

Never again

PETRA News

Parkhill Estate Tenants &
Residents Association

Number 156, July 2017

What happened at Grenfell Tower shocked us all. Naturally, social housing residents across the country felt a special affinity with the residents there. Now the various investigations and inquiries must uncover exactly what went wrong, and lessons must be learnt.

Here at PETRA, all of us - residents, committee members and staff - must respond to this worst of all possible 'wake-up calls', to make sure our homes are safe, our residents protected.

The day after the fire, the Council were in touch with us to check a few things. A scheduled fire safety inspection soon followed, conducted by a specialist firm called Lexicon. Their report has been sent to the Council and, though we haven't had sight of it as yet, we have been

assured that they found no cause for concern whatsoever at PETRA.

Since the tragedy, the London Fire Service has also been in touch and they will be carrying out one of their regular reviews of the estate later this year. They undertake these reviews to make sure they are familiar with estates like ours, their layout and features.

It won't happen here

We can be confident that a fire of the kind that hit Grenfell Tower will not happen here. Our towers are only 12 storeys tall with good access for emergency vehicles. Our towers are not covered in cladding. We have smoke alarms, fire doors and concrete partition walls in every flat. Last but not least, the estate is run by an on-site TMO, answerable to a committee of residents and therefore alert to issues whenever they are raised (see Jan's piece on page 2).



To do list

We should not be complacent. There are things we can all do to help keep our estate safe.

Playrooms: These must be cleared of the following: cardboard and boxes; bubble wrap; bedding; wood; clothing; books; paint (gloss); cupboards, wardrobes, drawers; insulation, polystyrene.

Sheds: We have not previously applied the above rules to the basement sheds. However, we will now be reviewing this, so please take this opportunity to dispose of all similar

items and materials currently stored there.

Landings: Again, these should not be used as storage space. Prams, scooters, shoppers, plants and flowers should be kept inside your flat.

Balconies: People still drop fag ends from the balconies. As well as littering the grounds below, these butts are a serious fire risk. The wind can blow a fag end on to a balcony below. This recently happened at Trellick Tower, west London, causing a fire.

Candles and incense sticks: Never leave these burning unattended in your flat.

Smoke alarms: Please check your alarm regularly, to ensure it is in good working order.

Four bollards: Behind Parkview there are four bollards marking the end of the parking bay that circles behind Overstrand. Please do not park on the Parkview side of these bollards, as it blocks emergency vehicle access.

PETRA'S VISION

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



Rubbish!

When is a 'TMO' not a TMO?

I am sure you will all wish to join me in sending our heartfelt sympathies to the victims, their families, and all those affected by the Grenfell Tower tragedy. There is a box in the PETRA office for donations if you would like to contribute.

Following the fire, the tower's managing agent was repeatedly referred to as a 'TMO'. In fact, it is an ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation) which manages the whole of the housing stock for Kensington & Chelsea - and not just the estate that Grenfell Tower is part of. This is similar to the ALMO that Havering had a few years ago, before they realised that it was better to take the stock back in-house to run it more efficiently.

As a 'proper' TMO, PETRA is a small organisation running just our estate and with the wellbeing of all our residents as the driving force behind our vision and ethos. This allows us to get to know our residents better, to be on hand to assist with problems and repairs that arise, and to provide a much improved service to everyone through our small, but dedicated on-site staff team.

Common sense

Following the Grenfell tragedy, we are asking you all to be more conscious of fire risks and to follow the simple measures outlined here and in both

my letter and that of the Cabinet Member for Housing sent to you recently. This includes keeping communal areas clear of prams, bikes etc., not leaving rubbish on landings, removing any ornamental items from the landings and checking smoke alarms on a regular basis.

Would you also ensure that parking is only in the designated areas as fire engines did experience problems last week in getting close to dry risers which are vital if a fire occurs on the upper floors.

Fire safety is 99.9% common sense so please let's keep ourselves and our neighbours as safe as possible!



Colin's bench

Friends and neighbours gathered together recently for unveiling of the plaque commemorating our late friend, PETRA volunteer Colin Roast, who died just under a year ago.

As I said to those attending, we thought a green park bench here in the heart of our community, backed by evergreen foliage would be a fitting memorial to a man who gave so much of himself in order to help this community grow.



Believe it or not, we hate moaning here at PETRA - but not as much as we hate clearing up after thoughtless residents have, once again, failed to dispose of their rubbish properly!

Rubbish comes in all shapes, sizes and material. We need to dispose of ours Responsibly, and that's why we have chutes, orange bins, bottle banks, paper containers, textile containers and green containers dotted around the estate.

It's not complicated, but there are some simple rules you need to follow.

So, if you're not sure what goes where, look at our Guide to Rubbish and Recycling on our website at www.petratmo.weebly.com - or else ask Brad, Micky or any of us in the office.

Thank you for playing your part in keeping our estate clean and tidy.

News in brief

Washing line

Can residents please ensure that when drying clothes on the balcony they are kept below the line of the balcony wall.

Fag ends

When not dropping them from balconies (see fire risks), some residents do the next worst thing - leaving them on the balcony floor, where they get washed down the drain. This eventually results in blocked drains and/or the littering of the basement. Please dispose of your fag ends responsibly.

Summertime... and the livin' is easy

It can also be noisy. So please be considerate when playing your music or watching the telly late at night with windows and balcony doors open. Your neighbours won't want to be disturbed.

Lifts

We apologise for the recent problems with the lifts. Engineers are working to resolve these issues as soon as possible.

Moped crime

This is now a major problem affecting many neighbourhoods, involving all kinds of crime. If you see any such activity on or around the estate please report it *immediately* to either:

- the 101 number
- Crime-stoppers on 0800 555111
- or the PETRA office.





Events

Wildlife on the doorstep

What a wonderful sight! Have you seen them? Sparrowhawks have been nesting in a tree on the park-side perimeter of the estate.



These small birds of prey like hunting in confined spaces like dense woodland, so gardens and parkland are ideal hunting grounds for them. Adult male sparrowhawks have bluish-grey back and wings and orangey-brown bars on their chest and belly. Females and young birds have brown back and

wings, and brown bars underneath. They all have bright yellow or orange eyes, long, yellow legs and long talons. Females are larger than males, as with most birds of prey.

We always say ours is the loveliest estate in Havering - it seems we're not the only residents to think so!

Committee meetings

31 July

21 August - brought forward one week due to bank holiday

25 Sept - AGM

PETRA's regular Coffee morning

The first Wednesday of each month, 11-1pm, in the Concierge.

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

CONTACTS

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THERE'S A GUY WORKS DOWN QUEEN'S THEATRE SWEARS HE'S ELVIS

Later this month the hit show 'The Elvis Years' is coming to the Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, and a party from PETRA will be there, getting 'all shook up'. Just one example of the great things we get up to thanks to PETRA's social activities team.

Members of the team will be paying you a visit in the next week or two, bringing a short questionnaire with them.

We want to find out what activities and trips would interest you and your children over the summer holiday and beyond. Please let us have your views.

PS: The PETRA Committee has just agreed to buy a marquee. Now all we need are some events to hold under it!

