

# BITS & PIECES

SPRING 2020

THE **BITMO** NEWSLETTER FOR BELLE ISLE TENANTS & RESIDENTS

## PAULA LIPTROT: BOARD MEMBER, VOLUNTEER AND SCONE CHAMPION!

**Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO) was very fortunate to have Paula Liptrot as an inspirational Board member for many years. Sadly she passed away in December.**

A long standing supporter of BITMO, Paula always cared deeply about her community and lived a life full of service to others.

Twenty years ago, working with like-minded citizens of Belle Isle, Paula became a driving force in the establishment of an Estate Management Board for Belle Isle, which then became Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO).

Paula's achievements for the community in Belle Isle are numerous - both as an active member of the Board of Belle Isle TMO and also as an active member of the community. She cared passionately about people and wanted to do the best for them.

Tenant Management Organisations are a vehicle for local empowerment and Paula is a prime example of how an individual can help empower a community. She cared

passionately about the mission of BITMO to deliver a stronger safer community and a better life for all.

In October 2019 she was awarded an Inner South Leeds Community Hero Award by Leeds City Council.

And of course we have to mention Paula's scones! Paula provided refreshments for so many BITMO events and community activities that her baking skills are legendary... and if Marks & Spencer ever got hold of the recipes, well...



**Paula Liptrot (right) at the 2017 BITMO Gala event, with Cllr Jane Dowson, Lord Mayor of Leeds**



## FIVE YEAR PLAN

**Our Board's Vision is to deliver improvements in three key areas that will make a difference to the people who live in Belle Isle.**

- **Our Green Agenda**
- **Digital Skills**
- **Empowering the Community**

Our Green agenda is front and centre of our thinking and service delivery, and we will be focusing on energy efficiency in your homes by improving insulation and helping you deal with condensation. We are waging a war on plastic, printing and paper and getting serious about recycling. We are supporting a community garden run by Belleaf, and are planning a programme of copse planting in our unused green areas as well as exploring what moss panels can do for air quality in the area.

We are offering more basic IT skills courses in the GATE, whilst improving our own skills digital skills, so that we can help you to feel confident to get online and make use of digital services.

BITMO provides unique services in Leeds with a focus on tenant empowerment by providing a rich and diverse programme of activities in the GATE. If you'd like to find out more; get involved in a way that suits you; run a group, session or activity; access our services; or join in with our Green Agenda campaigns, call into the GATE to speak with a member of BITMOs staff or email [gate@belleislebitmo.co.uk](mailto:gate@belleislebitmo.co.uk)

Have you ever thought about becoming a Board Member? Getting involved in running BITMO will supercharge your CV, give you access to training, mentoring and professional HR advice and expertise. Plus of course you'll be investing in your community and shaping its future.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A HOUSING ESTATE MANAGEMENT OFFICER

**Housing Estate Management** is a busy and diverse area of work and is split into 3 areas: Anti-Social Behaviour, Environmental issues and Tenancy Support.

**8.30am** Get into the office to a complaint of ASB received overnight. This is a report of a further incident in a case I've been working on for a couple of weeks and I will need to contact the Police and Social Care to make them aware of developments and arrange to meet with them.

**9.15am** Appointment with a tenant accused of causing ASB. There has been reports of noise nuisance – playing loud music and arguing. I've gathered evidence, interviewed complainants and witnesses and now reached the stage when I have formally arranged to meet with the perpetrator to outline the complaints against them and hear their side of the story. I will be informing them that I require the nuisance to stop and be warning them that if they do not modify their behaviour they run the risk of escalating tenancy action and ultimately losing their home.

**10.00am** Catching up on updating our data base with latest developments on the matters I am dealing with, I have 11 ASB cases at the moment which means I'm gathering evidence from all parties involved. I need to review nuisance diaries, witness statements, noise recording equipment, police records and information from other agencies. All the complaints we deal with are potentially a breach of a tenant's Tenancy Agreement, so we need to consider what the most appropriate action we can take is – on the basis of the evidence we have.

