

# New homes for neighbourhoods Update



September 2015

Brighton & Hove City Council's New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme is building much needed new council homes on council owned land. We work with local resident associations, ward councillors and many council teams and partners to make best use of council housing land and buildings, improving neighbourhoods and helping to meet the city's housing needs. We are aiming to build at least 500 new council homes across Brighton & Hove.

This summer tenants moved into the first new council homes to be completed under this programme. Another 77 new council homes for affordable rent are now being built at six sites in Brighton, Hove and Portslade, with more in the pipeline. The new homes will be let through Homemove.

## **Preston Road – 2 new wheelchair accessible family bungalows**



Tenants have moved into two fully wheelchair accessible three bedroom family bungalows which were completed on time and below budget at the end of July, thanks to collaborative working across the council and with the council's Sustainable Futures construction partnership and in-house architects. They have been built on the foundations of unfit, former temporary accommodation units.

## **Former Manor Place office – 15 new flats at Robert Lodge**

The concrete structure for the first block on the site of the old prefab Manor Place Housing Office is now up to the same height as Robert Lodge. The Estate Regeneration Team and constructor, Westridge, have kept in very close contact with Robert Lodge Resident Association during this noisiest part of the build and residents have been very patient. However, they helped redesign and replant their communal gardens, which are now a larger, more open shared space.



The southern block of nine one bedroom flats with a lift should be finished in early 2016 and will be suitable for tenants with mobility needs. We expect work on the northern block of six flats to start as the first block is completed.

## **12 new family houses in Portslade and Hangleton**

Garages on the north side of Flint Close in Portslade have now been demolished to make way for two new houses, with another pair to be built on the south side. Four family houses are also being built on former garage sites at both Foredown Road, Portslade and Hardwick Road, Hangleton. All 12 houses will be let in summer 2016.

## **Brooke Mead – 45 extra care flats**

The constructors are removing underground cabling and diverting sewers and gas pipes in preparation for the demolition of the old Brooke Mead former temporary accommodation block in Albion Street. The 45 extra care flats with community facilities which will replace it should be ready by summer 2017.

The Estate Regeneration Team and constructor Willmott Dixon are in regular contact with local residents and businesses as well as with Albion Hill Residents' Association.



## **Ardingly Street car parking site – 5 new homes in Kemp Town**

The sixth scheme now on site is on a small cleared site in Kemp Town formerly used for car parking. After completing ground works and foundations, construction of the concrete walls and floors should start in November. We expect the five homes, including a ground floor wheelchair accessible flat, to be let next summer.

Westridge, like all constructors in the programme, are signed up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme and aim at all times to keep nuisance, noise and disruption from the building works to a minimum. They and the Estate Regeneration Team also make sure that the local tenant and resident association, ward councillors, Local Action Team and neighbouring residents are updated with progress on the works.

