

Tenants' Voice

Autumn
2017

A newsletter for
and by Tenants

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Photo courtesy of John Elsey

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Hello,

Welcome to the autumn edition of 'Tenants' Voice' where tenants and leaseholders share news, achievements and keep up to date on any changes that may affect them.

It is with sadness we report the passing of Mike Busby, former Chairman and member of the Editorial team.

Editorial Team

New Vice Chair for the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum:

Welcome to Tracy Thomas who has recently been elected Vice Chair of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum. Tracy moved here from Gosport Borough Council where she was actively involved in the Customer Opinion Panel, community projects and meetings with contractors.

Our thanks go to Paula Weaver who held this position for six years and has only given it up to let someone else have a go! Thanks Paula for all your work on behalf of tenants.

Housing Rent Payments:

Direct Debit Rent Payments

The Council has been looking at the way in which we collect rent payments via Direct Debit. We are planning to expand on the frequency that we can collect money in order to make it easier for people to pay using this method.

Payment of Council rent by direct debit has transferred to AllPay, who are a company specialising in this type of payment and they now handle the process on the Council's behalf.

This now means that we are able to offer variable payment dates for rent to be paid when it suits you. You could choose to pay

weekly, fortnightly, every four weeks or monthly. If you would like to change your direct debit payment date, set up a new payment or have a query about your rent payment, please give us a call on 01329 236100.

In the meantime, rent payments can be made in the following ways:

Direct Debit: You can now set up a Direct Debit over the phone during office hours (8:45am to 5:15pm) by calling 01329 236100. Alternatively, we can still send you a form or you can email: housing@fareham.gov.uk

Online at www.fareham.gov.uk and look up Housing Rents

Telephone our automated service (available 24/7) on 0845 6066876 or during office hours (8:45am to 5:15pm) call 01329 236100

Visit the Council Offices between 8:45am and 4pm

Post a cheque to the address on the back of this newsletter (do not post cash)

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 524132



Mike Busby

Mike Busby sadly passed away in April this year. Mike had been a tenant of Fareham Borough Council for over 30 years and lived with his family in Stubbington.

During this time, he was very involved in promoting the views of tenants, particularly in the Stubbington area. Mike was involved in the Tenant Area Panel Groups and was Chair of the Stubbington Group. He went on to be the Chairman of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum and held this position until 2012. In addition, Mike was involved in the Housing Tenancy Board, the Borough Panel and the Hampshire Residents' Group. He attended many training and awareness workshops for tenants and contributed towards the newsletter.

Mike will be sadly missed by tenants, leaseholders, local councillors and staff of Fareham Borough Council.



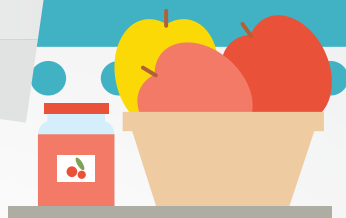
Chimney sweeping

Do you still have an open fire in your home that you are using? If so, are you aware that Fareham Borough Council will arrange for your chimney to be swept regularly (at no cost to you)?

Our contractor, TSG, will carry out chimney sweeping, so, in order to arrange this, please contact Alan Dindar on 01329 236100.

Food waste

What's your favourite food?

