

BETRA News

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BETRA Tenant Management Organisation
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Why vote for BETRA?

- Having BETRA on site means residents do not have to go to the Council's offices whenever they have a problem.
- Lloyd and Jennie provide support and advice to individual residents and their families, and we advocate and liaise with key services on your behalf.
- Ground maintenance and minor repairs are dealt with swiftly and expertly by our own, dedicated team.
- BETRA's events and activities - such as our forthcoming Easter Event (see page 4) - provide a much-needed focal point for the community, and loads of fun along the way.
- BETRA is dedicated to making life better for all our residents, whether that means improving parking facilities, working closer with the Police, or upgrading our lobbies and other communal areas.
- Last but not least, BETRA means local people have a say in how their estate is run.

If residents vote against BETRA, all the above will be lost.

The decision is yours. Please make sure you use your vote. The future of our estate is in your hands.

Power to the People

In June - 15 years after the formation of BETRA - residents will once again have the chance to vote on the future management of the estate. Local democracy doesn't get more local than this.

Every five years, as part of our management agreement with the Council, BETRA is required to consult with tenants and leaseholders on the future management of the estate. This consultation takes the form of a secret ballot, held over four weeks. We call it the continuation ballot.

This year's Continuation Ballot will take place between **24 June and 19 July**.

You are being asked to judge how effective your tenant management organisation – BETRA – has been over the last five years, and whether you want BETRA to continue managing the estate in accordance with the current management agreement.

Decision time

This is a big decision. Please think carefully before voting. Every household on the estate will have one vote. If the majority of you vote for BETRA to continue to manage the estate, that is

what we will do. If, however, the majority votes against BETRA, the management of the estate will revert to the Council. We will have just 21 days to give the Council three months' written notice to end the management agreement.

How it works

Over the next few weeks, we will obtain the ballot box from the Council and prepare the ballot papers ready for delivery to you all.

You will need to cast your vote at the BETRA office.

Please note: if you lose your ballot paper, we will not be able to replace it. So we suggest you fill it out and vote as soon as you can.

Before that, we will be delivering leaflets to you all prior to the vote, giving you all the information you need.

Estate manager Lloyd Edwards will arrange for the office to stay open into the evening two days a week during the voting period so that everyone gets the chance to vote (check notice boards, website and flyers for details nearer the time).

The result

An open meeting will be arranged at the close of voting on 19 July at which members of the Council's Community Engagement Team will open the ballot box and oversee the count. Residents are welcome to attend this meeting (details to follow).

For those who can't attend the count, we will post the result on our website, estate notice boards and following newsletter.



**Estate Manager
Lloyd Edwards**

Lloyd's view

Showing consideration

Noisy neighbours are a pest, especially in the evenings. We all live on top of each other and our lives impact on one another, so please show consideration to those who live around you.

So when you undertake a bit of DIY you should start no earlier than 7am by 8pm. This is especially true during weekdays, as neighbours going to school or work early the next morning need their sleep.

Washing machines/dishwashers also cause disturbance. Please do not put your washing on after 8pm.

Running up and down the stairwells in the dead of night can also disturb those nearby, especially if you are talking loudly at the same time.

Likewise, playing your music so loud that everyone can hear you, or allowing your children to be up late and running about playing ball inside the flat, that too can be annoying for others trying to sleep some 10 feet below or above.

Showing consideration for others is important. It requires a little thought on our part but it can a big difference to those living around us, and so to the community as a whole.

Meet the Police

Local police officers, in liaison with BETRA, are planning to hold regular contact sessions with us. The Police have also agreed to increase the number of patrols made on and around the estate.

A contact session is a meeting where residents can have a face to face discussion with their local Police officers.

It's a chance to report crime, get crime prevention and other advice, seek help, offer support and submit information - anonymously or not as you wish. It's also a chance to highlight issues of concern on the estate and in the greater Harold Hill area.

From the Police point of view, these sessions are a chance to gain insight from local people, make their presence felt in the community, and hopefully put residents' minds at ease.

We plan to hold these meetings monthly, and we will vary the day and time of meetings so that everyone gets the chance to attend from time to time.

Forthcoming Contact Sessions at BETRA

- **Tuesday 16/04/19 1100-1200 hours, in the BETRA boardroom**
- **Wednesday 08/05/19 1230-1330 hours, in the BETRA boardroom**

Future dates will be published on the BETRA website and Facebook page.

If you are unable to attend these meetings, estate manager Lloyd Edwards is available to pass on information to the Gooshays Safer Neighbourhood Team in strictest confidence.

