

Ballot marks PETRA's 20th anniversary

PETRA News

Parkhill Estate Tenants &
Residents Association

Number 180 July 2023

As part of our management agreement with Havering Council, PETRA is required to hold a secret ballot every five years, to ask our residents - tenants and leaseholders - if you want PETRA to continue to manage the estate, or if you want to go back to having it Council-run. This is our fourth 'Continuation Ballot'.

We want you to vote for PETRA. Of course we do! We believe that when an estate is run by an efficient and responsible tenant management organisation like ours, that estate is better cared for and its residents more empowered. We also think it gives our community its best chance to flourish.

But I hear you thinking, "Well, they would say that". And so, we've asked residents what they think.

"The Parkhill Estate is one of the cleanest in Havering. It's a pleasure to live here. Thanks to PETRA for keeping the estate so clean and tidy. The people on the estate are mostly pleasant and friendly. I have lived here for 20 years now and have a great feeling of acceptance by both residents and Committee."

Jack Humphries

"I've lived here over 30 years, the last 17 as a leaseholder, and I've seen the estate get better and better with PETRA. They have achieved a lot and I want them to go on making improvements on our behalf. With PETRA, you know they are close by, and you feel they are on your side."

Paula



How does PETRA work?

PETRA is a democratic organisation run by a Committee of residents and accountable to all its residents.

By being on site, we are better able to understand your needs and wishes, and we are quicker to respond to them. By being careful with our funds, we are able to spend our surplus each year on projects to improve the estate (ground maintenance, social activities, upkeep of communal areas, to name a few).



What does PETRA achieve?

Here are some of the recent actions we have taken in response to residents wishes:

- In response to security concerns, we enhanced the CCTV coverage.
- By moving the bins, we were able to create improved parking facilities.

- Many residents ask us for advice on benefits, form-filling and the like - office manager Caroline has helped dozens of residents in this way.
- Covid has changed things, but we continue to look for ways to bring the community together by organising social events such as our planned Family Fun Day this September

- When emergencies occur and residents need help (remember the lifts breaking down, the power cuts), PETRA staff and Committee members have been the first to react.

- We have liaised with the Council on major works such as the replacement of the lifts and windows, ensuring maximum information and minimal disruption is provided to residents.

- PETRA fights tirelessly on behalf of residents to make sure the Council fulfils its responsibilities - for example, lobbying to have the leakage problems with the new windows properly addressed.

- PETRA's grounds remain among the best kept in the borough, thanks to our staff members, providing a green and pleasant environment for all our residents, especially young families.

- As we've watched the 'Park Rise' estate being built, it has been PETRA office manager Caroline Edwards who has worked hard to represent the interests of our residents. Caroline has demanded that our residents are kept informed, and safe, during this disruptive period. She has sought to establish the protection our residents' parking rights before 175 new households arrive on our doorstep (see page 2).

Caroline's

viewpoint

Parking permit success story

I'm delighted to say that I have managed to secure parking permits for the estate.

I recently met with the new Assistant Director of Housing who has given me the go-ahead to implement the scheme that I proposed some time ago.

This new parking permit scheme will be implemented some time after October of this year, providing PETRA secures your support to continue in operation at the forthcoming Continuation Ballot.

We would be unable to enter into this contract before we have been granted permission by residents to continue in operation.

This is a major success, showing what can be done when an estate is managed 'close to home' by a team that understands the issues and pressures that affect residents.

It means that when the new neighbours arrive, the parking facilities on our estate should not be badly affected, with our residents have priority over available spaces.

I shall update you all with further details in our next newsletter, but meanwhile, please remember to vote in the forthcoming Continuation Ballot.

Regards, Caroline

Continuation Ballot - Timeline

- **July** - Ballot papers will be delivered to all flats
- **July and early August** - Voting will take place. The ballot box will be in the PETRA office. Residents can come in during office hours to vote, or post your ballot paper through the PETRA letterbox.
- If you are unable to come to the office, please call PETRA to arrange for a member of staff to collect your vote.
- **17 August, 3pm** - Council officers will be in attendance at PETRA to conduct the count.
- **The result** will be announced at that evening's Committee meeting, before being posted on the estate notice boards.

