

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

The following deputation was submitted to Full Council on 17 July 2014 and is referred to Housing Committee – Damp and other tenants' issues

There is a flat on Brentwood Road which has the Queen's head on the living room wall. Maybe this doesn't sound too unusual, but in this case the Queen's head is a temporary feature caused by the shape of the mould on a permanent damp patch which takes up around four square foot of the wall (photos provided). It's a game the parents play with their two children, both of whom are asthmatic. They clean off the mould on a regular basis but it always returns in a different shape. When it's been raining heavily, there is also running water down the wall.

When the issue was raised with Mears, the residents were offered a dehumidifier, but they are concerned about what this would do to their electricity bill. It is also a short term fix which will not make the problem go away and needlessly increases energy use. These tenants pay rent for their council property and have the right to a proper solution to be found for the extreme damp in their home.

In another flat on Brentwood Road, a Mears home visit recorded damp levels off the scale in the tenant's bedroom, bathroom, living room and entrance hall. The proposed solution in this ground floor flat has been the removal of a brick above the damp course and new plasterboard, but the underlying cause of the damp does not appear to be being addressed. This seems an expensive and short term measure, particularly if the problem is also affecting other flats in the block. This case has been queried with the repairs team at Mears for the last nine months, and the resident is also asthmatic with other health conditions affected by damp.

In spite of representations made by a ward councillor, the solutions offered to the related damp problems above fail to resolve the problems for tenants, and cost more money in the long term, both involving expenditure in the short term while not fixing the underlying issue causing the damp. These cases also suggest that there may be ongoing damp issues in these particular buildings which would benefit from being investigated as a whole rather than on a flat by flat basis in response to residents' requests.

Will the council acknowledge the failure in these cases to offer satisfactory solutions to these damp problems; make enquiries with Mears as to why there have been such

delays with these specific cases; request that the possibility of a larger problem in these buildings which would best be addressed as a whole be investigated; and raise this issue at the next housing committee with a view to avoid similar situations arising in the future?

There is currently no active tenants' association on the Hollingdean estate. Will the council also undertake to support the continuation of tenants' associations when key residents move on, in recognition that they serve an important purpose in highlighting maintenance issues and engaging tenants in the improvement of their homes and living environment?

List of Deputies

Tracey Hill	35 Hollingdean Terrace, Brighton, BN1 7HB
Caroline Penn	41 Ventnor Villas, Hove, BN3 3DA
Michael Inkpin-Leissner	6 Ridge View, Brighton, BN1 9AL
Craig Baxter	1 Brentwood Road, Brighton, BN1 7EQ
Leonard Stafford	10 Stephens Road, Brighton, BN1 7ER
Lillian Stafford	10 Stephens Road, Brighton, BN1 7ER

Supporting information (photo)

