



PEABODY

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PEOPLE IN LONDON SINCE 1862

SPRING 2011



ENGAGE

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Resident involvement

An interview with a
resident inspector

Your neighbourhood manager

A day in a working life

Your homes

Solar electricity special



New!

With this issue:
**Supplement for
young people**

Peabody Direct is your first point of contact for all repairs, services and queries.

THIS EDITION

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A word from Steve Howlett



Firstly, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to residents from the former Crown Estate properties. We're delighted to have you on board.

Our mission is to make London a city of opportunity for all. With that in mind, this issue includes a supplement for London's young people who are facing tough challenges right now. We hope this will help to give them ideas about the opportunities available.

We offer opportunities to all our residents, of course. You can read more about our employment, training and customer involvement programmes on pages 6 and 12. There will be even more ways to get involved with us in the forthcoming months because

2012 will be the 150th anniversary of the founding of The Peabody Donation Fund. We are planning lots of events we'd like to share with you so do let us know if you'd like to get involved – you can find out how on the opposite page.

Finally, 2012 will also bring the Olympics and Paralympics to London for the first time since 1948. If any of you are going to be part of this, then let us know and we'll follow your progress and cheer you on. There may also be quite a few of you who remember the 1948 London Olympics – again, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes, Steve

About Engage

Engage is published three times a year for tenants and leaseholders of Peabody.

Editor: Christina McLoughlin

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Front cover: (from top) Melissa Jones, Benedicte McKenzie and residents and volunteer gardeners at Whitecross Estate, EC1

CONTACT US

Throughout *Engage* you'll see Peabody teams and employees listed as contacts for more information. You can also reach these contacts through Peabody Direct.

Peabody Direct: 020 7021 4444 or 0800 022 4040 (free from landlines)
peabody.direct@peabody.org.uk

Contact details for former Crown Estate residents remain unchanged. Please call 020 7255 4100.

Address all content suggestions, contest entries or comments for *Engage* to:

Editor, *Engage*

Peabody, 45 Westminster Bridge Road
London SE1 7JB

Email: peabody.engage@peabody.org.uk

Tenant and family services advice line

Free, confidential advice and information about support for all residents:

020 7021 4491 (Mon–Fri: 1.30pm to 4.30pm)
tenantsup@peabody.org.uk

Did you know? We've expanded the number of different ways you can get involved in what we do. There is something for everyone, whether you have a busy lifestyle or can give us more of your time. To find out more, contact Policy and Insight through Peabody Direct or email: customer.involvement@peabody.org.uk.

PEABODY NEWS

Crown Estate purchase completed

Four new estates have joined the Peabody fold

Peabody has now completed the purchase of the Cumberland Market, Millbank, Victoria Park and Lee Green estates from The Crown Estate – adding some 1,300 properties to our portfolio.

We were first named as the prospective buyer of the estates in October 2010. There then followed a period of consultation during which The Crown Estate considered resident and stakeholder views.

Under the terms of the sale, we will honour existing residents' rights over rent setting and security of tenure and will continue to designate 9 out of every 10 new lettings for key workers.

Steve Howlett, Chief Executive, said: "There is a very strong need for key worker, sub-market rented housing in London and we are committing to keeping these homes affordable."

The sale gives former Crown Estate residents access to Peabody's range of community activities, training and support. You can find a list of projects and events, as well as addresses of Peabody's local learning centres, on page 16 of this issue.



Above: properties at Millbank in Westminster

Peabody has been assigned an Aa2 issuer credit rating by the global rating agency, Moody's. Susan Hickey, Peabody's Executive Director of Finance, said: "Moody's high rating shows that Peabody is in an excellent position to contribute to a great future for London's communities. It's an indication not only of confidence in our current financial strength, but also our ability to pursue a strategy of growth."

• See also 'Bond Issue' on page 4.

Requesting repairs

We're pleased to announce that we can now accept requests for repairs from any member of a household – in the past, we've only been able to take requests from residents named on our tenancy agreements. You can book repairs by contacting Peabody Direct on 020 7021 4444 or freephone 0800 022 4040. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am-8pm. Residents with a My Peabody account can also book repairs online. Former Crown Estate residents should continue to report repairs by calling 0800 783 7496.

Read an interview with a resident repairs inspector on page 6.

