

Items from the Tenant Only meeting held on 25 /10/16

1. Window Replacements in Woodingdean

This matter has now been ongoing for many years. Janet has recently visited several of the homes in Bexhill Road area requiring new windows with the surveyor. The council has agreed to window replacements, but has said work cannot start until April 2017 due to the bad weather. Bexhill Road is the highest point in Brighton & Hove and is therefore very exposed to bad weather. Some of the windows requiring replacement are so bad that water comes into people's homes when it rains.

The meeting felt that these residents should not be left with inadequate windows for another winter and that the work should commence urgently

Action (2 stars):** *It was agreed to raise this at the Area Panel to request that window replacement work starts immediately*

Response from Neil Erridge - Surveyor & Contract Manager Property & Investment Team - 01273 291502

The window replacement program In Woodingdean has already started in as such that we have been looking at siting the welfare units and organising the start addresses.

Mears/Anglian will start sending out surveying appointment letters in January 2017 with a view to start fitting at the beginning of April 2016.

As you are aware, the Woodingdean windows have already been brought forward in our programme. It would not be feasible to start work immediately, not because of bad weather but because of the window replacement programme that we have drawn together.

We appreciate that window repairs may be necessary over the coming months. Tenants who are suffering with issues with their windows should call the repairs team in the usual way and they will send out window specialists to repair any windows in the interim.

2. Robert Lodge Rear Doors

The rear doors at Robert Lodge are in very poor condition and need replacing, but residents have not been advised of when this will be done.

Action (* 1 star): *It was agreed to raise this at Area Panel to ask when the replacement of rear doors at Robert Lodge is scheduled to start.*

Response from Delia Hill - Complaints & Residents Liaison Team, Mears - 01273 574354

Robert Lodge rear doors were identified as being in poor condition in September 2016. Mears arranged for inspections, design and costs to be sent to the Quantity Surveyors in the Property & Investment Team for review.

On 1 November 2016 Mears received authorisation from the council to arrange to supply and fit seven rear doors to the blocks at Robert Lodge. Mears have also given instructions to the door manufacturer to proceed. We anticipate the doors being ready in approximately eight weeks and the install will be arranged for the following week. We anticipate each door taking one day to install.

3. Robert Lodge Trades Buttons

A survey of residents was recently conducted to decide what should happen about the trades buttons on door entry systems at Robert Lodge. To date residents have still not be advised of the outcome.

Action (* 1 star): *It was agreed to raise this at Area Panel to ask what decision has been made regarding the trades buttons.*

Response from Sharon Terry - Resident Involvement Officer -Tel: 01273 293265

Housing Customer Services together with Sharon Terry, Resident Involvement Officer, contacted 78 occupied flats at Robert Lodge by telephone and in writing. At the time of the Tenant Only meeting held on 25 October, the survey was still in progress. Residents who could not be contacted by telephone were written to and given until Friday, 11 November to respond. Those residents who had not replied by 11 November were contacted a second time by telephone to establish their vote in favour or against the closing off of the trades buttons.

At the time these pages went to Democratic Services the final results of the survey were still not complete. By the time residents meet for the next East Area Panel meeting on 28 November, residents at Robert Lodge would have received a letter informing them of the results of this consultation.

4. Robert Lodge Rear Doors

The new flats at the north end of Robert Lodge have left one resident, Roger Harris, with a brick wall in front of his window. When the flats were planned he did raise an objection but this doesn't seem to have been taken into account. This impacts on him quite significantly because he is partially sighted and the loss of natural daylight means he now has to have his lights on during the day. The council has agreed to paint the wall white to reduce the problem, but this has not yet been done.

Action (* 1 star): *It was agreed to raise this at Area Panel to ask what consideration was given to the impact on existing residents before the new flats were built and when the exterior wall facing Roger's flat is due to be painted.*

Response from Carol Jenkins- Estate Regeneration Project Manager, City Development and Regeneration- 01273 293832

The new retaining wall along the side of the footpath between the new Robert Lodge North block and Mr Harris' flat will be painted white to reflect light back into his flat. The painting could not be done until the building works had been completed there, but will be done by the end of November. The new wall had to be partly rebuilt after a skip hire company driver damaged it delivering a skip. His damage was captured on CCTV and the skip hire company (not Westridge or the council) is paying for those remedial works. After painting there will also be some low planting which, together with the new white wall, should improve Mr Harris' outlook compared to how it was before the works. The Westridge site manager has spoken to Mr Harris and explained what is happening.

