

BETRA News

Issue 8, January 2017

Banishing the winter blues

It may now be cold, wet and miserable, but at least we can warm ourselves in the glow of happy memories generated by BETRA's recent social activities - our Halloween bash, Christmas Grotto and visit to Colchester Zoo. Thanks go to everyone who helped organise these memorable events.





Estate Manager
Lindsey Taylor

Happy 2017 everyone

Having had a very busy 2016, we are currently going over our projects for the new year, starting with putting up the rest of the house signs, tackling the large green area between Oundle/Radstock and Kirkham House and planting more wild flowers, as they were a lovely display last year. The team are also out and about again, maintaining the Estate, it really is like the Forth Bridge - once you've finished, it's time to start again.

Christmas was a very warm one this year. However, with the weather on the turn, we are making sure that we have enough rock salt for when the ice and possible snow hit. We have also had a hit of boilers breaking down. This should always be reported immediately - especially in this weather as it's too cold to be without heating/hot water and we will always endeavour to get this pushed through as an emergency for our residents.

On the Management Agreement issue, we are 'hoping' to finally sign the MMA. All the TMOs in the borough are eager to get this signed as are Havering Council, so hopefully this is something we can seal this year. We are also still in talks with Havering to undertake the block cleaning as

News in brief

Drain blockers leave a bad smell

An air freshener is a good thing, but like everything else needs to be disposed of properly. Recently, there has been a spate of air freshener rims being flushed down the toilet and getting blocked in the pipework causing a major blockage. Please can residents take care to dispose of all air freshener parts properly. Thank you.

Blot on the landscape

You may be wondering about those unsightly mounds of mud on the Green. Dug up and prepared as flower beds last year, they have unfortunately not proved to be the safe haven for plants that we hoped for. Instead, a combination of uncontrolled dogs and vandals have between them destroyed everything planted there. There needs to be some kind of obstacle there, to prevent football being played near some of our residents' windows, so BETRA will be installing an alternative barrier - unobtrusive though sadly not plants - shortly.

this is something all the TMOs are again eager to undertake.

Don't forget to look at our BETRA website (www.betratmo.org) to look for our current events, we also post our events on the new notice boards we put up - so do remember to take a look in these as to what is happening at BETRA throughout the year. I believe the Easter Bunny will be coming again to BETRA this year - so let's hope he brings the warm sun with him!

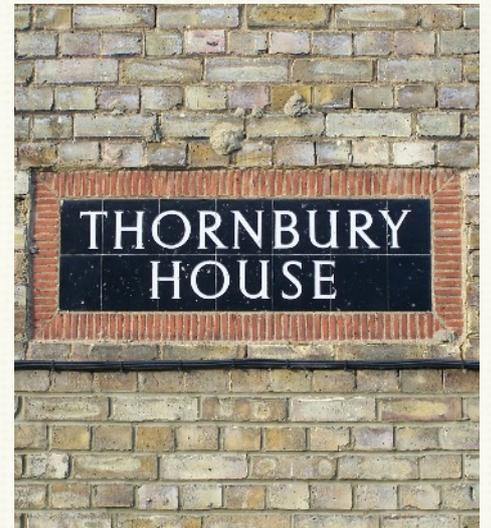
Once again, wishing everyone a Happy New Year - and remember, if you need any advice or just to talk, our doors are always open.

Lindsey



You can't miss us!

Residents have complained that visitors and cab drivers sometimes struggle to find them. Not any more. New signs are going up around the estate. Slightly less elegant than the originals, they are undoubtedly more prominent and therefore easier to see. Drivers who don't see them probably shouldn't be driving!



Unwanted Christmas gifts?

Like to donate yours to BETRA? Unwanted gifts make great tombola and raffle prizes. By recycling them in this way you help BETRA raise funds for our forthcoming events and trips.

Please bring items to the office. They will need to be new, unused and - preferably - in their packaging. Thank you!

The stuff we don't talk about

'What shall we put in the newsletter, Lindsey?' asks our newsletter editor Andrew.

At this point Lindsey usually puts her head in her hands and cries:

'Oh there's so much going on...!'



'Excellent!' says Andrew. '

'But we can't possibly talk about most of it.'

Of course, much of the work Lindsey and her colleagues do is confidential and should stay that way. We would never print personal details about individual residents and their dealings with BETRA.

However, it is important for residents to know about the range of work undertaken by the BETRA team on your behalf. It goes way beyond the grounds maintenance, social activities and committee business we usually talk about here.

So here's Lindsey with a glimpse into a typical week's workload of the stuff you don't usually read about.

'People are frequently locking themselves out, so we have to break into their property to let them back in.

'We shop for some of our more vulnerable and frail residents, and top up the water in their cars. We help some elderly residents keep their allotments tidy (else they would lose them).

'We are often required to come to the aid of residents with mental health problems, people trying to move due to ill health, and others whose pets are not being properly looked after.

'Sadly, there are incidents on the estate involving anti-social behaviour, drug and hate crimes which BETRA, working with the Police and other appropriate authorities, must seek to resolve. '

So next time you see a member of the BETRA team out and about, give them a thumbs-up. You can be sure they've earned it.



Events



(Left)
Happy in the slow lane

BETRA resident Louise and her retired greyhounds take a stroll.

(Below)
Looking forward

We will soon start planning another early summertime trip to **Adventure Island** at Southend. Let us know if you and your family want to be included, and watch out for further details on the notice boards, our next newsletter and website.



Darts get together

The second Wednesday of each month, in the boardroom, from 5-7pm
Why not join 'One dart Ken' (as our boastful Chairman likes to be known), friends and neighbours for a get together, to throw some arrows and enjoy a takeaway supper and drink? Chinese? Pizza? We decide on the night. All residents welcome.

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 BETRA Board meeting
Thursday 26 January, in the Boardroom

BETRA

Tenant Management Organisation

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

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