I am also taking action on 3 cases where residents are not maintaining their gardens to the standard required – untidy gardens and not removing bulky waste take up a lot of time.

**11.15am** While I am reviewing my cases I take a phone call from a resident who is vulnerable and very upset about the smell of cannabis and the noise her neighbour's visitors are making. The customer is advised to contact West Yorkshire Police.

**12.00pm** We receive notification that resident who has been assaulted by her partner. I make contact straight away, I advise the resident to contact the Police immediately and arrange to meet with the resident later on today. This is a high priority case therefore I need to rearrange some of the work I had planned – some stats about DV?

**1.30pm** I quickly grab some lunch before a planned meeting with Managers.



### 2.00pm

Meeting to discuss how we can improve our service and involve residents in getting their perspective on how the service is delivered.

**3.00pm** Meeting with the victim of Domestic violence. I have provided the resident with contact details for Leeds Domestic Violence Service and made the relevant referral for support on their behalf.

**4.30pm** Meet with my Manager to discuss serving a Housing Caution on a resident who is persisting in causing ASB despite knowing exactly the problems they are causing. In this instance we have got robust evidence of continuing and serious ASB that is having a detrimental effect on immediate neighbours and the neighbourhood in general. Once the caution is served it will last for 12 months and if the behaviour continues the case will then be transferred to Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

Some of the complaints received will not be dealt with by Belle Isle TMO, they will be referred or escalated on to Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team. They deal with matters that require Notice of Intention to Seek Possession, injunctions, court orders and eviction. We work closely with Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team and meet with them regularly to share information and ways of working.

The situations we deal with as a Housing Estate Management Officer are sensitive and can be complex and in depth. Our aim is to be professional and approachable, and challenge anti-social behaviour and breaches of the tenancy agreement in our area in a direct manner. Belle Isle TMO's aim is to continually build a stronger, safer community and the work we do as Housing Estate Management Officer aims to deliver this message on a day to day basis in everything we do.

**5.00pm** It is a really rewarding role, and no two days are the same. That said, it's been a busy one and I'm happy to log off and leave for home.

**For information on how to report anti-social behaviour or any concerns about domestic abuse – see page 4**



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BITMOs GATE?

## Basic (really, really basic) Computer Classes!

Our new five-week basic computer course has been designed for real beginners wanting to learn how to explore the internet and send emails in a friendly group environment.

The course is held on Tuesdays from 1-2.30pm. Booking is essential as spaces are limited. Please contact 0113 3782190 or email [gate@belleislelmo.co.uk](mailto:gate@belleislelmo.co.uk)

**Engage Job Support** Need help with your CV or job searching? Engage Leeds are in BITMOs GATE every Thursday from 2-4pm. No appointment necessary.

## Knit And Natter or Crochet And Chatter!

A new group started in February and meets every Friday at 1pm. Our knitting and crocheting class is an opportunity for you to learn a new skill or practice if you haven't picked up a knitting or crocheting needle in a while!

Come along and make your square to add to our group's patchwork quilt.

## Gardening Day Thursday 5 March 12 – 3pm

Advice on maintaining and improving your garden, growing fruit and veg. Advice from experts and local gardeners. **Seed swap.**

Bring any seeds, plants or cuttings that you don't want and swap with other people

## Need help getting ready for work?

SCOPE will be running a two day a week help and training course on Tuesdays and Fridays in BITMOs GATE starting in March for 7 weeks.

If you have a physical impairment, mental health condition, sensory impairment, learning difficulties, or a long term health condition this could be the course for you.

SCOPE Pre-employment training will help you:

- Grow in confidence.
- Develop your interview skills.
- Find training, volunteering & employment opportunities.

To join, contact the GATE on 0113 3782190 or visit [www.scope.org.uk/starting-line](http://www.scope.org.uk/starting-line), you can also join by calling Sue on 07734 540763

## Time 4 A Cuppa Tuesday 3 March 12 – 2pm

Join us on Tuesday 3 March between 12pm to 2pm as we make 'Time 4 A Cuppa' and raise money for Dementia UK.

