

## A Land Fit for Heroes?

For more than 25 years, Head of Litigation David Collins has been Honorary Solicitor to a National Charity which helps and supports ex-Service personnel and their families. In January 2010, he was asked by the Charity to advise and represent ex-Service personnel and their spouses who live in purpose built accommodation in Bexhill. While previously the accommodation had been owned by charitable organisations prepared to accept a less than commercial rent for the flats, the Freehold was acquired by a private property company who within a matter of weeks served Rent Increase Notices upon the Tenants seeking to increase the rents by up to 70%.

However, careful scrutiny of the original Tenancy Agreements suggested that rents could only be revised every two years on a particular day of the year, and the Notices that had been served proposed increases to take effect on a different date. A loophole maybe, but one that accorded very much with the justice of the case as we saw it.

We are pleased to report that the Rent Assessment Committee agreed and held that the Notices of Increase of Rent were invalid, with the result that, for a further ten months at least, the Tenants were entitled to continue to pay the reduced rental figure. Several of the Tenants have used the breathing space afforded by this decision to beat an orderly retreat and find more affordable accommodation elsewhere.

The number of people in Hastings, St.Leonards and Bexhill and the surrounds living in long Lease or rented accommodation is probably much higher per head of population than in most other parts of the country and dealing with issues between Landlords and Tenants and Landlords and Tenants has for many years been a specialism of our experienced litigation team.

For assistance in relation to any Leasehold or Landlord and Tenant problem please

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