

Residents Questions - 3 star, All Areas

C3.1 - Lack of action on guttering repairs and maintenance

Area in city	Central
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	11 th July 2024
Week of Area Panel	16 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on 12th August
Name of officer responding	Sam Crick
Officer job title	Operations Manager
Contact Details	sam.crick@brighton-hove.gov.uk

C3.1 Question

Issue	Residents have found it impossible to get any action taken over broken and blocked gutters at Warwick Mount and repairs to gutters at Somerset Point.
Background	<p>Warwick Mount residents have been raising concerns about the damage from broken/blocked guttering for years, without any action being taken. Water runs down the walls and is causing damage to the external wall insulation which was installed at great expense.</p> <p>Pippin Boardman talked to Geoff Gage (Head of Housing Investment & Asset Management) and asked him to view and address the problems at Warwick Mount. Geoff did not think it was necessary to come and see the guttering but said it would be addressed. No action has been taken and there is considerable frustration about the delays and lack of communication.</p> <p>Eileen Stewart is also trying to get some action around a repair to broken guttering at Somerset Point.</p>
Request or Question	<p>Ask the following questions at the September Central Area Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it so hard to get <i>action</i> on repairs and maintenance issues? How can this be improved? • How can <i>communication</i> about on-going repairs and maintenance be improved, so residents are kept informed? Without updates and good communication residents feel that the issue has been completely neglected and nothing is being done.

C3.1 Response

Response

There has only been one job raised this year at Somerset Point which was allocated to skylift (access equipment due to height and to eliminate the need to scaffolding) to complete the works to the gutter. No other guttering jobs have been raised. Warwick Mount - Outstanding job with contractor to clear blocked hopper/downpipe. This was not carried out by the first contractor so was reallocated to new contractor and again is the only outstanding job which was raised in March 2024.

To answer “*Why is it so hard to get action on repairs and maintenance issues? How can this be improved?*” I would really need more information about specific cases, looking at the repairs history, responsive repairs issues are being completed when they are reported to us.

We have made advancements with tenants being able to use their Housing Online account to monitor outstanding repairs jobs at their property. Unfortunately, this does not cover blocks or communal areas as they can only see their property. When something is happening at a block (such as scaffolding going up or external repairs that might affect or inconvenience tenants) then we will write to tenants but currently there is no system whereby we update tenants on orders registered against a communal block that they may be ‘attached’ to.

C3.1 Action

Action	N/A
Start date	
End date	

N3.1 - Anti Social Behaviour and crime

Area in city	North
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	20 th June 2024
Week of Area Panel	9 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Janet Dowdell
Officer job title	Tenancy Service Operations Manager
Contact Details	janet.dowdell@brighton-hove.gov.uk

N3.1 Question

Issue	There are continued reports of anti-social behaviour and crime across the North Area. The meeting noted that there was a lack of police/PCSO presence around the areas where they live, where there used to be more.
--------------	--

Background	<p>Residents across the North area all reported serious ongoing cases of ASB & crime at the last RO meeting (April 2024).</p> <p>Most recently, residents across Hollingdean, Moulsecoomb, Bates Estate and Coldean have reported gangs of teenagers on motorbikes racing around the estates. They are not just causing noise nuisance, but also putting residents at risk of severe injury (riding through fields where children are playing, riding very close to residents).</p>
Request or Question	<p>The meeting agreed to raise this at all Area Panels.</p> <p>While this is not directly related to Housing, the issue of ASB seems to disproportionately affect residents living on estates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Council able to do anything to ensure that PCSOs are reinstated on estates? Can the Council put pressure on the Police to provide more PCSOs in and around estates?

N3.1 Response

Response
<p>N 3.1</p> <p>Thank you for this question. As members of the Brighton and Hove Community Safety Partnership the Council regularly meets with Sussex Police in order to work together to increase wider community safety throughout the city by tackling crime, the underlying causes of crime, and the fear of crime, to make Brighton and Hove a safer place to live, work and visit. This includes communication between the four area Housing teams and neighbourhood policing teams which includes PCSOs.</p> <p>A meeting so we can plan our response in a location-based way, is named the Joint Action Group, This group is jointly chaired by the council and the police, it looks at strategic issues and the deployment of resources in the city. We are ensuring the areas mentioned and ongoing concerns raised in this question are brought up for discussion and plan for this area.</p> <p>This is an example of how this approach can work, it's been very effective in other areas.</p> <p>We encourage residents to report all incidents to the Police or Housing so that we have the times, dates and location details to enable some targeted work to happen. Without these reports we are unable to plan our response or understand when there is a wider issue in a location.</p> <p>Call Sussex Police on 101 or 999 in case of emergency. report online at www.sussex.police.uk</p> <p>Call Housing Customer Services on 01273 293030 or report online housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk</p>

