

BETRA News

Issue 37 December 2025

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The Where We Live Campaign

This new initiative from the Council is worth supporting. The idea is to encourage residents and community groups to work with the Council to make the borough a cleaner and safer place to be, and empower communities to take pride in 'Where We Live'.

The campaign includes highlighting safety and environmental initiatives, helping towards a safer borough and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. The plan includes community litter-picking events and groups, as well as encouraging residents to adopt 'grot-spots' - small patches of land that are overgrown and messy - to turn into pocket gardens.

We're lucky here at BETRA to have a dedicated team working to take care of the estate, but there's always more we could be doing as a community to make our little corner of Havering the best it can be.

To find out more and to get involved visit www.havering.gov.uk/wherewelive

Amy joins the team

A warm welcome to Amy who recently joined the BETRA maintenance team.



Christmas at BETRA

Havering Council offices will be CLOSED on 25th, 26th, December and 1st of January 2026.

The Emergency Call Centre can be reached on 01708 433 999 for emergencies.

The BETRA office will close from Tuesday 23rd December at 12:00.

Wednesday 24th December - CLOSED

Thursday 25th December - CLOSED

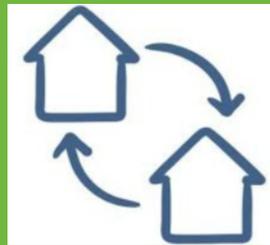
Friday 26th December - CLOSED

Wednesday 31st December - CLOSED

Thursday 1st January - CLOSED

Friday 2nd January 2026 - All staff to return to work normal hours. (Office from 9am)

Home swap?



There are several ways to research the idea of a home swap. You can contact people on specially dedicated Facebook groups, and there is also the website: www.homeswapper.co.uk

If you are interested in trying for a home swap, but would like help to do so, please visit the BETRA office.





As another year draws to a close, I just want to thank BETRA's staff team and Board members for all their support over the last twelve months.

We have been busy as usual recently, working with Havering Council colleagues to undertake various works designed to improve the day-to-day lives of our residents. These projects have included:

- Guttering cleared and flushed through.
- Installation and maintenance of 23 CCTV cameras for the safety of our residents (BETRA funded)
- Lobby areas repainted in magnolia
- Communal doors replaced to offer more secure entrances around the estate
- Balconies painted on the outside and inside.
- Shed doors replaced and painted in blocks Ampthill, Angmering, Upton and Devizes
- Car park potholes filled in Cardigan House
- Additional lighting has been installed in alleyways
- Some alleyways have been resurfaced
- Some stolen bins have been replaced.

On a sad note, I have to report that we lost a beloved Kirkham House resident recently, and we would like to pass on our condolences to all the family.

Finally, as the festive seasons draws near, I'd like to wish everyone a...

**Merry Christmas
and a very Happy New Year**



Nicola



Winter Fuel Payments

Those able to claim these payments have been restricted in the recent years, but some of our residents may still be eligible.

To be entitled to the Winter Fuel Payment for 2025-26, you must have reached State Pension age by September 21, 2025, and your taxable income must be below £35,000 per Year.

For more information visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

Winter vaccinations

The NHS are reminding those eligible to get their free winter vaccinations and stay protected during the colder months.

For more information and to book your vaccinations, visit www.havering.gov.uk and search 'Covid-19 and flu vaccinations'.

Fly-tipping, rubbish and recycling

Fly tipping continues to be problem around the estate. It is illegal to dump rubbish, like furniture or rubble, on public and private land. If you witness fly tipping, please report it to the BETRA office or directly to the Council.



Here is a recent example of fly-tipping outside Cardigan House. CCTV footage will be provided to Havering and if caught the perpetrators will be prosecuted.

Scared of your partner or ex?
Talk to us any time, day or night.



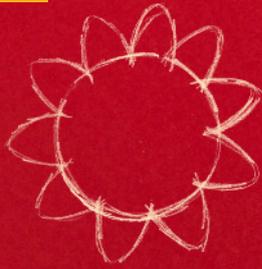
For residents own items, please reminder that Havering is no longer removes bulky items, white goods or large furniture from the BETRA estate. **For** any bulky item that need to be disposed of, you need to arrange for a collection online on the Havering website. Please use this link:

www.havering.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling/bulky-collections

If you prefer you can take items to the local Household Reuse and Recycling Centre at Gerpins Lane Recycling Centre, Gerpins Lane:
www.havering.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling/find-rubbish-recycling-sites - **Note this is chargeable**

With all the additional rubbish, Christmas always puts a strain on the estate's bins, so please remember to flatten large cardboard boxes and similar items of rubbish before disposing of them.