Royal wedding

The Peabody out-of-hours service will be operating on the day of the royal wedding: Friday, 29 April 2011. Please call Peabody Direct, as normal. We're also making plans to ensure that contractors will have access to estates in the borough of Westminster on that day in the event of emergency repairs. If you have any further questions about royal wedding day, **please contact neighbourhood services through Peabody Direct.**

Solar electricity

Peabody will be giving many residents access to solar electricity this year.

You can read all about it on page 8.

Translations

This magazine is available in:
Large print, braille or audio tape

বাংলা Français
Türkçe Português
عربي

and any other languages requested

Call Peabody Direct on 020 7021 4444 or 0800 0224040 (free from landlines).

London 2012

London will get top billing on the world's stage next year with the arrival of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We want to hear from any residents who are going to be involved – whether as a volunteer, worker or competitor.

We at Peabody will also be celebrating in 2012 because it will be the 150th anniversary of the founding of The Peabody Donation Fund, set up by American philanthropist George Peabody. We'd very much like you to help us celebrate. We're currently looking for an enthusiastic and energetic individual to



join the Anniversary Working Group, which is overseeing and planning our exciting programme. This includes, amongst many other things, an event at the Royal Albert Hall.

Please contact Eburn Atinmo (Eburn.Atinmo@peabody.org.uk) on 020 7021 4886 for information about both of the above.

Thinking about getting a pet? You are allowed to keep cats, small caged birds and fish in tanks, as long as they are kept in line with the conditions of your lease or tenancy agreement. For more information contact Peabody Direct or check our website (look under 'rights and responsibilities').

News in brief

BOND ISSUE

We've raised £150m from the bond market in a transaction that ranks as the most tightly priced deal of its kind in the sector. Stephen Howlett said: "We are delighted to secure this funding for Peabody's growth. It will enable us to provide homes and services to more people in London into the future."

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

We're aiming to put five of our employees through housing apprenticeships. We've also pledged that up to 5 per cent of all our new employees will be apprentices. Steve Howlett explains: "We can see people learning on the job by working alongside others with lots of experience – and having the opportunity of a structured training programme."

You can read an interview with a Peabody apprentice in this issue's youth supplement.

REGIONAL FORUMS

The East and West regional forums meet four times a year and give residents the opportunity to discuss issues with senior managers from Neighbourhood Services and other Peabody staff. Each forum has an annual budget of £150,000 to allocate to small environmental works which improve communal areas (you can read more about this Estate Controlled Environmental Improvement Budget, ECEIB, on page 11).

Residents who are interested in attending regional forum meetings should contact George Kirby, Assistant Head of Neighbourhoods for further information (telephone 020 7021 4853 or email George.Kirby@peabody.org.uk)

Congratulations to the newly elected chairs and vice chairs: Peter Hogben and Melody Robinson for the West Region and Fred Calcott and Robert Clifton for the East region.

WELL-BEING CONFERENCE

Peabody's London Well-being Conference, which took place on 17 February, looked at the government's Big Society agenda and the opportunities and challenges it creates for housing associations delivering community well-being initiatives. Peabody provides a wide range of such initiatives across London, including volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities, support to get online, and support to eat healthily and get active.

Speakers included community safety campaigner Baroness Newlove, the government's Big Society adviser Lord Wei and Talk About Local founder Will Perrin.

Quality Homes

The new name for our maintenance and building projects



Many of our property and estate improvement works are being rolled into one scheme which we're calling 'Quality Homes'.

This scheme brings together a number of projects and includes the ongoing work we're doing to continue to meet the 'Decent Homes' requirements, the home improvement Government standards which were introduced in 2000.

While a lot of the Quality Homes work will focus on both the external fabric of the Peabody's buildings and inside individual homes, it will also be linked with estate landscaping and modifications being carried out through our IMPROVE project (please see below) as well as our solar electricity initiative.

Pulling all these projects together makes practical sense. More importantly, it should also mean less disruption to you, our

residents, as we will aim, to undertake work in a more co-ordinated manner.

Robert Mathison, Head of Asset Management at Peabody said: "We think we can reduce costs and minimise the impact to residents – for example, not having a separate contractor for the DECENT and SOUND programmes".

If you'd like to find out about Quality Homes, you can contact **Jane Ruff on 020 7021 4323**. In due course you will be able to find out what works are coming to you by visiting the Your Estate page on our website.

