

BETRA News

BETRA Tenant Management Organisation
8 Angmering House
Barnstaple Road
Harold Hill
Romford
RM3 7SX
Phone: 01708 344300
Email: betratmo@btconnect.com
www.betratmo.org.uk

Issue 11, January 2018

Noisy neighbours

Have we ever been as noisy as we are today? Home is supposed to be a sanctuary, but what chance has it got with music, telly and internet available round the clock, electrical equipment humming away for much of the time, and people driven to shouting at one another instead of talking.

The fact is, excessive and regular noise can have a heavy impact on our lives, and those of our neighbours. BETRA and Havering Council can and do get involved in cases where individual household are causing persistent and excessive noise.

However, it is far, far better if we all show consideration for others by simply moderating the noise we make, especially at night. None of this complicated. We just need to avoid playing loud music or doing our washing late at night. Or having the volume on our TV so loud. Or starting that DIY project at 10pm!

But if your neighbour is not the naturally considerate kind, and you feel unable to approach them, talk to us about the problems you are experiencing.



In the work we do here at BETRA, we try to represent and respond to the needs and wishes of our residents. To do this, we need to know what your views are, and that is why we organise an annual survey of residents' views.

This survey usually goes out to all households on the estate around March or April. Typically, the questions we ask are about your experiences of the services we provide, and the problems and issues you want BETRA to tackle.

These issues might include vandalism, litter, parking, but it's up to you. Whatever your concerns are, we want to hear about them. And if your views are shared by others, they will help shape BETRA's priorities in the year ahead.



Deciding our priorities

Estate manager Lloyd offers these examples. "This year, we have given greater attention to the problems of fly-tipping and the removal of graffiti because residents expressed their concerns about these issues in last year's survey. It will be interesting to see this year whether residents have noticed these improvements.

It is important to us that all residents take part in the survey. That way we can get a complete picture of what the community thinks, rather than just hearing from the same few voices year after year.

So, when the survey pops though your letterbox in a month or two's time, please make a point of filing it in. It won't take you more than 10 minutes and it will mean *your* voice is heard.





Lloyd's Viewpoint

Estate Manager
Lloyd Edwards

Happy New Year everyone. I've been in post for six months now, and it seems like a good time to reflect a little on what I've learnt, and what I hope we can achieve in the months and years ahead. For a start, I've learned that there is more to this job than meets the eye. The financial side of managing aTMO was always bound to be a challenge: it's complicated! As well as very, very important. Our annual grant is fixed, and limited, so responsible budgeting is a must.

There is also the challenge of managing a team, making sure that every member - both staff and volunteers - are able to contribute to their full potential.

Last but not least, there are the on-going challenges of being the first point of contact for residents seeking help and advice, and engaging residents in our work, encouraging everyone who lives here to take pride in the neighbourhood.

Our community

Perhaps there is nothing more important than this last point. Building a sense of community is in everyone's interest, and is everyone's business. BETRA has a special responsibility to champion this idea, creating opportunities for residents to



play their part. We do this by encouraging residents to become Board members, by hosting social events and celebrations (like the upcoming visit by our very own Easter Bunny), and by using this newsletter, our website, and our noticeboards to promote local services such as Harold Hill Library.

Young achievers

Finally, one thing we would like to do is celebrate the achievements of younger residents, perhaps with a picture and caption in this newsletter. So if you know of any local youngsters who have - or are about to - achieve something special (eg, the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, a fundraising or volunteering venture, or a sporting achievement) we would love to hear about it.

Regards,
Lloyd Edwards



Candle with care

Atmospheric and pretty they may be, but candles can also be dangerous if misused. All residents are asked to follow these guidelines when lighting candles.

Always keep a burning candle within sight. Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or before going to sleep.

Never burn a candle on or near anything that can catch fire. Keep burning candles away from furniture, drapes, bedding, carpets, books, paper, flammable decorations, etc.

Keep burning candles out of the reach of children and pets.

Always use a candle-holder specifically designed for candle use. The holder should be heat-resistant, sturdy, and large enough to contain any drips or melted wax.

Be sure the candle-holder is placed on a stable, heat-resistant surface. This can help prevent heat damage to underlying surfaces and prevent glass containers from breaking.

Always read and follow the manufacturer's use and safety instructions carefully. Don't burn a candle longer than the manufacturer recommends.

Always burn candles in a well-ventilated room. Don't burn too many candles in a small room.

Don't burn a candle all the way down. Extinguish the flame if it comes too close to the holder or container.





News in brief

Join the team

BETRA will be looking for a couple of new Board members in February, as two of our current members move on. If you're looking for a way to get involved in the community, this might be your chance. To find out more about the role - whether you are a leaseholder or a tenant - please pop into the office for a chat with Lloyd.

