

Jan leads the way

PETRA News

Parkhill Estate Tenants and Residents Association

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At our recent AGM, four talented women were elected to take PETRA forward

Monday 28th September was important for another reason: it marked the end of Mike Davis's tenure as PETRA's chairman, as both a new committee and chair were elected to take our organisation and community forward.

In his final report as chair, Mike thanked staff and residents for their support, spoke about the challenges PETRA faces, proposed a campaign to increase the number of shareholder residents on the estate, and expressed confidence in the ability of the organisation to survive and flourish. He also – to everyone's relief – agreed to stay on as an ordinary committee member for another year.

Everyone joined together to thank and congratulate Mike on all he had achieved. There was also a hearty welcome for his

successor – his wife, and long-term committee member, Jan Davis – who was elected unanimously.

Parkview resident and former Councillor Jan was sporting a sling at the meeting, having broken her wrist in a fall days earlier. But these things don't hinder Jan, and her commitment, organisational skills and knowledge of local government and social housing mean that PETRA will continue to enjoy excellent leadership.

Among the other committee members elected for the first time were Sheila Slater (Vice Chair), Amber Barry (Secretary), and Anna Duffy (Treasurer). Of course, women have long played an important role in PETRA's success, but isn't it refreshing to see PETRA women now leading from the front. Good luck to them and all their colleagues on the committee.



Share in the journey

At the AGM, one of Mike's last proposals as Chair was to suggest we push to recruit more resident shareholders. At present 125 residents are shareholders. Ideally, there should be at least one per household.

PETRA shares won't make you rich, but they do show you care



PETRA shares cost just 10p to buy (from the office) and their value never changes. Of course, their true value lies in what they symbolise: your support for PETRA.

Shareholders are free to attend and speak at committee meetings, although formal voting rights are restricted to committee members.

Mike has suggested that shareholder recruitment officers be appointed, to encourage residents who have yet to join up.

If you would like to help us with our shareholder drive, or if you would like to purchase a share yourself, please visit the office today.

Jan's SOAPBOX

Onwards & upwards

Meet the team

At our recent AGM, I was honoured to be nominated and elected as your new Chair. Filling Mike's boots will not be easy – I know his boots! – but with the support of my very able colleagues on the committee, our staff and, I hope, our residents, I'm sure I'll manage.

These are challenging times for PETRA, as they are for all TMOs. We still await the outcome of the Council's latest review of spending, from which our new management agreement should emerge. What we are sure of is that there will be successive cuts to our grant over the next few years as the Council seeks to save at least an extra £3.5m from their housing budget.

Similarly, we are still waiting for the Council's review of their sheltered housing policy, which will determine whether or not we can take on some management responsibility for neighbouring Sunrise, Solar and Serena Courts.

These delays are frustrating, but it is worth saying that the Council too is under huge pressure, with central government demanding it makes cuts across the board.

In terms of immediate goals, I want to secure a service level agreement that will allow us to take over the cleaning of communal areas inside the blocks. I believe we could make a much better job of this than the Council seem able to do.

Where possible, we will also be looking to improve the estate in other ways, by extending CCTV coverage, redecorating the communal areas, improving signage, and examining traffic calming measures with our colleagues in the Council.

In the meantime, may I welcome all the new members of our committee, and thank those who have agreed to continue to serve. You are PETRA's future, and the future's looking bright!

Best wishes,
Jan Davis
Chairwoman



Below, **Bradley Pavey** and **Peter Bowman** model our new staff tops, chosen by PETRA style guru, Caroline. Peter, a long-time resident of Overstrand, began working with PETRA as a volunteer, helping Colin in the top garden. He also helps Bradley and Jim around the estate and is now employed by PETRA on a part-time basis.



Menswear fashion special
Maintenance chic

Do the right thing

“Consideration: To think carefully about. To bear in mind. To have regard for. To be thoughtful towards other people.”

Look at these definitions. Consideration for others is sometimes thought of as simple politeness – remembering your Ps and Qs. But it means more than that. It is, in fact, one of the basic building blocks of any civilised community.

That’s why we teach consideration for others to children at school. And that’s why we have to go on (and on) reminding recalcitrant adults about it, often till they are long in the tooth, in the hope that eventually even they see the sense in it.

The American writer Bill Bryson thought consideration for others was one of the qualities that made Britain and its people special. However, in his latest book he worries that this distinction is slipping and that we are becoming a more selfish, inconsiderate people.

The polar opposite of consideration for others is thought to be selfishness. And yet, if all of us were considerate of others all of the time, we would all benefit. Life in general would be so much nicer! What’s not to like about that?

