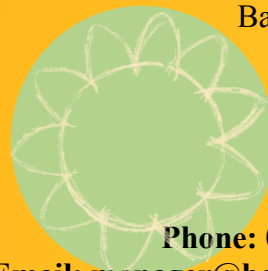


BETRA News

Issue 33 November 2023

BETRA Tenant Management Organisation
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www.betratmo.org.uk

Help keep our Estate clean and tidy

Clutter is becoming a huge issue around the estate, and the Council are issuing fines. The Grenfell tragedy has made local authorities much more focused, with a zero-tolerance approach.

Leaving clutter outside your property is a breach of tenancy (section 19).

Whether it is inside cluttering up the corridors and landings, or outside your property creating access issues and an eyesore, clutter needs to be stored appropriately or disposed of appropriately - and BETRA staff are here to help with this.

Any white goods, sofas or other items you are disposing of, please put outside your building, in the bark area.

Our staff, who take a tour of inspection around the estate every morning, and will then kindly remove them to the fly tip bins for you.

Please remember:

The tenant is responsible for removing their clutter and to leave this in the Bark area. Then BETRA staff will remove it from there.

We note that there are still door mats outside of properties. These need to be moved to inside the property. Thank you.

Jennie, Housing Officer,
with BETRA's new
Manager, Nicola





Hello everyone, my name is Nicola and I am the new Estate manager here at BETRA, and I am looking forward to meeting you around the estate.

I am very privileged to be able to work with my team here on the estate and nothing is a hassle when a job is raised for my staff to deliver. Their continued work and support goes without saying, and it is only with their support that I will be able to fulfil my role.

I came to BETRA because my passion is about helping and supporting tenants and their families in the best way I can. I have worked in the public sector for many years, including for Barking, Dagenham and Havering councils.

I am always here to help and support you in the best way possible. Feel free to pop into the office to introduce yourself, but otherwise I look forward to seeing you around the estate.

Finally, let me reiterate a point we make elsewhere in this newsletter - Please can everyone clear away clutter left outside of your flats. The Council has made it very clear to me that this will no longer be tolerated, and that fines will be issued.

Thank you,
Nicola

News in brief

Bin collection dates

Please note: The collection due on Tuesday 26 December will instead happen on Thursday 28 December.

The collection due on Tuesday 2 January will instead happen on Thursday 4 January.

BETRA office hours and emergencies over Christmas

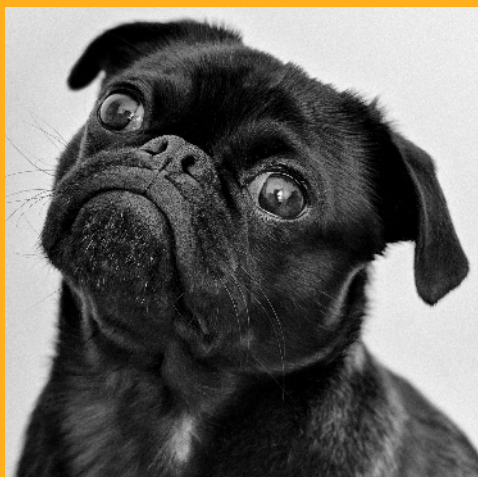
The opening hours will shortly be displayed on all lobby notice boards. For emergencies over Christmas, so when the office is closed, please call: 01708 344300. After 5pm, call Havering out of hours: 01708 756699.

Please be in

A reminder that whenever you report a repair to BETRA, we will give you an AM slot or a PM slot. Please make sure someone is at home during the allocated time.

The Council are responsible for external works and major repairs. Where relevant, the Council also give residents AM and PM slot when work is required.

Clean up after me, please



Dog walkers, you can be issued with a fixed penalty fine of £100 if you do not carry at least two poo bags with you? And yes, enforcement officers have the power to check that owners have come out properly equipped.

Please respect our estate and its residents - carry the bags and use the bins provided. You could be saving yourself £100.

Winter vaccinations



The NHS winter flu and COVID-19 vaccines are being offered to people most at risk of getting seriously ill.

Those who can get both vaccines through the NHS will include everyone aged 65 and over, pregnant women, care home residents, people with certain health conditions, frontline health and care staff, unpaid carers and household contacts of those at higher risk.

If you are eligible, it is important to top up your protection, even if you have had a vaccine or been ill with flu or COVID-19 before, as immunity fades over time and flu and COVID-19 viruses change each year.

For eligibility and how to book, please visit the website: northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk

Home Swap

Are you looking to move? Perhaps from a two-bedroomed flat to a one-bed flat. Or from a two-bed flat to a three bed house with a garden.

If so, there are several ways to research the idea of a home swap. You can contact people on specially dedicated Facebook groups, and there is also the website: www.homeswapper.co.uk

For more information on home swaps, visit the office.



Recycling - let's all do our bit

Parents, take responsibility

There have been several incidents recently of damage being done to property, including cars, on the estate recently. Manager Nicola has asked that patrols are increased, but the best deterrent against antisocial behaviour is responsible parenting and vigilant residents. We ask all residents, please play your part in taking care of our community.

Door keys please

You will be aware that new front doors are gradually being installed across the estate.

There is, however, one problem with them: in emergencies, BETRA staff are no longer able to gain access, something we were able to do with the old doors.

We are advising residents to get an additional key cut, and leave it with BETRA for emergency use only.

Emergencies do happen. The most common type involves residents locking themselves out having lost or forgotten their keys.

We will of course keep your spare key safely at the office, for use only in emergencies.

Having a spare key cut for BETRA will cost you a couple of pounds. Having a locksmith open your door for you will cost in excess of £150.