### How is the council paying for the new homes?

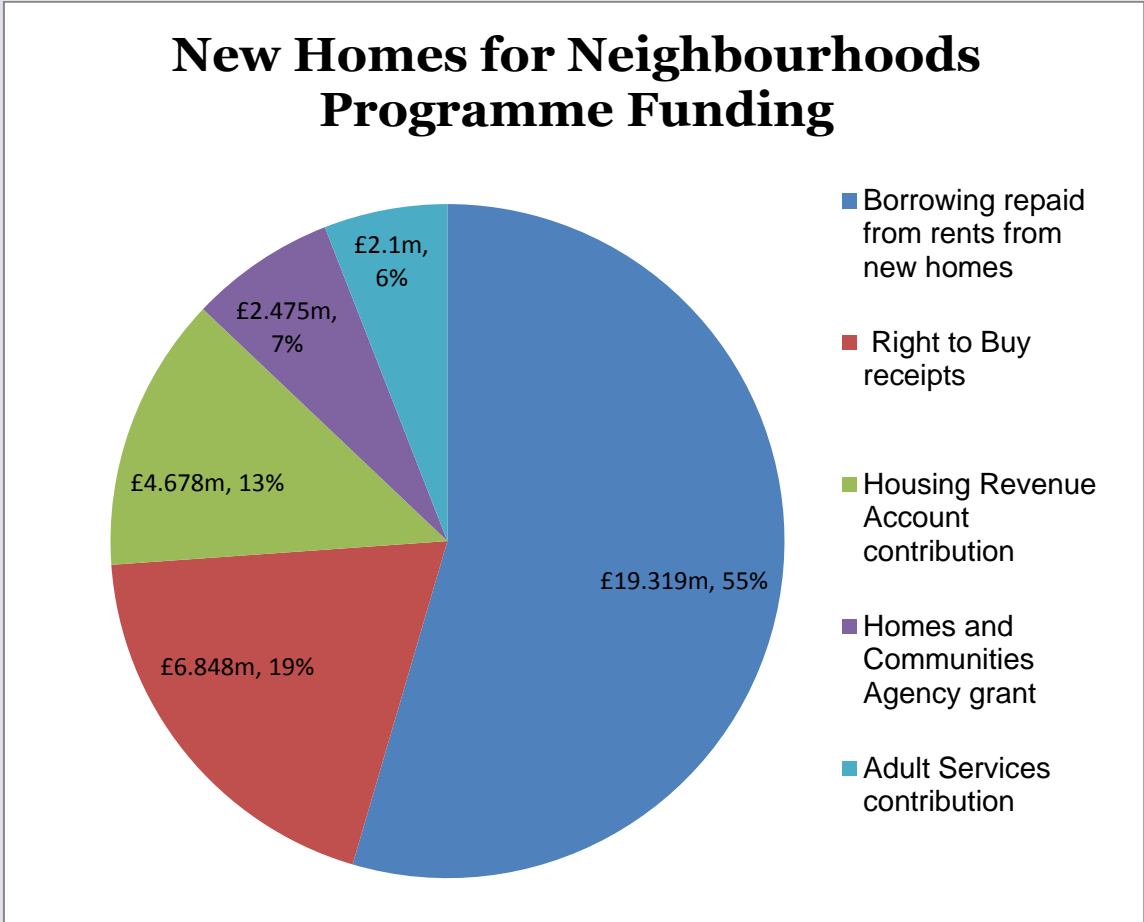
Most of the money comes from the rents for the new homes, which are higher than rents for existing council homes. They are 'affordable rents', set at the Local Housing Allowance levels of Housing Benefit. This rental income repays borrowing at low interest rates to help fund development costs.

Secondly, we use Right to Buy receipts from other tenants exercising their right to buy their council home. Receipts from sales pay for up to a third of the cost to build each new home. If we don't use this money to build replacement new homes, we have to pay it to central government.

Thirdly, we can use some of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) surpluses we make by running council housing more efficiently, now that the council housing budget is 'self-financing' and does not have to make payments to the government every year.

Fourthly, we have some government grant paid by the Homes and Communities Agency: £2.4 million for Brooke Mead. And finally, Adult Services have also made a contribution of £2.1 million to the Brooke Mead extra care scheme.

The chart below shows how the current new homes programme totalling £35.42 million is being funded over three years. The programme of capital works and improvements to existing council homes is £31 million for this year alone.



## **Findon Road, Whitehawk – 57 new flats on former library site**



This scheme of 57 new flats is currently going through the planning process. If successful, we expect building work to start in early 2016.

The two blocks include one, two and three bedroom flats with private balconies and lifts and six wheelchair accessible ground floor flats with private patios.

## **Wellsbourne site, Whitehawk**

The council's in-house architects are now developing the initial design for 28 flats of varying sizes in two blocks on the cleared Wellsbourne site, between the health centre and the school on Whitehawk Road. The council's Housing & New Homes and Policy & Resources Committees will be asked to approve development of the Wellsbourne scheme once further design work has been completed.

## **Design Competition for small sites**

The New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme is testing the value for money, speed and quality of many different ways to develop the affordable new homes that the city needs on council owned land.

As part of our strategy for small, challenging sites we are running a design competition with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) for four small former or underused car parking sites on council housing land at Hinton Close, Rotherfield Crescent and Natal Road and a small council owned parking site in Frederick Street, Brighton. The competition attracted 140 initial designs. 20 have now been shortlisted and will go out to consultation with local residents around the sites this autumn and be developed further. The four winning designs will be announced in January.

## **Former Selsfield Drive Housing Office**

A council architect is developing the initial design for 20 flats on the site of the former Selsfield Drive Housing Office on Lewes Road. Bates Estate Residents Association will continue to be involved as plans develop and the Estate Regeneration Team will organise full consultation with residents after further design.

## **For more information**

There's more information on the New Homes for Neighbourhoods council webpage at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/nhfn](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/nhfn), including regular updates on individual schemes and links to planning documents.

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