

Tenants' Voice

Autumn/Winter
2019

A newsletter for & by
Tenants & Leaseholders

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FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Hello,

Welcome to our Autumn/Winter issue of 'Tenants' Voice. We do hope you had a good summer, not too hot for all you gardeners.

Congratulations to our Fareham in Bloom winners and we have included some photos from the lovely gardens who entered the competition including Vimy House.

We do look forward to seeing you at our next Forum meeting on 30th January 2020 at 1:30pm at the Ashcroft Centre. Dates of future meetings are shown in this newsletter.

Cliff Murray was elected as Vice-Chair of the Forum at the Annual General Meeting in April 2019. Congratulations to Cliff.

If you have any ideas for articles in the newsletter or any photos of your garden, please contact us. In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy reading this edition.

Editorial Panel

Farewell...

It is with great sadness that we report that **Mollie Pearman** passed away in December 2018 whilst visiting her family in Australia.



Mollie was a well-known Yorkshire lady who moved to Stubbington in 2006 to be closer to her family and lived in Spencer Court.

In 2018, Mollie was elected as Vice-Chair of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum and was part of a party who met the former Housing Minister, Dominic Raab. Mollie will be sadly missed.

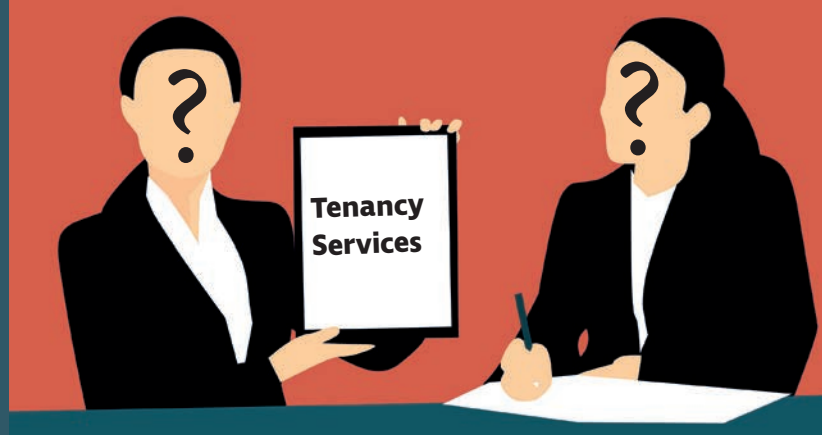
Dennis Easton lived in Hillson Drive for over twenty years and took great care of the open grassed area around his home. He was a well-known figure to local people, councillors and council staff, who all appreciated his community work.



Sadly, Dennis passed away in February at the age of 96

Dennis is pictured with his much-loved dog Ziggy, now being cared for by a neighbour.

New Faces in Tenancy Services:



Following some recent staff changes four new staff members have joined Tenancy Services. These include three new Neighbourhood Officers and a Fareham Housing Welfare Support Officer.

MAXINE NEAL joined us in May 2019 as a Neighbourhood Officer and will work Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the Western Wards. Maxine shares this area with Jon Johnson. Maxine can be contacted on 01329 824377 and Jon on 01329 824464 or email mneal@fareham.gov.uk or jjohnson@fareham.gov.uk.

STEVE PENFOLD is the new Neighbourhood Officer for South East Fareham and Stubbington from 2 July 2019. Steve replaces Matt Elsbury who left the Council in April 2019. Steve can be contacted on 01329 824492 or email spenfold@fareham.gov.uk

KAREN FRANKS is the new Neighbourhood Officer for North Fareham and started work at Fareham Housing on 12 August 2019. She replaces Tania Ridden who is now the Sheltered Housing Officer at Collingwood Court. Karen can be contacted on

01329 824458 or email kfranks@fareham.gov.uk

SAMANTHA SOKHI joined Fareham Housing in May 2019 and is the Fareham Housing Welfare Support Officer. This is a new role within Fareham Housing. Sam's role is to offer more 1-1 support to tenants who are at risk of losing their tenancy and helping them to stay in their home. Sam can be contacted on 01329 824373 or email ssokhi@fareham.gov.uk

Crofton Court celebrates its 30th birthday

Birthday celebrations have taken place at sheltered accommodation which has offered retirement housing for 30 years in Stubbington.

Crofton Court, in Bells Lane, has been home to hundreds of residents for three decades and a special birthday party was held to celebrate with the Mayor of Fareham, Cllr Mrs Pamela Bryant, as guest of honour at the event on Friday 5 April.

