

# Tenants' Voice

AUTUMN/WINTER  
2020

A newsletter for and by Tenants



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**FAREHAM**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



# Hello!

Welcome to the Autumn/Winter edition of the Tenants' Voice, we hope this finds you safe and well. It's been a busy few months with lots to tell you about.

Sadly, Covid-19 is still affecting our daily lives, with some residents seeing a significant reduction in their household income due to the crisis. For those left struggling with debt, or unable to make ends meet to pay for daily essentials, see page 7 for details of how to get help and support.

The pandemic has meant that the annual Fareham in Bloom competition could not be run in the usual way this year. Instead the Council held its first ever virtual Fareham in Bloom competition, with over 100 entries submitted online. It was incredibly tough to choose the winners. We think you'll agree, they are stunning garden displays!

Also in this issue, details of how to check your heating is in working order as we head into the colder months, and lots, lots more. We hope that you find this edition helpful and informative.

Take care,

**Editorial Team**

## Trafalgar Court residents raise £300 for Macmillan Cancer Support

On 19th September, residents at Trafalgar Court held a socially distanced coffee morning to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Care.

Well done to residents Maureen and Yvonne for organising it all and for raising funds for such a great cause!



### Mayor of Fareham visits Lincoln Close to celebrate a very special birthday!

There was a special visitor for a resident at Lincoln Close in September. The Mayor of Fareham, Cllr Pamela Bryant, visited Mrs Edith White – as she celebrated her 100th birthday. Mrs White received a bouquet of flowers from the Mayor during a social distanced celebration.

Photo Credit: The News Portsmouth



# Virtual Fareham in Bloom 2020



## Virtual Fareham in Bloom

The annual Fareham in Bloom competition could not take place in the usual way this year.

We know how important gardening and outdoor spaces are to our residents though, so we decided to hold the competition virtually instead. Residents were asked to submit their entries online, with the winners voted by the public and a judging panel.

Included in the entries were photos from Vimy House; Barnfield Court; Downing Court and Lincoln Close.

“Well done everyone who entered!”



FAREHAM IN  
**BLOOM**





## Test your central heating

**As the weather begins to get colder, now is a good time to test your central heating to make sure that it is working. It is better to check it now so any problems can be fixed before you really need to heat your home.**

Any problems with gas central heating need to be reported to Liberty Gas who can be contacted on 0800 970 2512.

Problems with storage heaters or any other form of heating need to be reported to Responsive Repairs who can be contacted on 0800 1412 194 (free from landlines, some mobile networks may charge) or 01329 236100 (Monday to Friday 8:45am to 5:15pm).

## TV licences

**Over 75s who don't receive Pension Credit will now have to pay for their own TV licence. The TV licensing authority will be in touch by letter with details.**

Please be aware of scams regarding TV licences as some unscrupulous individuals are sending emails asking you to renew your license. If you are in any doubt, please call the TV licensing authority on 0300 790 6071.



## Is Sheltered Housing right for you?

**Sheltered housing offers an opportunity for older people to live in an environment where they have their own home, but they benefit from having a Sheltered Housing Officer on site. In addition, they have access to communal facilities such as laundries, communal lounges and communal gardens. The Council has several such schemes throughout the Borough, including Collingwood Court in Fareham, Crofton Court in Stubbington and Sylvan Court in Sarisbury Green.**



If you currently live in a house or two bed flat or maisonette, you might want to consider a move to sheltered housing. You may also qualify for a downsizing payment. For example, if you live in a three bedroom house and you moved to a one bedroom property, you could qualify for a payment of £1250. For more information please contact your Neighbourhood Officer.





## Sheltered Housing during lockdown

**During lockdown, the staff in our Sheltered Housing schemes continued to provide a vital service for residents. Some staff remained on site and others worked from home checking on residents by phone on a regular basis. This was crucial to our residents, especially when there were restrictions on visitors.**

So that tenants were protected, staff working on site wore PPE (personal protective equipment). In this way, both tenants and

staff were protected as much as possible.

To reduce the risk of spreading the virus, communal facilities such as lounges had to be closed. As soon as it is safe to do so, the Council will open these facilities again. Our Sheltered Housing Officers still found ways of providing activities for tenants, including socially distanced VE Day celebrations.

In the meantime, the Council is making sure that all sheltered housing schemes are kept clean so that the risk of spreading the virus is limited.







## Dumped rubbish

**We receive a number of complaints about rubbish which has been dumped in communal areas. This includes items such as mattresses, clothing, cardboard and furniture. Not only does this look unsightly, it can also smell and be a trip hazard.**

If there is a problem with the bins in your building, please contact the Council on 01329 236100. We will repair or replace damaged bins and will investigate providing new ones if there are not enough.

Bulky items and things that cannot be recycled must be disposed of responsibly. If exits and walkways are blocked by dumped rubbish it could prevent someone from escaping in the event of a fire. We run a bulky waste collection service which can be booked by calling us on the above number or via our website at [www.fareham.gov.uk](http://www.fareham.gov.uk). Our website also tells you where to dispose of other items such as clothing and books.



## Estate inspections

Fareham Borough Council is trialling a new system for estate inspections. We are going to visit blocks and areas where we have issues along with our partners in grounds maintenance and our cleaning contractor Hi-Spec. The aim of this approach is to link up and get issues addressed by ensuring that the contractor is present. Feedback will be given to residents in the areas visited and in the newsletter.

