

## WELCOME

By Tina Favier, Director for Housing and Communities

We are just over a year into our work to transform your homes and the service you get from us, and hopefully you're already seeing a positive difference.

As part of our improvement plan for Adur Homes we have been working hard to build the right team to meet your needs, building better relationships with you, working out exactly what needs to be done to

individual homes and blocks of flats, and finally starting to get those urgent renovation projects done.

In this newsletter we give some information about some of the health and safety work we have been focusing on over the last year. We've also included something a lot of you ask us about - our empty properties and what we are doing about them.

It was nice to see so many of you at the recent



engagement sessions and to hear your views - good and bad.

I know that we have a lot of things to fix and much to do in order to rebuild a better relationship with you.

My team and I remain fully committed to doing this and improving your homes, with you.

## MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME UPDATE

We're carrying out surveys to assess the condition of all our homes so we can decide which properties most need updating and what they need. That includes looking at everyone's kitchens and bathrooms, their windows and doors and how they heat their homes. We'll use this information to decide where we should invest first to make

sure your home is of a good, safe and secure standard.

You will be contacted by someone from our contractor, Michael Dyson Associates, to make an appointment with you to visit your home for up to an hour for the survey. Please keep the appointment as this is key to having your home improved.

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

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# TACKLING ASBESTOS

Before we carry out work on our properties where there are tenants, we always carry out a survey to check for asbestos so that we don't put people at risk.

Asbestos was commonly used in construction before 2000 and national guidance is that it's safest to leave it where it is unless it could be damaged.

At Aston House in Shoreham, we identified

asbestos that needed to be removed when we were preparing to install new fire doors.

To keep all of the tenants safe, we temporarily moved them out of the block while we carried out the work.

Thank you to all of the Aston House tenants for their helpfulness and patience during the disruption caused while we were making their homes safer.



# GETTING ACCESS

We're working hard to make sure that every Adur Homes property has a working fire alarm, carbon monoxide detectors if they have gas appliances, and fire doors if they are flats.

We also need to do gas and electrical checks to help keep our tenants safe.

Every one of our homes where we've been given access now has either a working carbon monoxide detector, a fire alarm or both, but unfortunately sometimes

we can't get inside properties, which can prevent us doing this really important and legally required work.

If we or one of our contractors contact you about getting access to your home, please keep the appointments so we can make your home safer.

If you have not given us permission we may need to go to court to get a warrant to enter your home, which we obviously don't want to have to do.



# REMOVAL OF ITEMS FROM COMMUNAL AREAS

It's vital that walkways, stairways, hallways and other shared areas in our blocks are kept clear of any items, both because they are a fire risk and because they could prevent you and your neighbours escaping in an emergency.

Please keep these areas clear. If we find any items in communal areas, we will remove them and may bill the owner for us taking them away and getting rid of them.

Photo: a fire at Warren Court in Lancing spread in items left in a communal area



# TENANTS' SURVEY

In October we asked you to complete a survey to tell us what you thought of your homes and the service we give you.

We're really grateful that a total of 720 tenants took the time to respond online, by phone or by post.

We asked you to tell us what you didn't like about the way we work for you and what most needed to be improved.

The topic that you most frequently said needed to improve was our day-to-day repairs, in particular repairs that had not been done and how long work can take to be completed. You also were particularly keen for us to get better at improving your homes, at tackling mould and

damp problems and keeping communal areas clean.

Overall, just over half of tenants (54%) said they were satisfied with the service they receive from us. The same proportion were satisfied that their council home was safe but just 47% were satisfied that it was well maintained.

Of those tenants whose home was repaired by us in the last year, 59% said they were satisfied with the service. But just 18% of you who made a complaint to us this year were satisfied with our response.

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. Your honest feedback will help us to improve the service you receive.



We'll ask you the same questions again later this year to see how we're doing.

We will also report the results of the survey to the Regulator of Social Housing, the national social housing watchdog, as part of the work we're doing to improve our service to you.

To read the full results, see: [www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/adur-homes/information-and-publications/tenant-satisfaction-measures](http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/adur-homes/information-and-publications/tenant-satisfaction-measures)

## RESIDENT SURGERY MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER

A big thank you to all the tenants and leaseholders who attended the last set of resident meetings in May.

It was very helpful hearing the feedback and we are using this information to improve our services.

Many of the issues raised at the meetings were about individual tenancies and leaseholders concerns and it was difficult at times to respond as fully as we would have liked in a public group setting.

The next set of meetings in September will therefore

follow a 'surgery format' where you will be able to meet and ask questions from key officers in one to one meetings. Officers available to speak with will include those responsible for repairs, maintenance, allocations and tenancy support.

You won't need to book, just come along and ask any questions you may have. Either the director or the assistant director for housing will also be available should you wish to speak with them about any general concerns, feedback or ideas you might have.

**The meetings will start at 5:30pm and finish by 7pm. The dates and locations for each area are as follows:**

- Tuesday 3rd September: Eastbrook Manor, Fishersgate
- Monday 9th September: Harriet Johnson Centre, Sompting
- Tuesday 17th September: The Shoreham Centre
- Wednesday 25th September: Southwick Community Centre
- Monday 30th September: Lancing Parish Hall



# COST OF LIVING | EMPTY HOMES

If you're struggling financially you don't need to deal with it on your own. We've put lots of helpful information at:

[www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support](http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support)

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

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

- The **Time to Talk** counselling service 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**

We currently have a number of empty homes that we are committed to bringing back into use where possible.

We have been working with two external contractors to get these homes ready for citizens who need them.

In the past six months we have repaired and improved 53 of these homes so that new tenants could move in.

This work will continue as we push to reduce the number of empty properties we have across the district.



Renovated kitchen to bring an empty property back into use

## 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/adur-homes/request-a-repair)
- **Contact your Housing team:**  
[tenancy.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:tenancy.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk)
- **Or your leasehold team:**  
[leasehold@adur.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto:adurhomes@adur-worthing.gov.uk)