The site manager is available at the Robert Lodge site office to talk to tenants about any concerns or queries they have in connection with the new build works. He also attends monthly Robert Lodge Resident Association meetings with Westridge's contracts manager, the council's architect and the council's Estate Regeneration Project Manager, Carol Jenkins, to update residents and deal with any issues that may arise. Carol is also available on 01273 293832 if any residents have queries or concerns about the construction of the new flats.

The council's Planning department would not have given planning permission for the Robert Lodge North block in 2014 if it impacted unduly on existing residents. Planning applications for new council homes don't get treated any differently from applications from other developers. The council's Estate Regeneration Team and architect have also consulted and involved Robert Lodge residents throughout the new build project, from initial design to completion. As well as attending every monthly Robert Lodge Resident Association meeting, they invited all residents to a consultation event on the proposed design of the North and South blocks in April 2014 before applying for planning consent, after which changes were made to the design in light of feedback we received.

Land to develop much needed new council homes is scarce, and we need to make the very best use of what we have. Our aim is also to improve the neighbourhoods in which we are developing new homes, working with local residents and ward councillors. As well as being consulted on design of the new blocks, all Robert Lodge residents were invited to trees and art workshops to help design the remodelled Robert Lodge gardens and the newly installed hawk sculpture. We have also provided mobility scooter and cycle stores at Robert Lodge.

Three Star Items from the Central Tenant Only meeting held on 27/10/16

Resident Involvement Review

The meeting agreed the following proposal, to be put on the Blue Pages as a 3 star item for the next Area Panel:

“Central Resident Only meeting is concerned that there is insufficient time for a city-wide exposure to the planned Resident Involvement Review proposals, and it does not allow for a meaningful discussion by a wider audience of residents. It is therefore proposed that decisions on the Resident Involvement Review are deferred to the Area Panel meetings in March 2017 and preceded by a broader circulation of the proposals.”

Action: III for all Blue Pages and discussion at Area Panel.

Response from Hilary Edgar – Housing Services Operations Manager – 01273 293201

The Resident Involvement review started in May 2016 and is made up of the following stand alone projects; the consultation structure, communications, the Resource Centre, training for residents, transport, newsletters, Homing In, the Scrutiny Panel, community rooms and the Estates Development Budget. The review has included the views of a wide range of residents through surveys, meetings, working groups and at the citywide conference.

The Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group met throughout the duration of the review to consider reports from these individual projects and to take an active role in reviewing the recognised resident involvement structure. This work has generated a significant amount of information and led to proposals on how the current involvement structure could be changed to enable more residents to get involved, how the council can support residents to do this and a number of recommendations specific to the individual projects within the review.

On the original timeline it was intended that a draft report based on the review would be considered at this round of Area Panels and presented to the Housing & New Homes Committee in January 2017. However, this has been revised following a request by the Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group for more time to work through the recommendations and the report will now go to a later cycle of Area Panel and committee meetings. Additional meetings of the review group have been set up and a revised timeline will be agreed with the Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group at these meetings.

Three star items from the North Tenant Only meeting held on 12/10/16

1. **Car park lighting at Nettleton and Dudeney**

Dave reported that there are 12 lights in the Nettleton and Dudeney car park, but only 7 of them are working. The first one stopped working 9 months ago and was reported. Then another one was knocked over and had to be cut down. Dave has sent at least 8 emails to try and get this sorted, but it still hasn't been done. He has been told that it will take Mears 7 – 8 weeks to get a cherry picker to repair them.

Action: I I I (3 stars)

It was agreed to raise this at Area Panel and ask the following questions:

- *Why is there no planned maintenance on lighting that belongs to Housing, in the way that highways lights are checked and cleaned?*
- *Why does it take Mears 7 – 8 weeks to get access to a cherry picker, when other contractors can access them within days?*

Response from Christopher Barber – M&E Manager – 01273 293348

Street lighting on housing land has not previously been maintained as there is no system or known information within the Council that identifies where the lamps and columns are located on housing land.

