

## FINANCIAL FACTS AND FIGURES FOR 2016

CASH IN	£	CASH OUT	£
LDC grants towards loans	11,800	Loans advanced	134,431
ESCC grants towards loans	20,500	Grants to tenants	1,095
Loan repayments from tenants	64,753		
Subscriptions & donations	17,479	Employee expenses	13,215
Fundraising events	1,506	Office expenses	4,317
Gift aid tax refunds	2,145		
Interest	1,199		
<b>Total cash in</b>	<b>119,382</b>	<b>Total cash out</b>	<b>153,058</b>

Over the last three years, more than 230 individuals, couples and families have been helped into housing with our assistance, at a total cost of £344,000. The 86 new loans made in 2016 were funded from repayments of earlier loans (48%), local council grants (24%) and by generous donations from our supporters (14%). The balance came from HOMELINK reserves.

Loan repayments by most of our 244 current tenants continue to increase and are presently running at around £5,000 every month. At the end of 2016 the total of loans owed by tenants was £259,125.

A new scheme was started this year to give small grants to help some tenants with 'moving in' costs.

We are truly grateful for all the support received, whether from personal donors, churches, local councils or other organisations. I should also like to thank Paul Lawrence for examining the formal HOMELINK accounts, copies of which can be obtained from me.

*John Howes, April 2017*

**HOMELINK TRUSTEES:** Ethane Ashling-Perry, Rev. Ian Byrnes, John Cornish, Linda Fisher, Rita Harper, Terry Howell, John Howes, Elizabeth Mandeville, Malcolm Mazey, Rev. Martin Miller, Bryan Perry, Christine Tutt, Joan Wignall.

## LEWES DISTRICT CHURCHES HOMELINK



You are invited to attend the  
**ANNUAL MEETING FOR SUPPORTERS &  
PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**  
on Thursday 8th June 2017 at 7.30 pm at  
**King's Church, Brooks Road, Lewes BN7 2BY**



### *Directions to King's Church, Lewes*

- From roundabout at north end of tunnel, head towards Lewes town centre and turn right at next roundabout by TESCO garage.
- From Lewes town direction, after crossing river turn left at roundabout by TESCO garage.

Then go straight on at next roundabout, past ALDI. Turn left by Carpet Right and Homebase. King's Church is at end of the road on left.

**Parking is possible on road, and at TESCO, but not at HOMEBASE, please.**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

HOMELINK was founded in 1998 as an ecumenical charity, in order to assist people with little or no savings and on a low income. It offers interest-free loans to enable suitable applicants to rent in the private sector, within the Lewes District Council area. Similar loans are offered to mentored ex-offenders from Lewes Prison, in association with Sussex Pathways.

*Registered charity No. 1068735*

# HOMELINK ANNUAL REPORT for 2016

## REPORT FROM OUR SERVICE MANAGER, JAMES GARDNER

2016 was one of the busiest years ever for HOMELINK, as 86 tenancies (a record) were secured, compared to 66 for 2015. A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with interviewing and other assistance.

The increase in applicants and tenancies secured can be put down to two factors: a) the opportunity now for tenants to obtain our help for tenancies outside the Lewes district, if they have been unable to find an affordable tenancy within our area, and b) HOMELINK becoming better known through other agencies and word of mouth.

The benefit caps continue apace and cause our tenants great financial hardship. An applicant with three children who was having all her housing benefit paid, told us that now she has to pay £400 towards it, which is forcing her to move.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, JOAN WIGNALL

As always, many, many thanks to all of you for the help and support you give to the work of HOMELINK. As James says, HOMELINK is becoming better known and is no longer a small charity. Much more administration and management work is needed as we grow. Our risk assessment (done annually) makes this very clear. However, looking forward:

- We are encouraged by the Government's White Paper 'Broken Housing' and by the promise that letting agents' fees will be banned;
- Our church representatives, who keep our congregations up to date, and our volunteers, meet from time to time for tea and to network. This April we were in Newhaven, at St Michael's. Next time, the meeting will be in Lewes;
- Please come to Pippa and Michael's very special Garden Party on Sunday 2nd July in Seaford. We are delighted when fund-raising is offered.

2018 is HOMELINK's 20th birthday. We will be using this time as an opportunity to celebrate and to raise HOMELINK's profile with various events. If you would like to offer an event or idea, please do.

## EVENTS IN 2016

In 2016 we enjoyed a Ukulele Tea at the Friends' Meeting House in Lewes and a Christmas concert by the Ashdown Singers in Seaford, followed by tea and mince pies. Many thanks to all who organised and/or supported these events.

*Thank you for all your help. We are just getting settled into our new home. RM*

*I would like to thank Homelink for enabling me to move into an independent space. I never could have afforded it on my own. BD*

*I am so grateful that I now have a safe space for me and my young children. SW.*

*I will always be grateful for your compassion and help. My job is amazing and my new home is my haven. SC*

*A massive thank you to Homelink for helping me at a time when I was in dire straits. I have recently secured a job! JT*

## FUTURE PLANS

HOMELINK is considering becoming an Incorporated Charity. This would make no difference to the nomination of trustees but would be more appropriate for a charity which is beginning to outgrow its Trust status.

## ANNUAL MEETING SPEAKERS

On Thursday 8th June we shall be hearing from:

- **James Gardner**, telling us about his work and the housing situation locally;
- **Grace Blaker**, an early trustee, reflecting on homelessness then and now;
- **Andy Chequers** from Lewes District Council, explaining plans for more affordable housing in the district.

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Please pray for wisdom to use our finances wisely and well: for more affordable accommodation to rent: that landlords and agents may rent at fair prices. Please ask God to bless the work of our Service Manager and Trustees and that of Lewes District Council housing department.

## CONTACT US

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