

Battersea Fields Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2022

Battersea
Fields
Resident
Management
Organisation

So here we are... 2022! I do hope you're all keeping well while we finally get back to a bit of normality after the past two years.

The RMO has some exciting projects and events planned for this year including phase 2 of the new recycling bin enclosures to be installed outside each of the 3 entrances of the high-rise blocks in Spring. We are also planning to freshen up the paint on the metal railings, fencing and garden tables & benches around the estate plus plans to increase free and secure bicycle storage space.

None of these projects will be charged to tenants or leaseholders.

At the beginning of May last year, the RMO ended the cleaning contract with Regent Samsic and brought the cleaners in-house, meaning they are now directly employed by the RMO. This has allowed us to finer tune their cleaning duties to better serve the estate. You may have noticed one of our cleaners jet washing many areas of the estate to which we've had some fantastic feedback from residents. I'm keen to continue and increase this level of cleaning detail which simply does not happen on estates directly managed by the Council.

The RMO Board and I look forward to providing further updates to residents throughout the year about the improvements and events for your estate.

Best wishes.

Chris Clutterbuck

Chris Clutterbuck – Housing Manager



Fire safety

The London Fire Brigade has issued a warning following a spate of fires last year across London involving the charging of e-scooters.

In the first 6 months of 2021, firefighters attended to more than 25 fires involving electric bikes or scooters and some of them have been significant incidents resulting in serious injuries. In many cases, they are stored in escape routes or communal areas which can stop people being able to escape if they become involved in a fire.

Some of the incidents attended by firefighters are detailed below:



e-scooter fire – Erith



e-bike fire – Tottenham

- On 15 March, Six fire engines and around 40 firefighters tackled a fire at a flat in Erith which involved an electric scooter which was on charge. A woman and a child were treated at the scene for smoke inhalation.
- On 1 May, firefighters were called to a blaze at a flat in Clapham. It was caused by a fault in a battery unit for an electric bike which was on charge at the time of the fire.
- On 24 May, a first floor flat in Brixton was badly damaged after a fire caused by a fault in the lithium-ion battery pack of a mountain bike which had been converted into an e-bike.
- On 26 May, five people were taken to hospital after a fire at a flat in Southwark. The fire was caused by the failure of part of a battery in an electric scooter on charge.
- On 9 June, a person was taken to hospital after a fire at a maisonette in Wood Green. It was caused by the failure of a battery fitted to an electric bike that was on charge at the time of the fire.



So what can people do to keep safe?

The Brigade's advice is to always use the correct charger for the product and buy an official one from a reputable seller.

Batteries can get warm during their use and it is advisable to allow them to cool down before attempting to re-charge as they could be more susceptible to failure.

Batteries should always be charged on hard flat surfaces where heat can dissipate.

Batteries can also pose a risk if they have been damaged, so try to ensure they are not getting knocked around while in use or while being carried as spares as this can increase the chance of damage to cells.

You should always make sure you unplug your charger once it's finished charging. Always follow manufacturers' instructions when charging and we would advise not to leave it unattended or while people are asleep.

Lastly, the Brigade's advice is to never block your escape route with anything, including bikes and scooters. Store them somewhere away from a main through route.



Use the correct charger



Look after the batteries

Unplug charger and don't leave unattended

Bulk rubbish

Please be aware that it is not permitted to dump rubbish including bulk items on and around the estate including footpaths.

Wandsworth Council enforcement officers have the power to issue £400 fixed penalty notice on-the-spot for fly-tipping. Fly-tipping is also a breach of tenancy and lease conditions.

The weekly bulk rubbish collections by our contractor are to ensure the estate is kept tidy from illegal dumping, this is NOT a service for residents to freely dispose of their bulk items. Please do the right thing and dispose of your bulk rubbish appropriately.

You can dispose of bulk items at the local tip located on Smugglers Way, Wandsworth SW18 1JS. **Wandsworth Council can also collect and remove bulk items for as little as £20 for four items.** Please visit the Council's website if you need to book a collection.

You can also anonymously report to the estate office individuals who are blighting your estate by dumping any rubbish.



One incident of bulk rubbish on our estate.



Building rubble, kitchen tiles and other building waste that damage chute in Dresden House.