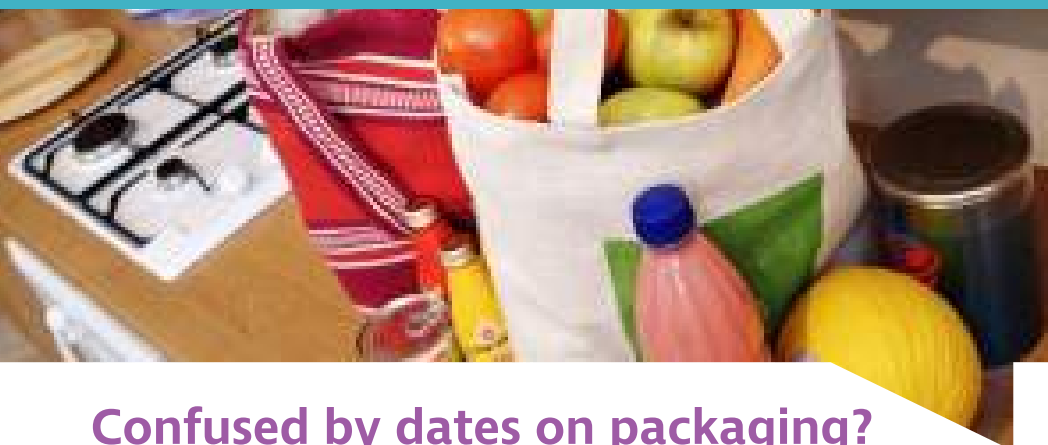


It takes water, energy, fuel and packaging to produce the food we all love, so it's surprising how much ends up in the bin! It's easy to make a few small changes to keep food out of the bin, starting at home in your own kitchen.

What's in it for you? If you are a family of four, you could be saving as much as £60 each month.

Fareham Borough Council is working in partnership with Sainsbury's to help people cut what they spend simply by using more of the food they buy - it's a lot easier than you might think!

We are looking for people to keep a weekly log of what food is thrown away. We will then send you a **'Waste Less Save More'** pack to help you make the most of the food you buy. If you would like to be involved, please contact us.



Confused by dates on packaging?

A 'Use By' date on a product is there for food safety reasons. You can eat it right up to the 'Use By', but not after - even if it looks and smells fine. Most foods can be frozen, so freeze meat and cheese on or before the 'Use By' date to use later on.

A 'Best Before' date is about food quality and should be safe to eat but it may no longer be at its best. If potatoes have started to sprout, cut the shoots off and cook as usual. Tomatoes past their best can be added to a meat sauce, stew, or cooked to make a quick pasta sauce or pizza topping. Remember, food

from a greengrocer doesn't have a date on it at all!

Make a plan – People who use a shopping list waste less food (and spend less!) Check the fridge and cupboards and write a list to take to the shops.

Get your portions sorted – Many of us often cook too much, particularly rice and pasta. It doesn't look like much in the pan so we add more and it ends up being thrown away. Get to know how much is right for your family; it doesn't matter if you measure it using a tablespoon, cup, mug or scales.

Love your leftovers

Love your leftovers – Last night's leftovers could be tonight's feast. Check out our recipes at www.fareham.gov.uk and if you've got any great ideas of your own, we'd love to see them. Video your recipe and we can share it on our website.

If you're finding it tricky to make the most of your milk, here are our five steps to success:

- **Check your fridge temperature.** It needs to be below 5 degrees Celsius.
- **Think about how much milk you're buying** go for smaller bottles.
- **You can freeze milk too** as long as it's before the 'Use By' date. Just remember to take a little bit out first to allow room for expansion. Did you know you can freeze it in an ice cube tray to pop in your tea or coffee!

For more information, please contact Sue Hand on 01329 236100 or email customerservices@fareham.gov.uk.



Sylvan Court:

Sylvan Court, Fareham Borough Council's newest Sheltered Housing Scheme, is now open and residents from across the Borough have been moving in. The scheme is set in lovely grounds in a quiet area with plenty of outdoor seating.

When we visited we were given a guided tour of the building by Douglas the Sheltered Housing Officer who was very helpful. All the flats are spacious with good natural light, great kitchens, wet rooms, sprinklers (in case of fire) and balconies. The building has under floor heating, good fire escape plans and a lovely cleaner called Jackie who is very well thought of. There is a doctors' surgery nearby and the local chemist delivers prescriptions to residents.

We chatted with two new residents who have settled in very happily to their second floor flat. They really enjoy living there.



There is a good community spirit with coffee mornings and visits to the local swimming pool. We joined some of the residents in the lounge for coffee and they told us that in time they would like to create a wild flower garden, grow vegetables and have a compost bin!

The residents we talked to are happy in their new homes and in their words "couldn't wish for a better place to live and to no longer be isolated".
Yvonne Goddard.



Estate improvements

Do you have any ideas about how your estate could be improved? If so, contact your Area Housing Estates Officer (details on page 7).

Paying for Repairs and improvements:

Leaseholders will be aware that they contribute towards the external repair costs for their property and the building they live in. The costs are apportioned equally based on the number of properties in the block. For example, if you are in a block of four you will pay 25% of the cost of repairs and if you are in a block of 16 you will pay 6.25% of the cost.

