

# BITS & PIECES

THE BITMO NEWSLETTER FOR BELLE ISLE TENANTS & RESIDENTS



NOVEMBER 2024

## Belle Isle Backs BITMO

**BITMO will keep running Belle Isle, thanks to your support.**

Tenant led means we are independent. We work closely with Leeds City Council but we do things the way you want them doing. Our tenant board members put **Belle Isle tenants first**. In the next five years we plan to keep improving our services and do more of the things that are important to you. We want to have more conversations with more of you. Of the people who voted, 93% voted YES for BITMO, but 61% of people didn't vote at all, and we want to understand why that is. Without tenant support the management of Belle Isle will, at some point, go back to Leeds City Council and we don't think that is in the best interests of the people who live here.

We will be doing a survey by phone to ask people what would encourage them to vote. We will use that information to improve what we do for the benefit of Belle Isle residents.

### Belle Isle Ballot 2024 Result

BITMO to continue

Yes 93% No 7%

Thank you Belle Isle!



For the next five years, BITMO's tenant-led Board will keep working to make a stronger, safer, greener Belle Isle for everyone.



**Tell BITMO what you think—scan the QR code (or ask for a paper survey form)**

We want to provide different ways for tenants to have their say. You telling BITMO what is important to you is fundamental to successful tenant management. Please scan the QR code or ask for a paper survey in the BITMO offices to give us your feedback.

We are changing our **pests policy** to provide a better service to you. We'd like to know what you think about the new service offer. Some of the **gardens** on the estate are huge and take a lot of work to maintain. This is why we set up the garden tool library, where you can borrow garden tools free of charge. We want to help people who struggle to maintain their gardens. Please scan the QR code or ask for a paper survey in the BITMO office if you want to comment on BITMO policy on pests or gardens.

Is there an area on the estate that you think looks neglected and needs a bit more love? Or is vandalised and needs some security measures? Our board have made money available to improve the physical appearance of the estate and we want to work with tenants to make a difference. Call BITMO on 0113 378 2190 to discuss this.

When you give us feedback your tenant board take it into account when deciding what the best service offer can be.

**Save the date! Belle Isle Gala, Saturday 5 July 12-3pm at Windmill School & Coopers Field**

## Celebrating Belle Isle's "community assets"

What are Belle Isle's assets? Assets are things in the community we want to celebrate. This could be things like buildings, people, businesses and organisations that benefit the community and make Belle Isle a better place to live.

Belle Isle's Community Builder, **Ben Mills** is asking you what your community assets are. You will see Ben walking around Belle Isle, so you can tell him when you see him or contact him through BITMO's GATE or with the QR code below.

Belle Isle residents have already suggested the **Belle Isle Club** and Belle Isle Senior Action's 59 Centre (see below). What are the parks and green spaces that you value? Do you think Manorfield Hall and The Welcome Centre should be included?



Community Builder, Ben Mills, is asking what you think the best things about Belle Isle are.

You can see a display of Belle Isle's assets on Town Street in the window of St Vincent's charity shop - which is an asset itself.

Ben adds "Belle Isle is full of positive things happening when you scratch the surface. When positive things happen and more of us get to know about it. This can encourage our neighbours to do more for our community. Let's make it happen!"

Use this QR code to see what assets have been put forward so far and to make your own nominations - or call in at BITMO's GATE to find out more.



### Elected Belle Isle tenants

Leon Kirkham—Chair, East Granges  
Jean Burton, Vice Chair/Secretary, Brooms  
Harry Austin—Vice Chair/Treasurer, Aberfields  
Kim Asquith, Town Street  
Trevor Brown, Winroses  
Sharafath Ghafiri, Winroses  
Rose Hodgkinson, Rosedales  
Tracy Morris, Aberfields  
John Oddy, Belle Isle Circus  
Julie Rhodes, Brooms  
Gerry Roberts, Winroses  
Emma Walkley, Aberfields

### Who is on BITMO's Board?

#### Local Councillors

Councillor Wayne Dixon  
Councillor Emma Pogson-Golden

**Co-opted**—extra members brought on for their experience

Shannon Ferry, Belle Isle Circus  
Margaret Brown, Brooms  
Ashley Knowles, local resident

Paul Truswell, ex-MP & Middleton Park councillor

Could you be a BITMO Board Member next year? To find out more or come to a Board meeting, call Peter Olver on 0113 378 2189.



You're invited to the next Board meeting on Thursday 28 November at 6pm at BITMO

# How well is BITMO working in serving the tenants of Belle Isle?

Here are some results for the six months April—September 2024.