Chute blocked by bedding and carpet

Rubbish chutes

There are a total of 15 internal rubbish chutes on the estate, 3 in each of the high-rise blocks. Unfortunately, a small minority of residents continue to ignore basic advice previously given on how to use them. Items such as building rubble, kitchen worktops, door frames, ceramic tiles and laminate flooring from flat refurbishments continue to block and damage the inner lining of the rubbish chutes. Carpet, bedding, large boxes and even pizza boxes are also causing blockages.

In 2021 residents were charged **£9,268.40** for specialist contractors to unblock chutes which were too severely blocked for our cleaners to clear. In January 2022 alone, severe damage to the lining of a chute caused by building rubble, kitchen worktops and tiles, has cost residents of Dresden House **£4,830** to repair.

Only small rubbish bags containing general household waste should be placed in the chute. If these costly repairs and blockages continue then the RMO will have no choice but to decommission all rubbish chutes.

Private refurbishment works

We'd like to remind leaseholders that any noisy refurbishment works should only be carried out during daytime hours, ie from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm on Saturdays and none at all on Sundays.

Leaseholders are also responsible for ensuring that any building dust and debris left on the communal areas and lifts is swept and cleaned up at the end of each day.

It would be helpful if you could also let your neighbours know if you are going to carry out any works.

Q&A

with Vicky - Board Member

Q. What are the advantages of being a resident run estate, rather than the council?

A. I think the biggest bonus of our RMO is having the onsite office and staff. The fact that you can call the office and speak to someone working solely for our estate is so much more personal. Also, decisions are being made by residents, in the best interest of residents. It can be big things like employing and managing cleaning staff directly or small things like choosing the colour of our new bin enclosures. There have been many improvements to our estate that wouldn't have happened without our dedicated staff and board member input.

Q. What is your favourite thing about being a board member?

A. My favourite part of being a resident board member is helping to organise social events. In the past we have arranged events such as subsidized coach trips and free children's parties - they're always fun. We've had to hold off on events due to Covid, but we're excited to be arranging a BBQ towards the Summer.

Q. Can any resident become a board member?

A. If you have paid your £1 to become a shareholder of the organisation, yes.

Vicky – Board Member

Money worries?

It's a difficult time for many but financial advice and support is available if you're struggling to make ends meet. Here's details of some organisations who can help:

Financial Inclusion Team at Wandsworth Council: For help with benefits, budgeting and debt advice, search for the Financial Inclusion Team on the council's website at: www.wandsworth.gov.uk and complete the 'contact form,' or call: **0208 871 8780**

Citizens Advice Bureau: Advice on benefits, debt and more: Tel: **0808 278 7833 (freephone)**

Foodbank Advice Project:

Free advice on benefits, work, debt or any other issue that's causing hardship: **0207 326 9428**

Discretionary Support Grants:

Find out which discretionary support grants from Wandsworth Council you may be entitled to:

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing/benefits-and-support/

These include grants for food and fuel, white goods & furniture. Grants for help with rent for those receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit which includes a housing element.

You can obtain help to apply for these from Citizens' Advice Bureau on: **0204 529 0674**

Warm Home Discount:

For those on a low income. Check directly with your energy supplier as soon as possible to see if you're eligible and how to apply. Any discount will be applied to your account by 31 March 2022.

South West London Law Centres:

For advice on a wide range of debt issues including credit and store cards, council tax, bank and pay-day loans, help with grants for Thames Water customers facing hardship: **0208 767 2777**

Difficulties paying Rent:

call Sue at the estate office on **0207 622 7499** for advice and support.

Dog fouling

Unfortunately, dog fouling on communal areas continues to be an issue on our Estate. We remind dog owners that Battersea Park Estate has dog byelaws in place and owners of dogs who breach the byelaws could face fines of up to £500 (more for multiple offences) and have permission to keep a dog in their property revoked. Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times and must not go onto the grassed areas of the estate.

Anyone who witnesses this nuisance and health hazard, please report it to the Council's Dog Control Service on **0208 871 7606 or by email dogcontrol@wandsworth.gov.uk**



Thank you for reading, remember the estate office can be contacted between 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday on **0207 622 7499** or by emailing office@batterseafields.co.uk