Most of us know why recycling is a good idea – we all need to help conserve natural resources, reduce demand for raw materials, save energy, cut carbon omissions and so on. But how to – that's where things get Tricky.

Recycling arrangements differ from one local authority to the next, but every local authority including Havering details its arrangements on their website. If still not sure, ask a member of the BETRA team.

If in doubt remember the three Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle.

It's especially important that each household plays their part in settings where dozens, sometimes hundreds of households share the same recycling amenities. Settings such as many of our estates and blocks. So please make sure to play your part.

1. Reduce Waste Generation:

One of the most effective ways to ease the burden on the council's collection services is by generating less waste in the first place. Consider reducing single-use items, practicing mindful shopping, and opting for products with minimal packaging.

2. Recycle Responsibly:

Recycling is a key component of waste reduction. Please continue to separate your recyclables from your regular waste and place them in the designated bins. Remember to rinse containers and remove any non-recyclable materials.

3. Spread the Word:

Encourage your neighbours and friends to do their bit. The more residents participate in waste reduction and proper recycling, the more we can collectively contribute to a cleaner and greener community.

Finally, the recyclenow.com website has lots of clear and useful advice to offer. It allows you to search your postcode, providing tailored advice on how to recycle at

home, how to recycle food waste and understanding recycling symbols.

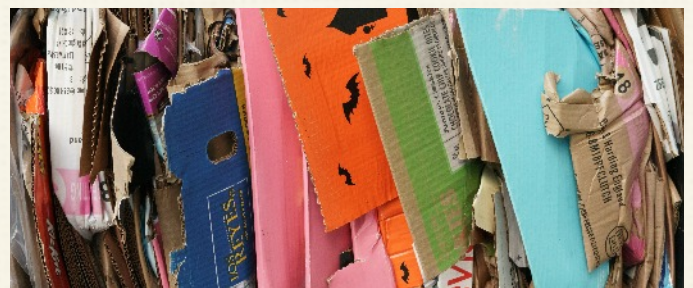
Council's new recycling service

From Monday 23 October, the Council has been working with its new waste contractors, Urbaser Ltd, to provide a service that will offer residents a chance to recycle more items such as plastic pots, tubs and trays and have glass bottles and jars collected for the first time.

Other new additions to the waste service will be the collection of small electrical items, batteries, and clothes.

Residents are being asked to place these items separately to their black and orange sacks, so they can be recycled through the correct process. Residents should look out for information including a printed information sent to all households in the coming weeks.

More on the new service on the Council's website: www.havering.gov.uk/info/20003/rubbish_and_recycling





Events

Winter jobs

With boiler breakdowns and frozen pipes, winter can be a busy time for social housing providers. Havering get more calls and messages regarding repairs at this time than at any other. We want to support you to prepare for winter and prevent problems from happening in the first place.

Tackling winter weather

Frozen pipes can cause problems with heating and boilers when the cold weather arrives. When that happens, it often occurs in large numbers all at once, meaning we can't always provide a fix inside of a day.

A tell-tale sign of a frozen pipe is if you turn a tap on during a period of freezing temperatures and you find that little to no water comes out.

So how can you prevent and resolve this common problem?

Step one: be prepared

- Identify any taps that continually drip. Even a small trickle can lead to a frozen pipe when temperatures drop below zero. So don't wait, report those issues to us now.
- You should also find out where your stop tap is – most are fitted under the kitchen sink – and understand how to turn it off so you can do step two.

Step two: how to thaw a frozen pipe

- Turn off the water supply at the stop tap.
- Check any pipes that run outside of your property. If the pipe has burst, you will need to contact us, skip on to step three.
- If it hasn't burst, slowly thaw the pipe by holding a hot water bottle or a towel soaked in hot water around the pipe. You can also use a hair dryer on the lowest setting.
- When it has thawed, reset your boiler by holding in the reset button for 10 seconds and waiting for the boiler to re-fire.

Step three: If a pipe has burst

- Turn off the water supply at the stop tap.
- Turn on all your taps to reduce any flooding and soak up any escaping water with towels.
- Report it to us immediately.

Staying safe

Thawing a frozen pipe is a safe thing to do so long as you follow the tips below:

- Don't disconnect the pipe
- Don't try to thaw it above waist height.
- Don't try to access the pipe or other pipes within the boiler.
- Look out for ice on the ground where you poured hot water to thaw the pipe. This could cause make the ground below slippery.
- Never use a naked flame or blowlamp to thaw it.

Testing your boiler

Boiler breakdowns and heating problems are common in winter. If you haven't already this winter, please check your boiler now.

Make sure you're satisfied that it's working perfectly by turning it on for a few hours. Any problems, get it solved now by reporting it to the council.

Damp and mould

One of our key priorities is to ensure we're providing customers with warm, dry homes which are free of condensation, damp and mould. So, what should you do if you identify signs in your home?

The key thing to remember is not to wait – report it straight away. You can report this on the Havering website. You will receive a reference number which you should keep safe.

Even a small sign of condensation, damp or mould can be a sign of a defect with your property which is better addressed proactively, rather than waiting until the problem gets worse.



Next BETRA Board Meetings 8 February 2024, 6pm

Scared of your partner or ex?
Talk to us any time, day or night.



BETRA

Jill, Chair
Nicola, Estate Manager
Jennie, Housing Officer
Mark, Senior Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer,
Steven, Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Naomi, Bookkeeper

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Harold Hill
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RM3 7SX
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Email: manager@betratmo.co.uk
www.betratmo.org.uk

Residents, please note the manager's new email above, Also, let the office have your email address if you have one, and update us if you change your mobile number. You can do this by emailing the manager at the address above. Thank you

Homes and Housing
Havering Council.
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Email: homes@haverling.gov.uk