

Peabody News

YOUR MAGAZINE APRIL 2021



Meet our volunteers at the
Waltham Forest food pantry



New jobs bulletin / £500 community grants / News from our Customer Hub

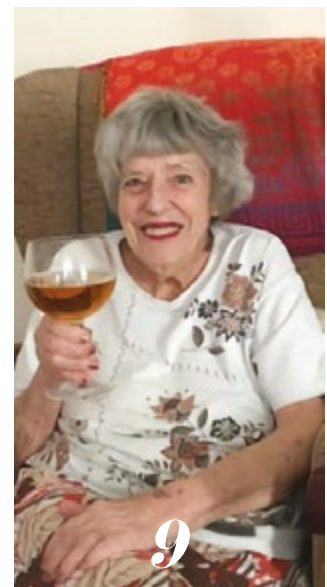
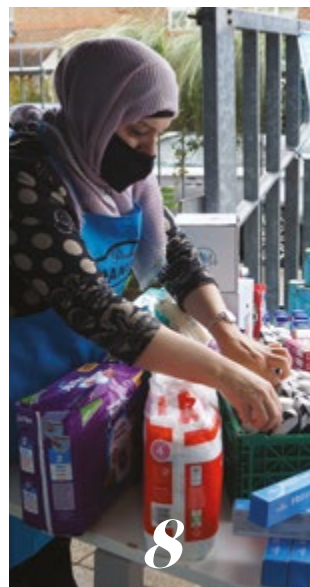
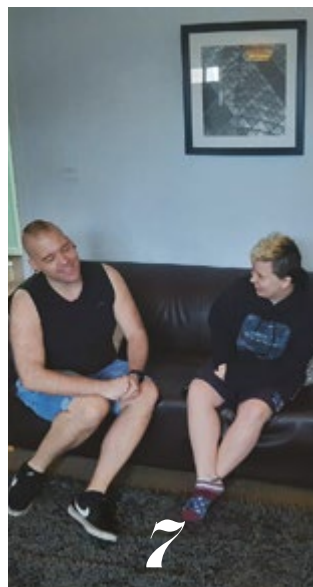
Welcome

Hello and welcome to your newsletter. Here you'll find the latest news from across Peabody communities as well as updates on our services.

Need to get in touch?

Call us on 0300 123 3456 or visit www.peabody.org.uk/contact-us

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Staying green

Please recycle this magazine when you have finished with it.

Meet your Resident Board Members



Peter Baffoe, left and Karima Mbarak, right



Peter Baffoe joined us a resident Board member in 2018 and is passionate about representing residents:

"I'm passionate about my community. I was born at Guy's Hospital, grew up in London and have lived here all my life. My aim is to be a voice for people who are seldom heard. People call them hard to reach but I don't accept that. In my role on the Peabody Board, I make sure that residents are heard."

Karima Mbarak joined the Peabody Community Foundation Board as a Resident Board Member late last year: "Young people are absent from many, if not most, Board rooms. As a black British, 25-year-old

university graduate, mother of one and a Peabody resident, I'm not exactly the 'typical' Board member but that's exactly what motivated me to get involved – to bring in new ideas and ways of thinking."

Shreya Hewett also joined the Peabody Community Foundation Board as a Resident Board Member late last year: "I heard about the Resident Trustee position after I became a member of the Pembury Steering Group. I love that at each stage of involvement with the Peabody Community, there's been an opportunity to get involved at a deeper level to provide feedback from diverse residents' perspectives."

Become a Young Leader, Ambassador or Advisor



Are you between 11 to 25 years old? Want support to develop your own community project for other young people and Peabody residents in your local area? Then our Young Leaders, Young Ambassador or Young Advisor programmes might be for you.

Nayim Ahmed, 19 years old, is a Peabody Young Leader and creator of the podcast *Endless Possibilities*: "I wanted to help young people who are interested in careers in the sports

industry learn more about what it's actually like to work in the industry so I came up with an idea to create podcast. I contacted lots of leaders in the sports industry who I think are doing great things and invited them to participate in the podcast. Over 10 episodes, you get to hear about the journeys of different leaders, the challenges they faced, the people and organisations who helped them along the way. It was fascinating to hear first-hand about the career choices they'd made.