Work has recently begun to compile an asset list of lamps and columns, using a resource on loan to the Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) team from the Estates team and this work is ongoing. Access has also been granted to the corporate 'Mayrise' Street Lighting Module on a temporary basis and this is being used to check lighting that is identified on housing land, against the highways street lighting.

Going forward, this project is very time consuming, but once identified, the housing land lamps and columns will be surveyed, provided with a serial number and added to the corporate maintenance programme.

Mears response Delia Hills – Resident Liaison Manager – 01273 574354

I am sorry to hear that incorrect information has been given regarding a cherry picker. Mears do not use cherry pickers for access to repair external lighting; we use an in-house tower scaffold which takes no more than a few days to book out to any trade team. In trying to find out who gave this information, I can see that an electrical operative attended on 25 August and put on his further works sheet that a cherry picker was required. Therefore, this Thursday (20 October) in the electrical tool box talk, all operatives will be reminded that Mears do not use cherry pickers unlike the council's street lighting team and that the in-house tower scaffold takes a few days to book.

Unfortunately, the further works mentioned above were not processed by Mears due to an administration error and this caused the delay, for which we are very sorry.

To rectify this matter as quickly as possible, James Pauley the electrical supervisor assessed the external lighting at the front and rear of the blocks on Monday 17 October and identified four lights on housing land in need of repairs, three at the entrance to the rear car park and one at the front of Dudeney Lodge. These have been booked to be carried out on Thursday 20 October using the tower scaffolding - job number 9549777. James will be in attendance to ensure the repairs are carried out correctly and will do another check to ensure no further lights have failed.

James also noticed that street light numbered '1' on Florence Place is not working and has emailed the council's Street Lighting team as he believes this light is on highways land.

2. Community Payback

Nettleton and Dudeney Residents Association requested the Community Payback Team to do some gardening work via their RIO. After a long wait Dave received a phone call to say they were on site and ready to start work. He returned home immediately to show them what to do, but they only stayed for 4 hours.

They said they would return the next day, but he didn't hear from them for another 4 months, when they called to say they would be there the next day. They then didn't turn up and he saw them working in another area of town when he was out visiting relatives.

Others at the meeting said that they had had similar experiences recently and it was thought to be due to reduction in staffing or possibly privatisation.

Action: I I I (3 stars)

It was agreed to raise this at the Area Panel and ask the following questions:

- *What is the system for requesting the Community Payback Team?*
- *What can Associations expect from them?*

Response from Stephen Berry – Project Coordinator – Kent, Surrey & Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company – 01273 699266

The Community Payback Team have stated that they spent approximately four weeks carrying out gardening works at Nettleton and Dudeney. Once the initial contact was made with the Residents Association representative, this was not necessary for subsequent visits and the group attended when their schedule allowed. The Community Payback Team can be requested through a Community Payback Nomination Form submitted through the Resident Involvement Team.

Response from Becky Purnell – Resident Involvement Manager – 01273 293022

I am going to organise a meeting with the Community Rehabilitation Company to go through works requested through the Community Payback Nomination Form. If any association has an enquiry about requested work or would like to submit a request please telephone Trevor Jones on 01273 294651, or email RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Three Star Items from the West Tenant Only meeting held on 03/11/16

1. **Resident Involvement Review**

Muriel Briault gave a report on the Resident Involvement Review. The draft proposals are being discussed in the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment group – unfortunately this meeting clashed with the West Residents meeting today.

She said recommendations in the draft proposals include getting rid of the Area Panels and replacing them with 4 city wide meetings a year and ending funding for Resource Centre support of Resident Only meetings. It was noted that there is no proposal to cut Resource Centre funding overall - they will be asked to do more training work instead.

It was acknowledged that there was often little progress with Blue Pages items, but felt that this was because the Council didn't actually take any action in response to issues raised by residents.

There was concern that only a few residents have seen the draft proposals, and that the timetable for agreeing these does not allow for representatives to discuss the proposals with their Association members. It is important to make informed decisions, and to have the time to do this.

The West Area Residents meeting agreed to support the following proposal that Central Area Residents have put forward for the Blue Pages:

“Central Resident Only meeting is concerned that there is insufficient time for a city-wide exposure to the planned Resident Involvement Review proposals, and it does not allow for a meaningful discussion by a wider audience of residents. It is therefore proposed that decisions on the Resident Involvement Review are deferred to the Area Panel meetings in March 2017 and preceded by a broader circulation of the proposals.”