--

E3.1 - Anti Social Behaviour

Area in city	East
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	27 th June 2024
Week of Area Panel	9 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Janet Dowdell
Officer job title	Operations Manager
Contact Details	janet.dowdell@brighton-hove.gov.uk

E3.1 Question

Issue	It takes a long time for the Council to initiate the first steps into investigating incidents of ASB.
Background	<p>Issues around anti-social behaviour was raised at the last East Area Resident Only meeting (11th April 2024). A response was received from Jan Dowdell, Tenancy Services Operational Manager (E3.1, page 45-47). While there is an acknowledgement from residents that investigations into ASB take time, residents also pointed out that it takes the Council a long time to even initiate the first steps (e.g. informal warnings, support etc), by which time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the ASB is embedded and systemic; b) residents affected by ASB are aggravated and frustrated, and there are massive impacts on their mental health. <p>It would be better for the Council to address the problem early on for interventions to be effective, and for local residents to be reassured.</p>
Request or Question	<p>It was agreed to raise this at all Area Panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents ask the Council to be more rapid in their initial response to reports of anti-social behaviour, and address the issue before it escalates. • Residents ask that any initial response to, and interventions for dealing with reports of ASB involve a discussion/consultation with members of the community, including resident reps.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents suggest a probationary period for any new tenancies before they become secure, with regular check-ins to ensure that any problems are detected and dealt with early on, including provision of support and necessary preventative work.
--	---

E3.1 Response

Response
<p>E 3.1. The council's approach to casework is to take prompt action to deal with reports of ASB. Experience shows if we don't do this it may become harder to resolve.</p> <p>We are also aware that the way we work is still reactive and there are instances where we could have prevented the ASB from occurring in the first place, such as being more present the estates, undertaking more home visits This enables us to gain good information in an area and understand more about how people are managing their tenancies and relationships with neighbours.</p> <p>In every case where there are victims or witnesses to incidents of ASB the case officer will contact them to get details of the situation, carry out a risk assessment and put in place appropriate risk reduction measures. During this contact there will be a wider discussion regarding what measures the victim or witness feel need to be taken, and the measures that housing are able to take. Ideally this contact may need to be more frequent so that tenants are supported.</p> <p>In situations where it is appropriate, housing will liaise with resident representatives. However, in most cases housing is unable to discuss case details with other people because it would involve the sharing of sensitive and personal information, and this cannot be done without a lawful basis.</p> <p>There is a probationary period for all new tenancies. Every new tenant hasn't previously held a secure tenancy, will have an introductory tenancy which is a probationary tenancy lasting for a period of 12 months. This enables us to understand whether people are sticking to the terms of their agreement.</p> <p>A series of visits are carried out at set points during the 12-month period and where there are concerns, including anti-social behaviour issues or support needs, monitoring visits can be put in place until the issues are resolved or action to extend or end the introductory tenancy are taken.</p>

E3.1 Action

Action	N/A
Start date	N/A
End date	

E3.2 - Guttering Work

Area in city	East
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	27 th June 2024
Week of Area Panel	9 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Sam Crick
Officer job title	Operations Manager
Contact Details	sam.crick@brighton-hove.gov.uk

E3.2 Question

Issue	Residents are being told that subcontractors are due to clear the guttering on their homes, but are not being informed about when this will happen.
Background	<p>A resident in Woodingdean was told that the guttering on her house would be cleared at some point by subcontractors. When asked when this would happen, she was informed that the Council don't know when and that the subcontractor would just knock on the door at some point. The guttering that needs to be cleared is at the back of the property so a subcontractor would need to be let in.</p> <p>If residents don't know the date that the work is due to happen, they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may not be at the property when the subcontractor happens to come by • may be unaware that a subcontractor is due to arrive, and refuse entry because they don't know who they are
Request or Question	<p>It was agreed to raise this at all Area Panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents should be informed in advance by letter or text message about the date the subcontractor is due to be working in their area, so that they are alerted to the fact and can make necessary arrangements. • Subcontractors should be expected to communicate with the Council about progress of work, and when they are due to be working in particular areas. • The Council need to improve their level of communication with residents, and keep residents regularly notified about what stage the repair/work is at.

