



***STRENGTH IN NUMBERS – BE LEASE-AWARE***  
***Independent group representing leaseholders***  
***in the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust***

**Officers:**

**Chair (acting):** Keith Nials; **Vice:** vacant.  
**Secretary:** James Weston; **Vice:** Alison Philpot  
**Treasurer:** Rachel Webber; **Vice:** vacant.  
**VAHT Board LH rep.:** Christine Campbell

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## **L.R.G. NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2009**

Following the 2009 AGM your committee has been working hard on your behalf. They have had numerous meetings with the VAHT, but as you may have guessed these meetings have got nowhere, in fact the VAHT continued to ignore constant complaints from leaseholders and is still not listening to the LRG about unfair charges. Meetings with the trust have now completely broken down as it has become obvious the VAHT is hell bent on just doing what they want with no thought of wanting to “Work Together”.

### **The Cost Of Solicitors Advice And Tribunal Hearings**

Having received around a £1000 in donations into the LRG fighting fund—to pay towards our fight to get fair and accurate service charges from the Trust—your representatives used the contributions to engage a solicitor for advice on the legality and justification of these charges, and to advise on pursuing a case against VAHT at a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT).

Advice received from the Solicitors gave us specific pointers on items they believe should be used in tribunal applications. Your LRG has now taken the decision to take on the Trust in a tribunal.

A big thank you to all who have contributed. You will appreciate that, with solicitors costs and the cost of putting a case together on your behalf, it is proving expensive. However, Leaseholders feel that we cannot sit back and let the VAHT ride over them. And if the trust is not prepared to listen to you, the Leaseholder, then a tribunal is the only way forward.

### **Tribunal Application**

You will be pleased to hear that after many hours of hard work two applications have now been put forward to the LVT. Both these applications have been fully supported by your LRG Committee.

Although there is still lots of paperwork and legal issues to go through, the LVT has accepted that the Leaseholders' have a case to be heard. A date has been set for at least one of the hearings: Thursday 28th January 2010, The Holiday Inn, Aston Clinton Rd, Aylesbury. All leaseholders are invited to attend, although you will not be allowed to speak, it is likely a large contingent of support could further strengthen and help win our case.



## **Evidence For The Tribunal**

In order for the tribunal to be a success the LRG needs to gather as much documented evidence as possible. We would like evidence to support where you have been charged any excessive amounts of administration costs, service charges for items not in accordance with your lease, any overcharges, or any evidence of the VAHT's incompetence. Copies to our PO Box or e-mail.

## **The Challenge Must Go On**

The LRG has voted to continue your fight until a decision is made by the tribunal of WIN or LOSE. This costs money, and it means your support is needed both in your attendance of hearings and financial contributions. Please therefore book dates of hearings in your diary NOW, and if you can make a contribution to the fighting fund please do so now. Ultimately this is an investment that will save you time and money in the long term. And you should feel a warm fuzzy feeling for doing something for the greater good of all Leaseholders.

## **Fighting Fund**

If you are in a position to contribute to the challenge, however small, you can do so at any "LloydsTSB Bank plc" or address to: LRG Treasurer, Box 898, Aylesbury HP20 9FG. Cheques should be made payable to: "LRG FIGHTING FUND" And credited to: A/C No: 0080007; S/C: 30-90-38. If you are sending a cheque please supply us with your name & address.

## **Just In: Another Result For Leaseholders!**

All leaseholders should have had a letter regarding insurance from the VAHT. This letter was to inform you all of a reduction in your insurance premium for 08/09. The VAHT had erroneously added on another 5% of Insurance Premium Tax, yet it clearly states on the invoice from Acumus that the 5% is already included. The LRG would like to add that this mistake was also missed by the auditors, for whom Leaseholders ultimately pay.

## **Remember To Be Lease-Aware**

Invoices for your service charges should be with you by now, but are the charges relevant to your lease? We strongly advise you to read over your lease as it is a legally binding document between you and the VAHT. You will find it useful if you need to challenge the trust on any charges. If you can't find your Lease you might be able to obtain a copy from your mortgage lender.

## **L.R.G Annual General Meeting January 2010**

Please note that your representatives have voted in favour of deferring the 2010 AGM (normally held in January each year) until after a decision is made by the tribunal.

## **Dates For Your Diary**

Committee meetings are held at 6.45pm for prompt 7pm start at Eskdale Road Community Centre, Stoke Mandeville, HP22 5UJ, normally monthly on a Thursday. Please check the website: [www.lrg-aylesbury.org.uk](http://www.lrg-aylesbury.org.uk) or call/text 07531 846 816 for exact dates if you would like to attend.

Tribunal Hearing Date - Thursday 28th January 2010, The Holiday Inn, Aston Clinton Rd, Aylesbury. – All leaseholders are invited; we hope to see you at the tribunal!