We'll have staff from Belle Isle Senior Action and Trinity Network here to answer questions about older people's support and activities available in Belle Isle, as well as the Fire Service who will be giving a safety talk from 1pm.

Donations of cake or money equally welcomed! Call 0113 3782190 to get involved.

**In the last newsletter we asked for your views about how BITMO communicates with you and how you can give BITMO your opinions. Thanks to the 36 people who replied. There was a lot of support for BITMO:**

- sending out text messages - please make sure that we have a correct mobile number so that we can text you
- posting on Facebook – like us @BelleIsleTMO
- keeping this newsletter going.

You want to give BITMO your information by: ■ Coming in to BITMO offices ■ Commenting on Facebook ad website articles

- Attending local meetings near you. A few people said the meetings arranged so children could be present.

## WHY NOT START SAVING FOR CHRISTMAS NOW WITH LEEDS CREDIT UNION?



Overspent this Christmas? How about saving throughout the year? Leeds Credit Union offers a Christmas Club account which allows you to save as much or as little as you like direct from your pay throughout the year for the festive season.

You can save anything from £1 and the Christmas Club account gives you that peace of mind that you will be saving all year round for a happy Christmas.

### Christmas Club account features:

- Save as much as you want from now until the end of October
- Minimum balance £1
- Save as much or as little as you like
- The money can be withdrawn from 1 November
- Target Dividend Rate 0.5%\*

To find out more or discuss loans or other accounts, Leeds Credit are at BITMOs GATE every Friday from 9.15 – 11.15am or you can visit their office in St George's Community Hub Monday – Friday 9am–2.30pm.

## HOW DO I REPORT ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

If you are a council tenant in the BITMO area you need to report the problem to BITMO. You can come in to the BITMO Office, phone us on 0113 3782188 (office hours) or email [bitmo.enquiries@belleisleltd.co.uk](mailto:bitmo.enquiries@belleisleltd.co.uk). If you are a private tenant you should report it to your landlord first. If you own your home you should report it directly to Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team. You can phone them on 0113 222 4402 Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm or email them at [LASBT@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:LASBT@leeds.gov.uk). Out of Hours Noise Nuisance response service on 0113 376 0337 from 6pm to 3.30am, 7 days a week.

### If you are worried about domestic abuse of any kind:

- Adult Social Care on 0113 222 4401
- Weekends, Bank Holidays and all other times contact the Emergency Duty Team on 0771 210 6378.
- Children's Social Care on 0113 222 4403.  
If your concern will not wait until the nextday contact the Children's Emergency Duty Team on 0113 5350600
- Behind Closed Doors works with women and men throughout the Leeds district whose lives have been, or are, affected by domestic violence and abuse. Women's Team: 0113 222 4202. Men's Team: 0113 222 4203

## BITMO OPENING TIMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

**We offer a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week service to report repairs. This can be done by phone to 0113 378 2188 or 0800 389 5503.**

You can e-mail us at [bitmo.enquiries@belleisleltd.co.uk](mailto:bitmo.enquiries@belleisleltd.co.uk)

You can also report a repair using the customer service portal on the Leeds City Council website.

Our repair service covers items of general wear and tear such as water leaks, sticking doors and windows and perished wall plaster. Our service does not cover blocked sinks or toilets, damage caused by our tenants or repairs to items installed by our tenants. Our customer service team will be able to advise you further on the repairs that we will do.

In the nine months between April 2019 to December 2019:

- 99.53% of repairs were completed within target time
- 99.86% were satisfied with the way we carried out their repair

**For out of hours repair emergencies call 0113 376 0499**

Our housing office is open at the following times:

Monday 9-5      Tuesday 9-5      Wednesday 9-1  
Thursday 9-5      Friday 9-4

If you have any issues with your rent account or Universal Credit, please call our Rents Team on 0113 378 2187.



@BITMO\_LS10



Belle Isle TMO