E3.2 Response

Response
<p>Initially, the intention was that the contractor would be notifying residents of appointments via SMS or automated call. Unfortunately, this system has been delayed their end but ready for trial at the end of this month (August). Currently, the contractors are calling ahead where they can, but it is a huge task on such a large scale. If tenants are missed then a calling card is left with details to contact the contractors to rearrange.</p> <p>We are meeting with the contractor 15/8/24 to discuss this further</p>

E3.2 Action

Action	As above
Start date	
End date	

E3.3 - Visitor Parking Permits

Area in city	East
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	27 th June 2024
Week of Area Panel	9 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Paul Nicholls
Officer job title	Parking Strategy & Contracts Manager
Contact Details	paul.nicholls@brighton-hove.gov.uk

E3.3 Question

Issue	Officers were going to conduct a review of visitor parking permits but residents have not heard the outcome of this review yet or seen any changes.
Background	The issue and questions about visitors parking permits was first raised as a 3-star item at the Resident Only meeting 29 th June 2023, leading into the Area Panel meeting 4 th September 2023.

	<p>The original response from Paul Nicholls, Parking Strategy & Contracts manager, was:</p> <p>“The visitor parking permit purchase process is being reviewed with a view to streamlining the process. This is a technical piece of work but work has started on this.”</p> <p>It was raised again at the Resident Only meeting of 9th January 2024, leading into the Area Panel meeting of 18th March 2024.</p> <p>Jenny Mitchell (Parking Customer Services Manager) responded:</p> <p>“A parking review is due to take place spring 2024, we will review this point at that time.</p> <p>“We are currently in the process of exploring virtual visitor permits whilst still offering physical scratch cards.</p> <p>“Visitor permits are issued to residents who meet the criteria, they must reside at the property 5 nights a week or more. They must be able to supply proof of address dated within the last 3 months, we are also able to check council tax records to confirm they are a resident of the property they are requesting permits for.</p>
<p>Request or Question</p>	<p>It was agreed to raise this at all Area Panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents request an update on the parking review • Residents would like to discuss potential changes to visitor parking permit costs, structure and criteria for eligibility. The problems raised were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking permits are too expensive ○ The limit of 50 permits per person needs review ○ Community assets, such as community centres, are currently not eligible to purchase parking permits

E3.3 Response

Response	
	<p>The Parking review update is being presented to Cabinet on 26th September to agree the strategy and policy direction within Parking Services.</p> <p>We will be happy to provide an update to residents at the next Area Panel.</p>

E3.3 Action

Action	As above
Start date	26.09.24
End date	N/A

E3.4 Stop bleeding kits

Area in city	East
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	27 th June 2024
Week of Area Panel	9 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Caroline Vass
Officer job title	Interim Director of Public Health
Contact Details	Caroline.vass@brighton-hove.gov.uk

E3.4 Question

Issue	There is a need for a greater network of “Stop bleeding kits”, much like defibrillators.
Background	N/A
Request or Question	<p>It was agreed to raise this at all Area Panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents are asking for more Stop bleeding kits to be rolled out across the city, and for training to be provided to community groups / residents on how to use these. BELTA resident rep would like to work with the Council on the provision of these kits and the training.

E3.4 Response

Response
<p>Thank you for your question regarding stop bleeding kits. It is unclear whether there is in fact a need for such kits. This is not an identified topic in the BHCC three year planning cycle for needs assessments, and would not be part of the public health offer. However Public Health colleagues will contact South East Coast Ambulance Service to understand their thoughts on the need for these kits, and/or any training that the NHS may offer, to feed into the Area Panel discussions.</p> <p>The model for any roll out is a similar model to the roll out of defibrillators across the city. There is work underway to explore the learning from the defib programme and if similar approaches were suggested for other tools the learning may be useful.</p>

W3.1 - Role of Leaseholders & private tenants in resident engagement (including EDB panels)

Area in city	West
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	3 rd July 2024
Week of Area Panel	16 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Keely McDonald
Officer job title	Senior Community Engagement Officer
Contact Details	keely.mcdonald@brighton-hove.gov.uk