All tenants contribute towards the cost of repairs to all housing stock within their weekly rent



charge. Therefore the cost to individual blocks is paid for by both tenants and leaseholders.

However, as tenants contribution towards the cost of repairs is not block specific they will still pay towards repair costs, regardless as to whether works have been carried out to their block in the

previous year. This does not happen with leaseholders.

Leaseholders pay for the cost of major works when invoiced therefore we ask leaseholders to build up what is known as the cyclical repair fund. This helps to pay the cost of works when they occur. The Council has identified a number of blocks where major works may take place and for this reason, some leaseholders have experienced a large increase in their contributions for this year.

Dates for your diary 2017/18

Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum meetings at Ferneham Hall (Octagon Room)

Thursday 9th November 2017 at 1:30pm. The maintenance service

18th January 2018 at 1:30pm – What does the Council's enforcement team do?

26th April 2018 at 6:30pm – Annual General Meeting – Anti social behaviour

26th July 2018 at 6:30pm – Financial advice and managing debt

Estate Monitor/ Block Captain meeting:

28th November 2017 at 10:30am

15th May 2018 at 10:30am

Housing Policy Development & Review Panel:

All tenants and leaseholders are welcome to attend. Meetings are held in the Civic Offices at 6pm:

21st September 2017

16th November 2017

18th January 2018

8th March 2018

South Coast Training:

The next training event for tenants and leaseholders will be held in Southampton on **Saturday 28th October 2017**. The workshops will include:

- Mental Health & Well-Being
- Welfare Reform
- Value for money – asking the right questions & how to get the most out of performance information
- Confident me, confident you!
Working effectively as a group

Contact Jennie Larkin on 01329 824463 or email jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk for more information about this event.

You said, we did...

Areas inspected	Issues identified & action taken	Outcomes
Solent House; Hamble House; Needles House; Meon House; Medina House; Spithead House; Langstone House & Minden House	'Dragons' Teeth' missing around Solent & Hamble. Fly tipping & car up on ramps in a dangerous state.	Dragon's Teeth to be replaced. Fly tipping removed & car has now gone.
Marchesi Court	Dumped items in hallways	All removed.
St Quentin House; Ramillies House; Marne House; Caen House; Tebourba House; Vimy House & Flanders House	Dumped items in bin areas; litter picking needed; stairs not cleaned in some blocks; sweeping needed around blocks; contaminated & overflowing recycling bins.	Stairs in all blocks should be cleaned every week & this is being monitored. Pathways; drying areas & bin areas to be swept every 6 weeks. Bins emptied.
Garden Court	Gate missing leading to properties.	Gate replaced.
Northmore Close	Communal shed found to be falling apart.	New shed to be provided by FBC.
Foy Gardens	Request for bench seating.	Following consultation with residents, two seats are to be installed.
Frosthole Close	Dumped items in recycling area & overflowing bins. Lines need to be re-painted for parking bays.	Recycling area cleared. Line painting due to be done later this year.
Gaza House; Arras House; Hillson House & Nashe House	Parking issues at Gaza. Dumped bulky waste left in bin area at Arras. Hillson House & Nashe House – bins left out & items left in recycling area that could not be recycled. Nashe Way – problem with use of parking bays	More parking bays installed; bulky waste cleared from Arras & letter sent to residents in Hillson & Nashe about bins. Parking signs put up in Nashe Way.





Free support & advice with any problems that are affecting your independence, health or well-being

What can we help you with?

- Problems with your housing
- Welfare benefit checks
- Managing your money & budgeting for daily living
- Getting in touch with health services
- Issues with drug & alcohol
- How to manage your medication
- Finding a job or a training course
- Using telecare or assistive technology
- Finding interesting things to do in your local area
- Meeting new people & finding friends

Telephone advice is available from Monday to Friday between 9am – 5pm by calling 0330 822 0282.

Or drop in: Wednesday 12:30am – 2:30pm, Fareham Job Centre, Crown Buildings, Civic Way, PO16 7HR

www.theyoutrust.org.uk

PIERS



PIERS is a spin-off service offered through Two Saints who provide help to people in South East Hampshire, including Fareham.

PIERS stands for Prevention, Early Intervention, Resettlement and Tenancy rescue. It is available to anyone 18 or over who may be in need of help. This could be families, single people and older people who need help to keep their tenancy.

