

Tenants' Voice

Autumn/Winter
2018

**A newsletter for & by
Tenants & Leaseholders**

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Hello,

Welcome to the Autumn/Winter 2018 edition of the Tenants' Voice. We do hope you all had a great summer and didn't get too sunburnt!

The front cover shows the garden at Trafalgar Court which won an award in both the Britain in Bloom and the Fareham in Bloom Awards. You will find details about other award-winning gardens in this newsletter.

We hope you find some useful articles in this edition but please do send in all your news and photos.

Editorial Team

Farewell...

Some changes have taken place in Tenancy Services and a sad farewell was said to Jon Shore, Jane Cresdee and Hugh Saich earlier this year. Many thanks for all the work they have done and we wish them well in the future. Welcome to new staff members Andrea Kingston, Gemma Barton, Janine Hensman and Greg Sharman.

Who's who in Tenancy Services:



Following a restructure of Tenancy Services, Area Housing Estates Officers are to be known as Neighbourhood Officers. There are six Neighbourhood Officers and they are managed by the Neighbourhood Manager, Andrea Kingston, who also manages the Tenant Involvement Officer, Jennie Larkin.

ANDREA KINGSTON took on the new role of Neighbourhood Manager in April 2018 following the restructure of Fareham Housing. Andrea has been at Fareham Council for over 25 years and her background is from the Benefits Section. She is also an Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist and manages the Council's Investigations Officer. Andrea can be contacted on 01329 824618 or email akingston@fareham.gov.uk

JENNIE LARKIN has been involved in tenant participation for 22 years and has worked for both local authorities and housing associations. Jennie has been at Fareham Borough Council for nine years. Jennie can be contacted on 01329 824463 or email jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk

MATT ELSBURY has been at Fareham since 2010 and has covered Titchfield, Western Wards, SE Fareham and Stubbington during this time.

He previously working at Vivid Housing and as a Housing Officer in Leigh Park for Portsmouth City Council. **Stubbington & South East Fareham is Matt's area and he can be contacted on 01329 824492 or email melsbury@fareham.gov.uk**

JON JOHNSON shares this area with **HELEN AYERS**. Jon works part-time on a Thursday and Friday. Jon has worked in housing since 2001 and came to Fareham as an Area Housing Estates Officer in 2012. Helen works Monday through to Wednesday and has been at Fareham Borough Council for over nine years having previously worked for a Housing Association.

Jon and Helen operate in the Western Wards. Contact Jon on 01329 824464 or email jjohnson@fareham.gov.uk. Helen can be contacted on 01329 824464 or email hayers@fareham.gov.uk

TANIA FELLAH has been a Neighbourhood Officer at Fareham Borough Council for seven years and has worked in Housing for 18 years. Previous roles were at Yorkshire Housing, Leeds North West Homes and Leeds City Council. **Tania looks after North Fareham and she can be contacted on 01329 824458 or email tfellah@fareham.gov.uk**

GEMMA BARTON took on the role of Neighbourhood Officer in November 2017. Gemma has been at Fareham Borough Council for 16 years and previously worked in the Housing Options Team. **Portchester is Gemma's area and she can be contacted on 01329 824484 or email gbarton@fareham.gov.uk**

GREG SHARMAN is the newest member of the team but has experience in neighbourhood management. Greg previously worked in the Enforcement Department overseeing problems in the borough such as abandoned vehicles, fly tipping and litter. Prior to that Greg worked as a Police Community Support Officer for nine years and was based in Fareham. Greg knows the borough very well. **Greg looks after South West Fareham and Fareham Central. He can be contacted on 01329 824483 or email gsharman@fareham.gov.uk**

JANINE HENSMAN became the Leasehold Management and Land Charges Officer in April 2018. She has worked at Fareham Borough Council for 20 years in various departments but this is the first time she has worked within the housing team. Janine can be contacted on 01329 824499 or email jhensman@fareham.gov.uk

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

This will be re-introduced in Fareham in November 2018 and will affect working age tenants who make a new claim for Benefit with the Department for Work & Pensions.

www.gov.uk/universal-credit



Chimney sweeping

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

Our contractor, Liberty Gas, carries out chimney sweeping. To arrange this, please contact Liberty Gas on 0800 9702512 who will speak to you and arrange a convenient time for a chimney sweep to visit your property.

