 05 06

To get support if you've received items by post that you believe to be fraudulent, contact:

Royal Mail Scam Helpline 0800 011 3466

To find out more about local anti-fraud initiatives and support, visit the East Sussex Against Scams Partnership (ESASP) website:

safeineastsussex.org.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.

Both events, with the theme "Torn from home", were organised by Eastbourne Borough Council and held at the Tennis Centre in College Road.

During the main event, hosted by Eastbourne Mayor Councillor Gill Mattock, a short film - "Five Needles" - was shown, which retold the plight of Jewish deaf women held prisoners in a Nazi sewing factory.

Marcel Hirshman, Director of DeafCOG, gave a presentation about the Nazi persecution of the Jewish deaf community and told how his own family had been affected by the Holocaust.

Pictured below, left to right are: Anna Reid, Chair of Eastbourne Networx, Mayor of Eastbourne Councillor Gill Mattock, Stephen Rosenberg Faiths Forum Member and volunteer for the Council of Christians and Jews, Ronnie Taylor nephew of Belsen Concentrations camp liberator, Councillor Stephen Gauntlett Chairman of Lewes

District Council, **Lena Holt**, International Voice Orchestra Conductor, **Larry Navon** Chair of Eastbourne Liberal Jewish Community, **Dorit Oliver-Wolff** Holocaust Survivor, **Stephen Lloyd MP**, **Councillor Peter Pragnell** Chairman of East Sussex County Council.



Fire safety in your home

Did you know?

- About 200 people a year die in accidental fires in the home.
- Not having a working smoke alarm makes the risk of dying in a fire at least four times greater.
- Faulty electrics (appliances, wiring and overloaded sockets) cause around 6,000 fires in the home each year.
- Two fires a day are started by candles.

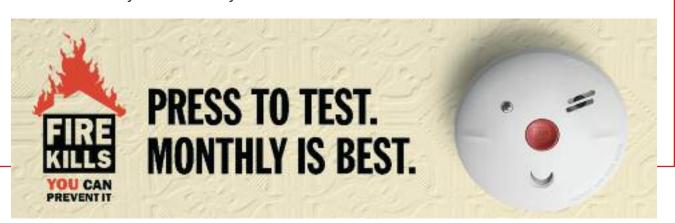
Smoke alarms save lives

As a landlord, Eastbourne Homes Limited must provide smoke alarms in its properties but you, the tenant, are personally responsible for making sure they continue to work after the initial test.

Test your smoke alarms every month. If any of your smoke alarms have a one year battery, make sure it is changed every year. Only take the battery out when you need to replace it.

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service offer free Home Safety Visits to people who are most at risk from fires in their homes. To find out if you are eligible, visit:

www.esfrs.org/your-safety/home-safety-visits or call **0800 177 7069**. For more information about fire safety, visit www,firesafety.campaign.gov.uk



What's on around the town

Eastbourne Homes

APRIL

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel Meeting,

Fri 3 April 2019 10am to 12pm

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tues 30 April 2019 4.30pm to 6.30pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thurs 25 April 2019 6pm to 8pm

MAY

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Fri 3 May 2019 10am to 12pm

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tues 28 May 2019 4.30pm to 6.30pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thurs 30 May 2019 6pm to 8pm

JUNE

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel meeting

Fri 7 June 2019 10am to 12pm

Old Town Area Panel meeting

Tues 25 June 2019 4.30pm to 6.30pm

Langney Area Panel meeting

Thurs 27 June 2019 6pm to 8pm

JULY

Hampden Park and Willingdon Trees Area Panel AGM

Fri 5 July 2019 10am to 12pm

Old Town Area Panel AGM

Tues 30 July 2019 4.30pm to 6.30pm

Langney Area Panel AGM

Thurs 25 July 2019 6pm to 8pm

QUIZ NIGHTS

Quiz Nights at The Stage Door

First Tuesday of every month!

£2 entry per person with a cash prize to be won.