Through this podcast I wanted motivate and inspire the listeners - young people living anywhere who are interested in a career in sports. The Young Leaders programme really helped me to shape and bring this podcast to life – I really recommend other people who have an idea to apply. You won't regret it!" For more information, visit www.peabodyyoungleaders.com

Community grants



You can apply for up to £500 to fund your community project idea. We are currently accepting applications for the Peabody Community Leaders programme. You can apply for up to £500 to fund an online or socially distanced project that benefits the local community. We support a wide range of projects in all different shapes and sizes. For more information, visit www.peabody.org.uk/community-superhero

Looking for a job?

Sign up to our new fortnightly jobs bulletin for new jobs straight to your inbox. If you spot something you want to apply for, one of our expert employment case workers can provide one-to-one support to help you apply. Sign up here: www.peabody.org.uk/newsletter



Keeping yourself and others safe

As lockdown eases we must all keep doing everything we can to keep each other safe, by sticking to all of the guidelines even as rules are eased. As meeting up with friends and family carries the risk of the infection spreading, there are some simple steps we can follow: keep washing our hands, wear face coverings, keep a social distance and only meet outdoors where the risk is much lower. Remember - the "Hands, Face, Space and Fresh Air" rule, we all will be!

Have you joined the resistance?

Our teams are taking part in our 'Join the resistance' campaign to help raise awareness of the importance of having the Covid vaccine. More than half of adults in the UK have now had the

vaccine and it will help all of us to stay safe and get back to normal. As we know some people are worried about having the vaccine, we're sharing the stories of people who have had it.

Have you joined the resistance?

If you'd like to share your story in the next issue of our magazine, please do let us know at communications@peabody.org.uk



Monika
Support Worker

I went for the vaccination after discussing it with my family. There'd been so much worrying information shared on social media and I was initially unsure, especially because I'm Black and didn't want to be a guinea pig.

My mother told me to be brave and to ignore all of the speculation, especially as I have underlying health conditions which could cause problems if I caught the virus. She said to treat it like the flu and pneumonia jabs which I have every year. She also reminded me that if I refused the jab I'd be causing unnecessary risk for our customers, and this wouldn't be fair, so I decided to go ahead. Fear is a terrible thing, but it can be overcome with education.



Kate
Team Manager

I received the Pfizer vaccine, and although I'm not a fan of needles, it was totally fine!

Now I can do my job safely. I also want to get back to normal life and enjoying things like holidays and travelling, and I wanted to protect people like my parents who're both elderly. If you're offered the vaccine, please be responsible and take it - we really need to keep each other and ourselves safe.

The sooner we get the vaccine the faster we'll return to the normal life we took for granted.



George
Communications Officer

I was offered the vaccine because I'm asthmatic, and although it's usually manageable it can get very bad in summer or if I'm recovering from the flu. I was offered the AstraZeneca vaccine and received earlier this year.

I had the vaccine because I don't want to catch the disease, and I don't want to spread it to my parents who're both vulnerable, or any of my friends and family. A few years ago, I was hospitalised because I couldn't breathe and it was as scary and awful as it sounds. Having the vaccine doesn't just make it safer for my family, it's also reduced some of the anxiety I've been feeling for months.



Myth busters

Did you know:

- The Covid vaccines have been in development for over 10 years during which 90% of the vaccines had been already been created.
- The vaccines work by teaching your immune system how to fight the virus, but don't actually give you Covid or alter your DNA.
- You may feel a little poorly for a day or so after, but this is normal and means that your body is building protection.
- All Covid-19 vaccines have been tested on people from all walks of life, including a range of age groups and all ethnicities. The vaccine is effective for everyone, and there's no evidence to suggest it could cause harm to any specific groups of people.
- The first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine should give you good protection from coronavirus from three or four weeks after you've had it. But you need to have the two doses of the vaccine to give you longer lasting protection.
- There are no pork or other animal ingredients in any of the approved vaccines.



Opening Doors London



We are working with Opening Doors London (ODL), the largest charity helping connecting LGBTQ+ people over 50 with activities, events, support and information. If you are over 50, live in London and identify as LGBTQ+ find out more about free ODL services including:

- Telefriending
- Friday / Sunday Socials (over Zoom)

- Dementia support groups (over Zoom)
- BAME support group (over Zoom)
- Groups and activities (after lockdown restrictions have eased)

Contact:
www.openingdoorslondon.org.uk
info@openingdoorslondon.org.uk
 020 7239 0400

Meet Gina, our star volunteer in Essex

Gina volunteers at the King Edward Community Centre in Essex.

