

BITS & PIECES

THE BITMO NEWSLETTER FOR BELLE ISLE TENANTS & RESIDENTS



SPRING 2021



BITMO NEEDS YOU

Could you help run Belle Isle?

Find out more about becoming a tenant board member

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Why we joined the BITMO



BITMO Chair Leon with Leader of the Council Judith Blake at the BITMO AGM.

What keeps you motivated and committed to volunteering?

I want to improve the area I live in. It really is as straight forward as that. I want Belle Isle to benefit from everything it's able to, and being part of the BITMO Board is a great way to make that happen and give back to the community I live in.

What would you say to someone who was unsure about getting involved?

You don't have to have all the answers. You don't have to be an expert- no one expects you to be- just be yourself and share your experiences of living in the area.

We appreciate that it might feel a bit nerve racking for new board members being part of a formal meeting, but our meetings are held in this structured way to make sure that everyone is given the opportunity to speak and share their opinion.

Come along to a board meeting, talk to board members, and consider the commitments. We know how valuable your time is.

Leon

Where did the journey to becoming Chair of BITMO begin?

My initial involvement started through my work- I'm a Trade Union Official- and was working as part of a project team for BITMO. When the project finished I wanted to continue being involved with the organisation so I was nominated to be a board member. After a while I became Treasurer, and from 2014 took up the Chair's position.

Right from the start I've been passionate about BITMO being a good employer as well as a good landlord, so I continue to use my experiences and knowledge from work alongside my experiences of living in Belle Isle.

Shaf

Why did you join the Board?

There were a couple of reasons. First because BITMO had supported me in the community gardening project I launched, Belleaf. BITMO supported me and the community and I wanted to give some of that support back. Secondly, I realised that working with BITMO staff, Board members and councillors I would learn a lot more and this would help with future projects. Joining in gives valuable insight and is the best way to help the community.

What support and training is there for new Board members?

BITMO staff and board members are very supportive.



Training is suspended for now because of Covid but there will be sessions dealing with all BITMO services from caretaking to human resources and health & safety.

Search Belle Isle TMO on Facebook



Board



What kind of changes are you hoping to bring to BITMO?

I have only been involved for a few months but I want to help promote a green agenda, I want to extend BITMO's work for people with debt and I'd like to help bring money in to benefit the community.

Why should other Belle Isle tenants join the Board?

If you want to have a say in shaping your community's future, you should definitely join! You get to meet new and interesting people and keep the good work going. If you

are not happy with something in your community, you can join the Board and help change things.

How can Board members get involved in the running of BITMO?

You can get as involved as you want to. There are regular meetings and you can volunteer to get involved with working parties. If it ever gets too much you can always take a break or step down. To have a chat about joining the Board, ring up or send a Facebook message and our staff will contact you.

Jean, Vice Chair of the Board

Why did you first get involved in BITMO?

I have been active in the community for a long time. I was a volunteer on the lunches for the WRVS and when I retired I got involved in Winter Aid. We formed the Brooms Group to represent the tenants in the Brooms area. We knew about the Estate Management Board that managed the North of the estate and got involved when there was the proposal for a TMO to run the whole of the estate. We spent about four years looking into it and setting it up, including going on visits to TMOs in other parts of the country.

What changes can you make as a Board member?

We get involved in all the big issues like setting the budget and discussing policy, but we can get involved in the detail as well. When the houses in the Brooms were being refurbished we could get changes made to benefit the tenants.

What kind of commitment is needed?

There are meetings every two months and you have to read the papers before the meeting and take part in the discussions. There is training and support for new members – you are not expected to know how the Board works straight away. But you can also get involved in groups and there are committees to plan the Gala and the Christmas parties. You need to listen to what people around the estate are saying and bring their views to the Board.



What benefits does Belle Isle get because of tenant management?

Housing Leeds have closed their housing receptions but at BITMO you can go in and talk to our staff. We have a team of caretakers who look after the estate. We fund the GATE community centre. These are just some of the benefits we get because we are run by tenants in a TMO.

Could you become a BITMO Board Member?



We are looking for tenants and non-tenants to join our Board of Management. Board membership is rewarding. It gives you a real stake in this community, develops your knowledge and skills and helps support a competitive CV. We offer comprehensive induction and training.

If you are a BITMO tenant and can offer energy, enthusiasm and your time then we would love to hear from you.

To give you a flavour of our operation, we currently have nearly 40 members of staff (plus a number of dynamic

volunteers helping run our normal operations); our annual revenue costs amount to some £3m to service our range of activities, including: lettings, repairs, tenancy services, rent collection and the GATE outreach programme (Getting Advice, Training and Employment); and we also manage the capital investment programme on the estate on behalf of Leeds City Council.

Contact Karen Hoole on 0113 378 2182

Email karen.hoole@belleisletmo.co.uk

Complete this form and return it to Karen Hoole, BITMO, Aberfield Gate, Belle Isle, Leeds, LS10 3QH.

Name:

Address:

Phone number:



Important Phone Numbers Cut out and keep

Report a repair call **0113 378 2188** or
0800 389 5503

Make a rent payment call **0113 378 2187**

Report anti-social behaviour call **0113 387 2188**

Report issues with bins and bin collections call
0113 222 4406 or download the Leeds Bins app

You can find out all the information you need about BITMO on our website:

- Repairs
- Rent
- Help & Support
- News from Belle Isle
- Information on BITMO's performance



Go to www.belleisletmo.co.uk or scan the QR code

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Belle Isle TMO