

## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2017 - No. 43

### Changes on the Board of Trustees



The Annual General Meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at Cams Hall saw some significant changes to our Board of Trustees. Our longest serving member, Captain Patrick Binks who joined us in 2005, sadly has now retired. Patrick has been involved in many aspects of the Association over the years including the role of vice-chairman and a constant source of good advice and solid contributions. His parting gift to the Association was a very interesting history of the Agamemnon Housing Association. We were very happy to welcome two new trustees to the Board – Paul Watkins and Carl Dixon. Both Paul and Carl are ex-Royal Marines who bring a wealth of experience in the sheltered housing and care sectors.



Above left – our Chairman accepting the Association's history from Captain Binks RN, who we wish a fond farewell. Welcome to ex-Royal Marines Paul Watkins (left) and Carl Dixon (right) who bring a wealth of experience to the Board of Trustees



### Wellbeing Service here to stay



With the continued success of the Wellbeing service in Gosport, and Southsea, the Board of Trustees has recently decided to consolidate the service in those courts on a permanent basis. It was also decided to continue using external Wellbeing service providers in our Cosham and Waterlooville courts for the foreseeable future. The Trustee who specialises in Adult Social Care, Alex Burn reported to the Board that the Wellbeing service users are clearly benefiting from Alex Cullen's companionship and her assistance in learning computer skills, completing documentation such as Blue Badge applications and accompanying them to events in the Court such as coffee mornings. The Board also agreed that service users may be asked to contribute to the cost of the service if they exceed a set number of Wellbeing visits. Contact your Warden if you wish to know more about the Wellbeing service.

**Wellbeing Assistant, Alex Cullen supporting a service user in Cornwell Court**



**Wellbeing Room Trial** The Association is currently conducting some research to identify if our tenants would benefit from having a Wellbeing Room within each court. This will be piloted at Victory Court. To begin the process our Chairman Rod Edwards, Trustee, Roger Harrison, CEO, Pat Burns and Warden of Victory Court, Jackie Warren-Holland visited the Rowans Living-Well Centre to gain information on what complementary therapies amongst other services they deliver and how these could be tailored and best delivered to suit our tenants. Some of the treatments that tenants could access are massage, hypnotherapy, reflexology, physiotherapy, as well as beauty therapy treatments and light exercise. These treatments can help people to

feel good, and in turn aid a person's physical and mental wellbeing. A Tenant Survey has recently being completed at Victory Court to determine which treatments will prove most popular. The early signs are that there is a requirement for such services. The next step is to create the facilities to accommodate such services.

## Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance

**Cap** Heard of Universal Credit? It is due to be rolled out in the South in 2018. Universal Credit is a single monthly payment and it will replace some of the benefits and tax credits that you might be currently receiving e.g. Housing Benefit, Income Support, Tax credits and some support allowances. The roll out will mean that you have to make your claim online and there will be a seven day waiting period. There is also a possibility that you may have to wait up to 6 weeks before you receive your first payment and this will be paid, to claimants, in arrears. It is still to be determined if Housing Benefit for sheltered housing will be included in Universal credit. We will keep you informed. **Local**

**Housing Allowance Cap (LHA)** In the 2016 Spending Review the Chancellor outlined plans to cap the amount of rent that Housing Benefit will cover in the social sector to the relevant LHA. The National Housing Federation has advised that the new system is planned to be implemented from 2019 and the (LHA) cap will not apply to supported and sheltered housing until then. As the Association receives additional information on either issue we shall forward this onto you via the Newsletter and also via your Warden.



**Nicky Miles: Letting and Finance Officer**



**June Lefevre (Warden Cornwell Court) championing Dementia awareness.**

## Dementia Champion hits the ground running

June LeFevre, Agamemnon's volunteer Dementia Champion visited all courts in February and March giving a Dementia Friends talk. She received positive feedback from all wardens and tenants that attended. Understanding a little more about dementia may help with living with this non-discriminatory disease and appear a little less frightening for the newly diagnosed tenant and their families or carers. She is looking forward to the next 'Dementia Friends Roadshow' in 6 months' time where she will be further discussing this seemingly taboo topic. June's aim is to make a difference in a positive way by introducing as many tenants as possible into the Dementia Friends family.



