

Thinking caps on...

PETRA News

Parkhill Estate Tenants & Residents Association

Number 159, April 2018

Here comes the ‘Continuation Ballot’

In September - 15 years after the formation of PETRA - residents will once again have the chance to vote on the future management of the estate. Local democracy doesn't get more local than this.

Once every five years, as part of our management agreement with the Council, PETRA is required to consult with tenants and leaseholders on the future management of the estate. This consultation takes the form of a secret ballot, held over two weeks. We call it the continuation ballot.

So, in September you will be asked to judge how effective your tenant management organisation – PETRA – has been over the last five years, and whether you want PETRA to continue managing the estate in accordance with the current management agreement.

Majority rules

This is a big decision. If the majority of you vote for PETRA to continue to manage the estate, we will do so. If the majority votes against PETRA continuing to manage the estate, we will have just 21 days to give the Council three months' written notice to end the management agreement. PETRA will then cease to manage the estate.

Over the next few weeks, PETRA will obtain ballot boxes from the Council, prepare the ballot papers ready for delivery to you all, organise the open meeting at which councillors will oversee the count, and, last but not least, work to convince you all to vote in support of PETRA.

Remember this

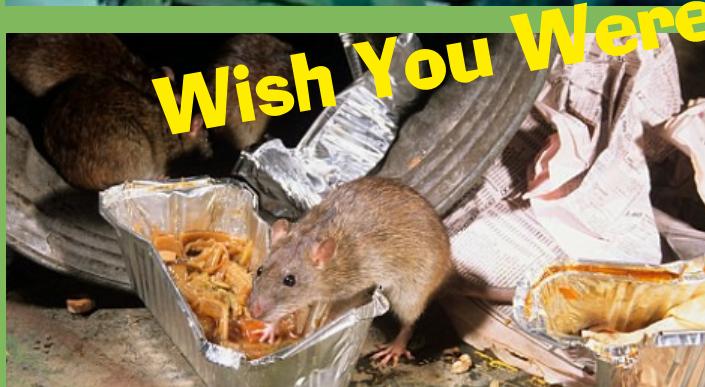
There are many things affecting life on the estate that PETRA has little or no control over. Nevertheless, when you vote, please remember the many things PETRA has achieved in just the last five years:

PETRA'S VISION

A safe, pleasant neighbourhood where people want to be part of a vibrant, caring community

- Overseeing the installation of new kitchens, showers, windows and refurbished lobbies
- New pathways, traffic calming measures, benches, signage and hanging baskets
- First class grounds maintenance
- Dedicated maintenance of rubbish and recycling facilities
- A range of events and activities
- Advocate for, and liaison with, all key services
- Onsite support and advice to individual residents and their families

And those of you with long memories - or recent experience of life on council-run estates - remember what the alternative looks like, what life on this estate used to be like...





Friends remembered

PETRA at 15

I'm still finding it hard to believe that we have been going for 15 years!

So much has happened in that time and the estate has seen some major improvements since I moved here 37 years ago. At that time there was a great deal of anti-social behaviour, drug paraphernalia scattered around the communal areas, graffiti and rats as big as dogs in the basement areas. Even though I had a permanent steady job I was unable to get credit due to the postcode!

PETRA has addressed all of these issues over the years and - with occasional blips of anti-social behaviour - I think we are living up to our vision of being a safe, pleasant neighbourhood where people want to be part of a vibrant, caring community. We achieve this when we work Together, taking ownership of the area we live in, asking family and visitors to respect the whole estate as they would your home.

Our staff play a huge role in providing this service and just think what it would be like not to have the office to report those repairs to - repairs which, in most cases, are dealt with on the same day. Or to help residents who are not computer savvy to complete the on-line forms they are required to submit, to claim benefits etc. Or to chase up council contractors when jobs are not being carried out within reasonable time scales.

You will of course be able to have your say when the 15-year ballot takes place in September. In the meantime, let me know if there is a service provided by PETRA that you are not satisfied with, so that we can rectify the problem. *Jan*

PETRA has lost two of its staunchest friends. We pay tribute



June Kight

Mike Davis writes: June, one of the nicest most gentle people, was sadly called to the higher place after this world on 23 February, after a time spent in hospital.

June was one of the first members of the Tenants Association (PASTA) in the mid 1980s, and did all of the training required when we decided to become a TMO. She was the only original committee member who really got to grips with double entry book-keeping, and subsequently became Treasurer - a post she held for most of the last 15 years.

Over the last few years ill health took its toll, but June always remained a staunch and loyal supporter of the PETRA vision for the people of this estate. I'm sure the whole of the Parkhill and Sunrise Estate will join me in sending our sincere condolences to her son, David.

June's funeral took place on 13 March at Corbets Tay cemetery. The funeral cortege stopped briefly outside Overstrand House that morning for residents to show their respect for June.

Paul Taylor

Paul, who sadly passed away recently, was PETRA's first manager, working closely with Mike Davis and the committee to negotiate the management agreement with Havering Council which has, in the years since, served our community so well. Paul was a bright man, whose commitment to social housing was only matched by his passion for books.

After his time with us, Paul went on to publish a book of his own, *Inspector Morse: A Literary Companion*. Last year, he put his general knowledge to the test, as a guest on TV's the Chase, where his exceptional general knowledge was rewarded with a large cash prize.



News in brief



Give us a lift!

