

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2015 - No. 39

Eliza MacKenzie Court opened by Matron-in-Chief, Captain Steve Spencer RN



Our Chairman with Captain Spencer



It was a bright sunny day in Cosham on Thursday the 30th April 2015 when local dignitaries, the Board of Management and many tenants came together to witness the official opening of Eliza Mackenzie Court. The current Matron-in-Chief, Captain Steve Spencer RN kindly opened the event because Eliza Mackenzie was the Navy's equivalent of Florence Nightingale due to her outstanding contribution in Therapia during the Crimean War. The official opening was preceded by a presentation to the Court by its Architect, Robert Benn. The short ceremony was followed by refreshments and attendees enjoyed some stirring music provided by the Portsmouth Naval Reserve Band in the sun filled courtyard. The Association is proud of the new Court and the social value it provides to the local area. The Chairman told the press, *'This is an enormous success for our organisation – the first new court for many years. It has been a massive investment and is fully occupied. We have got a very long history of looking after our service people. We have worked really hard to deliver this court over the past two years.'* Finally, Eliza Mackenzie Court is now fully occupied so the management element of the Service Charge across the association will reduce as it is spread over more tenants – good news for all!

Sad farewell to the Association's longest serving Trustee, Carol Howden



Carol with her farewell flowers from the tenants in Cornwell Court

Sadly we must say farewell to Carol Howden after 17 years outstanding service to the Association. Over the years she helped in delivering the improvements in Neptune Court, the extension at Cornwell Court and our new Eliza Mackenzie Court. These projects have made a great difference to those the Association houses and supports. To quote the Chairman, *'when I first joined the Board I fondly recall thinking of our Association as patrician and caring. I still feel that and Carol has been constant in ensuring that, as we change and grow, we as a Board should remained mindful of those that we serve.'* Many thanks Carol, particularly from the tenants of Cornwell Court where you were the Chair of the tenants Participation Group. We wish Carol and Norman (ex-Navy) the very best for the future.

The Association welcomes two new Trustees



New Board members Alex Burn and Roger Harrison discuss the nuances of a single flat in Somerville Court with Mrs Anne Bradley.

The Association welcomes Mrs Alex Burn who recently joined the Board after eight years as Head of 'Older People's Well-Being Team, Hampshire County Council' and Mr Roger Harrison, formerly of IBM and amongst many other things, is currently the Chairman of the Spring Arts and Heritage Centre, Havant. Both Alex and Roger accompanied the CEO on an induction tour of most of our courts in early March 2015. Both members engaged with our tenants and staff who appreciated their visit. Alex will take up the Chair of the Cornwell Court Tenants' Participation Group meetings.

New Members of Staff The Association welcomes Mandy Haycock as our new cleaner in Neptune Court, Mandy joined us from Sheldon Cleaning Services Ltd when the cleaning contract was brought back in-house in February this year. We also welcome Mark Buttle the new Southsea Property Services Engineer. Mark is an ex-Soldier and an experienced Property Services Engineer who is very keen to make a difference and add value in Cornwell and Sirius courts.

The Chairman's Annual Lunch Your feedback from Tenants' Participation Meetings indicated that the old format Chairman's Annual Lunch was not working. Only a small percentage of tenants from each Court could attend. Those who did attend mainly stayed at their own tables and did not mix. Moreover, some tenants could never attend due to mobility/health issues. Therefore the Board has directed after hearing your feedback that to have three events, with each paired court having a party which they could each host every other year on an alternate basis. That way all tenants that wish to attend can do so without mobility issues. The Association will invest in a couple of gazebos, so that there will be sufficient covered space to utilise the courts' wonderful gardens if the weather is not good. Just to remind you, the aim of the event is to meet members of the Board and tenants from the paired Court socially. After much consultation the dates for the functions are shown below (venue in **bold**), we look forward to seeing you there:

- Friday 5th June 2015 - **Cornwell** and Sirius Court.
- Tuesday 21st July 2015 - **Somerville** and Eliza Mackenzie Court.
- Tuesday 18th August 2015 - **Neptune** and Victory Court

Neptune Court – by Warden, Pauline Decunha

The Court has completed an attractive makeover in the guestroom, lobby and lounge. The new ground floor carpets look great, tenants and visitors are all very impressed. The 'icing on the cake' was the inclusion of a new fish tank in the lounge.