"I've lived in Laindon for over 30 years so feel very connected to the area. My friends Marie, Trudy and I run Community Cuppa which is a weekly social gathering at the Peabody King Edward Community Centre.

Before the pandemic, we'd meet at the community centre but since the lockdown we've switched to using WhatsApp. When it's someone's birthday Trudy will always post them a message, and last year Marie handmade a mask for everyone in the group and we delivered it to their homes.

Community Cuppa becomes another family you've got. Since the start of the pandemic we've all stayed in touch and WhatsApp has been amazing. We've been sharing updates, jokes, asking one another questions. Now that we're all getting our Covid jabs, we all tell each other how we're doing. We just can't wait to be able to get back into the centre again.

I love Community Cuppa - we've had magicians, singers, demonstrations, talks by the Dogs Trust, Police and Fire Service. We recently had a talk on how to avoid being scammed. We also have a Saturday quiz night every few months



which is good fun.

At Christmas, we worked with the Peabody Essex Community Development team to make hampers for everyone as we couldn't have our usual Christmas dinner at the centre. We were so glad to still be able to celebrate together despite being apart.

My one tip for other people who are interested in volunteering is not to leave it until you retire to volunteer. If you start volunteering earlier then you'll find what you like and it will much easier to get more involved later in life."

If you live in Essex and would like to get involved in any of our community activities or to volunteer, contact Ella Rayment on 07947 566937 or ella.rayment@peabody.org.uk

Get involved

The impact of Covid-19 has meant that we've had to find new ways to connect and engage with our residents. We've met with nearly 700 of you virtually to discuss topics including fire safety, service charges, repairs and neighbourhood and community safety. Our Scrutiny Panel and Strategy and Policy Group continue to help shape our policies and improve our services.

We are reviewing our involvement strategy, which sets out how residents can influence decisions and services. Over 1,300 residents have already got involved so far.

Find out how you can get involved with our resident groups by emailing getinvolved@peabody.org.uk or call 0800 022 4040 and ask to speak to the Resident Involvement team. Getting involved in our resident groups is also a great way to develop and show a range of skills on your CV.

A new furry companion at Pioneer House



Meet Teresa and Lola. Teresa lives in Essex at Pioneer House, a supported housing scheme for people with learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries and mental health issues. She was brought up with dogs while living in foster care and told us she'd really like a dog, though she didn't meet the criteria to adopt one as she lived in supported housing.

To help her during this difficult year we introduced her to Lola, who needed a forever home. Lola moved in with Teresa in December and their friendship has been a joy to watch. Lola has made such a positive difference to her life and also likes to help us out in the office!

Working together to make a house a home

We have been providing showroom furniture to our supported housing customers and schemes to help our most vulnerable residents build safe and happy homes.

When we sell new homes we dress them with furniture to make them feel lived in. Often, the buyers don't want or need the furnishings, so we make sure they go to a good home.

Pathways is one of our supported housing schemes for adults with mental health disorders and difficulties. People live at Pathways for up to two years, and most then go on to live in their first proper home. With many customers recovering from time spent in hospital or homelessness, having a safe and inviting home is incredibly important.

Kate Poyser, who manages Pathways, told us "The items donated from the show homes are always very nice, modern and practical pieces; it's so great that we're recycling in this way, directly to our own vulnerable customers."

Pathways helps residents moving into independent living with furniture and other things that make a house a home. Some of the show home

furniture has gone directly into these forever homes, which also prevents the residents from having to take out loans to purchase essential items.

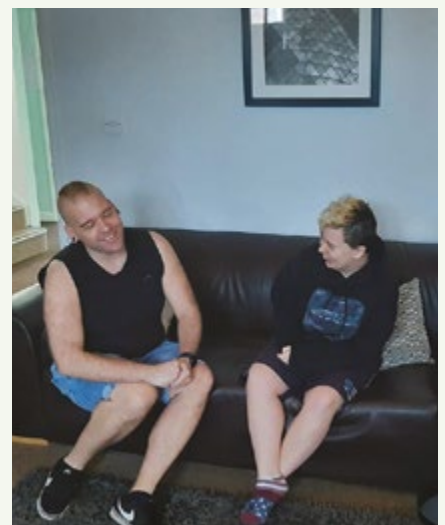
"Thank you for the furniture, my home is the best it has ever been, I feel I can finally relax and move on with my life" (Former Resident)

"Pathways is so homely and nice, I didn't think it was supported housing at first as it's nothing like a hostel" (Professional visitor)

"It's so nice that Pathways is cared for, it makes me realise that we are important" (Dee Hazleton, Resident)

"Keep up the good work, Pathways always looks homely and inviting" (Bruce Johnson, Resident)

We also worked with Essex Outreach Support Service where we're helping people out of homelessness, and helped make their houses homes too. The customer who received a lovely pink bed said "I just sat on my bed and cried, it is the best thing anyone ever given me". And another family who received donated furniture last year said "despite everything that's happening, you've made our Christmas."



