

WELCOME

By Tina Favier, Director for Housing and Communities

Welcome to the spring edition of the Adur Homes newsletter. I hope that you have been keeping well and that you are all looking forward to the year ahead.

In this edition we have updates for you on the progress that we are making as well as important information that you need to be aware of.

Our work continues on our improvement plan to transform your houses into homes that are good, safe and sustainable.

As I have said previously, we know there is a lot to do and a long way to go but

we are fully committed to working with you to achieve this.

Our work with the Regulator of Social Housing is focused on the most important priorities, including health and safety and compliance, to ensure the homes you live in are safe.

As part of our work programme I am pleased to formally introduce you to our new Assistant Director for Housing and Homelessness Prevention, Rob Jarvis. Rob joins us from a neighbouring district and is a highly experienced housing professional.



I hope you find this newsletter useful. If you have any feedback, let us know by emailing:

adurhomes@adur-worthing.gov.uk



Rob Jarvis

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- **Rent increases**
- **Self referral update**
- **Our capital programme**
- **Empty properties**
- **Cost of living support**
- **New legislative changes for housing providers**
- **Meeting you in your places**

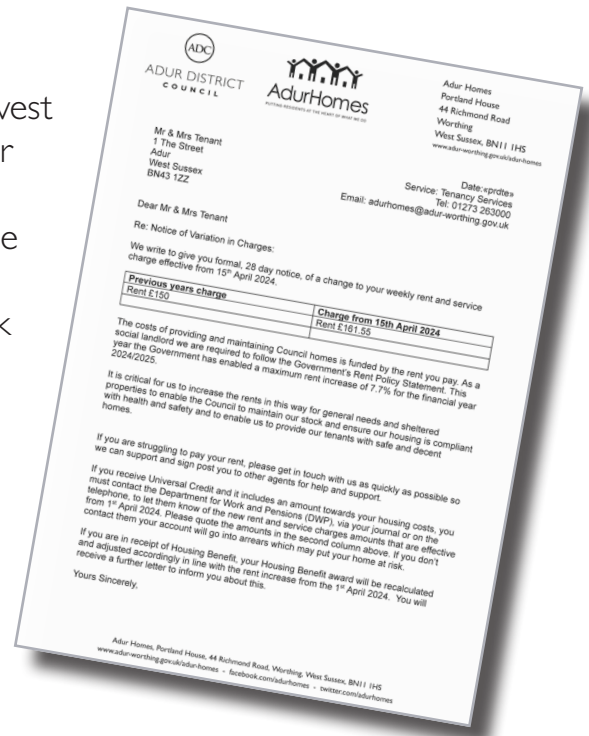
RENT INCREASES

A rent increase of 7.7% has been approved for Adur Homes tenants, in line with most other authorities up and down the country.

This will increase the average rent for most general needs tenants by an average of £8.16 per week.

We understand the cost of living challenges many of you are facing but the increase is essential to support the

ongoing work to invest in and improve your homes. If you are struggling with these payments we are very happy to speak to you.



SELF REFERRAL UPDATE

Last year we referred ourselves to the Regulator of Social Housing because we realised we were not always providing you with the decent homes that you have a right to.

We have made good progress since then to improve homes across the district. We meet with staff from the regulator to demonstrate what we're doing.

After agreeing an improvement plan with the regulator, we have worked hard over the last 12 months to improve our properties, including carrying out more than 2,880 gas safety surveys, fitting more than 1,880 smoke and CO alarms and doing more than 300 electrical tests.

We still have plenty of work to do so please help us to make your homes even

safer by allowing us access when we need it after we or our contractors have contacted you.

We're prioritising safety and compliance to ensure that your homes are safe and the work programme needed to bring them up to a decent standard. There is so much more to do and we want to thank you for your patience.



OUR CAPITAL PROGRAMME

We've finalised our budget for 2024/25, which will allow us to spend more than £10m on making long-overdue improvements to hundreds of Adur Homes properties over the next 12 months.

Amongst the work that will be carried out will be the fitting of around 300 kitchens and bathrooms at homes in urgent need of modernisation.

We'll also be installing

around 200 replacement boilers and fitting new double-glazed windows and doors at around 400 homes, while there will also be roof and wall repairs and more safety work carried out.

We'll be appointing contractors soon and contacting those residents whose homes we'll be working on first so they know when they'll be getting the improvements they need.



EMPTY PROPERTIES

A lot of tenants ask us about the number of empty properties we have. We know this is higher than it should be and we are working hard to address this.

To tackle the backlog of empty properties, we have appointed two new

contractors to help us get our empty homes back up to scratch as quickly as possible so that new tenants can move in.

We currently have 120 properties that are going through this process and the contractors have recently

taken on extra staff so they can improve the homes to a good standard but more swiftly.

Our aim will always be to get our empty properties available to use for Adur residents in urgent need of somewhere to live.

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

If you're struggling financially you don't need to deal with it on your own. We've put lots of helpful information in one place on the cost of living section of our website, at:

www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support

Please also speak to your housing officer who will

be able to give you advice around help available. This could include directing you to Citizens Advice, community organisations or other council services.

Alternatively, if you need someone to talk to for mental health support, you can call:

Time to Talk the free counselling service you can contact on **01903 703540**

Mind Mental health charity on **0300 123 3393**

Sussex Mental Healthline 24 hours a day on **0800 0309 500**

The Samaritans 24 hours a day on **116123**



NEW LEGISLATIVE CHANGES FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS

New changes to the law about council housing include the introduction of seven rights you should expect:

- To be safe in your home
- To know how we are performing, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how we spend our money
- To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a

- strong ombudsman
- To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants
- To have your voice heard by us
- To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your home kept in good repair by us
- For the government to

ensure social housing can support people to take their first step to ownership

We are working closely with the Regulator of Social Housing to ensure we always protect those rights for you.



Rob Jarvis

MEETING YOU IN YOUR PLACES

You've told us that evening meetings aren't always helpful for you, so following this feedback we'll be running daytime sessions instead.

Anyone can come along for

updates on our improvement works, to get information about what we're doing in your area and to ask us questions.

After the May elections there' will be events in

Southwick, Sompting, Lancing, Shoreham and Fishersgate.

When we've confirmed dates and venues, we'll let you know when and where they will be.

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

We don't always get things right first time. Your feedback, good or bad, helps us make improvements, so visit:

www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/complaints

or call us on: **01903 221023**

You can also ask any of our employees to make a comment for you, or you can email us at:

adurhomes@adur-worthing.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied, you can refer your complaint to the:

Housing Ombudsman by calling 0300 111 3000

ADUR HOMES: KEY CONTACTS

- **Report a repair online:**
www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/adur-homes/request-a-repair
- **Contact your Housing team:**
tenancy.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk
- **Or your leasehold team:**
leasehold@adur.gov.uk
- **To make a rent payment, speak to a member of the team or report a repair over the phone:**
please ring us on **01273 263030**
- **Or you can email us at:**
adurhomes@adur-worthing.gov.uk