

TANT

TENANTS ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

TANT NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2013- CHAIRMANS CHAT.

VOTE FOR CRISTINA GEORGE. I strongly urge all of you to vote for our committee member and National Trust Tenant-Custodian Cristina in the election for the National Trust Council. It's very easy to do online or by post (**details of how to vote will be in your autumn magazine**) and continues to strengthen tenant representation in this vital area.

In the last Newsletter I was looking forward to our meeting with the Trust's Director-General and Chairman in London. We got an agreement to pave the way to making National Trust tenants full members with voting rights. (We achieved automatic non-voting membership some time ago). Dame Helen Gosh also agreed to make a personal visit to a tenant with serious tenancy issues. To date neither has happened. We welcome your feedback on these issues. Our helpline is very active lately, and we are conscious of winter approaching. If you wish to talk about any aspect of your NT tenancy in complete confidence... we're very friendly, just call us. We want to make TANT even more widespread. In our busy lives Pop-up Tenant Associations are a really positive idea. The next stage is to make these simple to start, small but effective and easy to run. I would like to hear from anyone who would like to help us design a starter pack and work on a national roll-out plan. Call me personally on 07741053764.

Keep warm and remember; don't shiver in silence, we may well be able to help.

Andrew Turner-Cross

CRISTINA GEORGE seeks your support as she stands, once again, for election to the National Trust Council.

The National Trust is not just about land and property; it is about people – the membership, volunteers, tenant-custodians, staff, visitors – and engaging involvement and participation. Without people much of what the Trust does today is irrelevant. 'For everyone,' said Octavia Hill. How does the NT remain relevant to 21stC visitors? This is the biggest challenge the NT faces and I say: 'Start with the Council'. Elect people who can represent a wide range of views, age groups and NT 'users'. As a working mother of three teenagers and tenant-custodian of a property open to the public, I hope you may, once again, think me fit.

The Trust asks for people from all walks of life to join its Council, but until recently it retained systems that made it difficult for the ordinary working person. I have made some progress with changes to meeting dates; this has taken nearly three years! Now I ask for members' support to see through my representation and challenge the Trust to respond to its own objectives across a range of initiatives.

In these increasingly straitened times, getting the provision of services right for its 'users' will be crucial for the NT, as will finding ways to engage new audiences. My experience in retailing could support the Trust's retail development; my experience running a wedding business at one of the Trust's properties could help guide the sensitive development of similar businesses at other properties; my early career could benefit the fund-raising activities of the Trust both at local and national level; as a teacher I can advise on youth engagement. Most of all I recognise that enthusiasm, energy and passion are key to being an effective contributor.

During my first three years on Council I have contributed to the sub-committee supporting NT staff to progress the vision for volunteering in 2020. This includes trying to determine what community involvement might look like in the future. The Trust struggles to reach urban and minority communities, but this will be critical for its future. I firmly believe that the Trust can be relevant to all of us, for ever.



Repairs and Heating Programs

Any problems with heating or other repairs that might affect your affordable warmth in the coming months, contact your local NT offices. If you cannot get satisfaction there please feel free to contact any Committee member or the Helpline 0845 224 2986, were any contacts will be dealt with in full confidence. Chimneys that need relining or other matters like this are not a matter of choice but for Health and Safety reasons have to be done.

Also please remember there are grants out there to help insulate your homes for the winter, many of these are free or very low cost. If you cannot find out about them either ask you local council or ring us 0845 224 2986

Data Base and Funding

Due to pressure of work etc we have not got our normal letters out to people on our Data Base so it is just in the Newsletter for now.

If you have not already registered on our Data Base could you send us the following:-

Name, Address, Contact Details, Phone and or email

While could people consider a donation to funds, so we are independent from the NT? We are not asking for much but if people could afford £ 10 per household or £ 5 for consecianory households.

Payment should be made either by cheque made out to TANT and sent to our Treasurer Alan Limb at POBox 677, Redhill, Surrey RH1 9BR

Or standing order to Account 75514834 Sort Code 60-16-09 Nat West

Thank you all so much

Some TANT achievements since it was formed earlier this century

1. The formal body representing NT tenants, acknowledged by the Trust locally and nationally.
2. Worked with Lord Blakenham's review of the Trust until which point the NT did not know how many houses/cottages it owned or their condition.
3. Contributed to the 2005 NT National Housing Policy.
4. Initiated & worked with the Trust on the introduction and subsequent issue of Tenants Handbook.
5. Represented tenants at NT AGM's securing many £millions for property improvements and maintenance.
6. Secured a change in the law, so tenants are able sit on the Council of the National Trust.
7. Recognition by the Trust of tenants as Tenant Custodians in view of the special nature of their homes and environment.
8. Non-voting automatic NT membership with the benefit of free visiting to all NT sites, free parking and the NT magazines.
9. Persuaded the NT that they needed to work towards the equivalent of the Government's Decent Homes Standard for the condition of their housing stock.
10. That there should be provision of out of hours emergency numbers backed up by TANTs own scheme.
11. TANTs substantive and informative web site.
12. Helped local tenant associations be created across the country.
13. Issues regular newsletters keeping tenants informed of current developments.
14. Helped many hundreds of individual tenants with problems about their homes and leases.
15. Worked with the Trust in dispute resolution in more difficult cases.
16. Responded to media interest when required in a balanced way.
17. Secured an individual seat on the Council of the National Trust.
18. The election of TANT as an appointed body to the Council of the National Trust.

You may contact TANT Committee members as follows:

Andrew Turner-Cross, Chairman (07741) 053 764 | Peter Bate, Development Officer (01643) 704 063

Linda Baharier, National Organiser (07815) 842 133 | Alan Limb, Treasurer (07717) 823 101

Gordon Harris, Secretary (0845 224 2986) | Leo Stevens, President (0845 224 2986)