**How much of the rent did BITMO collect?** We collected £97.63 for every £100 owed. This is the best of any area in Leeds. The average amount across Leeds is £96.05

**The total amount owed from Belle Isle's 1,823 homes is £187,622.** This compares to £311,077 owed in Middleton (2183 homes) and £312,047 owed in Hunslet (1751 homes).

We know that many people are struggling to pay the rent. **We helped 99 households in hardship get a combined total of £289,096 extra income in the last six months.** We employ two extra staff to do this work. We also provide free meals at BITMO's GATE three times a week, a Community Fund to pay for white goods and furniture and run a scheme to provide good quality school uniform and winter coats.

At 30 September 2024 there were **8 empty homes** that were being made ready for letting—out of a total of 1823 homes. This is 0.44% of Belle Isle homes. There were 22 empty homes in Hunslet, which is 1.34% of their homes and 22 empty homes in Middleton (1%).



Sometimes tenants are evicted. It is a last resort. It happens because there has not been sustained improvement in rent payment in line with the order made by the court. We apply to the court for an eviction order when tenants have not kept to the instruction the court gave about how much they need to pay towards what they owe. **We evicted three tenants between April and September 2024.** We evicted seven tenants in the previous 12 months.

We **closed 37 anti-social behaviour cases** during the 6 month period – of which 29 (78%) had seen an improvement in the situation according to tenants. In the next Bits & Pieces we will report on the number of homes with up-to-date gas safety and electrical safety certificates and repairs completed on time.

Are you interested in helping improve BITMO's performance? To find out more please contact call Peter Olver on 0113 378 2188 or email [Peter.Olver@belleisletmo.co.uk](mailto:Peter.Olver@belleisletmo.co.uk)

You can find out more about BITMO's performance on our website by scanning the QR code.



## BITMO tenants are more satisfied than tenants managed by Leeds

Tenants whose homes are managed by BITMO are 6% more satisfied than those managed by Leeds on average. There are some areas where we need to do better. The BITMO Board wants to increase satisfaction in all areas to at least 70% and we are working on that. If you'd like to be part of improving what we do, get in touch with us to find out more.

	Leeds City Council	BITMO
Overall Satisfaction	65%	71%
Well Maintained Home	67%	70%
Safe Home	71%	78%
Repairs Last 12 Months	70%	84%
Time Taken Repairs	68%	79%
Neighbourhood Contribution	58%	72%
Approach to ASB	51%	45%
Fairly & with Respect	72%	75%



Could you help improve BITMO services to Belle Isle?

# You said, BITMO did!

Here are just some of the things that BITMO have been able to do because residents told us they wanted to see some changes.

**Quad bikes and illegal electric bikes** are quite a feature of life in Belle Isle. Tenants have asked us to take action to stop them from speeding around the estate. The main areas that people have spoken to us about are Nesfield View, Windmill Close, and the Circus. We've fenced around the Circus and that has been successful. We've put barriers in place at Nesfield View. We are looking into barriers for the ginnel between Belle Isle Road and Windmill Close that can't be removed. We know this is a major through route for quad bikes and so we will make them very secure.



Local people have told us they want lighting on **Belle Isle Circus** so it feels a safer place. This has been arranged and one lighting pole is in place. Vandals removed the second before its installation was complete. Again, we are not easily put off. The work will be completed, and the Circus will become a safe place for people to walk across, sit and enjoy the view of the city.



People have told us that they aren't happy with the condition of the **planters across the estate**. These are looked after by Continental for Leeds City Council. We've spoken with Continental to see if they will improve the planters, so that rather than being an eyesore they are attractive features on the estate. We didn't get anywhere with that, so our estate caretaking team are taking matters into their own hands. They plan to improve all the planters over the winter months, so that by Spring they are pruned, free of litter, and in bloom.

Tenants at **Windmill Close** told us they are not happy with the appearance of where they live. They wanted the green areas to be improved, washing lines to be re-installed, and bulky rubbish to be removed. Our caretakers set about doing that work, and the community development team are talking to tenants to find out how we can work together to make long term improvements.



## Important phone numbers

Report a repair call **0113 378 2188** or **0800 389 5503**  
Make a rent payment call **0113 378 2187**  
Report anti-social behaviour **0113 378 2188**  
Report issues with bins and bin collections to Leeds City Council on **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](http://www.belleisletmo.co.uk) or scan the QR code

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