Here on the estate we see numerous examples of the kind of behaviour that worries Bill Bryant and – more importantly – our many considerate residents. If you are responsible for some of the behaviour outlined below, please, in future, try a bit harder to do the right thing.

Litter in the basement

Some people continue to litter the ground surrounding the tower blocks. Incredibly, these include some of our own residents – people who live here! For example, the car owners who think that it’s ok to sweep the rubbish out of their vehicles – crisp packets, tissues, cigarette butts and all the rest of it – only to leave it where it falls! Often within yards of one of our bins!

Cycling indoors

Some people – including adults – seem to think that it’s ok to ride their bikes inside the tower blocks. It’s not. As well as being a danger to other residents, this marks and damages the laminated flooring. Please stop it.

Inappropriate renovation

Laminated floors are not permitted inside the flats, except for those situated on the ground floor. There is a very good reason for this, as anyone who has lived immediately below this kind of floor will tell you. Please respect this rule.

Butts dropped from balconies

As reported before, some continue to think that it’s ok to drop their cigarette butts from their balconies. These butts fall as litter onto communal areas, or else get blown, still alight, onto balconies below, creating a fire hazard. Please, wherever you are, dispose of your rubbish, including cigarette butts, responsibly.

Smoking in communal areas

We continue to get reports of people smoking in the communal areas of the three blocks – ie, the stairwells and lobbies. Please don’t. It is illegal and perpetrators will be prosecuted.

If you see something

If you see illegal or anti-social behaviour happening on the estate, please call 101, the non-emergency police number. Your call will be recorded and patrol officers alerted. Alternatively, report the incident to Caroline in the office. Caroline is on the local police panel, and will be able to bring the matter to their attention.

The Fairy Elephant

By Jan Davis

**There I am, in my bed
All warm and snug and cosy
When at 5.15 it has to be said
My world is anything but rosy**

**The rhythmic pounding of your feet
Waken me with a puzzled start
I lay and wonder under my sheet
Does this person even have a heart?**

**To work, yes I know you have to go
Truly, I applaud your work ethic
But give a thought as I toss to and fro
I don’t find your noise... aesthetic.**



Firework Night

As the big night approaches, please be aware that the setting off of fireworks on the estate is not permitted. Details of local displays, including the Firework Spectacular at Romford and Gidea Park Rugby Club, can be found on the Havering Council website.

Events

Fun Day photos

On our July Fun Day the weather was rubbish, but we had a good time anyway. Thanks to everyone who helped make it happen, and here's looking forward to the next one! To see more photos from the day, visit the website



Tea party

In September, PETRA hosted a successful tea party for Macmillan Cancer Care, raising just under £200. The event was organised by Jan Davis and Lesley Marsh with delicious cakes coming from our very own master bakers, Jan and Colin Roast.

Saying goodbye

We are sad to report the deaths this summer of two long-time residents and friends, Joyce Luck and Alf Foster.

Joyce's husband, Bob, helped set up our original residents association alongside Jan Davis back in the 1980s, and although she had moved to Southend in recent years, her family asked that the funeral take place here in Hornchurch, with the hearse setting out from the estate, the place she always regarded as home.

Caroline attended both Joyce and Alf's funerals on behalf of PETRA, and on both occasions was met with warmth and gratitude by the families.

Halloween workshop

Friday 30 October, from 4pm
Kids, join us, in the concierge, to make masks and carve pumpkins ready for the big day.

Christmas Market

We hope to organise a trip to one of the Christmas markets in early December. If you would be interested in joining us, please let Caroline know as soon as possible. Watch the notice boards for details in due course.

Cooking sessions

Jan is planning some cookery classes for near Christmas, focusing on making delicious presents for family and friends. Pop into the office to sign up for these classes, and watch the notice boards for details.

Open Evening

Friday 18 December
As usual, PETRA will host an open evening for residents on the eve of the Christmas break. Do join us for a drink and nibbles in celebration. Watch out for details.

Next committee meeting

Monday 26 October, 8pm, in the concierge
Monday 30 November, 8pm in the concierge
There will be no meeting in December.

Christmas opening hours

The PETRA office will be closed from 1pm on 24 December, opening again from Monday 4 January. Details of cover will be published nearer the time.

CONTACTS

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Homes and Housing,
Havering Council. Tel: 01708 434000
Email: homes@havering.gov.uk

Letterbox Lotto!

Every month, we give away three gift vouchers worth £20 each to residents who go online and spot their door number on our website home page. Play Letterbox Lotto today!

The numbers change every month, so keep checking!

www.petratmo.weebly.com