Housing Green Paper - What it means for you.

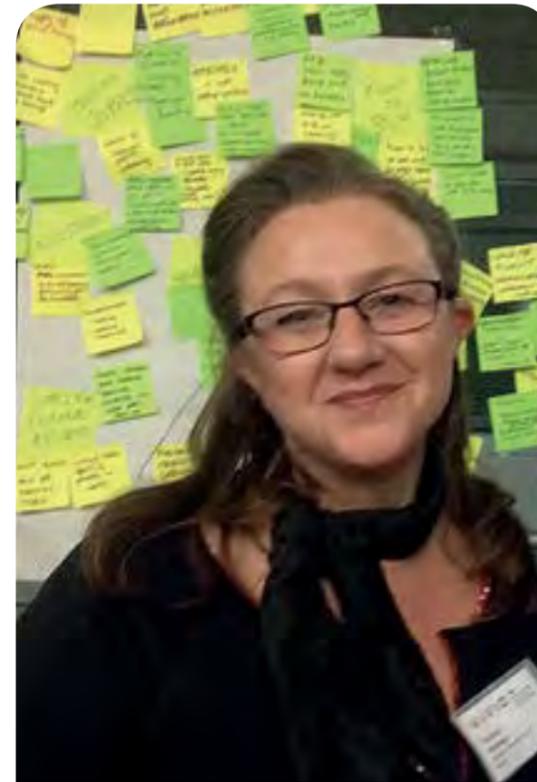
The Government published a social housing green paper 'a new deal for social housing' in August 2018. This paper sets out a proposed strategy for reforming social housing to make it safe and well managed in the interests of all those who need it.

The strategy has five core themes:

- Ensuring homes are safe and decent, particularly with regard to fire safety

- Making sure that complaints are dealt with effectively
- Empowering residents and strengthening the regulation of social housing
- Tackling the stigma around social housing tenants and celebrating thriving communities
- Increasing the amount of social housing and supporting home ownership

The green paper is a consultation document so some of the above may change. An update will be given in the next newsletter or you can visit www.gov.uk and look up 'A New Deal for Social Housing'.



Welcome to the new Chair of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum

Welcome to the new Chair of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum, Tracy Thomas, and the newly elected Vice Chair, Mollie Pearman. Our thanks go to Barbara LeSueur who stood down as Chair at the Annual General Meeting in April 2018. Barbara did a great job as Chair and will be missed - we all wish her well.

Housing Rent Payments

You can pay your rent 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.

Direct Debits are our preferred method of payment as your rent will be paid automatically from your account, ensuring that your rent is paid on time and preventing arrears, which could affect your tenancy. You can set up a Direct Debit for any frequency and for any day of the month that is suitable to you. For example, you could set up your Direct Debit on the same day as your benefits or wages are paid, so it is paid immediately. Remember that

arrears on your account can affect your tenancy and in the most serious cases where arrangements are not kept this can result in you losing your home.

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

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.

Find out more online at www.fareham.gov.uk and look up Housing Rents.



Diary Dates 2019

Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum meetings at Ferneham Hall (Octagon Room) – All welcome.

- **31st January 2019** at 1:30pm – Universal Credit update & a presentation from Liberty Gas
- **4th April 2019** at 6:30pm - Annual General Meeting (Review of resident involvement)
- **25 July 2019** at 6:30pm – Grounds maintenance presentation

Housing Scrutiny Panel:

All tenants and leaseholders of Fareham Borough Council are welcome to attend these meetings. Meetings are held in the Civic Offices at 6pm. Dates of meetings are:

- **24th January 2019**
- **7th March 2019**

South Coast Training:

The next South Coast Training event will take place on **11th May 2019**.

The event held in October 2018 included workshops on Housing Policy & Legislation (Universal Credit & the Hackitt Report which followed the fire at Grenfell Tower), Confidence Building, Drug & Alcohol Abuse & Tenant-led Scrutiny.