The birthday party included a cake and a performance from the HMS Collingwood

Voluntary Band. A collection of photographs went on display for the special occasion, some dating back to when Crofton Court was built in 1989.

Cllr Fred Birkett, Executive Member for Housing, said:

"It's important to mark these big occasions and a chance to look back on all the happy times people have had at Crofton Court. We're very proud of our housing here, which offers elderly residents a home where they can be supported to live independent lives."



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 Debit is the 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, if your Benefits or wages are paid into your account on the 12th of the month, you can set up a Direct Debit for this day also so that your rent is paid out immediately and you have peace of mind that it is paid. 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.

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

Telephone our automated service (available 24/7) on 0345 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 52-41-32.

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



Stock Condition Survey

The Council commissioned a company called Rand Associates to undertake a Stock Condition Survey on a sample of our properties this year. They surveyed a sample of homes (houses, flats or bed-sits) to assess the condition of other similar properties in the area.

The data gathered will be used to plan for major improvements and future investment programmes. We would like to thank all those tenants who allowed the surveyors into their homes.



Is your property too big for you? Do you want to move to another area? Then Homeswapper may be 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.

Candle light safety

Candles give a winter's night a warm glow and scent a room, but left unattended, an open flame can destroy your home in minutes.

Use candles safely by:

- putting candles in a holder and away from material that may catch fire
- don't burn candles close together and do not move a candle once lit.
- put candles, incense or oil burners out when you leave the room, go to bed or leave the house
- never leave children or pets alone with burning candles
- alternatively, you could use an LED candle
- take care when smoking on your balcony and discard your cigarettes safely

Fareham Housing: Building & Providing More Affordable Homes



Artist impression of 18 new flats to be built at Highlands Road (former Hampshire Rose pub site).

In addition to tenancy services and the maintenance of Council homes Fareham Housing are also looking ahead to ensure further new affordable homes are provided and built. This will help to address the on-going need for affordable housing in Fareham, particularly for those on our waiting list.

New Council Homes

In the summer construction started at two Council owned sites at Bridge Road (Park Gate) and Highlands Road (Fareham North West) to provide 22 new affordable homes for rent. Both sites are due to be finished and ready for occupation by Spring/Summer 2020.

These are the first Council owned housing sites being built for over three years. Other sites in the pipeline include land at Station Road in Portchester, land at Wynton Way, the former Coldeast Scout Hut site and land in Hill Head on Stubbington Lane.

Affordable Housing Strategy

The Council have adopted a new Affordable Housing Strategy which gives background on what affordable housing is, who can provide it, what the need is in Fareham and what we will be doing over the next five years and beyond.

The main purpose of the Affordable Housing Strategy is to provide more affordable homes, ensuring they are the right homes in the right places for those in need of affordable housing.

For more information contact **Robyn Lyons** (Affordable Housing Strategic Lead) on **01329 824305** or email **rl Lyons@fareham.gov.uk**

**citizens
advice**

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 6pm on Thursday).
- **Broadlaw Community Centre** (Wednesday 10am until 12 noon).
- Visit the **Highlands Hub**, 103 Highlands Road, Fareham. PO15 6HZ (Tuesday 10am to 2pm).
- Visit **Lockswold Library**, Locks Heath Shopping Centre, Park Gate. SO31 6DX (Tuesday 12 until 4pm).
- Visit **Portchester Library**, 70 West Street, Portchester. PO16 9TX (Thursday 10am until 2pm).
- Visit **Stubbington Library** (every Friday from 10am until 2pm).
- Visit the CA website at **www.farehamcab.org.uk** or **www.citizensadvice.org.uk** or ring **0344 411 1306**.

Diary Dates 2019

Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum meetings will be held at Ferneham Hall (Octagon Room) until January 2020 when all meetings will be transferred to the Ashcroft Centre as Ferneham Hall is closing. All are welcome to attend Forum meetings. Meetings focus on topics of interest to tenants and leaseholders.

- **30th January 2020** at 1:30pm (to be held at the Ashcroft Centre) – Presentations from Liberty Gas and Grounds Maintenance.
- **23rd April 2020** at 6:30pm (to be held at the Ashcroft Centre) – This is the Annual General Meeting of the Tenants' & Leaseholders' Forum.

Housing Scrutiny Panel

The Housing Scrutiny Panel, which meets four times a year is made up of seven local Councillors. The purpose of the Panel is to examine the services delivered by Fareham Housing and to make recommendations and monitor action plans.

Anyone is welcome to attend these meetings and listen to the content of reports presented to the Panel by Housing Officers. The next meeting at the Civic Offices is on 6 February 2020 at 6pm. You can find the minutes of previous meetings and agendas for future meetings on our website www.fareham.gov.uk by clicking on **"About the Council"**.



