

Members' resolution about the National Trust's continued funding of the
Tenants' Association of the National Trust

The resolution

That the members agree that the voluntary work of the Tenants' Association of the National Trust (TANT) continues to be financially supported by the National Trust.

Supporting statement

As well as undertaking valuable conservation work, the Trust also owns some 5,000 properties, most of which are occupied as private homes. They provide the Trust with annual income in excess of £20m, making Trust tenants one of the largest contributors to Trust finances.

It is recognised as good practice for any landlord with a portfolio this size to fund a Tenants' Association, and early this century, when representatives of local tenant groups met with Lord Blakenham and Dame Fiona Reynolds, it was decided TANT would become the representational body for tenants, with the Trust agreeing to fund ongoing expenses.

TANT mans a 24-hour helpline and mediates between Trust and tenant when problems occur. There is no cost to any tenant and we regularly find satisfactory resolutions, preventing issues from becoming litigious and saving the Trust thousands in legal fees. We have formed excellent working relationships with those at the very highest level, annually meeting with the Chairman to discuss overall policy issues and tenant concerns, with a view to ensuring smooth operation of the Let Estate.

We have been instrumental in the production of a Tenant Handbook, the regeneration of the Let Estate and in introducing Tenant Satisfaction surveys. Through TANT's diligence and efforts, tenants are no longer prevented from sitting on the Trust's Council, and improving the Let Estate is now one of the Trustees' priorities. Much has been achieved through this cooperation, but there is constant, ongoing need for TANT as the Trust seeks to raise all its properties to the Decent Home standard, to satisfy the expectations of modern tenants and optimise revenue from numerous redundant buildings.

However, TANT has recently been informed that the agreed funding will be withdrawn in 2017. For a non-profit organisation run by volunteers this is a potentially fatal blow.

Over the years we have worked closely with the Trust, helping hundreds of tenants who found themselves in difficulties. We are 'middle men', tirelessly mediating between Trust and tenant to resolve problems and improve policies.

TANT funding costs the Trust around £15,000 pa – less than 0.1% of annual rental income – and is vital to allow us to continue to be the voice of the 10,000+ tenants, custodians of smaller properties, who rely on the Trust for the roof over their head.

You may be a tenant or know someone who lives in a Trust property who would have free access to TANT's help should this ever be required. But this can only happen if TANT continues to receive the funding it so desperately needs to survive.

We therefore petition the membership to help us continue our work, ensuring that tenants are safe and protected and that the National Trust continues to follow established good practice by maintaining financial support for their Tenants' Association.

Do something great today – vote YES!