As you will know, we have had serious problems with the lifts in recent months. The good news is that there is something we can all do to help keep the lifts in working order: **Never hold back the doors with your hands to keep them open.** This overrides the safety button and damages the mechanism. Use the button instead.

The bad news is that these lifts are old and the parts needed to repair them when they do break down are expensive and very difficult to come by - not that this excuses the unacceptably long delays in getting them repaired we've experienced in recent months.

PETRA is doing all we can to get these repairs done quickly and as a matter of urgency, but sadly the lifts are a council responsibility and we have little influence in the matter. We can only apologise to residents and promise to keep putting pressure on the Council to deliver a better maintenance service for these vital amenities.

- To report a repair by phone during the day ring 01708434000
- To report a repair by phone after 5pm ring 01708756699
- To report a repair online go to the London Borough of Havering website

Door entry system

Uphavering and Overstrand residents have recently experienced similar problems with their door entry systems. Youths have damaged the doors, then substandard repairs have led to a reoccurrence of the problems. We apologise for the inconvenience caused, but again must point out that these doors are the responsibility of the Council.

Kitchen appliances

Does your cooker stand next to your fridge freezer? If so, we advise you to reconsider your kitchen layout. When the fridge is next to the oven it has to work extra hard to hold its temperature, wasting energy. And where one or other of the appliances develops a fault, there could be an increased risk of fire. You should make sure there is at least a small gap of 50mm between these appliances. If you need further advice, and perhaps help with moving an appliance, pop into the PETRA office.

Andy's your man

Local resident Andy is offering his services as a money-saving expert to fellow residents. Andy offers this service for free, and he comes recommended by several PETRA staff and committee members who have all benefited from his expertise!

Andy can help with:

- Gas/electric tariffs
- Car insurance
- Household contents insurance
- Mis-sold package bank accounts
- Water bills (for single or dual occupants)
- Computer problems

Appointments can be made in the PETRA office.

Think twice before double parking

Double parking causes problems - to the person you park behind or beside, as well as to passing traffic. We are lucky on this estate to have good provision for parking, so please do not double park anywhere on the estate. Thank you.

PETRA's Gripes & Swipes

Sadly, whenever we publish this newsletter we have to include incidents of inconsiderate and antisocial behaviour. But we would rather give more space to good news and positive stories. So, from now on we will try to confine our gripes and swipes to a few short, sharp bullets. And if any of them apply to you - PLEASE TAKE NOTE!

- **Cigarettes** - do not throw butts from balconies - it is dangerous
- **Chewing gum** - is litter. Please dispose of it accordingly, ie not on the pavement
- **Rubbish** - do not throw cardboard boxes and other bulky items down the chute; put them in the orange bins
- **Rubbish** - do not put unwrapped cat litter down the chute
- **Rubbish** - do not leave rubbish bags on landing. Dispose of them immediately
- **Dog mess** - walkers, carry poo bags at all times, and use the facilities provided
- **DIY** - please do your knocking and your banging between 8am and 8pm - because at all other times you are likely to be causing a disturbance



EASTER FUN

Thanks to everyone who helped make our (indoor!) Easter Egg Hunt such fun for all the kids. Special thanks to Charlotte, ex-manager Natasha's daughter, who, on paying us a visit, found herself taking on a very special role, much to the delight of the younger children.



Stay and Play

These workshops (left), led by Tina Peters from Havering College's Family Learning Team, have been going really well, showing once again how young parents (and their toddlers!) like nothing better than the chance to link up with others for a bit of mutual support, advice, encouragement - and fun.

The workshops take place in PETRA's concierge and involve craft activities and sometimes food as well. All our courses aim to be fun and are about spending quality time together.

Further sessions are planned and all parents of toddlers are welcome to come along. Each session has a particular focus and here are the dates:

3 May - Fun and Play

10 May - Fun and Play

7 June - (and weekly thereafter for five weeks): Language and Numbers



Events

PETRA's regular Coffee Mornings and Afternoon Teas

- Wednesday 2 May
Afternoon Tea 1-3pm
- Wednesday 6 June
Coffee Morning 10-12
- Wednesday 4 July
Afternoon Tea 1-3pm
- Wednesday 1 August
Coffee Morning 10-12



Fathers Day activities - This will be in June. Watch noticeboards for details.

School holiday activities - The Social Committee will soon be making plans for these, so if you or your children have any bright ideas, please let us know.

Committee meetings

30 April, 7.30

21 May, 7.30

25 June, 7.30

Letterbox Lotto!

Every month we give away three gift vouchers worth £25 each to residents who go online and spot their door number on our home page.

Play Letterbox Lotto today!

**[www.Petratmo.
weebly.com](http://www.Petratmo.weebly.com)**

CONTACTS

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Website: www.havering.gov.uk

Out of Hours Emergency telephone number: 01708 756699

(We answer the PETRA office phone up until 5pm.)

Summer Special Sunday 15 July

To mark our 15th birthday, PETRA is busy organising another of our Fun Days on the green, so please note the date.

There will be donkey rides and DJs, hook-a-duck and a food stall, Soccer Shootout and even some visiting birds of prey. A local celebrity might pop in, and all the proceeds of the Tombola stall will go to CRY - Cardiac Rescue of The Young, a favourite charity of committee member Sue.

And as if that's not enough to whet your appetite, we will be unveiling PETRA's brand new ... MASCOT!