W3.1 Question

Issue	Elected representatives of residents' associations are not able to vote at various Resident Engagement meetings if they are leaseholders or homeowners (i.e. not Council tenants).
Background	<p>This issue was raised at the last West RO meeting (see minutes 18th April 2024, Item 2).</p> <p>At recent resident engagement meetings, leaseholders and homeowners were told they were not able to vote as they are not Council tenants. Residents Associations elect the person who they think is best suited to represent them in the Resident Engagement structure and at the Area Panel. This could be a council tenant, leaseholder, private tenant or homeowner. Whoever is entrusted with this role by their Association should be able to vote and participate fully at Area Panel and at other resident engagement meetings.</p> <p>While the Terms of Reference state that elected reps - regardless of whether they are tenants, residents, leaseholders or homeowners - are able to vote at Area Panel meetings, this does not extend to other Resident Engagement meetings and panels, such as the Estate Development Budget panel. Elected reps are currently being invited to these panels but are then told that they cannot participate in voting and decision-making processes because they are not Council tenants.</p> <p>While they have been told by Sam Nolan (BHCC Community Engagement Manager) that these procedural issues are under review, the meeting would like the review to make the following change:</p>

Request or Question	West Residents are asking that anyone who is an elected representative of their Association is allowed to vote and participate fully at Area Panels and all other resident engagement meetings (including EDB panel meetings).
----------------------------	--

W3.1 Response

Response
<p>I recognise that this issue is still a concern for some residents in the West area. Due to the underspend over the past few years, there have been no votes held at the West Main Bid Estate Development Budget Meetings. Each meeting agrees whether to hold a vote in this instance and all have decided that it was not necessary but would continue to discuss and offer feedback for each proposed bid. Due to the level of underspend in West currently, it's unlikely the next Main Bid meetings will have a need for a vote either and, as previously, each attendee will be able to play an equal role in discussing and ensuring funding is awarded appropriately.</p> <p>Although the previous comments made about the issues West residents have raised, in relation to voting rights, have been recorded, there are no plans to change the Area Panel Terms of Reference at this time. This request will be added to the previous comments made.</p>

W3.1 Action

Action	N/A
Start date	
End date	

W3.2 - Estate Development Budget Process

Area in city	West
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	3 rd July 2024
Week of Area Panel	16 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Keely McDonald
Officer job title	Senior Community Engagement Officer
Contact Details	keely.mcdonald@brighton-hove.gov.uk

W3.2 Question

Issue	No action has yet been taken with regards to West residents' requests at the last meeting.
Background	<p>This issue was raised at the last West RO meeting (see minutes 18th April 2024, Item 3).</p> <p>West residents asked for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">evidence that proper consultation was carried out about changes to the Estate Development Budget terms and conditions, to include minutes and Area Panel reports. This has not been received. West residents requested that this information be sent to the Chairs of the West Resident Only meetings (Muriel and Alison)a meeting between West representatives and Keely McDonald and Sam Nolan, where these issues can be properly aired and discussed (Muriel Briault is the contact for this). <p>Neither of these has happened</p>
Request or Question	West residents request follow-up on the above items.

W3.2 Response

Response
I apologise that this has not happened yet, a meeting was provisionally arranged for July however had to be rescheduled due to staff availability. This meeting has now been arranged for 15 th August, a verbal update will be available at the next West Area Panel meeting.

W3.2 Action

Action	Meeting to be held with Muriel, Alison, Sam Nolan and Keely McDonald to discuss issues.
Start date	15/08/2024
End date	15/08/2024

W3.3 - Areas in and round Estates in state of neglect and disrepair

Area in city	West
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	3 rd July 2024
Week of Area Panel	16 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12 th August

Name of officer responding	Chloe McLaughlin/Grant Richie
Officer job title	Estates Service Manager
Contact Details	chloe.mclaughin@brighton-hove.gov.uk

W3.3 Question

Issue	<p>All areas reported that their estates were being left in a state of neglect and disrepair, and looking increasingly shabby and dirty. Residents and resident reps all work very hard to improve their estates and areas but time and time again are faced with hurdles when they try to do so. Residents feel demoralised that they constantly have to fight to get things done, and wait a long time for things to get fixed or sorted.</p>
Background	<p>When residents request action or report issues to the Council, they would like to be kept informed and know the outcome – even if the outcome is that whatever is requested can't be done. If the outcome is that things <i>can't</i> be done, then they would like to know what <i>can</i> be done.</p> <p>Conway Court / Livingstone House / Clarendon & Ellen areas reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litter, graffiti, fly-tipping, overgrowing weeds. • When an area looks neglected, it attracts anti-social behaviour such as drug taking and drug dealing, which creates more problems. • Lifts being out of order, or needing maintenance – repairs or maintenance can take years to take place. • Windows repairs – this took 2 years to fix. • Hedge-trimming and pruning doesn't happen – residents have had to sort this out themselves. • Bushes haven't been cut back on the pathway along Clarendon Road, making it difficult for people, particularly those in mobility scooters, to get past. • Pavements have loose slabs or tree roots growing, creating hazards for people, particularly those in mobility scooters or those with mobility issues. <p>Residents also reported inefficiencies in building & repairs work. Work isn't being checked to see if it's up to standard; contractors don't have access to the right materials; those coming to assess repairs don't understand the buildings well enough.</p> <p>Knoll Estate: See also item 8.</p> <p>Residents have resorted to cutting back overgrown hedges / bushes across paths themselves because areas are not being routinely maintained by the Council and action isn't being taken quickly enough when problems are reported. When they subsequently ask the Council to come and clear the cuttings, they have been told that this can't be done,</p>

