

BETRA News

Issue 16 July 2019

BETRA Tenant Management Organisation
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Fancy joining us?



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

Our management board 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 run the estate. Appropriate training is available for new members and our Acting Chair Wendy and estate manager Lloyd are on hand to support and guide you.

The Board meets once a month, works as a team, and draws on all the different skills and experience of its members. You don't need any special skills, just enthusiasm and the desire to support our community.

Old or young, you would be made most welcome. And by the way - board membership looks great on a CV, and the team working skills you will develop are sure to come in handy.

Does that sound like you? If so, and you would like to find out more (with no obligation) then please pop into the office for a chat with Lloyd - today!

Thumbs up for BETRA

On Monday 22 July, the continuation ballot count took place at the BETRA office, and the message from residents was clear: Carry on BETRA!

You may have seen the results on our notice boards. We had a resounding yes vote of confidence in this our latest five-year ballot.

Of 72 votes cast, 71 were in favour of BETRA, meaning we comfortably exceeded the 51% of votes needed for BETRA to stay looking after our estate for another 5 years.

The ballot was carried out by Havering independent Community Engagement team in our office. Residents and Committee members were present to witness it all, and all enjoyed the food we laid on for the event.

As the result was announced, our Acting Chair Wendy said:

"I'm delighted with the result. It shows we are clearly doing some things right, all across the estate. I want to say a huge thank you to Lloyd and the staff for all their hard work over the last five years, and here's to the next five year's hard work in support of our community!"



Residents watch votes being counted...



before enjoying some BETRA hospitality.





Now that the continuation vote has been completed, it's a huge relief to the committee, myself and all the staff, and it also means we can start looking ahead.

We like to think we work hard for our little corner of Harold Hill, but to have gained the support we did means a lot and we'd like to thank everyone who took the time to vote - TMOs like BETRA only thrive when residents take these opportunities to have their say.

Over our next five-year term, we intend to go on making improvements around the estate. We always encourage our residents to keep in touch with us and if you think there is anything we can improve on, anything you feel needs mentioning, or anything we can do better, please get in touch via our various channels:

Phone us on: 01708 344300
(office hours)

Email us at:
betratmo@btconnect.com
Or contact us via our website at:
www.betratmo.org

Finally, a reminder that our AGM is coming up on 15 August. Non-committee members are most welcome, so feel free to join us if you'd like to find out more about **your** BETRA.

Regards
Lloyd :)

Meet the Police Fire safety



Local police officers, in liaison with BETRA, will be holding further 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.

Future dates will be published as soon as we have them, 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 Crime stoppers website:
www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Having a new fire safety office. A former fireman who attended the dreadful Grenfall Tower fire two years ago, Shane Cook is, unsurprisingly, going to be vigilant when it comes to enforcing fire safety measures, and BETRA will be working with him to ensure our residents are as safe as possible.

Shane has already expressed concern about possessions left outside of flats, on landings and in hallways. While there is a zero tolerance policy from the Council on this, we are trying to get clarification regarding whose responsibility it is to enforce the policy, and we are seeking the best solution possible for our residents.

However, if you feel that there is excessive clutter in your block, then please do get in touch with us ASAP.

Your contact details



Residents change their mobile phones quite frequently these days and sometimes fail to notify us of their new number.

In case of emergencies, BETRA needs to keep up-to-date contact details for all our households, so please keep us 'in the loop'. This information will be confidential and used only by our staff when it is important that we contact you.



Home in August?

If so, enjoy your 'staycation'



Nitrous Oxide - on our streets

You may have seen silver gas canisters discarded in the streets and wondered what they are.

Sadly, they are the evidence of drug taking on the estate, and we are not alone in having this problem.

Across the country, there is growing concern at the number of young people using nitrous oxide, also known as hippy crack, laughing gas and balloons.

The drug became a craze at festivals and concerts, where it could be bought in balloons to inhale for £2 or less, and is now becoming more common as a recreational drug. It works by blocking signals to the conscious mind from other parts of the brain, giving users a brief feeling of intense euphoria and relaxation.

Is it legal?

Under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016, it is illegal to supply nitrous oxide for its psychoactive effect.

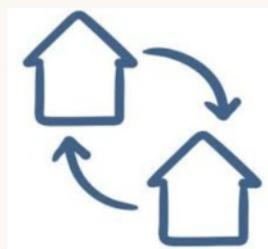
Is it dangerous?

Yes. Short-term side effects can include headaches, dizziness and unconsciousness, while longterm, excessive use has been associated with anaemia, incontinence, depleted bone marrow and numbness in fingers and toes. Deaths are rare, but there have been tragedies.

In 2012, A 17-year-old art student from north London, suffered a cardiac arrest, fell into a coma and died after inhaling the gas in 2012. In 2015, a 22-year-old University of Brighton student was found dead with about 200 spent canisters in his room.

Parents beware

Parents, if you see your children with things like this, please take action – your children's health and well being could be at stake. And if you see these canisters lying around the estate, please alert us to them and we will ask the Police to check these areas during their patrols.



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.



Events

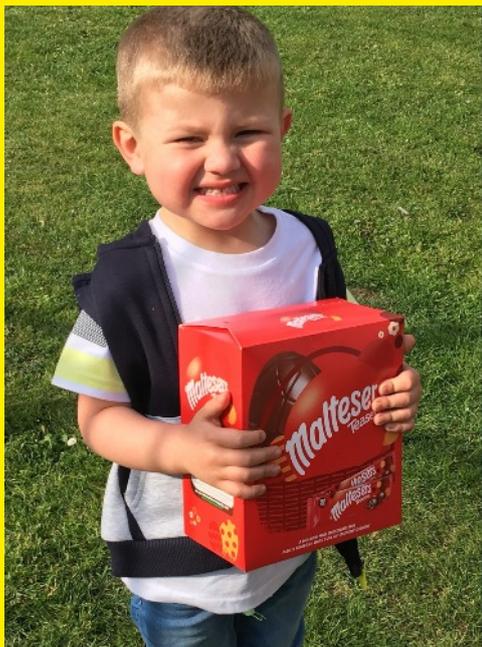


Remember our Easter Egg Hunt?



This was another successful BETRA event and thanks to everyone who helped make it happen.

Meantime, watch this space for upcoming events, including free transport and subsidised tickets to the Havering Show (see posters in the blocks). We also hope to run a Halloween event on Thursday 31st October, as well as a Christmas do this year. More details to follow nearer the time.



BETRA



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
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 15th August 2019**

See the letter that accompanied this newsletter, or one of the notice boards.

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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BETRA's former manager Lindsey Taylor and current senior maintenance officer Mark Richardson on their recent wedding day. Congratulations guys!