Leaseholder Forum

Leaseholders account for around 40 of the 216 households on the estate. If you are one of them, the Leaseholder Forum gives you a voice to raise issues of concern with the Council.

The forum is open to home owners across the borough and it meets between 6.30pm and 8.30pm at Havering Town Hall, Committee Room 2, Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BD. The next meetings are on Tuesday 20 March and Tuesday 24 July.

Please note, personal issues or individual cases will not be discussed at these meetings. Rather this is an opportunity to bring items to the table that the Home Ownership Team can address. For example, the start of the gas safety certificates for leaseholders, and the implementation of the major works payment options.

Please let the Home Ownership Team know in advance if you plan to attend one of these meetings. This will help them ensure copies of the agenda and previous minutes are available to all attendees.

For any estate-related issues, please continue to make BETRA your first point of contact.

Tenancy Support Service

Among his duties, Havering's new head of the Tenancy Support Service, Neehara Wijeyesekera, is tasked with liaising with and supporting the work of the borough's three TMOs, including BETRA.

After a period of transition in the Council, during which this kind of support was somewhat lacking, we welcome Neehara and look forward to working with him. He said of his new team recently,

"We need to work hard to ensure our customers receive high quality services and our challenge is to provide this consistently well during a period of positive change for Havering and its residents." To which we say, "Hear, Hear!"

Vandalism - Please be vigilant

As ever, BETRA's approach to vandalism of all kinds is simple - zero tolerance. There is no place on our estate for anti-social and criminal behaviour. But we can only stamp it out if residents take responsibility for reporting problems speedily. Specific incidents should be reported to the Police on either 101 or 999, depending on the seriousness of it. Alternatively, you can report what you know to the BETRA office. Information shared with us will be treated in confidence.



Easter Bunny

Yes, he's back! Or he soon will be. Come Easter, our very own Easter Bunny - the one with a curious resemblance to our Chairman Ken Howson - will once again be handing out Easter eggs to those children courageous enough to approach him. Watch out for the venue, date and time of this and other forthcoming events on our noticeboards and website shortly.

Events

All outdoor events will be in the vicinity of the big car park near our caretakers' lock up.

Need help with computers?

Residents sometimes ask us for help with using computers. In fact, there is help available in our local neighbourhood.

ICT Skills Training

At The Betty Strathern Centre, ICT Skills Training provide **free** basic computer courses to local adult communities in the areas of East London and Essex.



The Betty Strathern Centre

Training ranges from the basics, such as how to turn on a computer, searching the Internet, creating and using emails, to more advanced accredited courses using the Microsoft Office programmes. For the accredited courses, there would be a small charge towards the cost of your second qualification certification.

Tuesdays 10:15 – 12:15 at Betty Strathern Centre, 41 Myrtle Road, Harold Hill, Romford, Essex, RM3 8XS
Website: ictskillstraining.org.uk

And then there is **Harold Hill Library**.



Our local library is located on Hilldene Avenue. It's a very popular facility, fully accessible, and with lots of events and activities, including a Citizens Advice Service every Monday and Thursday 10am-2pm.

You can phone Harold Hill Library on 01708 434973 for more information.

Here are some of the facilities it has to offer:

- 11 computers providing internet access
- Homework station
- Four car parking spaces
- Six cycle posts
- Minicom
- Limited Exhibition space
- Adult reading group
- Young at Heart group that meets the last Tuesday of every month
- "Reading Buddies" to help your children develop their reading skills
- Regular baby rhyme time sessions for under threes and story times for under fives
- Black and white photocopier
- E-books and audio books.

Better late than never!

Still to decide on some new year's resolutions? Courtesy of BETRA, here are a few to be going on with:

- **Look out for your vulnerable and elderly neighbours**
- **Take proper care of your Pets**
- **Always clean up your dog's mess to ensure our children stay safe**
- **Make sure your dog is micro-chipped - not doing so has been a legal offence since 2016**
- **Keep on reporting all anti-social behaviour to the BETRA office - it will make a difference.**

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.



BETRA

Lloyd Edwards, Estate Manager
Mark Richardson, Senior Care-taking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Steven Richardson, Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Brian Pratt, Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance Officer

8 Angmering House
Barnstaple Road
Harold Hill
Romford
RM3 7SX

Phone: 01708 344300

Email:

betratmo@btconnect.com

www.betratmo.org.uk

Homes and Housing
Havering Council.

Tel: 01708 434000

Email:

homes@haverling.gov.uk

Website: www.haverling.gov.uk