If you would like to find out more about the next event, please contact **Jennie Larkin on 01329 824463**.

Estate Inspections:

Area Housing Estates Officer	Estate/area to be inspected	Date of inspection
Stubbington & South East Fareham Matt ElsburyFareham South East & Stubbington.Tel. 01329 824492 melsbury@fareham.gov.uk	Spencer Court & Marks Road	Tuesday 4th December 2018 at 10am
	Endofield Close; Blenheim House & St Julien House.	Thursday 10th January 2019 at 10:30am.
Portchester Gemma Barton 01329 824484 gbarton@fareham.gov.uk	Estate inspection & coffee morning at Garden Court & Newtown	Tuesday 22nd January 2019 at 10am.
	Bishopsfield Road	Thursday 7th February 2019 at 10am. Meet outside St Quentin House.
South West Fareham Greg Sharman 01329 824483 gsharman@fareham.gov.uk	Sicily & Salerno	Tuesday 5th February 2019 at 10am. Meet outside Salerno House.
Western Wards Helen Ayers (Mon-Wed) 01329 824464 hayes@fareham.gov.uk	Foy Gardens	Tuesday 12th March 2019 at 10:30am
	Addison Road	Friday 18h January 2019 at 10am.
North Fareham Tania Fellah 01329 824458 tfellah@fareham.gov.uk	Frosthole Close	Thursday 4th April 2019 at 10am.



You said, we did...

Areas inspected	Issues identified & action taken	Outcomes
Marchesi Close Foster Close	Notice board had not been updated at Marchesi.	Information updated.
Solent House Hamble House Needles House Meon House Medina House Spithead House Langstone House Minden House	Overflowing bins in recycling area between Spithead & Medina House. Damaged bin lid at Meon & bin lids missing at Spithead. Dumped items in recycling area at Needles. Cleaning issues at Hamble & Meon.	Ongoing issue. Resident tidied up the area. Bin lids repaired/replaced. Recycling area at Needles cleared. Cleaning issues reported to cleaning contractor.
Crofton Court Melvin Jones House	Regular meetings held with residents and Neighbourhood Officer.	Residents raise any concerns.
Sylvan Court	Parking issues. Not enough parking spaces for the number of vehicles. Also issues with the garden and sign leading to the car park.	Both the parking issues and improvements to the sign are being looked at. Also, the garden is to be maintained regularly.
Downing Court	Meeting with Neighbourhood Officer. Issues were raised about the car park and decorations to flats.	Changes to the layout of the car park are being considered and residents have been added to the assisted decorating list.
Beverley Close Birchen Close	Gutters need clearing of leaves and moss. The area needs a litter pick and the car park needs sweeping. Lock change needed for a rear door.	Gutters to be cleared. Litter picking carried out and car park cleaned every six weeks. Lock change arranged for rear door.
Frosthole Close	Dumped items in the bin area; disinfectant not used by cleaners and water not changed; white lining requested around parking bays.	Rubbish removed, but, this is an ongoing issue which is being monitored. Cleaners asked to change water and to use disinfectant.
Gaza House; Arras House; Hillson House & Nashe House	Contaminated recycling bins at Nashe House.	Bins emptied.
St Quentin; Ramillies; Marne; Caen; Tebourba; Vimy; Flanders	Pathways around blocks needed sweeping. Overflowing bins at Ramillies & Marne. Dumped items at Tebourba House.	Pathways and other surfaces should be swept every six weeks. Bins emptied & dumped items removed.
Linden Lea Robinson Court	Vents on the outside of the blocks needed to be replaced. Rubbish to be cleared from sheds.	Vents now replaced. Rubbish cleared.



Rubbish and bulky waste

Many blocks have experienced the unsightly view of messy bin areas during the hot spell over the summer. Blocks particularly affected by this included Salerno House, Tebourba House and Frosthole Close. Recycling bins are being contaminated with waste that cannot be recycled and unwrapped rubbish is being put into bins and then attracting flies.

