



Gurkhas join the party at Kings Worthy

Members of Kings Worthy Tenants' Association (TA) were joined by local Gurkha residents for the annual Christmas party.

The visit was arranged by TA Vice Chairman Sandra Perkins so local people could have an insight into their lifestyle and culture.

Chairman Paul Bungey said: "In the end we had 12 members

of the Gurkha community in Winchester at our social. It was a fantastic evening – a great success!

"They were very friendly and polite and they went away with most of the raffle prizes!"

He added: "Of course, they've all met Joanna Lumley!"

Kings Worthy TA normally holds a combined social evening and



Annual General Meeting.

In December, the committee decided to separate the two events so the members could enjoy the party!

TACT's Alan gives words of wisdom

I felt privileged to be asked to speak at the Capita Conferences in London and join a panel of experts giving my views on the Reform of Social Housing Finance – my main passion in life!

Capita Conferences have been successfully delivering topical events to the public sector for over 15 years, attracting audiences from central, regional and local government, housing, police and education sectors, as well as the private sector.

Over the two days I put my views on how Winchester City Council works with its tenants to get the Best Value for Money, and involve its tenants in the day to day running of their homes, and involving them in committees and groups involved in all housing matters.

I was working along side many eminent people in the housing world and from government

departments. This presented a great opportunity to express the views and concerns of council tenants.

Beryl White my fellow Joint Chair of TACT, and some TACT members also attended, so it was great to have local support.

As the only Council Tenant giving a presentation at the Conferences it was very rewarding and I was grateful to have been considered to speak as a tenant representing our views on both occasions.

My thanks to everyone from Winchester who came along to support me, and encourage the work TACT does to support tenants.

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Information Sharing Sessions, and the most asked question?

TACT would like to thank all the tenants and Older Persons Support Officers (OPSO's) for making us welcome when we visit your sheltered schemes to spread the word about TACT, what we are campaigning for and how to get involved.

Your main concern is why there appear to be fewer Older Persons Support Officers (OPSO's).

We will try and explain the reasons for this when we attend

further information sessions with you in the future.

The Council is also discussing this issue with members of the Sheltered Housing Forum, which has been set up for residents.

When members of TACT attended a Sheltered Housing Conference in London the issue was being raised by tenants from other parts of the country so it is a national problem and not just confined to Winchester.

If you would like to know more about Information Sharing Sessions at Sheltered Schemes or the Sheltered Housing Forum



please contact the Tenant Involvement Team on freephone 0800 716 987 or by email tenantinvolvement@winchester.gov.uk

Hampshire-wide residents' group

A new group has been launched to represent residents from a number of councils and housing associations across Hampshire.

The Hampshire and District Residents Forum will meet every two months to discuss how residents can make a difference.

It has also been chosen by the Tenant Services Authority to set trial resident involvement standards across the county.

For more information contact TACT or the Tenant Involvement team on Freephone 0800 716 987 or by email tenantinvolvement@winchester.gov.uk

TPAS London South East Committee

I have just completed my year as one of four committee members on the TPAS (Tenant Participatory and Advisory Service) London and South East Committee.

We trialled the new, smaller committee for a year and decided it worked very well.

I am pleased to report that I was re-elected for a three-year period. This will give the committee stability to plan meetings and improve our efforts to pursue tenants concerns.

The main topic of the last meeting was a presentation by Nigel Long on The National Tenants Voice, prompting many



Alan Rickman & Beryl White

interesting questions and answers.

Beryl White Joint TACT Chair found it interesting and good for networking.

For myself I look forward to my new term in office, and the backing of TPAS members.

Tenant Inspectors Make a Difference!

Tenants and leaseholder Inspectors have just undergone a two-day training course in leaseholder inspections to help them review and improve the service. In particular they focused on:

- day-to-day management of leasehold properties
- how to involve leaseholders in the service
- policies, procedures and service charges.

They were asked to report on what works well and doesn't work well and make recommendations about the service. They suggested:

- produce a leaseholder handbook
- investigate improvements to the leaseholder billing system
- compare services with other housing providers to ensure they are cost effective.

Overall they felt leaseholders received a good standard of service from Winchester City Council.



