

BITS & PIECES

THE BITMO NEWSLETTER FOR BELLE ISLE TENANTS & RESIDENTS



February-March 2024

A positive mood at BITMO

by BITMO Chief Executive
Deborah Kelly

Lots of hard work by BITMO staff and Board Members is coming together to launch our enhanced service offers. First off, we are **improving how we approach kitchen repairs**. Where we can't match damaged kitchen units and worktops, we will replace all of them, if that will extend the life of the kitchen significantly. You have made it clear that you don't want to have to put up with mismatched kitchen units. This will save us money in the long run as the frames are usually in perfectly fine condition. We've worked through the list of landlord and tenant responsibilities on repairs and found over 30 ways we can do more. Examples are **repairing or replacing outside doors and unblocking sinks**.

Our Winter Warmth Campaign this year proved very successful. Having carried out thermal imaging surveys; we contacted households whose homes are the least energy efficient and who are on benefits to offer a package of goods to help them stay cosy in the winter months. **We have given warm goods like blankets, hot water bottles worth a total of £10,000 to 114 Belle Isle households.**

We have a regular food offer three days a week, cooked by food safety trained volunteers from a new restaurant quality kitchen and a new food bank that runs every Friday.

As well as our Repairs Café, and Cinema Club, you



may not know that **we provide free English and Maths tutoring and a hot meal once a week to primary school aged children**. Our staff have helped tenants get an extra £267k of income.

We have launched a tool library, that will help people in maintaining their homes and gardens. **You can borrow things like stepladders, hedge trimmers and push lawnmowers**. On top of this we are delighted to report that in most areas customer service and performance are going from strength to strength. We have raised our game in terms of rent collection, from being near the bottom of the housing offices in Leeds a few years ago to being at or close to the top.

This year we will be asking Belle Isle tenants to put their faith in us to continue to provide landlord services through a ballot in September. We hope that we are doing enough to earn that privilege.

Can you help build a stronger, safer Belle Isle?

There are chances for Belle Isle tenants to work with BITMO to improve the area. You could become a BITMO shareholder, a Board Member, volunteer to help run community activities, take part in estate inspections or link up with your neighbours for things like walking groups, litter picking or a summer fun day. There's the **Belle Isle Gala** coming up on Saturday 6 July at Windmill School from 12-3pm. You are welcome to just enjoy the day, but you could also volunteer to help or to run your own stall. To find out more call Tracey or Jo in our Community Development Team on 0113 378 2190 or 07891 270094.

The **BITMO housing counter** is open 9am-12pm & 1-5pm Monday to Friday (closed Wed afternoon). We have a full day telephone service on 0800 389 5503 or 0113 378 2188.

Emergency out of hours 0113 376 0499.
Email bitmo.enquiries@belleisletmo.co.uk

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

BITMO's GATE community centre is open:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9am-1pm

Tuesday and Thursday 1pm—7pm
and Saturday 16 March 1-4pm

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



Spotlight on BITMO's Customer Assistants

Because we are tenant led, we are able to have the kind of face to face service people want, where customer service comes first.

BITMO's front line Customer Service Team are perfectly placed to help our tenants get the most out of the services we provide. We believe that having a **locally based face to face team** available to deal with the full range of enquiries from BITMO tenants, means that we can provide the right service at the right time for more people. Our Customer Assistants are available from 9-12 every morning and 1-5pm, except Wednesdays, when we close at 12pm (but we are still available by phone or email).



Janice, Zara, Loraine, Natalie, and Samantha know the estate well, they know our homes and the people who live here, and they really care about what they do. Because of this

they can provide a direct connection for you to resolve problems, get advice, report repairs, or pay your rent. The work they do is varied and they are kept very busy. Because they know our residents, they know when extra help is needed, and go out of their way to make sure we do the right thing for everyone. You aren't dealing with an anonymous contact centre, you are dealing with the same people day in day out, who take pride in Belle Isle, and BITMO, and want to help everyone to have the best service and experience possible.

No matter how hard we try we don't always get things right, but ask any of the team and they will say that the best thing about the job, is being able to help people, and resolve problems with a minimum of fuss and inconvenience for you.

How are BITMO doing? April-December 2023

76% of tenants surveyed thought that they were kept informed of BITMO's work
77% satisfaction with BITMO's day to day repairs
134 households experiencing financial hardship were supported with total income generated of £236k
105 retirement life (sheltered) residents had a support plan
98.18% of properties had a current gas safety certificate
Complaints responded to within target – Stage 1 85%, Stage 2 100%

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



BITMO's GATE

BITMO's GATE is the community centre in the old library near Kasa. It reopened recently with a new restaurant-standard kitchen. This meets modern fire regulations and will help the food safety trained volunteers to produce meals for the community three times a week. There's also a private space now for phone calls or conversations.

Here are just some of the regular sessions

Repair Café - bring in anything broken - from toaster and lamps to clothes or toys and our fixers will try to mend them. Saturday 16 March 1-4pm.

Breakfast every Friday 9.15—11.15am

Tutors for Year 4 & 5 Children. Every Tuesday in term time. Classes 4.15-6pm.

Free hot meal for everyone 3.30—5.30pm on Tuesdays

MINT Men's Mental Health Tuesdays 7-9pm

Help getting online—Tuesday & Thursdays 1-7pm.

Women's mental fitness & wellbeing with Leeds Rhinos every Thursday 1.15pm



From April you will need to be a member to use BITMO's GATE. There are 3 reasons for this:

The GATE is funded by **BITMO's Board** and the membership system allows us to tell them how many people are using the GATE and for what reason.

Leeds Libraries, who supply our computers and Wi-Fi, require users to agree to their terms of usage.

We ask what you are interested in. If we find enough other people interested in the same thing. We can help arrange a group or session.

You can fill in a paper or online form at the GATE or use this QR code.

