



Lewes District Churches **HOMELINK** **NEWSLETTER No 20: AUTUMN 2016**

UPDATE FROM JAMES, HOMELINK'S SERVICE MANAGER

This year, by the end of September, the number of applications and tenancies is 174 and 65 respectively. So we have almost reached last year's totals with three months to go of 2016.

The number of applications has gone up quite significantly. This may be because there has been a large increase in evictions and also due to an increase in domestic abuse cases. I think the increase in tenancies can be put down to HOMELINK's new policy of allowing applicants to move outside the Lewes District into other areas of Sussex. In June 2016, we helped 14 applicants obtain tenancies - our highest ever monthly figure.

Despite the increase in tenancies, it is still enormously difficult for many of our successful applicants to find affordable properties, the supply of which seems to be getting smaller and smaller. Local letting agencies have long waiting lists for these. In an effort to explain our service better and to forge better links, HOMELINK is initiating meetings with local agencies.

Here are just two quotes from those sent in this year by grateful tenants:

"Thank you for your help when I was in a time of need. I would have been sleeping in my car with my daughter and partner if it wasn't for your help" (D.S. on completing repayments);

"Thank you to all at Homelink for making it possible for me to finally move back into a home of my own. It has meant the world to me." (J.B.Y. on obtaining her tenancy).

RECENT EVENTS

PEACEHAVEN MUSIC QUIZ

Robert Robertson, former Mayor, presenting a cheque for the sum raised to HOMELINK's Chair, Joan Wignall.



HOMELINK'S ANNUAL MEETING at St Peter's Blatchington.

Speakers from HOMELINK, Sussex Pathways, and Lewes District Council shared helpful insights into how their organisations are coping with ever-changing circumstances.



TEA and UKULELE at the Friends Meeting House in Lewes.

What a lovely afternoon in the sunshine, with fun music and delicious food.

? ? QUIZ and PLOUGHMAN'S SUPPER 🍔 at St Thomas More in Seaford

A pleasant way to spend an evening, with a tasty supper, raising funds for HOMELINK. Many thanks to the Events Team.

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A Message from our Chair

Dear Friends,

You will see from the quotes at the end of James's update that many of our tenants are very grateful for the help that they receive from HOMELINK. Without the help and support that you give, in so many different ways, HOMELINK could not be so effective, so this message gives me the opportunity to say a big THANK YOU to you all, for all you do!

Would you like to find out more about HOMELINK and about the housing situation locally? One way to do this is to come to our Annual Meetings. Those of you who came this year heard speakers who were most informative, and much networking and chatting was going on during the refreshments afterwards. Please put next year's meeting in your diary!

We are in close contact with Lewes District Housing Department and pleased to know that they, and other groups, are looking at different ways of providing or finding affordable accommodation.

Our work to 'help people into housing' would not be successful without James, who manages the office, organises and supervises interviews, recommends loans, and follows up loan repayment situations. So I want here and now to thank James for his commitment to HOMELINK and for his thoughtful and caring approach.

Please keep in touch.

Very best wishes,

Joan

A Message from our Treasurer

HOMELINK is truly grateful to everyone whose generosity has helped fund the 65 new loans so far this year: especially local churches across our area; individual supporters; and friends who have attended our special events.

It is always an exciting moment when a new tenancy begins; and there is celebration too when one of our tenants completes their repayments. At times like these, tenants will often choose to express their thanks for HOMELINK's help given at a crucial time.

We are always looking out for new ways of serving those in need of a home. Please write and tell us if you have some good ideas which HOMELINK could take up.

John



HOMELINK needs people to:

- **work with the Events Team to organise events – very important!**
- **help HOMELINK's Secretary**
- **maintain HOMELINK's profile in the community**



HOMELINK needs Prayer

Please pray

For all who help forward the work of HOMELINK and for all who receive help. Let us thank God for all we have achieved in the last year. We ask for wisdom in using our funds as well as possible and for all our future work. We ask God to bless our efforts to continue to help the many in need into housing in Sussex.



Sunday 4th December at 3 pm
Ashdown Singers
Christmas Concert

Our annual Concert by the **Ashdown Singers** is at St Thomas More church in Seaford. Retiring collection. Coffee and mince pies afterwards. Don't miss it! Every year it is even more amazing!

2017
Thursday 8th June at 7.30 pm
HOMELINK Annual Meeting.