Other Events Around the Town

APRIL

Dreamboys

Thurs 4 April 2019 – Royal Hippodrome



Mike & the Mechanics

Fri 5 April 2019 – Congress Theatre

Aled Jones Charity Concert

Sat 6 April 2019 – Royal Hippodrome

Rock of Ages

Mon 8 April - Sat 13 April – Congress Theatre



Seafront Market

Thurs 11 April - Mon 22 April 2019 – Eastbourne Seafront

Dinosaur World Live

Fri 26 April - Sun 28 April 2019 – 6.30pm Congress Theatre

MAY

Magnificent Motors

Sat 4 – 5 May – Western Lawns

The Beatles Tribute Show

Fri 10 May 8pm – Eastbourne Bandstand

Madagascar The Musical

Tues 14 - Sat 18 May – Congress Theatre

Status Quo Tribute Show

Sat 18 May – Eastbourne Bandstand

Beer & Cider by the Sea

Fri 24 - Sun 26 May – Western Lawns



Eastbourne Sunshine Carnival

Sat 25 May – Eastbourne Seafront

The Steps Experience

Fri 31 May – Royal Hippodrome Theatre

JUNE

The Jungle Book

Sat 1 June - Sun 2 June 2019 – Devonshire Park Theatre

Robbie Williams Tribute Show

Fri 7 June –

Eastbourne Bandstand



Macmillan South Coast Mighty Hike

Sat 8 June – South Downs National Park

The Solid Gold Rock 'n' Roll Show

Fri 14 June 2019 – Congress Theatre

Eastbourne Triathlon

Sat 15 June 2019 - South Downs - Western Lawns Finish

Race for Life

Sat 15 June 2019 – Eastbourne Sports Park

The Nature Valley International

Fri 21 June - Sat 29 June 2019 Devonshire Park



JULY



999 Emergency Services **Display**

Sat 6 July - Sun 7 July 2019 Western Lawns

Beach Life Festival

Sat 13 July - Sun 14 July 2019 - Eastbourne Seafront

Dirty Dancing

Mon 15 July - Sat 20th July 2019 - Congress Theatre

Eastbourne Pride

Sat 20 July 2019 Princes Park



Romeo & Juliet

Wed 24 July - Sat 24 Aug 2019 - Holywell Open Air Theatre

If you are aged 60 or over and facing housing difficulties...



STEPS can support you

We can visit you at home and support you to maintain your independence

STEPS can support you with:

- Ensuring your home is safe
- **Looking into more suitable** accommodation
- Dealing with tenancy or mortgage worries
- Keeping warm and reducing energy bills
- Managing household bills and debts
- Obtaining daily living equipment

Contact STEPS, if you live in: Eastbourne, Lewes & Wealden

Phone: 01323 436 414 Text: 07970 668 106

Email: referrals@stepswest.co.uk

Hastings & Rother

Phone: 0300 123 2422 (local rate)

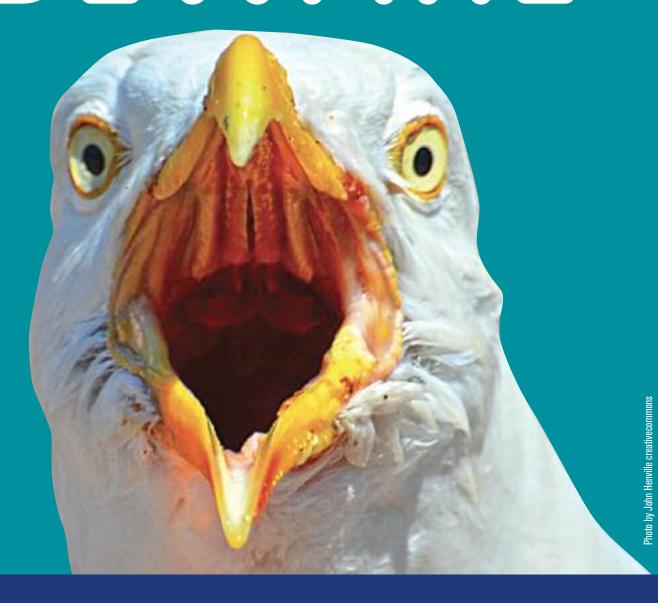
Text: 07944 140 016

Email: referrals@stepseast.co.uk



STEPS can also support with a range of other issues in conjunction with housing support.

BEWARE



Please don't feed the gulls

- It encourages them to steal food and makes them aggressive
- It causes a nuisance and it's not good for the birds

To find out more visit lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST
Lewes and Eastbourne Councils
working together for you