



BETRA News

Issue 5, January 2016



BETRA's New Year's Resolutions

- **Look out for your vulnerable neighbours**
- **Take proper care of your pets**
- **Clean up your dog's mess to ensure our children are safe**
- **Make sure your dog is micro-chipped by April 2016 – it will be a legal offence thereafter**
- **Keep on reporting all anti-social behaviour to the office – it proved to be invaluable in 2015 – thank you!**

Tackling the parking problem

The recent building of new houses along Darlington Gardens brought parking problems on the estate to a head. Put simply, there were no longer enough spaces to go round. To tackle this problem we are introducing a new parking scheme.

Many of the more affluent households these days have two or three cars, including those on Darlington Gardens. Yet they, like most houses, have, at best, one off-road parking space or garage. You can guess where their extra vehicles end up.

All car parking spaces on the estate will now be reserved for permit holders only. The scheme begins on Wednesday 13th January. The signs went up before Christmas, and you will have received a letter from us. Nearby houses have also been informed.

From the beginning of January, permits for two residents and one visitor per household have been available, free of charge, from the BETRA office.

To obtain your permits, we ask you to register with us, and this will enable us to identify residents who have not yet

got their allocation. Please take care of your permits. Replacements will be available, but only where valid reasons are given for the loss of a permit.

New spaces

In addition, we have just built 10 new parking spaces specifically for residents living adjacent to the new houses on Darlington Gardens. The work was carried out in November, and this new facility, like all parking spaces on the estate, will be for the exclusive use of residents and their visitors.

Resident permits are being introduced all over the borough at present, and the Council are charging residents £20 a year per household for this service. Here at BETRA we have decided to absorb the costs from our own budget, so you will not be charged. Our concern is not to make money but simply to ease our residents' parking problems.

We may not be out to make money, the company employed by the Council to run the scheme day-to-day will be. So expect them to be vigilant. If you or your visitors park without the appropriate permit you will be liable to fines.



Our year



**Estate Manager
Lindsey Taylor**

Well I have to say, what a year 2015 was! It was my first full year as an estate manager at BETRA and extremely busy one. The BETRA staff and board undertook several projects this year, all of which I am pleased to say we have completed.

Developments ranged from the expansion of the existing car park at Alcester/Southsea, to the security door windows all being upgraded, to walls being brought down, canopies re-felted and painted, flowers being planted around the estate and security doors being saddled and railings being painted.

We also introduced the new BETRA newsletter and website this year, and installed new portable security cameras covering our problem areas. Our new events committee organised numerous fun days, trips and events, whereby a lot of fun was had and friendships formed.

Whether it was our day out to Adventure Island and the seaside, a fun-filled Halloween, with screams that could probably be heard in Hildene, or our lovely Christmas Grotto and much else besides, all courtesy of our

Looking after

On Saturday 21 November, members of BETRA's management committee got together with colleagues from nearby PETRA and Ray Lodge TMOs for a training day entitled Running Your Community Business, devised and led by TMO consultant Liz Michael.

The purpose of the day was to improve board members' understanding of good governance and the role of TMO boards; to help them appreciate the importance of compliance with policies and procedures; to enable them to learn from each other; and to help them build a team approach to the business of governance back at their TMO.

Committee members find these training days very helpful, but all of us can benefit from developing a better understanding of how TMOs works. For this reason we thought we'd share with you some of the issues discussed

brilliant events team, it's been memorable.

Naturally, we have seen some people move on this year, and others newly arriving. In the main, we're a happy community, though sadly there have been a few evictions this year, brought on by persistent anti-social behaviour, or prolonged failure to pay rent. A good point at which to remind readers that if you find yourself in trouble, struggling to pay your rent, or in other difficulties, come and talk to me sooner rather than later. We are here to help.

So, here's to an even better year in 2016 for our BETRA community, and do keep your eyes on the BETRA notice boards for upcoming events.

Happy New Year!