Of the votes cast, if the majority vote for PETRA to continue to manage the estate, that is what we will do.

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, the office will close, and the estate will revert to being run by the Council.

**Whatever your views,
please vote - the future of
the Parkhill Estate is in
your hands**

Long hot summer days

Summer is here and we hope you are enjoying it. Please remember to stay safe and please keep an eye out for your vulnerable friends and family.



Older people who live alone, and people with underlying health conditions are at greater risk in spells of hot weather.

The main risks posed by a heatwave are:

- dehydration (not having enough water)
- overheating, which can make symptoms worse for people who already have problems with their heart or breathing
- heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

There's more information on how to stay well during hot weather on the NHS website.

Also, please remember that BBQs are not permitted on the estate, and yes, that does include your balconies. We don't need to spell out the reasons why, though experience tells us it's a good idea to remind residents of these rules from time to time.

Havering £ Helps

School Holiday Meal Scheme for Summer

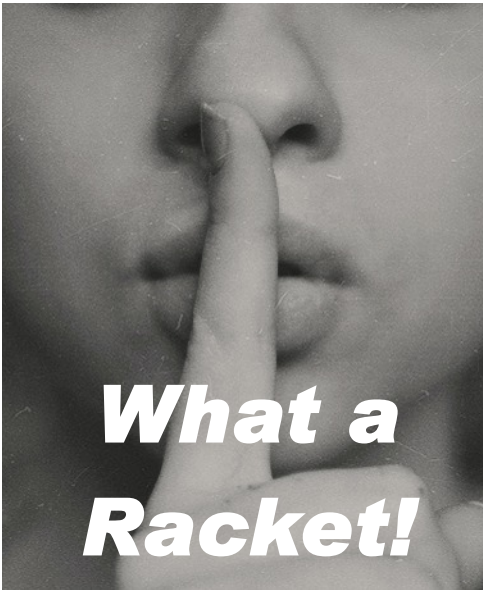
Eligible families can receive £90 per child for meal support over the summer school holidays as part of the Household Support Fund.

More info:
www.havering.gov.uk/mealsupport



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

For your safety



What a Racket!

Noise nuisance is one of the most common complaints received by housing providers.

We've all been there. Neighbours playing what they consider good music far too loud and far too late into the night. Or the handyman next door embarking on another DIY project at some ungodly hour. Dogs barking endlessly, the list goes on.

So what is too much noise?

You should keep any form of noise to a minimum between the hours of 11pm and 7am. While we and the Council won't usually investigate household noise made during daytime, it's still important you are extra considerate at all times of the day.

Also, we ask you to be patient and tolerant of your neighbours where possible. They're probably not being loud on purpose. It can often be hard to tell if you're making too much noise and if your neighbours can hear you.

Talk to your neighbour

If you're having a party or planning on doing any loud DIY work in your home, you might want to let your neighbours know in advance.

They will appreciate you letting them know. Perhaps an amicable arrangement can be agreed around the timings of these events. Or you could pop a note under the door or give them a heads-up over the phone if you've exchanged numbers.

Practical solutions

If you have speakers in your home, make sure they aren't resting against a wall or placed directly on the floor. You might not have your speakers set to a high volume or bass setting, but the vibrations can easily run through these surfaces and disturb your neighbour.

When moving around your home, especially at night, be aware of your footsteps and try to tread lightly if you can.

Could you use handles to close doors, instead of slamming them shut? Not only does slamming damage the door, it can also give your neighbours an unpleasant shock.

If you have them, place rugs in the parts of your home that you walk around the most during the night.

It's amazing what a rug can do to dull the sound of your movements, helping keep unnecessary noise to a minimum and saving your neighbours from a sleepless night.

If you need to report a noise issue

You should always try and speak to your neighbour before reporting any noise nuisance to us. Most of time, your neighbours have no idea they're disturbing you.