Community gardening

Between lockdowns, residents and volunteers braved the cold weather to help us care for some of the 4,000 trees we planted in Birchmere Park in Thamesmead last year. Although the trees are too young to fruit this year, we're excited to gather the first harvest of fruits with residents when the trees mature.



Meet the women at the heart of the Waltham Forest food pantry

Our community pantry in Waltham Forest helps residents with food costs, supporting around 40 families each week. One resident told us: “I signed up because I wanted to save money and get help with my shopping. It helps with your bills and it is value for money.” We asked local volunteers Kanez, Tai, Hassiba and Jacqueline to share their experiences volunteering at the pantry.



Kanez

Kanez lives in Chingford and is currently working towards her level 2 qualification in food hygiene and safety. “I enjoy meeting the customers that come in, putting out the stock, serving the customers, tidying up – just about everything in the Pantry. It’s helped me refresh my skills. If you are out looking for work, volunteering will help enhance your CV and it’s a very good experience. I did work in a shop a very long time ago but that wasn’t to do with food, it was a shoe outlet, but some of the ways we deal with our stock like clearing up and bringing in new stock are similar.”



Tai

Tai lives in Chingford Hall with her family, which includes her children so she has been busy home schooling. She completed her Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene qualification while at the pantry and is about to begin a teaching assistant qualification. “I signed up to volunteer at the Pantry to help in my community. I enjoy everything. I like talking to the people coming in and helping them with their shopping. The work is good and I enjoy it a lot. It has helped me to improve my English so much. I think it is a good idea to volunteer in your community. You can get to know other people, build confidence and it brings people together. It helps you make friends in the neighbourhood.”



Hassiba

Hassiba is passionate about volunteering and has been part of the pantry since it opened in August. She speaks multiple languages and hopes to offer informal French and Arabic classes at the pantry when social distancing rules allow. “It’s really important to help other people, especially those who are vulnerable. It’s been a good way to get involved in the community. We get to know people at the pantry, I’ve been living here for nearly nine years and I didn’t know all my neighbours. To anyone thinking of volunteering, I would definitely say, go for it! It’s a very good deed you can do for your community and you can get experience as well, and it can open up many opportunities if you volunteer for any organisation. It helps you and it helps others as well.”



Jaqueline

Jaqueline lives in Chingford Hall and has been involved in lots of community work, including coordinating the local mutual aid hot food delivery service at the start of the pandemic. “I enjoy volunteering and helping others in the community I live in. The pantry is providing a great service. Especially with lockdown, for some people just one visit here changes their week. They look forward to it. We often get lots of people saying how much they enjoy being here. Even the little 5 or 10 minute conversation we can have at a distance, you can see it makes a difference.”

If you would like to access the food pantry or want to find out more about our community activities or volunteering in Waltham Forest, contact Ellie Ward on 07920 534572 or ellie.ward@peabody.org.uk

Remembering Ruby Guyon

We're celebrating the life of Ruby Guyon, a resident born in Peabody Avenue in 1923 who sadly passed away this January aged 97. She was well known in the local community as an active member of St Barnabas Church, a founder of the Peabody Avenue and Close Gardening Club and as a regular at Thamesbank Community Centre's Encouragement Through the Arts and Talking programme (ETAT.)

Ruby Guyon was born in S Block in Peabody Avenue and lived in a family of 10 children until they were evacuated in WWII. She returned after the war with family and moved to E block in 1965. Ruby worked as a shop assistant at Harrods and as a dinner lady at Churchill Gardens Primary School.

Ruby was one of the first people to take part in ETAT at our Thamesbank Centre, a group that meets twice a week and encourages isolated people living on and around the Peabody estate to spend time together and be creative.

Peabody resident Jane, who manages the programme, told us: "Ruby has taken part in all the we have had to offer. She enjoyed the arts and craft sessions. She would embrace every session from teaching people to knit with Doris, creating and selling artwork, choir singing, festival parades to rap music and so much more, she had the have-a-go attitude. With a wicked sense of humour Ruby was such fun. She often spoke for the members at events to say how ETAT and the friendships she formed had enhanced her life. She will be missed and fondly remembered for her red lipstick and determination to embrace each day as it comes."