Action: Ill for all Blue Pages and discussion at Area Panel.

Response from Hilary Edgar – Housing Services Operations Manager – 01273 293201

The Resident Involvement review started in May 2016 and is made up of the following stand alone projects; the consultation structure, communications, the Resource Centre, training for residents, transport, newsletters, Homing In, the Scrutiny Panel, community rooms and the Estates Development Budget. The review has included the views of a wide range of residents through surveys, meetings, working groups and at the citywide conference.

The Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group met throughout the duration of the review to consider reports from these individual projects and to take an active role in reviewing the recognised resident involvement structure. This work has generated a significant amount of information and led to proposals on how the current involvement structure could be changed to enable more residents to get involved, how the council can support residents to do this and a number of recommendations specific to the individual projects within the review.

On the original timeline it was intended that a draft report based on the review would be considered at this round of Area Panels and presented to the Housing & New Homes Committee in January 2017. However, this has been revised following a request by the Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group for more time to work through the recommendations and the report will now go to a later cycle of Area Panel and committee meetings. Additional meetings of the review group have been set up and a revised timeline will

be agreed with the Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group at these meetings.

It was also agreed to note the strong agreement at the West meeting that the Area Panels should be kept as they are, along with Resource Centre support for the Resident Only meetings.

Action: Ill for all Blue Pages and discussion at Area Panel.

Response from Hilary Edgar - Housing Services Operations Manager - 01273 293201

The review has found that in terms of delivering what residents have told us they want from engagement with the council, that Area Panels in their current format, are neither effective nor good value for money – costing over £15,000 a year. The review is looking at alternative consultation structures that will ensure resources committed to this work support the primary aims of resident involvement – to broaden engagement and increase satisfaction with landlord services. This work is still in progress and as outlined above, will be presented to Area Panels for their consideration in 2017.

2. Common areas and private gardens

A resident at Ingram Court has been given permission by the council to privately cultivate part of the communal gardens. A small area, close to washing lines and cutting across an area where children play, has been fenced off. The plot is not adjacent to the resident's flat.

Ingram Court residents are concerned this is setting a precedent and that their communal grass areas will start to be divided up into individual plots. They have asked for clarification of the Council's policy on this but have not received a clear response.

They are also concerned that this decision about shared areas was taken without any consultation with residents.

It was agreed to ask for clarification of the city-wide policy on turning communal grass areas into private plots.

Action: Ill for all Blue Pages and discussion at Area Panel.

Response from Robert Keelan – Housing Manager, Tenancy Management- 01273 293261

There is no policy on granting permission for private garden areas. Typically, residents will contact the council about taking on an area underneath the flat window. The council would normally agree and advise City Parks to ignore this area and spend time on other parts of the estate.

Permission was not given to cultivate this part of the communal garden; however there was a discussion about using the area outside the flat. Apart from food growing projects, usually requested by associations, the council has not been asked about cultivating parts of communal gardens.

An officer has looked at the garden and found it to be quite discreet and as the communal grounds on the Ingram estate are not insignificant, enforcement for the removal of the garden was not planned. The Housing team is happy to hear the views of the Residents' Association regarding the use of the communal gardens; an area that would be suitable for a small vegetable patch could be suggested or the area could remain laid to grass.

3. Re-structuring of housing officers roles

There have been rumours about Housing Officers' roles changing so there are named officers for specific areas. It was agreed to ask for a clear explanation of proposed changes to officers' roles, how this will affect Resident Associations, and the time-scale in which changes will be introduced.

Action: III for all Blue Pages and discussion at Area Panel.

Response from Becky Purnell- Resident Involvement Manager- 01273 293022

The Resident Involvement Team emailed the first briefing for Tenants and Residents Associations below in mid September and it was posted to the Chairs and Secretaries who don't have emails. The text was also an article in Homing In. On 3 October when the new service started the second briefing below was circulated. The new Housing Managers will be at the Area Panels.

1. Homing In article copy briefing for tenants and residents associations

We've listened carefully to your feedback about the services you receive from us. You've told us that it's not always clear who is dealing with your cases, that there are too many teams working with you and that some local knowledge was missing in the services we deliver. We have now made some changes to improve and simplify the service you receive.