South Coast Training

These events are held twice a year and are designed to give tenants an opportunity to attend workshops on relevant housing issues.

The last event took place in October 2019 in Southampton with workshops on topics including Domestic Abuse, Housing Law including the Social Housing White Paper, the Impact of Brexit on tenant involvement and building safety following the Grenfell fire. The next event will take place in **April 2020**.

If you are interested in attending these events or would like to know more, please contact **Jennie Larkin** on **01329 824463** or **email jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk**



Fareham In Bloom at Vimy House

Fareham in Bloom

In Fareham in Bloom 2019, awards went to residents at Melvin Jones House, King George Road, Downing Court, Lincoln Close and Vimy House. Residents at Lincoln Close and Vimy House received gold awards for their efforts.

If you would like to enter **Fareham in Bloom in 2020**, entry to the competition is free and there are different categories of entry.

For further information, please contact Customer Services on **01329 236100** or email **parks@fareham.gov.uk** or you can visit the website at **www.fareham.gov.uk** and fill in an online application form.

Estate Inspections – Feedback

Due to the recent staff changes, we are unable to print a list of estate inspection dates in this edition of the newsletter. If you would like an estate inspection in your area, please contact Jennie Larkin on **01329 824463** or email jlarkin@fareham.gov.uk

Estate Inspections – Feedback

Areas inspected	Issues identified	Action Taken
Spencer Court & Marks Road	Hole developing on the pathway which posed a trip hazard.	Repaired.
Garden Court & Newtown	Fly tipping in the recycling area.	Bins emptied & fly tipping cleared.
Bishopsfield Road maisonettes	Fly tipping in some bin areas & contaminated recycling bins.	Bins emptied & fly tipping cleared. This is an ongoing problem that we are monitoring with the help of residents.
Frosthole Close	Dog fouling; fly tipping in the bin area; dead shrubs.	We are aware of the dog fouling, but, need to know who is allowing their dogs to foul. Fly tipping cleared. Dead shrubs will be removed.
Gosport Road, Fareham	Overgrown shrubs; issues with large gardens.	The land belongs to Hampshire County Council so overgrown shrub problem has been reported to them. Help and advice has been provided to assist the residents with maintaining their gardens.



Fareham Housing recently awarded a contract to Mountjoy to prepare our empty properties for new tenants, replace kitchens and bathrooms, disabled adaptations and occasional general repairs. Look out for more information about Mountjoy's work in our next newsletter.



Rubbish and bulky waste

Did you know that it might be possible to recycle your unwanted furniture? Some charities will take furniture. These include the British Heart Foundation; Sue Ryder; Jacobs Well and the Salvation Army.

Any upholstered items will need to have a fire label attached.

Unwanted furniture and other items should not be dumped anywhere, particularly close to people's homes as they can pose a fire safety risk to residents. The Council will take items away at a cost and further details can be found by ringing Customer Services on 01329 236100 or by looking at the Council's website **www.fareham.gov.uk**.

Chimney Sweeping

Do you still have an open fire in your own home that you are using? If so, are you aware your chimney must be swept regularly to reduce the risk of fire?

We provide this service to you for free. Please contact Liberty Gas on 0800 9702512 and they will arrange a convenient time to visit your property.



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.

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.

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.



Stuck for Transport in Fareham? Dial-a-Ride!

Dial-a-Ride Fareham & Gosport is your local easy access, door-to-door transport service. If for any reason you have trouble or discomfort with accessing public transport, Dial-a-Ride can help so that you don't have to miss social commitments or trips out for shopping. Dial-a-Ride has specially adapted minibuses equipped to carry passengers with or without wheelchairs and they are accessible with a lift.

When you become a member of Dial-a-Ride, you can travel anywhere and for any reason within the boroughs of Fareham and Gosport. The only exception is travel to hospital appointments, day centres, or to your GP. (For transport to these appointments, please

call Community First's Voluntary Car Scheme on 01329 231899 and give as much notice as possible).

Community First has completed over 14,000 journeys in the last year and will get you where you need to go. It costs no more than local buses and it is easy to become a member. Helpers and carers travel free of charge!

Members can access bi-weekly 'Tea and Tiffin' trips if they would like to enjoy an outing with friendly company.

Membership forms are available from 163 West Street or the website: **www.cfirst.org.uk.**

Contact details:

163 West Street,
Fareham, PO16 0EF

01329 223151

**dialaride.farehamgosport@
cfirst.org.uk**