Ruby's son, Steve, shared how important ETAT was to Ruby and the positive impact that being part of a programme was.

"That was her world." He said, "She was an extrovert and caring, she was well known and really enjoyed socialising."

Although she lived in a flat she enjoyed gardening. Her home was full of flowers and she was a founding member of the residents' Peabody Avenue and Close Gardening Club, who shared: "She brought great wit and spirit to the organisation. At 97, she was also an advocate for the elderly and their needs. She was instrumental in creating the woodland garden on Peabody Avenue, also known as Ruby's Garden. She lived most of her life on the Peabody



estate and was a valued member of the community. She will be sorely missed."

Once the Coronavirus restrictions are lifted, there will be a celebration for Ruby at St. Barnabas Church and the Thamesbank Community Centre.

Find out more about the great work ETAT does here: <https://etat.org.uk>



We're here to help

We know this is a tough time and if you need it, we can help. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, our teams have joined together to support the most vulnerable people in our communities.



Catherine sent us a picture of one of the meals she made from the food parcels.

“The food parcels are amazing! They’ve put really nice things in it. I’m grateful for everything I get it makes a difference and I’m really glad I’m with Peabody. I didn’t know the support was available - I would recommend it. It’s fantastic that there is a safety net – Peabody is my support system.”

Catherine, a Peabody resident in London

We have:

- Checked in with 21,000 residents to find out what help they need
- Helped 1,132 residents to access financial support
- Delivered 7,083 food parcels to residents
- Supported 7,864 people to improve their wellbeing through services like our befriending programme

We can support you with:

- Welfare benefits and managing money and debt
- Saving money on your energy and water bills
- Finding work, apprenticeships or training opportunities
- Joining our community volunteers
- Our Tenant and Family Support Team offers a range of support including access to health care services and help with managing tenancies.



To find out more about what support you can access, scan the QR code with your smartphone or call us on 0300 123 3456 or visit www.peabody.org.uk/coronavirus

Befriending

We run a remote befriending programme over the phone, we know that the lockdown has been hard for those who live alone. Befriending offers connection with others, contact volunteer@peabody.org.uk to volunteer as a befriender or be matched with a befriender yourself.

Enter our prize draw



Sign up to our resident e-newsletter or new jobs bulletin for a chance to win a monthly £50 Love2Shop voucher: www.peabody.org.uk/newsletter

Save money on your energy bills



Worried about your fuel bills? Book a free energy advice session. Residents who have used our energy advice service often save over £100 a year: www.peabody.org.uk/energysaving

“Thank you, you made a significant difference - I think there is a saving of at least £300.”
Peabody resident

News from our Customer Hub

There's a new way to contact us

We're now asking residents to contact us using the **Contact Us** form on our website instead of emailing. This will help our team members to respond faster and means we can prioritise vulnerable residents who need urgent help. You can still call us, write to us or message us on social media as normal.

Calling us is now faster and easier

When you call us, our new hold messages let you know approximately how long the call will take to answer. Between 9am-5pm we will also offer you a callback, if you choose the 'call me back' option, we can hold your position in the queue and call you back when a member of the team becomes available. This means you don't have to wait on the phone.

If you rent your home from us

When you call us, you'll be asked some automatic questions to check your identity. Our team member will then already have your details when we answer, which will speed up how quickly we can help you. It also means you won't have to reconfirm your details if you need to speak with more than one person. You can now check your rent account balance with us over the phone. To use this, call our Customer Hub as you usually do. Once we've checked it's you, press Option 2 and you will be put through to our rent account menu. From there, select Option 1 to hear your rent balance (it may not include payments made during the previous three days). You can then go back to speak to a member of our Customer Hub if you want to.

Register for self-serve

You can view and manage your rent and service charge payments, set up direct debits, print statements and more on our online portal: www.peabody.org.uk/selfserve

We've made our website more accessible

Making our services accessible to everyone is a priority for us. We've recently added a toolbar to our website which allows you to:

- Select a screenreader which will read text aloud

- Translate content into over 100 languages
- Zoom in on a page or add a ruler or screen mask
- Change the look and feel, including font sizes and margins

Look out for this button in the top menu of the website:



Reporting a complaint

We understand that sometimes things can go wrong with the services we provide. When things go wrong, we want you to tell us so we can put it right. You can raise a complaint with us by calling our Customer Hub on 0300 1233456 or on our website: www.peabody.org.uk/complaints

We want to help you resolve problems and disputes, and welcome the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. We are constantly looking at ways we can improve our services including faster response times and acting on the recommendations from the Resident Scrutiny Panel.

