

BITS & PIECES

THE BITMO NEWSLETTER FOR BELLE ISLE TENANTS & RESIDENTS



March 2023

BITMO provides extra services — but sometimes the housing counter has to shut

BITMO is controlled by the tenants of Belle Isle. We are very proud of the extra services that we provide over and above those provided by many councils or housing associations. We have a caretaking team where often this is contracted out to private cleaning companies. We run the BITMOs GATE community centre along with our team of local volunteers. We offer a £70,000 a year BITMO Community Fund. We run a series of free food and activity events in school holidays as well as free tutoring for Year 3 and 4 pupils.

We have our repairs contractor Mears based in our offices next to our repairs team, not a remote site, which helps provide a co-ordinated repairs service.

We are also really proud to run a housing counter, open 30 hours a week, where you can walk in and talk to housing staff directly. Many other housing organisations offer a call centre only, or you have to go to a community hub where you can talk to general council staff who will pass a message to your housing for you.

But sometimes the housing counter has to close. BITMO is a small organisation and so when our staff are away from work – for example on leave, unwell or training – we can't always keep the housing counter open. At these times **we will always provide a full telephone service on 0113 378 2188**. If your call goes to voicemail – probably because our staff are taking other calls – please leave a message and we will call you back. You can also email us at bitmo.enquiries@belleisletmo.co.uk and you can report a repair online (see QR code below).

BITMO is run by Belle Isle tenants and is committed to building a stronger and safer Belle Isle.



BITMO's housing counter provides a face-to face service for Belle Isle tenants

Contact BITMO

The BITMO housing counter is open:

Monday 9-12 and 1-5
Tuesday 9-12 and 1-5
Wednesday 9-12
Thursday 9-12 and 1-5
Friday 9-12 and 1-4

Phone service on 0800 389 5503 or 0113 378 2188. Emergency out of hours 0113 376 0499.
Email bitmo.enquiries@belleisletmo.co.uk

BITMOs GATE community centre is open:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-1pm
Tuesday and Thursday 1pm—7pm.
and **Saturday 18 March** 10am-12pm

You can phone the Rents Team directly on 0113 378 2187.

For ways to report repairs you can use this QR code.



BITMO's Board Benefits Belle Isle

BITMO is run by a Board of elected Belle Isle tenants, with some co-opted members and two Leeds councillors. They meet regularly during the year to make decisions about the overall running of BITMO.

Here are some of the decisions made at the January meeting.

* The budget for the next year was agreed, with £200,000 taken from reserves to be spent on making homes cheaper to heat.

* Planned works – we will spend £1.9million improving homes in Belle Isle this year. The planned investment programme is drawn up using information from the stock condition data-base, repairs trends, local knowledge and customer requests. In the next 12 months we are going to replace 24 kitchens and 4 bathrooms, provide new roofs to 15 properties on Middleton Road, and we will carry out thermal efficiency work to 34 properties on Windmill Road. Where tenants have large rent arrears or other tenancy breaches, the work will not be carried out until they have been resolved.

BITMO Community Fund

BITMO'S Board has set up a fund to support people in Belle Isle. You can apply for funds for:

- * Essential furniture or decorations you can't afford
- * Help with the costs of training or education courses
- * Funds to improve green spaces or run community groups.

To find out more ask the staff in BITMOs GATE or call them on 0113 378 2190 or call, text or WhatsApp Tracey on 07891 270094.

Please scan the QR code for more information from our website, including an online application form.



Board members representing Belle Isle at a national conference

There will not be a Belle Isle Gala this year. Although it is a popular event, the Board decided to put events across the school holidays offering free food and activities for Belle Isle families. There will be a Belle Isle Gala in summer 2024 though.

Funding was agreed for

- * A Leeds Little Library for East Grange Drive.
- * A contribution to the costs of the toilet on Whitehouse Farm Allotments on East Grange Drive
- * Support for the foodbank at Manorfield Hall
- * Funding for the Tuesday evening sports sessions at the West Grange MUGA

Could you be a BITMO Board member? If you are interested, please give Peter Olver a call on 0113 378 2189. You would be welcome to attend the next Board meeting in March to see if you would like to take a part in managing Belle Isle

Need help with anything online? Universal Credit, bidding for a new home, applying for jobs? Drop in every Tuesday and Thursday 1-6pm for help, or call 07891 270094 for an appointment at other times.

This newsletter is available in large print on request by phoning 0113 378 2188.