You can help to prevent this by making sure that any waste food is wrapped and placed in a bag in the bin. Nappies also need to be wrapped before going into a bin. Bulky items of furniture need to be taken to the local tip or can be taken away by the Council (there is usually a charge). More information about waste disposal can be found on the Council's website.



Is your property too big for you?

Do you want to move to another area? Then HomeSwapper may be the scheme for you.

To register, please go to www.homeswapper.co.uk

If you are of pensionable age and looking to downsize, you may be entitled to a transfer incentive payment of up to £2,250 plus removal expenses. If this is something you wish to consider, please contact your Neighbourhood Officer.

Fire Safety

There have been two fires in Fareham Borough Council properties this year in Redlands Lane and Portchester. Both these fires occurred because of a tenant's actions.

Please don't forget to check your smoke alarm. Ideally, there should be at least one smoke alarm fitted on each floor of your home preferably on the ceiling of a hall or landing. Smoke alarms should be tested once a week by pressing the button until the alarm sounds. Once a year, change the battery in your smoke alarm.

- People are reminded not to take smoke alarms down or to cover them up
- Do not leave cookers unattended
- Remember to clean your oven and hob regularly as a build-up of grease and fat can catch fire while cooking

- Don't leave washing machines, tumble dryers or dishwashers on overnight or whilst out of the house
- Switch off all electrical gadgets at night
- Leave window keys where they can be easily found

You can find out more information about fire safety can be found at www.hantsfire.gov.uk There are also fire safety notices being posted in communal areas of our block accommodation. Please read these so that you know what to do should a fire start in your block.



Citizens' Advice

For advice about employment, debt, family, relationship breakdown, legal help and other issues, please visit the following Citizens' Advice centres:



- **Fareham Library**, Osborn Road, Fareham, PO16 7EN - 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday and 5pm until 6pm every Thursday
- **The Highlands Hub**, 103 Highlands Road, Fareham, PO15 6HZ 10am to 2pm every Tuesday
- **Portchester Library**, 70 West Street, Portchester. PO16 9TX - 10am until 2pm every Thursday
- **Lockswood Library**, Locksheath Shopping Centre, Park Gate. SO31 6DX - 10am until 2pm every Wednesday

- **Stubbington Library** - 10am until 2pm every Friday
- Or phone **03444 111 306** - 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday and 9:30am until 1pm Saturday or the Citizens Advice website at:
www.farehamcab.org.uk
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Britain in Bloom



Fareham in Bloom

There was success at the Fareham In Bloom and Britain In Bloom Awards this year after a number of tenants and leaseholders entered.

Community Gardens at Vimy House, Trafalgar Court, King George Road and Lincoln Close entered the competition for the first time this year. There were also entries from Melvin Jones House, Chapelside and Downing Court.

Tenant, John Elsey, of Trafalgar Court recalls the evening of the Fareham In Bloom Awards.

"The evening of September 21st saw the joy filled annual event that is the Fareham in Bloom Awards. Trafalgar Court is a council sheltered housing scheme in South Fareham and six of our residents and a representative from the Local Co-op in Fairfield

Avenue (who have supported us this year) attended the Gala event. Sue, Maureen, John, Mary-Ann, Betty and Gwen were delighted with the show which included the wonderful 'Rock Choir' and speeches from various people concerned with Fareham in Bloom.

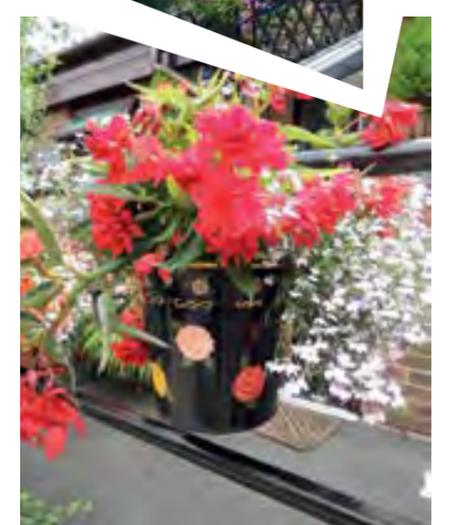
"Trafalgar Court entered the Council run Sheltered housing category for the third year and we were also honoured to be entered in the 'Britain in Bloom' South and South East competition this year too. We were happy and proud to receive a Fareham in Bloom Gold Award for the second year running and to be awarded a splendid trophy for best Fareham sheltered housing scheme.