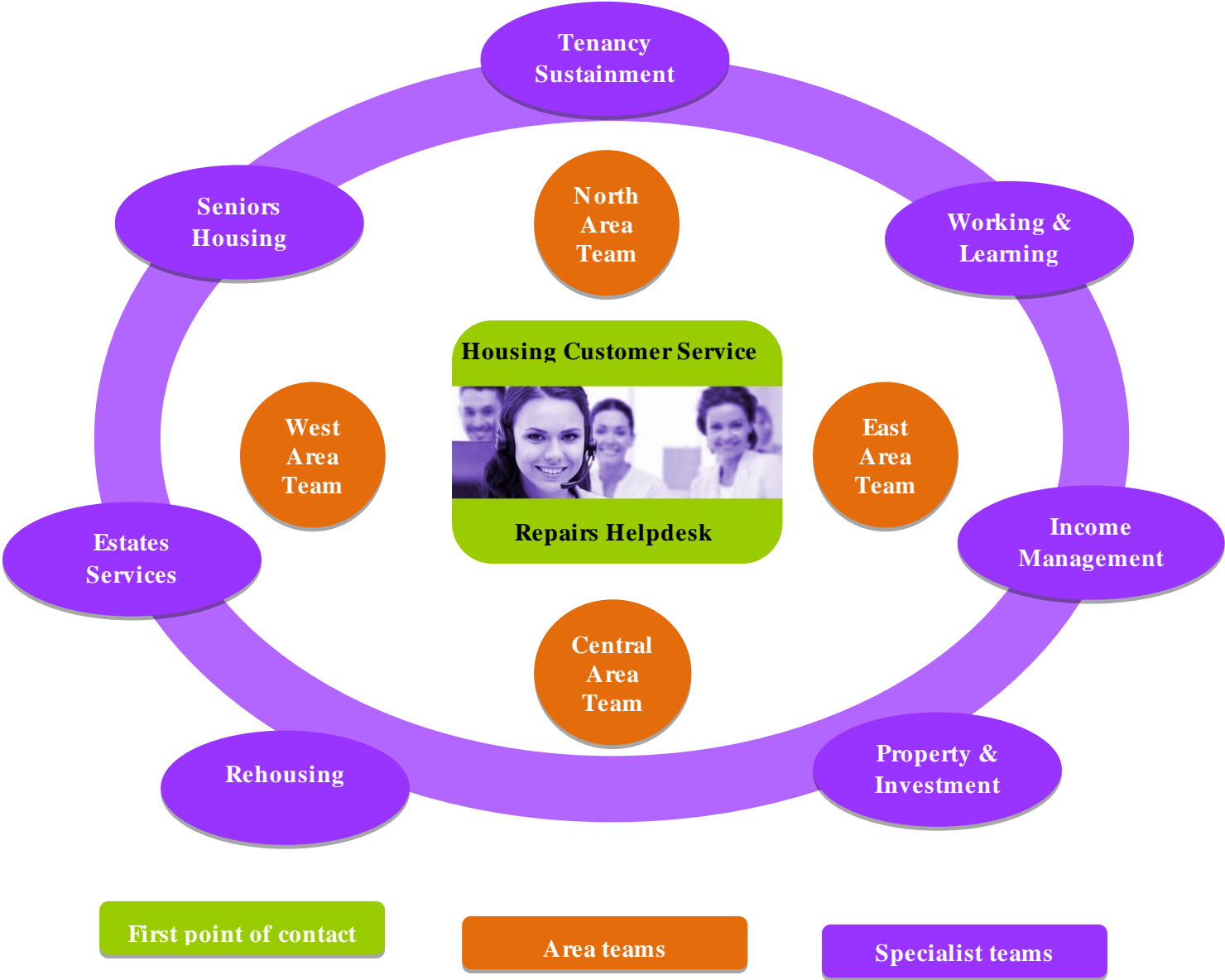
Housing Customer Services will remain your first point of contact on 01273 293030 or housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk. Also the contact methods for the repairs helpdesk remains the same: freephone 0800 052 6140, our local number 01273 294409 or BHCC.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk.