Paul Bungey and Angela Stevenson hard at work

Suggestions for improving the service are being put into an Action Plan and the Leaseholder Forum will be monitoring improvements.

Angela Stevenson added: "I particularly enjoyed visiting Gosport Borough Council and meeting tenants and leaseholders from other councils and housing associations."

If you are interested in becoming an inspector call Glynis Cole, Tenant Involvement Manager, on Freephone **0800 716 987** to find out more. You can also find information about inspections online at www.winchester.gov.uk/tenantinspections/

Highcliffe blazes a trail for community safety

Local families from Highcliffe, in Winchester were treated to a Community Safety Fun Day in half term.

The event was organised by Janet Berry and the Highcliffe Tenant and Leaseholder Association (TA) to introduce the police, firefighters and council staff to local people.

Janet got the idea from a recent Community Crimefighter Course and was awarded a grant of £947 from the Community Crime Fighters Small Grant Programme, funded by the Home Office Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Group. The grant was spent on information packs as well as the day.

She said: "The whole idea is for the local community to get to know the local crime fighting agencies to put faces to names so they'll be more confident about engaging with them and knowing what their roles are. I would also like to thank Trevor Lynas our local Neighbourhood Warden for his assistance in organising the day."

Children could have their faces painted and were given the chance to look round a fire engine and a police car. Some were introduced to police dogs

which were also taken along to the fun day held at All Saints Primary School, Highcliffe.

Winchester City Council's Neighbourhood Wardens took part in the day along with the Community Relations Officer Laura Brown.

Local mum Jo Wheeler spoke for many parents. "This has been a really good day and my girls have had a lovely time," she said.

Tenant Involvement Manager Glynis Cole helped arrange the Community Crime Fighter Course. She said: "I am really impressed that Highcliffe TARA put the course into action and organised this wonderful day.

"I would urge other TAs to follow this excellent example from Highcliffe."



Highcliffe TA Community Safety Event



TACT goes back to Parliament

The TACT Chairs and Janet Berry and Judith Steventon Baker, set off for London and the House of Commons last November for the launch of the Housing Group Review Report into housing finance.

Many council tenants from around the country converged on Parliament all intent to have their say.

It was a great debate with MPs from all parties listening and supporting our views.

Tenants have come a long way in their fight but we have further to go!

The looming general election makes no difference to the demands for justice from council tenants and Defend Council Housing.

All in all an excellent day. TACT will keep tenants informed as and when the information is published.

This edition of Tenant News has been produced by a team including Alan Rickman, David Cruden, Sheila Greaves, Joan Downing, Angela Stevenson and Susen Harding.

New approach and style for the TACT Annual General Meeting

The TACT Chairs, together with the Tenant Involvement Team, have for some time now been trying to make meetings different.

We have to rely heavily on our core of regular tenants, who turn up to meetings. So we would like to try a new approach, starting with this year's TACT Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- Hold it in early June
- On a Saturday morning

- Include an exhibition about TACT, Tenants and Residents Groups, and housing services
- Invited Speakers
- Followed by the AGM
- Tea, Coffee, possible light snacks.

This would hopefully encourage more tenants to participate in the day time, if they so wish.

For more information about the TACT AGM and how you can get involved contact the Tenant Involvement Team on 0800 716 987 or go on line at www.winchester.gov.uk/TACT



TACT Tenants & Council Together Meeting Dates 2010



Meetings are held on a Wednesday Afternoon from 2.00-4.00pm, and in the Evening from 7.30-9.30pm in The Common Room, Godson House, Central Winchester unless otherwise stated below

21 April 2010 19 May 2010
Saturday 12 June 2010

Annual General Meeting (AGM), Venue and time to be confirmed

All tenants and leaseholders welcome

● Contact the TACT chairs Alan Rickman or Beryl White if you want to find out more about TACT, their meeting dates, or want to raise any issues. You can call them on Freephone 0800 716 987 and leave a message or write to them at:

- **Alan Rickman,**
101 Taplings Road, Winchester, SO22 6HG
- **Beryl White,**
2 Pine Road, Bishop's Waltham, Nr Southampton, SO23 1EH

● Alternatively go to www.winchester.gov.uk/TACT

Now turn the magazine over to read