"Towards the end of the evening the 'Britain in Bloom' awards

were announced and our group from Trafalgar Court went up on stage to be presented with the highest Level 5 "outstanding" award at our first attempt.

"We were also delighted to receive a second 'Britain in Bloom' award called 'Greener Streets- Better lives.' This award is given to communities who transform areas into places where people can enjoy and benefit from the environment. It forms part of a call to action for the nation to get 'Greening Grey Britain' and it is sponsored by the Royal Horticultural Society.

"Fareham has a marvellous record in 'Britain in Bloom'. To be a part of that is very special to all involved with the Trafalgar Court community gardens project."





Deputy Mayor visits Lincoln Close

Residents were delighted when the Deputy Mayor Cllr Mrs Pamela Bryant and Deputy Mayoress Cllr Mrs Louise Clubley attended a reception at Lincoln Close to see the newly planted gardens. The Deputy Mayor also persuaded residents to enter Fareham in Bloom.

This year has also seen the revival of the use of the communal lounge at Lincoln Close with a number of events being held. These included a barbeque to celebrate the royal wedding, a disco, bingo and get togethers to watch the World Cup.

Photo: Deputy Mayor, Cllr Mrs Pamela Bryant, at Lincoln Close in the summer

Fundraising at Collingwood House, Sylvan Court and Frosthole Close for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Residents at Collingwood House recently held a cake sale and ran a tombola and raffle to raise £711.66 for Macmillan Cancer Support. The 'Frostie Club' at Frosthole Close raised over £300 as did the residents at Sylvan Court.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and what this means for you

The Government introduced General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018 to protect people's privacy.

The new regulation replaced the former Data Protection Act. Its main aim is to keep people and their personal details safe.

Fareham Borough Council holds some personal data about tenants to ensure tenants can be looked after, and tenancies and estates managed, in an effective way.

All data is dealt with by the Council in line with these new Government guidelines.

We keep our privacy notice under regular review. You also have the right to request access to your personal data being processed by us.

By law, Fareham Borough Council has to provide its housing tenants and leaseholders with certain information about GDPR – everything you need to know can be found at

<http://www.fareham.gov.uk/housing/gdpr.aspx>





Useful Contacts

Report a repair:

To report a repair to your home, you can do the following:

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

E-mail: responsive.repairs@fareham.gov.uk

Website: www.fareham.gov.uk/
housing and select the link for
Repairs & Improvements.

Visit or write:

Civic Offices, Civic Way, Fareham,
Hampshire. PO16 7AZ

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.

General enquiries:

For all other enquiries such as
Council Tax, Housing Benefit,
moving to another home 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.



Gas Servicing – what to expect from Liberty Gas:

Council tenants have their
boilers serviced once a year
to ensure the boiler is running
safely and efficiently. It is part
of your tenancy agreement, and
a legal requirement, that you
let our engineer from Liberty
Gas into your home to service
your boiler. Poorly maintained
or faulty boilers can present
a health hazard as dangerous
levels of carbon monoxide can
be released. They are particularly
dangerous because you cannot
smell the fumes.

Our engineer will inspect your
boiler and controls to make sure
they are operating safely.

- The inspection will include checking your boiler for corrosion and leaks
- Your boiler casing will be removed to check the functioning of its main components

- A gas pressure check will ensure your boiler is operating at the correct gas pressure
- A flue test will ensure that no unsafe emissions are being released from your boiler
- Your boiler's parts will be cleaned if required
- Your boiler's casing will be put back on and properly sealed
- Our engineer will leave a checklist with you including all the relevant information you need about the safety of your boiler.

Leaseholders are responsible for servicing their boilers and it is a legal requirement that this is carried out annually if you sub-let.

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