**Lisa Elliott – PCSO 12663 - Cosham**

## **Cyber Crimes and Telephone Scams**

Whilst visiting one of Agamemnon's Courts in April, I spoke to 2 gentlemen who had been recent victims of computer scams. One had just spent an hour on the phone to scammers who claimed they were from Talk Talk and were fixing problems on his computer, luckily he did not part with his bank details but it was a close call. The other had paid around £300 some 6 weeks ago for a package to protect his computer after being locked out of it, when discussing this with me he did not even realise it was a scam. In both cases the scammer had gained remote access to their computers and created the very problems they were claiming to resolve, this is a common and lucrative method of fraud. **So please beware:**

Scammers are very convincing and anyone can be a victim of Cyber Crime (not just the elderly or vulnerable). Never respond to cold calling over the phone, even when the caller appears to know your details. Do not allow remote access to your computer and be aware that this can happen inadvertently by opening email links or accessing suspect sites. Never give your bank/card details or personal information to anyone that phones you. Get virus protection for your computer and keep it updated (this is cheap or even free from reputable sources). If you've been having problems with your computer and then receive a phone call offering to fix it this will be a scam. Instead take it to a recognised local technician to have any viruses cleared. If it doesn't seem right – it probably isn't! Hang up and report it!

**Your Property Services Engineers (PSE)** The PSEs' primary tasks are to ensure your environment remains safe for you (fire alarm testing, water supply testing and general Health & Safety monitoring), to monitor the fabric of the buildings in the hope of nipping any problems in the bud (thus saving money and disruption) and to undertake maintenance tasks within their range of skills and report those tasks they cannot undertake. Your flat will be visited once a year by the PSE to carry out a series of routine tests on such things as stop cocks, drainage, electrical fittings and windows. These scheduled visits are in addition to responding to any issues that may arise. Issues that do not fall within their scope are things such as the putting up of curtain rails or hanging pictures that may loosely be described as minor DIY jobs. There are good reasons why they cannot do these tasks for independent living tenants; if they do it for one Tenant they are then obliged to do it for all and there are not enough hours in the day to allow for that. There are also liability issues which the Association's insurances do not cover. Such tasks should be undertaken by the Tenant, friends or family or, where necessary, by a contractor approved by the Association. However much your PSE may want to help he cannot unless it is an emergency so please do not ask him to conduct such tasks or be offended when he says no.



**Cornwell Court** Our Burns night was celebrated in true style at Cornwell Court on Wednesday 25th January. The Burns night supper included 'Haggis Neap's and Tatties. The Social Committee made it a spectacular evening and their efforts into making it a professional and enjoyable event was commented on by all who attended. Cornwell Court placemats were made. Candelabras and crystal decanters and a Burns night supper programme were just some of the little extras that made it such a wonderful evening. Well done!

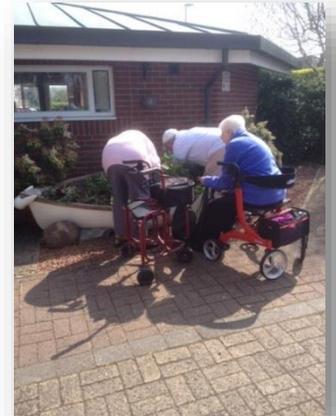
**Victory Court** The Victory Warblers and Warden entertained the tenants with a Christmas concert. All their rehearsing paid off as everyone enjoyed the afternoon. The tenants have also enjoyed a New Year's Eve party, Burns night and St Patricks celebration, fish and chip and quiz evenings, film afternoons, Sapphire Jubilee afternoon which raised £85.00 for the RNLI. The list could go on. The success of many of the events above are down to the hard work of our Social Group.



## Neptune Court

The gardens are glorious this spring and thanks must be given to the efforts of the tenants who work so hard to keep them looking so lovely. It has been a busy few months so far and the Court is looking much brighter thanks to Wheatsheaf Trust who have painted all the corridors and the upper lounge. Each floor has its own dementia friendly colour at the entry and exit points. As well as brightening up the Court it has given several people work experience, employment and traineeship opportunities. We have also had new carpet fitted to the upper 3 floors and new fresh water points to each floor. A big thank you must go to the tenants for being supportive and cooperative during this period. The Social Club held an Easter Raffle, with tea/coffee and hot cross buns, and a St George's Day celebration, which was enjoyed by many.

**Somerville Court** Pictured right is the gardening club's first outing at the front of the building this year, one Tenant was very excited as this was the first time she had been out of the Court in the fresh air since the middle of December last year. The hour of gardening was followed by a well-deserved cup of tea. The Courts has enjoyed several social events including a Christmas party, a New Year's Eve bash and an April fools' lunch, Our activities have included: Qigong, bingo, Somerville slimmers who have lost over 13 stone collectively and massage sessions. We are now busily preparing our props for our seaside theme Chairman's lunch on the 28th July, which we are looking forward to hosting this year.



**Eliza Mackenzie Court** The Court has enjoyed a comprehensive social calendar including an afternoon high tea (photo) organised by the breakfast club, and several successful afternoon activities such as art, bingo and whist – all organised by individual tenants and the Social Committee. Thanks to our resident gardening expert and his helpers, we now have a green house, which is producing bedding plants for the main garden and courtyard.

**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 safe, peaceful and dignified environment.

*P Burns*