Lindsey

on the day. It may help you to appreciate the voluntary work that members of the community put in to BETRA. It may even inspire you to join them!



business



We began the day by looking at what is meant by 'community business', of which a TMO is an example. As the name suggests, these bodies draw their members from the local community, and seek to benefit the community. They are not-for-profit organisations. Profit made or money saved is used to benefit the community. But equally importantly, they must be businesslike, i.e. legally recognised, efficient, organised, ambitious and pragmatic.

For all of this to happen, TMOs need to operate partnership management, with paid staff and committee working together to deliver strategic objectives as set out in the organisation's business plan. The committee needs to be a collective democratic decision-making body whose members share their TMO's vision, values and objectives. All committee members share collective responsibility and even a degree of personal liability for the good governance of their TMO. On top of this, certain members take on particular responsibilities, such as those of the chair, treasurer and secretary.

Individual committee members have multiple responsibilities, included reading and abiding by all governance policies, treating colleagues with respect, respecting confidentiality, contributing to the work of the committee and representing their TMO positively to the outside world.

The rules and tools of a TMO may seem complicated at first, but they are there to help these committees - made up entirely of volunteers from the community - set themselves up and run an efficient and effective organisation. It creates the basis on which they can negotiate with and agree a management agreement and associated funding with their local council - in our case Havering - and it enables them to draw up their business plan, the road map to a brighter future for their community.

Follow the geese!

During the training day, facilitator Liz Michael used imaginative ways to illustrate certain points.

For example, at one point she had everyone draw a bus representing their TMO. The idea was to show the many different components a bus (or TMO) needs - wheels, engine, petrol, driver, etc - in order to get to where it wants to go. In another exercise, she showed how we could learn lessons from the behaviour of geese. Strange but true...

Fact: As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird following. Flying in a V formation means the flock adds 71% greater flying range than if one bird flew alone.

Lesson learned: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get to where they are going quicker by working together.

Fact: When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

Lesson learned: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership.

Fact: The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep going.

Lesson learned: We need to make sure our honking from behind is encouraging to those up ahead!

Fact: When a goose is sick or injured, two geese stay with it until it can fly again or it dies.

Lesson learned: If we have as much sense as geese do, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

News in brief

Council cuts

BETRA still waits to hear from the Council what our budget will be for the next three years. We are expecting a cut, but we don't know the extent of it. Meanwhile, the Council undergoes another internal restructure. The housing department has lost 67 posts, including that of their dedicated TMO liaison officer, Laura Moore, a valued colleague of ours for many years.

Police service

Another service being hit by cuts to its funding is our local police. Lindsey says, 'This is bad news and could have a real impact on our estate. There were six PCSOs in this area, now there are just two. It's going to make it more difficult to prevent difficult situations escalating.'

Diane's daffs



December's mild weather brought us an early glimpse of board member Diane Howson's latest plantings - daffodils springing up outside Amphyll and Angmering. It's lovely to see, says Ann MacKay, who, just last year, was inspired to join BETRA's board after admiring Diane's work in the neighbourhood. From my kitchen window I watched as Diane tended to a lovely bed of tulips in bloom. I thought, 'What a wonderful thing to do for your community.'

New lock up

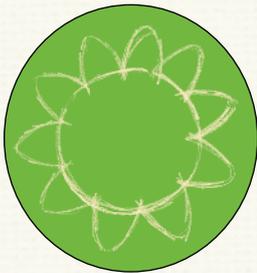


In January, a new lock up will be added to the maintenance team's base on the green (above). With BETRA's events team becoming ever more ambitious, we have all kinds of paraphernalia that we need to store. The new lock up should solve that problem.

Events

Good times!

Photos from our Halloween and Christmas events



The calendar of events for 2016 is currently being planned. If you have any ideas of what you would like our events team to consider, please pop by the office for a chat. We're looking, for example, at staging a regulate movie show for youngsters, and a fish 'n' chips 'n' darts evening once a month for the oldies among us. And then there's Easter to think about... Watch the BETRA noticeboards and our next newsletter for details.

Next BETRA
Board meeting:
21 January at 4pm

BETRA

Tenant Management Organisation

Lindsey Taylor, Estate Manager
Mark Richardson, Senior Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Steven Richardson, Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Michael Hughes, Part-Time Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Brian Pratt, Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance Officer
Lloyd Edwards, Housing Officer

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