New look Guestroom



Fishy friends

Victory Court - by Warden, Jackie Huges

Victory Court has had an amazing makeover in the lobby and the lounge. A new shed was donated by a Tenant. We have had a dishwasher fitted in the communal kitchen, which the social committee paid for. We had Burns' and Valentine's nights, an Easter lunch and a St George's Day celebration. We enjoyed a quiz challenge between Victory and Neptune, sadly Victory lost. But will be having a rematch and we will win next time, bring it on Neptune! The Percy Throwers of Victory Court have been out. Mrs Mima Roberts took charge of landscaping, pots and other areas of the garden, which is a real credit to her. Thanks too to Mrs Pam Rogers who contributed to the bloom in the back garden. Mr Tony Seal has done a great job with the hanging baskets. The local MP Caroline Dineage came for a visit at a coffee morning in April, her talk was very informative and appreciated by tenants from Victory and Neptune. All in all a very busy 6 months



**Neptune and Victory tenants with-
local MP Caroline Dineage**

Cornwell Court – Warden, June LeFevre



Halloween - guess who?

We have celebrated a few things since the last Newsletter. The first was a Halloween party celebration with a good turnout and entertaining songs from the 60s and 70s. A really successful Christmas meal was also enjoyed by many tenants. We are pleased to announce that we now have a Social Committee. This will enable tenants to enjoy day trips, night outs and social events. Frank Dyson was unanimously voted in as Chairman. Baroness Judith Jolly, Gerald Vernon-Jackson Lib Dem MP and Tom Morton, our Chairman visited in mid-April. They had a look around the court and then coffee and cakes with our tenants.. We are sorry to hear that Carol Howden will be leaving us and wish her all the very best in her retirement and thank her for all she has done for us. We are looking forward to meeting Alex Burn our new Chair of Cornwell Court. Our Annual Summer Fair will be held on Saturday 20th June between 1-4pm. All welcome.

Somerville Court - by Warden, Jackie Stoddart



Christmas came and went in Somerville Court with the normal festive lunch and seeing in the New Year. St Patrick's Day lunch with an Irish apple cake for pudding went down well. We are now getting back to normal after our mini-makeover in our lounge and Warden's office. The new ground floor carpets look amazing, tenants and visitors are all very impressed. We now look forward to our first joint function with Eliza Mackenzie Court on the 21st July 2015.

Tenant's enjoying the evening sunshine after a St George's Day fish supper

Sirius Court – by Warden, Eileen Makenzie



The Court was visited by Paddy Ashdown and Gerald Vernon Jackson on the 1st May 2015. Paddy went down extremely well with the tenants. As you can imagine he soon found an ex-Royal Marine from the Newtownards Road to swap dits with. The tenants kindly emphasised how well they were looked after by the Association. Despite being asked a couple of times by Paddy about their issues, they all said they had none, everything was fine. The visit was aired on South today that evening and many tenants appeared on TV.

Lord Paddy Ashdown interviewed in the Garden of Sirius Court

Greater focus on Care

Recent changes to health and social care present opportunities for the sectors to work closely together to improve the care experience now and plan for better services in future. Therefore, Agamemnon is exploring ways to better coordinate and enhance the care our elderly tenants receive with a view to improving their well-being and reducing the chance of hospital admission. The first steps have begun with tenants being consulted about conducting a care audit in each Court prior to confirming the way ahead.

Service Charge changes in 2016

Recent consultation with tenants has resulted in plans going ahead to include water and sewage charges in the 2016 Service Charge in order to reduce administration costs for our tenants. Similarly, it is planned to stop using coin operated laundry machines in 2016 and transfer the costs of the machines to the Service Charge in order to stop attracting crime through having cash held on the premises. More consultation will take place over the next few months and an amendment to the Tenancy agreement will be required.

Muddy Race 2015 - Team Agamemnon Needs Your Support



Pretty Muddy® isn't like any other fundraising event. It is a 5k muddy obstacle course where women of any ability can climb, jog and walk all over cancer. All of the wardens, some of the female office staff and some stand-ins like the CEO's wife have signed up for the challenge. The Pretty Muddy 5K Challenge is on Saturday 18th July 2015 at Southsea Common; our start time is 11.45am. Please come along if you can to cheer us on and have a laugh at our expense as we get round the obstacle course and get very muddy. You can also show your support by sponsoring us please see your warden for details, we are raising money for cancer research.

Notices

Please take time to read the most up-to-date notices on the Notice Board. These policies and notices are put in place to ensure that everyone enjoys living with the Association in a peaceful and dignified environment.

Lieutenant Colonel P Burns (Retired) MSc CEng MIET - CEO