Help comes in the form of budgeting advice, life skills, debt management, help with filling in forms and food bank access.

Get help by speaking to Tenancy Services or Housing Options. They will refer you to PIERS. Alternatively, visit the **Council Offices on a Wednesday between 10am and 1pm** and speak to an advisor from PIERS.



Estate Inspections:

Area Housing Estates Officer	Estate/area to be inspected	Date of inspection
Stubbington & South Fareham Matt Elsbury 01329 824492 melsbury@fareham.gov.uk	Solent House; Hamble House; Needles House; Meon House; Medina House; Spithead House; Langstone House & Minden House.	Monday 9th October 2017 at 11am. Meet outside Solent House.
	Salerno House & Sicily House	Monday 23rd October 2017 at 11am. Meet outside Salerno House.
Portchester & South Fareham Sian Jeffery (Mon & Tues) 01329 824484 sjeffery@fareham.gov.uk Lauren Bedford (Wed - Fri) 01329 824484 lbedford@fareham.gov.uk	Kenwood Road; Webb Road & Roman Grove.	Monday 11th September 2017 at 10:30am. Meet at the front of Linden Lea.
	St Quentin House; Ramillies House; Marne House; Caen House; Vimy House & Flanders House.	Thursday 5th October 2017 at 10am. Meet outside St Quentin House.
Western Wards Helen Ayers (Mon - Wed) 01329 824464 hayers@fareham.gov.uk Jon Johnson (Thurs & Fri) 01329 824464 jjohnson@fareham.gov.uk	Hewett House; Hewett Close; Hewett Road & Ransome Close.	Friday 8th September 2017 at 11am. Meet outside Hewett House.
	North Fareham Tania Meskouri 01329 824458 tmeskouri@fareham.gov.uk	Stow Crescent Cort Way & Thorni Avenue

Council's Corporate Strategy - Have your say:

The Council's draft corporate strategy sets out our priorities for the next five years and what we plan to do to achieve them. We need your help to make sure we are heading in the right direction. We have drafted a number of priorities and actions we need to do to achieve these priorities.

You can find out more and have your say online at www.fareham.gov.uk by 16 October.

You can also attend one of our engagement events:

Wednesday 23 August

9am until 1pm
Portchester Market

Tuesday 5 September

3 7pm
Ferneham Hall Octagon room

Saturday 16 September

10am until 1pm
Stubbington Village Centre



Contact details

Fareham Borough Council,
Tenancy Services, Department
of Operations, Civic Offices,
Civic Way, Fareham, Hampshire.
PO16 7AZ.

Email / Tel:

jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk
or tel: 01329 824463

hsaich@fareham.gov.uk
or tel: 01329 824499

Website:

www.fareham.gov.uk

(look under Housing; Existing
Council Tenants; Tenant and
Leaseholder involvement.)

Useful Contacts

Report a repair:

Phone 0800 1412 194 (free from landlines, some mobile networks may charge) or 01329 236100 (Monday to Friday 8:45am to 5:15pm).

E-mail: responsiverepairs@fareham.gov.uk

Website: www.fareham.gov.uk/housingrepairs

Visit or write: Civic Offices, Civic Way, Fareham, Hampshire. PO16 7AZ
For out of hours emergencies please contact 0800 374 485.

Gas repairs:

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

For faults with a gas boiler & gas central heating please contact our contractor TSG directly on 0800 781 2739.

General enquiries:

For all other enquiries such as Council Tax, Housing Benefit, transferring to another property and the Right to Buy, please

contact 01329 236100 or visit our website at www.fareham.gov.uk.

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/epanel

Citizens' Advice

For advice about employment; debt, family, relationship breakdown, legal help and more contact the Citizens' Advice. Phone 03444 111 306 (9am until 5pm Monday to Friday and 9:30am until 1pm Saturday). Visit Fareham Library, Osborn Road, Fareham, PO16 7EN (10am to 4pm Monday to Friday and 5pm until 6:30pm on Thursday). Visit the Highlands Hub, 103 Highlands Road, Fareham. PO15 6HZ (Tuesday 10am to 2pm).

Visit the CA website at www.farehamcab.org.uk or www.citizensadvice.org.uk

**citizens
advice**