Finally, we have recently noticed on our CCTV footage that certain residents are going down the bins in our bin compounds and leaving rubbish on the floor, not in the bins. If that's you, please put your mess back into the bins where it belongs, otherwise action will be taken against your tenancy.



Anti-social behaviour

To report anti-social behaviour over Christmas, call 999 in an emergency, or 101 for non emergencies.

Alternatively, you can report it through your local police force's website, your local council's website, or directly to the BETRA office (see Christmas opening hours). For anonymous reports, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Affordable food over Christmas

Money-wise, this can be a difficult time of year for some families. The housing charity, Peabody, runs a Community Hub in Havering in collaboration with the council. People living in the area can drop in to use their affordable food pantry, as well as get free, confidential support with anything from budgeting to finding employment.

The Community Hub is located at: **Harold Hill Community Hub, Chippenham Road, Romford, RM3 8YF.**

If you find you're struggling, this Community Hub is well worth a visit.

Pets corner



A reminder that if you live in a ground floor property you are allowed two animals (a pet permission form needs to be completed in the BETRA office and we send this over to Havering). With any property above ground floor, you are only permitted to have one animal.

Clear the clutter

A reminder that all lobby areas are to be kept free of clutter. Items stored in lobby areas can potentially cause a trip hazard for any emergency services when trying to reach your property, and so are strictly prohibited.

With BETRA staff carrying out weekly checks of all communal areas, and Havering having made it clear that warnings will be issued against anyone leaving clutter outside their front door, now is the time to act.

You will receive a warning letter, and seven days later another visit to check the clutter has been removed. If not, your items will be taken away and, if not claimed within 28 days, disposed of. You could then face eviction - having your tenancy taken away from you.

Damp and mould

With winter here, a quick reminder of the ways in which you can help prevent condensation build-up and consequently mould growth in your home.

Check all the fans and vents you have in your home. If you have an electrical fan that isn't working or a vent that is blocked or not achieving its purpose, please let us know and we will have someone attend to repair as soon as possible.

When cooking, showering or bathing - anything that produces steam - keep the doors closed to that room. This will prevent steam escaping out to other areas of your property.

Where possible, move furniture away from walls by an inch or so to allow as much airflow behind it as

possible, avoid clutter, and ensure any devices such as washing machines, tumble driers etc have space behind them for airflow. The more air you can get flowing round your property the less chance you have of condensation building up and resulting in mould growth.

If you notice a build-up of condensation regularly, likely around windows and window reveals, try to wipe dry.

While we appreciate these measures may not always be possible, by doing what we can you may find mould growth is kept in check.

If such measures are insufficient, we will do all we can, as an organisation working alongside Havering Council colleagues to treat every report seriously and take the necessary actions to reduce and remove mould where we can.

Have a local issue or concern but not sure who to speak to?

Contact your **Ward Councillor** and ask them to look into the matter on your behalf.



www.havering.gov.uk/councillors



Events

Contact details and spare keys, please

Can residents please make sure the office has your most up-to-date **contact details** including your telephone numbers, email address and next of kin's details.

Raising and completing jobs around the estate - not to mention emergencies - requires us to have up-to-date contact details at all times. This saves time. On occasion, it may even save a life.

With the new fire doors in place, it is really important that you pass over a **spare key** to the BETRA office, to be used only in emergencies, or when you need us to open your door.

Failure to provide us with a spare key will mean that you will have to organise a lock smith to allow access into your flat in such an emergency. This will be expensive and you will have to pay the bill.



Kerry, Board Member



Lauren, Board Member

The BETRA Board

Our yearly Annual General Meeting was held in the BETRA office on Thursday 30th October 2025. All current board members voted to remain, and we'd like to thank Lloyd for chairing the meeting and many thanks to the Board for their continued support.

Meet some of the team



Jill, Chair



Charles, Treasurer



Emily, Secretary



David, Minute Taker

Next Board meeting

The next Board meeting will be on Thursday 15th January 2026 at 6:30pm, for Board members only.



BETRA

Jill, Chair
Nicola, Estate Manager
Hayley, Housing Officer
Mark, Senior Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer,
Steven, Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Amy, Caretaking and Repairs Maintenance Officer
Naomi, Bookkeeper

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