Residents can also phone the team direct on 07876391408. Meanwhile, the Police will of course continue to be subject to emergency call outs as and when required, on 999. For non-emergencies, call 101 or message the Police via the Crimestoppers website: www.crimestoppers-uk.org



PC Sam Hammond from the Gooshays Safer Neighbourhood Team



The murder of teenager Jodie Chesney, commemorated here on the estate as elsewhere across the Havering, is a terrible reminder of the need for us all to look out for one another and support the work of the Police.



News in brief



Ahead of the five-yearly ballot, BETRA's Acting Chair Wendy Thomas, asks for your support

"As the ballot draws closer BETRA need our residents' support more than ever.

"We love our estate and we like to think that is partly down to the great work BETRA has done over the years.

"Our maintenance guys keep the grounds looking amazing and whenever you need them, the majority of the time they are right there.

"To keep it that way we need as many 'Yes' votes as you can give us.

Events

"Here's another reason for voting for BETRA - our brilliant community events such as our forthcoming:

Easter Special on Thursday 18 April.

"All the kids on the estate have the chance to meet the Easter Bunny this year - he will be in our office from 4pm on Thursday 18 April. We look forward to seeing you there.

Join Us

"We always have space for more residents to get involved - whether that be on our Board - attending a quarterly meeting to discuss estate issues; on our Events Committee - just helping out and bringing new ideas; or as a Share Holder - Did you know you could become a share holder of Betra TMO for just 10p?!

"For all these options, just ask the office for more information."

See you all soon
Wendy :)

Home swap

The mutual exchange scheme allows social housing tenants to advertise their property with a view to swapping their home with another social housing tenancy.

If you would like to advertise your flat for a mutual exchange, we can publish your home's details here. We will not publish names and addresses, just the key information.

Here are three local properties currently available for a home swap.

- 1 bed looking for a 2 bed (any floor).
- 2 bed looking for a 3 bed (any floor).
- 2 bed looking for a ground floor or house 3 bed.

If interested in any of these properties, or you would like to advertise your property in this newsletter, or if you have friends in the area that are looking to swap, please get in touch with the office.

Robert 'Bobby' Moore

We're sad to have to report that BETRA has lost an old friend with the recent death of Robert Moore, or Bobby, as he was known to many.

Bob lived across the road from us, yet his interest in the community led him to get involved in the setting up of BETRA, and he remained a close supporter and friend of ours ever since.

We send our heartfelt condolences to Phyllis, Bob's widow, and pledge to support her going forward just as she and Bob supported us.

Go on! Make a difference where you live

BETRA is looking for some new Board members. This could be the opportunity you've been looking for.

Democracy, openness and self-help are important principles for a tenant management organisation like BETRA. To ensure these principles are adhered to, we seek to have a management committee, or board, that is broadly representative of the people who live here.

All residents have a right to stand for election to our board, and with it the chance to help in the management and running of the estate. Appropriate training is available for new members of the board, and our Acting Chair Wendy and estate manager Lloyd are on hand to support and guide you where necessary.

The Board meets once a month, works as a team, and draws on all the different skills and experience of its members. But you don't need any special skills. Whatever you're background, you could have something to offer us - and vice versa (management board memberships looks fantastic on a CV). Maybe you have worked in an administrative capacity in the past? Maybe you're good with figures, or have technical or practical skills? Or maybe you see yourself as just an extra pair of hands, keen to learn new skills along the way. That's fine too.

The most important quality we are looking for is commitment, and a desire to help make a difference. If that sounds like you, find out more (with no obligation) by popping into the office for a chat.

Wishing all our residents



Join us on Thursday 18 April, for our

Easter Event

4pm-5.30pm in the square behind our office

Kids - Meet the Easter bunny - he has an Easter Egg for you! - From 4pm in the office.

Easter Bonnet Competition

Arts & Crafts

Tea, Coffee & Cakes

Make a Card

Tombola & Raffle



Events

BETRA Bingo

The last Wednesday of each month, in the boardroom, from 5-7pm

Meet friends and neighbours for an easy-going chat over a few games of bingo, followed by an end of game buffet on the house. All residents welcome.

Next Board Meeting

TBC - Check notice boards and website for details.

BETRA

Wendy Thomas, Chair
Lloyd Edwards, Estate Manager
Jennie Goddard, Housing Officer
Mark Richardson, Senior Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Steven Richardson, Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Brian Pratt, Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance Officer

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PETS CORNER

Ann with her dogs, Benji, 3 (right) and Bobby, 10 (Left)

"Although they will jump up they are only excited and will never do any harm. They love going out on walks, especially on our big green. If you see us come and say hi, especially as the summer is here now and it's staying lighter later. I find about 5pm is the best time - we get the last of the sunshine while the dogs enjoy the fresh air and I also get to stretch my legs."

Want to appear in our next Pets Corner? Give our office a call :)