What is new is that we now have four area teams of Housing Officers who will deal with a range of neighbourhood and tenancy matters such as responding to anti-social behaviour reports, carrying out estate inspections and having oversight of the appearance and upkeep of our estates. The new Housing Officer area teams replace three previous groups of staff – Neighbourhood Officers, Neighbourhood Team Leaders and the Tenancy Enforcement Team. We hope that you find this localised approach addresses the feedback you have shared with us.

A number of specialist teams will still remain to continue our focus on collecting rent, reletting homes and providing support to prevent tenancies breaking down.

Contacting us by telephone remains the most popular way you use to get in touch, and we have made some changes to increase the number of staff answering calls and to reduce call waiting times. Our housing office receptions (Lavender Street, Whitehawk Hub, Portslade Town Hall and Bartholomew House) will close between 1-2pm each day from Monday 17 October 2016. The reception areas will still be available for you to use the freephone to call different services.

Representation of Housing landlord services



2. Redesign of Housing’s landlord services

Housing Customer Services will remain the first point of contact for tenants on 01273 293030 or housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk. Also the contact methods for the repairs helpdesk remains the same: Freephone 0800 052 6140, our local number 01273 294409 or BHCC.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk.

Area Housing Teams

The new area housing teams will be led by Janet Dowdell, Tenancy Services Operations Manager (janet.dowdell@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

We have four area teams consisting of a Housing Manager and five Housing Officers who will work across their area:

North Michael Raywood, Housing Manager (michael.raywood@brighton-hove.gov.uk) working with Gemma Johnson, Deborah Bryne, Jake Woollard, Elisabeth Neighbour and April Goodley.

Central Annabel Tate, Housing Manager (annabel.tate@brighton-hove.gov.uk) working with Eve Hitchens, John Evans, Lisette Glanvill, Mel Fraser and Allan Haryott

East Rachele Metcalfe, Housing Manager (rachele.metcalfe@brighton-hove.gov.uk) working with Caroline Boaks, Maggie Chamberlain, Alex Barton, Toya Regan and Cheryl (Trill) Moss

West Robert Keelan, Housing Manager (robert.keelan@brighton-hove.gov.uk) working with Mark Griffiths, Kenna Kendall, Helen Burrows and Reem Scott. There is one vacant position within this area which we are recruiting to.

The new Housing Officer area teams replace three previous groups of staff – Neighbourhood Officers, Neighbourhood Team Leaders and the Tenancy Enforcement Team. We hope that this will make our services simpler for customers. There will be a lower ratio of properties per officer than at present enabling us to manage the range of neighbourhood and tenancy issues in each area.

There is also a citywide team with three officers working on the cases that we should be able to solve quickly and the most complex cases that could take up a lot of officer time. This will ensure that the area based housing teams are free to deal with the day to day landlord issues that arise for our residents and on our estates. This team is led by Richard Jordan-Penswick, Housing Manager (richard.jordan-penswick@brighton-hove.gov.uk) and will include Pamela Cunningham, Laura Newton and Graham Davies and 3 additional Housing Officers who are currently being recruited.

A map is attached providing boundary information for each area team:



Early Intervention

Our service redesign will also pull together our teams working with our most vulnerable and socially excluded residents into the Early intervention Tenancy management service. This service is led by Emma Gilbert, Tenancy Services Operations Manager (emma.gilbert@brighton-hove.gov.uk). It includes the:

Seniors Housing team led by Peter Huntbach, Housing Manager, (peter.huntbach@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Tenancy Sustainemnt team led by Adrian Channon, Housing Manager (adrian.channon@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Re-housing team led by Lorraine Bourton, Housing Manager (lorraine.bourton@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Work and learning led by Teresa Jabbi, Work and Learning Co-ordinator (teresa.jabbi@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Housing Income Management Team

The Housing Income Management Team has made some changes to merge the current Income Management Officer and Senior Income Management Officer role into a new Account Manager role. Account Managers will continue to work on a patch basis but will now manage the accounts from beginning to end. This places a greater emphasis on consistent and co-ordinated account management and will enable us to work more efficiently to effectively manage the changing relationship with our tenants. This team is led by Lynn Yule, Housing Income Manager (lynn.yule@brighton-hove.gov.uk).

Housing Customer Service Team

Housing Customer Services will remain the first point of contact for tenants both on the telephone and at housing office receptions. This team is led by Hilary Edgar, Housing Services Operations Manager (hilary.edgar@brighton-hove.gov.uk).