Could you help with a repair?

Last year, Peabody and Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) launched a new responsive repairs platform in partnership with Plentific. Self-employed, skilled residents can use the platform to bid for work from Peabody and other housing associations using the platform. So far, customer satisfaction using the system is close to 90%. We currently have over 400 local contractors delivering more than 60,000 repairs a year in Peabody and NHG homes. If you're a resident and you want to use the platform to find work, find out more here: www.plentific.com/en-gb/contractors/dps

Getting more women in trades

We are also working with Plentific and others in the UK Housing sector to increase representation of women in trade roles. The pandemic has had a huge impact on women in closed sectors such as retail and arts and leisure, where women make up 57 per cent of the workforce. In comparison, only two per cent of tradespeople are female, often deterred by the stereotypes

attached to the profession. We have signed the Women's Trade Network Pledge, a commitment to supporting long-term change to remove barriers, empower and support women as well as increase access into trade roles. Find out more: www.peabody.org.uk/womenintrade



Changes to managing parking on our estates

After listening to your feedback, we began a new parking contract with Parking Control Management Ltd (PCM). We are switching sites formerly managed by MET Parking to PCM. Find out more on our website: www.peabody.org.uk/neighbourhoods/parking-and-garages PCM will honour all existing visitor parking permits issued by MET by like for like exchange or a refund on the unused spaces up until 31 December 2021. Contact our Customer Hub to arrange an exchange or refund with a clear picture of your permit.



Guidance for residents who are EU citizens

If you or your family are from the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, you may need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue living and working in the UK. You'll get settled or pre-settled status depending on how long you've been living in the UK. The deadline for applying is 30 June 2021, from 1 July 2021 employers will need to see proof of your immigration status. Find out more: www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/eligibility

Sharing recipes

As the days get warmer, lots of us are keen to meet up with friends and family outdoors – so what better time for a picnic? Here are a couple of our favourite recipes which are perfect for eating al fresco!

Easy fruit scones

With this recipe, even a novice can whip up a batch of delicious fruit scones.



INGREDIENTS

- 350g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 85g butter
- 3 tbsp caster sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 175ml semi-skimmed milk
- 150g sultanas
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- Lemon juice (just a squeeze)
- A beaten egg (to glaze the top for that nice browned look)
- Jam/optional clotted cream

METHOD

- 1 Pre heat oven to 220C/gas 7 and grease baking tray
- 2 Mix flour, salt and baking powder in a bowl
- 3 Add butter and caster sugar and mix with your fingers until finely crumbed
- 4 Heat milk in a jug for 30 seconds then add vanilla extract and a squeeze of lemon juice
- 5 Stir in milk and sultanas to make dough
- 6 Scatter flour on your work surface and hands, then fold and pat your dough until it's around 4cm thick
- 7 Use a cutter/upside down drinking glass to cut out scones from the dough
- 8 Place on baking tray and brush with beaten egg and bake for 15-20 minutes
- 9 Serve with jam/clotted cream and enjoy!

Picnic-ready brownies

These fudgy brownies hold their shape well and are easy to pack into Tupperware and take to the park.



INGREDIENTS

- 185g butter
- 185g dark chocolate
- 85g plain flour
- 40g cocoa powder
- 100g white chocolate
- 3 eggs
- 275g golden caster sugar (regular caster sugar is fine if that's what you have!)

METHOD

- 1 Pre heat oven to 180c/160 fan/gas 4 and line a 20cm square tin with baking paper and grease sides (to avoid sticking to the pan!)
- 2 Melt butter and sugar in a bowl
- 3 Break eggs into a bowl and whisk in sugar, keep whisking until creamy
- 4 Fold cooled chocolate mixture into egg mix
- 5 Sieve flour and cocoa powder into the bowl and fold into the mixture
- 6 Chop white chocolate into chunks and fold in
- 7 Pour mix into lined tin and bake for 30 minutes – ready when sides begin to come away from the tin and centre doesn't wobble
- 8 Excruciating wait to cool!
- 9 Turn out onto a board and chop into 16 squares