If talking with your neighbour (via phone, note under the door or from a distance) doesn't work, visit the PETRA office. There's also guidance on how to report a noise issue on Havering's website, including guidance on what they will and won't investigate as antisocial behaviour.

Following the Grenfell tragedy, social housing providers now put much greater emphasis on fire safety.

The changing of **communal doors and everyone's front doors** are part of these changes. So too is the need for residents to keep the **play/store rooms** clear of clutter and combustible materials.

Please remove your property from these rooms if they fall into either of these categories.

Finally, some residents have begun leaving clutter and oversized pieces of rubbish in the **chute rooms**. Presumably for somebody else to dispose of. Please do not leave your rubbish there. If not appropriate for putting *in* the chute, dispose of the rubbish in the appropriate bins outside, as follows:

Know your bins

PETRA Repairs and Grounds Maintenance Officer Bradley has a message for all residents: **"Please remember that the orange bins are for recycling only."** That means:

Yes Please! - Clean

- Cans
- Long life cartons
- Foil
- Paper / card
- Plastic bottles
- Plastic food tubs / pots
- Bottle tops
- Microwave meal trays
- Cardboard boxes (flattened and folded into the bin)

No Thanks!

- Food
- Garden waste
- Glass
- Polystyrene
- Nappies
- Batteries, Toys

Letterbox Lotto!

Prize **DOUBLES!**

Every month, we give away one £50 shopping voucher to the lucky household whose number appears on the website?!

Spot your number on the website and report seeing it to the office to gain your prize.

Play Letterbox Lotto today at
www.petratmo.weebly.com
Good luck!

Events

Council seeks views of young people



Across the borough, secondary school students are being asked their views on what matters to them about their wellbeing.

The #BeeWell wellbeing census has already been completed by over 1400 young people. The results will be available in the autumn and in the meantime the Council is looking to set up a Havering Youth Wellbeing Steering Group to carry this work forward.

They are looking for young people between the ages of 14 and 18 who live and go to school in Havering to join the group.

The Havering Youth Wellbeing Steering Group will look at the results of the census from across the borough, agree together what the priorities are, and help decide on projects and activities to make improvements.

All participants will also receive a £10 Amazon voucher for each meeting they attend as a 'thank you' for their time.

The first four meetings take place on:

- Wednesday 2 August, 5pm-6.30pm
- Wed 13 September, 5pm-6.30pm
- Wed 4 October, 5pm-6.30pm
- Wed 25 October, 5pm-6.30pm

All meetings will be held on MS Teams. The first meeting in August will be an introduction meeting to give members of the group a chance to get to know each other and we will start looking at and discussing the census results in September.

If you are interested in taking part, please email myplace@havering.gov.uk to let them know. Ideally they would like everyone to attend all the sessions, but if you know there is a date you can't make that should be ok.



We are sorry to say that residents will no longer be able to use the office as a designated storage and collection point for their deliveries, and will have to make alternative arrangements.

We offered this service during Covid, but rather than gratitude we have received complaints from some - those who seem to think they should have access to the office 24/7. This is unreasonable and the reason why we have, regrettably, had to bring this arrangement to an end.

Family Fun Day

- Sunday 10 September

Committee meetings

- Monday 31 July
 - Monday 25 September
- All at 6.30pm

CONTACTS

PETRA

Opening Hours: 7.30am - 1600pm
(Closed 12pm - 13.00 for lunch)

Sheila Slater, Chair

Caroline Edwards, Estate Manager

Bradley Pavey, Repairs and

Grounds Maintenance Officer

Tim O'Shea, Part-Time Repairs and Maintenance Officer

All based at the PETRA office

Tel: 01708 475358

Email: petratmo@aol.com

www.petratmo.weebly.com

Homes and Housing,
Havering Council. Tel: 01708 434000

Email: homes@havering.gov.uk

Website: www.havering.gov.uk

Out of Hours Emergency telephone

number: 01708 756699

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