If you have an issue in the area where you live and feel that an estate inspection would help, please contact Jennie Larkin on 01329 824463 or email [jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk).



*Arras House*

## Did you know Household Waste Recycling Centres are open again?

These are operated by Hampshire County Council. For further details, including how to book an appointment, see our website.

## Help with everyday essentials



The impact of the pandemic has been wide ranging. For some residents it has left them in financial hardship. This might be because their employment has ended, their hours have been reduced, or their income is less because they have been furloughed or are self-employed.

Fareham and Gosport Basics Bank can provide practical help for anyone struggling to pay for daily essentials such as food and toiletries, whatever the reason. They have a delivery service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

“Fareham and Gosport Basics Bank can provide practical help for anyone struggling to pay for daily essentials such as food and toiletries, whatever the reason.”

Those wishing to access the service will need a referral from the Council or another agency such as Social Services, a health visitor, schools outreach workers or a doctors' surgery.

Please note that you cannot just turn up at the Basics Bank.

If you need any other help at this time, please contact Hampshire County Council on 0333 3704000 and they will direct you to the support you need. This could be help with picking up prescriptions for those shielding or a friendly phone call.



## Housing Rent Payments:

**There are lots of different ways to pay your rent:**

**D Direct Debit:** You can set up a Direct Debit over the phone with the Neighbourhood Team by calling 01329 236100. Alternatively, you can email: [housing@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:housing@fareham.gov.uk)

**Online** at [www.fareham.gov.uk](http://www.fareham.gov.uk) and look up Housing Rents.

**Telephone** our automated service (available 24/7) on 0345 6066876

**Telephone/internet banking** through your own bank. The Council's details are Fareham Borough Council BP Account. Account number 07020066 and the sort code is 52-41-32. Please make sure that your rent account number is listed as the reference number so we can match the payment to your rent account.

## Housing rent payments

**Has the Covid-19 pandemic left you struggling to pay your rent due to employment issues?**

Tenants struggling with rent payments are encouraged to talk to their Neighbourhood Officers as soon as possible.

If your officer isn't available, the Duty Officer can be contacted on: 01329 236100 or 01329 824435. If you reach the answer phone service, please leave a short message with your name and phone number and they will call you back as soon as possible.

**The contact details for Neighbourhood Officers are as follows:**

**Gemma Barton (Portchester)**

[gbarton@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:gbarton@fareham.gov.uk) • 01329 824484

**Karen Franks (North Fareham)**

[kfranks@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:kfranks@fareham.gov.uk) • 01329 824492

**Maxine Neal (Western Wards including Titchfield)**

[mneal@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:mneal@fareham.gov.uk) • 01329 824377

**Steve Penfold (Stubbington & South Fareham)**

[spenfold@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:spenfold@fareham.gov.uk) • 01329 824458

**Greg Sharman (South-West Fareham & Fareham Town Centre)**

[gsharman@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:gsharman@fareham.gov.uk) • 01329 824483





## Gas servicing

Even during the current crisis, gas inspections are essential and will continue to take place. Contractors, Liberty Gas, will ensure that you are kept safe and will call you before they visit to check things through with you.

Engineers will not normally arrive wearing protective equipment, but you can request that they do so if you wish. They will wear PPE if the tenant has the virus.

When the engineer is in your home please remember to keep a safe distance away and open internal doors. The engineers will use hand sanitiser and will clean any surfaces that they touch. They will take any protective equipment used away with them.

## Useful contacts

### To request a repair to your home

Phone 0800 1412 194 (free from landlines, some mobile networks may charge) or 01329 236100 (Monday to Friday 8:45 to 5:15) and ask for Responsive Repairs.

E-mail [responsiverepairs@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:responsiverepairs@fareham.gov.uk)

Website: [www.fareham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.fareham.gov.uk/housing) and select the link for Repairs & Improvements.

For out of hours emergencies please contact 0800 374 485.

For gas leaks or if you suspect the presence of carbon monoxide contact 0800 111 999.

For faults with a gas boiler and gas central heating, please contact our contractor Liberty Gas on 0800 9702512.

### Leasehold Issues

To discuss service charges or any issues affecting leaseholders, please contact Janine Hensman who is the Leasehold Management and Land Charges Officer on 01329 824499.

### Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice in Fareham is currently operating a telephone and online service only which means that you cannot visit their offices at present.

For general advice please call: 01329 223117

webchat at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or online at [public.citafareham.org/advice](http://public.citafareham.org/advice)



## E-panel

Join the Council's E-panel to get involved with consultations and to have your say. Listening to your views is important to us and you can really make a difference to life in the Borough. You can join online at [www.fareham.gov.uk/e-panel](http://www.fareham.gov.uk/e-panel).

## Tenants' Forum and tenant involvement:

It is unlikely that any meetings or training events will be held for tenants until next year at the earliest.

In order to keep tenants involved, tenants living in blocks are encouraged to contact us about cleaning and grounds maintenance issues. Estate inspections can take place with no more than one tenant and one officer.

The newsletter is another way of keeping in touch and if you have any ideas for features or articles, please contact Jennie Larkin on 01329 824463 or email [jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk](mailto:jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk).