

Our new neighbours (and their cars) are on their way

Did you see this recent news release from the Havering Council? It read:

A "topping-out" ceremony was held at the former Solar, Serena and Sunrise site in Hornchurch last week.

Topping out ceremonies are a time-honoured tradition that signify the successful completion of the structural phase of a project, marking the moment it reaches its highest point.



The Solar/Serena/Sunrise scheme... is part of a regeneration project being delivered by a joint venture between Havering Council and Wates Residential that covers 12 sites across our borough.

175 new properties will be provided for the over 55's, including new council rented homes, shared ownership homes and properties for sale, with new homes to be available for local residents from Summer 2023.

Meanwhile...

Traffic calming measures

Have still not been installed around our estate, and now it's not only the traffic that needs calming. For ages, estate manager Caroline has been lobbying for additional traffic calming measures to be installed to combat the increased traffic hazards brought on by the nearby construction site.

In her latest email to Havering officials, Caroline said, "I cannot believe something serious on a health and safety level is still outstanding. Can I have an update please, only I keep getting complaints from my residents. There has even been a few incidents where expletives have been exchanged and got very heated..."

The continued dithering from Havering is not only unfair on Caroline who has to field residents' frustrations, **it's dangerous**. Does someone have to get hurt, even killed, before we get the zebra crossing and speed humps needed?

As our wait continues, please pedestrians and drivers both, make sure you take extra care on the estate's entrance and exit routes, especially around the blind corner at the top.

Parking permits

These too are still 'on the table' and the subject of lengthy discussions between Caroline and Havering officials.

Caroline is lobbying for permission to bring in a company that would, for free, set and administer a simple parking permit system that would protect residents' parking rights.

Caroline has repeatedly pointed out that traffic volumes are only going to increase once the building construction is Completed. It is high time the council addressed this now urgent issue.

Letterbox Lotto!

Prize DOUBLES!

We've made a few changes to Letterbox Lotto, to encourage more of you to visit the website at least once a month.

Now, every month, we will give away one £50 shopping voucher to the lucky household whose number appears on the website...

But only if you spots your number on the website and report seeing it to the office.

**Play Letterbox Lotto today at www.petratmo.com.
[Weebly.com](http://www.petratmo.com)
Good luck!**



Remembering the Queen

The state funeral of Her Majesty the Queen was a memorable occasion.

We understand the event was watched by over six billion people worldwide, making it the largest viewing audience ever and around 60 percent of the entire world's population. Proof, if proof were needed, of the very great esteem in which she - and this dear old country of ours - was held.

Recalling the event is made all the more poignant when we remember that it was just a few months before that we were all celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, as the sun shone and we enjoyed one of those special occasions when the estate comes together for a party.

Queen Elizabeth, who served this country well for longer than most of us have been alive, can now rest in peace. May her successor, King Charles, do her, and us all, proud.

Regards, Caroline

Note from Sheila Slater

I wanted to say 'hi' as I am now officially Chair of PETRA TMO. I am looking forward to the coming years, I would welcome any suggestions or problems you may want me to look into. Please get in contact with me via the office and I will get back to you.

Best, Sheila

STAY
ALERT

CONTROL
THE VIRUS

SAVE
LIVES

Covid update

The government has removed remaining domestic restrictions in England. There are still steps you can take to reduce the risk of catching and spreading COVID-19:

- Get vaccinated
- Let fresh air in if meeting indoors, or meet outside
- Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces

For further advice and information on Coronavirus, visit the government's website at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Flu jab

Remember also to get your free flu vaccine.

The best time to get vaccinated is in the autumn, before the cold temperatures start. Find out more or speak to your local pharmacy or GP. School-aged children will be offered the vaccine at school. The flu spreads from person to person – even amongst those not showing symptoms. The vaccine is the best protection for you and those around you.

The cost of living crisis

Roadshow

The Havering Community Team will be visiting our estate to provide cost of living advice to residents on all aspects of family and household expenses.

The team will be with us on **Thursday 3 November, between 2pm and 4pm**, in the Concierge opposite the office. No appointment needed - just pop in.

Energy crisis

The energy crisis shows no sign of letting up. The recently announced price caps are welcome, but the cost-of-living crisis affects many aspects of the typical household's daily expenditure, notably rents and mortgages, fuel, food, and so on.

While PETRA cannot control the cost of living unfortunately, we are there to help where we can. If anyone is worried about what the winter or indeed the future brings financially, then please come in and talk to us. We can help by doing budgeting with you, all the way through to helping you apply for financial help where it is available out there for you.

What help is available?

With so many schemes now in operation it's a bit of a maze, but worth exploring to see what support you are entitled to.

Energy Bill Discount

Way back in May, every household in council tax bands A-D received £150 for help with energy bills. There is a second sum of money being handed out this winter. It's different this time as every household across the country should be receiving this



regardless of your council tax bracket. It will not be paid directly to you or put onto your council tax bill like last time. This time each household will have £66 put onto their energy account at the beginning of each month between October 2022 - March 2023.

If you currently pay monthly via direct debit for your energy bills, your direct debit amount will be reduced in each of these months. For example, if you pay £100 direct debit every month what should be debited from your bank account to the energy company should be £34. And this will still put £100 of credit onto your account.

If you have a key/card meter in your property and pay on standing order/regular debit credit set up for the meter then the amount will be automatically credited onto your account similar to a direct debit payment.

If any residents have top-up devices (Card or Key) meters (pay as you go), then the discount should be available on the first week of every month. The discount should automatically happen, either by way of having the money credited to your account when you go to top-up as normal, or you may receive vouchers from your energy supplier direct to allow you to pay for the top-up rather than the cash or card payment that you would normally make.

These payments will be made via your energy companies and onto your electricity accounts only. If you haven't received the discount by the middle of the month, I would advise getting in touch with your electricity supplier asap. Regardless of how the payment gets to you, that if your account is in debt then the debt will be taken off of the discount you will receive and the rest attributed to your account.

Cost of living payments

Households on any means-tested benefits (benefits which you have had to provide Regular evidence for) ie job seekers, ESA,

income supports, tax credits, etc. This should have been made in two lump sums. The second payment should be approximately £300 and should arrive into the same account you receive your benefits in and should be paid to you by the end of September.

Disability cost of living payment

This payment is primarily aimed at those who get Disability Living Allowance (for either adults and children), PiP or War, or armed forces pensions. You must have been claiming one of the above benefits prior to 25th May 2022 to qualify.

By the time this publication comes out you should have already received up to £150 extra around the 20th September up to the beginning of October. If you haven't received this payment but qualify as above, then you can report this on the Havering or Government websites under the title, 'Disability cost of living payment missed'.

Winter fuel payments

Winter fuel payments aren't changing this year as far as we can tell. The criteria for winter fuel payments are if you receive a state pension usually or have extenuating circumstances. So if you usually receive annual winter fuel payments this year should be no different.

However, if you are entering pensions age this year it may be worth checking with your supplier that you are going to receive it - they may not be aware that you have reached state pension age.

If you have not received confirmation by letter or the funds by 13th January 2023, then get in touch with the winter fuel payment centre on 0800 7310160.

Pensioner cost of living payment

If you are entitled to a winter fuel payment you should also receive a 'pensioner cost of living payment' of up to £300 included with your winter fuel payments. This should also

be paid in November. This should be automatically applied if you were born between 1942 and the 25th September 1956.

Again, if you haven't received your winter fuel payment or the extra pensioner cost of living payment by the start of December, contact your energy supplier, or ask us for assistance, or call the winter fuel payment centre number listed above.

Cold weather payments

Should the temperatures this winter drop below 0 degrees for a period of 7 days or more every resident will be eligible for extra top up money approximately £25.

Warm home discount

This discount isn't a government scheme, more an energy supplier scheme. Primarily for those on a low income or pension credits, you can apply to your energy supplier for an additional credit on your energy bills.

Best way to see if you are entitled to this would be to look on your energy suppliers' websites. While some may receive this automatically some may have to apply through their suppliers individually. Not all suppliers offer this scheme, but it's worth checking. If yours does, it should not affect the other payments you receive.

Rent-free weeks

The council has four rent-free weeks per year. The latest one was at the end of August, to ease pressure around the back-to-school time when families are put under extra financial burden buying new uniform etc. The next rent-free week will be Monday 26th December 2022, another expensive time of the year, so this rent-free week will be welcome.

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



Events

News in brief

Lifts update

The lifts replacement project continues to make good progress. The latest estimate is that the works will be completed on time, by the end of the year.

The new lifts are a great improvement on the old, which makes it especially disappointing to see that some residents (a small minority) continue to treat them as dustbins, to be littered and even spat in. Some people deserve to live in a pig sty, but most of our residents deserve better than to have to live alongside these people.

If you witness anti-social behaviour of this kind - or of any kind - please report it to the office.

Numbers please



People change their phones more frequently than they used to. Please make sure PETRA has your up-to-date contact details at all times -

phone and email. Tenants and leaseholders ought to comply with this, for none of us know when an emergency may occur.

The intercom systems of Overstrand and Parkview residents makes it especially important for us to have your numbers. Parcels go missing when residents are not in. With your number, we can intercept these parcels and take delivery of them.



Do you know someone who lives with Dementia? Learn more about Dementia and how to support your loved ones with dedicated training in three one-hour monthly sessions beginning on 4 th October.

The sessions run from 1pm to 2pm on the first Tuesday of each month and will be held at Harold Hill Community Hub, Harold Hill Library, 19A Farnham Road.

Committee meetings

- Monday 31 October, 6.30pm
- Monday 28 November, (AGM), 6.30pm

Christmas arrangements

The office will close at midday on Friday 23 December, and will re-open on Tuesday 3 January 2023. As usual, there will be cover during this period, and the guys will continue to deal with rubbish over the holiday.

CONTACTS

PETRA

Opening Hours: 7.30am - 1600pm
(Closed 12pm - 13.00 for lunch)
Sheila Slater, Interim Chair
Caroline Edwards, Estate Manager
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Tim O'Shea, Part-Time Repairs and Maintenance Officer

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