	<p>and that residents have to deal with clearing the cuttings themselves, because they are the ones who did the work.</p> <p>There is a lot of goodwill amongst resident volunteers to take on some of this kind of work. However, it's extremely frustrating that there is absolutely no support from the Council.</p> <p>For example, it would be a good idea to have Council drivers to have regular rounds to come and collect and clear some of these cuttings around the estates, or to have a Council service whereby residents could call up to ask for a free collection.</p> <p>North Portslade: As reported at the last RO meeting – Lack of grass cutting and maintenance of footpaths, pavements, verges.</p>
<p>Request or Question</p>	<p>West Residents would like to know when the Council are going to start taking action to improve the condition of estates, and be more proactive and communicative about taking action in and across the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of communal areas inside blocks • Maintenance of communal areas outside blocks • Individual repairs and maintenance • Maintenance of pathways and pavements (including cutting back of hedges/bushes/tree suckers & weeds) • Keeping residents informed

W3.3 Response

Response
<p>The Council are taking action every day to improve the condition of tenant's homes and the wider estates. As we have reported before there is a backlog of repairs which has impacted upon the condition of people's homes. We are now making good progress in reducing this backlog, we have brought in an additional two contractors. In addition we have started to introduce new preventative measures such as gutter clears which will reduce the damage to people's homes and the nuisance of overspilling gutters during rain.</p> <p>We are regularly undertaking repairs to communal areas both inside and outside of our buildings in addition to the planned improvement works that are undertaken each year.</p> <p>Please let us know if you think that we have not done a good job or if you see something that needs repairing please call Repairs Help Desk and report it 01273 294409 or email Repairs.Helpdesk@brighton-hove.gov.uk</p> <p>We recognise that grounds maintenance across our estates is a concern for residents. Chloe Mclaughlin, Estates Service Manager, is currently working with City Parks to improve the scheduling of work. We are compiling a list of areas that we know need attention.</p> <p>If you know of any areas that need immediate attention please contact estateserviceteam@brighton-hove.gov.uk for the attention of Chloe Mclaughlin.</p>

We fully support residents who help maintain their estates and the Estates Service Team regularly collect bagged garden waste. If a group of residents have done some work in a communal area. You can ask for a free collection of garden waste by ringing the Estates Service Team on 01273 294769.

W3.4 - Anti Social Behaviour Cases: Statistics

Area in city	West
Star rating	3 Star/ City wide issue
Date question raised	3 rd July 2024
Week of Area Panel	16 th Sept 2024
Deadline for officer response	1pm on Monday 12th August
Name of officer responding	Janet Dowdell
Officer job title	Operations Manager
Contact Details	janet.dowdell@brighton-hove.gov.uk

W3.4 Question

Issue	In response to North Area's question (N3.1, p58) regarding ASB, Janet Dowdell (BHCC tenancy Services Operations Manager) provided a breakdown of ASB cases and formal actions taken (p.59), but didn't specify which area this covered, or whether it was citywide.
Background	N/A
Request or Question	West residents request a report of ASB cases and Council actions taken, broken down by area (North, West, East, Central).

W3.4 Response

Response
<p>The area breakdown for the 675 unique ASB cases recording during 2023/24 referred to in the commentary of the previous Housing Performance Report was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 201 Central • 96 East • 228 North • 150 West <p>The area breakdown of formal actions taken since April 2024 is presented in the table below. (recording of events have only recently been included on our system. this is not a</p>

complete picture of the events for the whole year. CPW/Ns have only been in use since April 2024).

Action	Central	East	West	Total
Closure Notice/Order	1	2		3
Community Protection Notice	3		1	4
Community Protection Warning Issued	7		6	13
Cuckooing Case	8	4		12
NOSP Served	6	5		11
Total	25	11	7	43