Stock survey

We are currently carrying out a stock survey to assess the condition of our housing stock. This will inform planned maintenance and improvement works. In a small number of cases, this may require access to residents' homes for the internal survey, which will take a maximum of 1 hour. Residents will be informed well in advance of any visit.

IMPROVE update

We've improved the urban landscape in Clyde Road, (see right), brightening it up with different textures, materials and colours. We've also created better communal areas for families and better parking – and now it's spring, our new plants should soon be in bloom. Work on Rosendale Road is due to begin in May 2011.





Did you know? If you have a My Peabody account, you can use this secure section of our website to view your rent account, update your personal details, request repairs and more. Former Crown Estate residents will be contacted when registration is available. Go to www.peabody.org.uk.

Graduation Day

Celebrating our first resident graduates from Birkbeck



Resident graduates (left to right): Jo Fisher, Naseerah Syed, Abigail Anfam and Avid Hotan

Two members of our Resident Review Committee, along with other residents from the Diversity Forum and Customer Inspection Team, recently completed the Housing and Participation (Certificate of Higher Education) course at Birkbeck College, University of London.

A graduation ceremony was held in February. The six graduates were: Avid Hotan, Abigail Anfam and Naseerah Syed (Resident Review Committee); Hossam Alhaj-Ahmed and Joanne Fisher (Customer Inspectors) and Eleanor Wooldridge, a member of the Diversity forum.

Genevieve George, Peabody's Customer Involvement Policy Officer, said: "I am very proud of the graduates and their achievements, not only are they more equipped to work with us but the course can also be used as a great basis for a career in housing, which I hope some will choose to follow.

"Also a huge thanks to Birkbeck for developing the course and for providing such a brilliant opportunity for our residents."

If you would like further information about the course please contact the Policy and Insight Team on 020 7021 4457.

Digital TV

Keeping you in the picture

The UK is going digital. We're still on schedule to complete our digital TV installation programme by the end of this year. If you've received a letter from our contractor SCCI to have your socket installed, it's important that you contact them to book an appointment.

You can reach them on **0845 402 0223** or **0208 652 7830** (if you have any problems with the new service, please contact Peabody Direct). Digital TV provision for former Crown Estate residents is being reviewed separately – there is no change to current contact details.

You can find general independent advice about the switchover on www.digitaluk.co.uk



(call **08446 505050**). The Government has also provided a Switchover help scheme to support older (over 75) and disabled people. Call them on **0800 40 85 900** or visit www.helpscheme.co.uk to find out more.

If you have further questions about the Digital TV programme at Peabody, please contact Michael Dickinson on 020 7021 4747 (Michael.Dickinson@peabody.org.uk).

Need to know

PARKING ON OUR ESTATES

You may have heard that changes to the rules around clamping and towing away vehicles on private land are currently being considered by Parliament. Until a decision has been made, parking on our estates will stay as it is, though we are considering alternatives should changes become law (bay holders will be informed by post if that happens). Also, watch out for further updates on our website and estate noticeboards.

In the meantime, we're revising our policy with the help of some residents and will shortly be tendering for a new parking enforcement provider.

You can send comments and suggestions to Neighbourhoodclientteam@peabody.org.uk

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

The tendering of a new contract is underway as Peabody is looking for a long-term partner to provide its landscape maintenance. Seven contractors got through the first stage of the process and we hope to have the new contract in place this autumn.

Please contact Amanda-Jayne Doherty for further information on 020 7021 4095 (Amanda-Jayne.Doherty@peabody.org.uk)

PEST CONTROL

We're looking for a new pest control provider. Currently, we're drawing up contract specifications and will soon be inviting tenders. Thank you to all those residents who've completed satisfaction questionnaires – your input has been invaluable and has helped to identify areas for improvement.

If you have any suggestions you'd like us to consider, please contact Neighbourhoodclientteam@peabody.org.uk

HAVE YOUR SAY

We have just started work with an agency who conducts telephone interviews for us. We're asking you about recent repairs, gas servicing, calls to Peabody Direct, and complaints.

In April we will also be carrying out a survey to gather information about overall satisfaction from our customers, so listen out for a phone call and your chance to tell us what you think about our services.

You can find lots more information about Peabody and its services on our website. Please visit www.peabody.org.uk

An inspector calls

Feedback from one of our new resident inspectors



Following our switch to a new repairs contract in May last year, we've set up a resident inspector repairs group made up of Peabody volunteers. The inspectors each go out with a surveyor to look at work carried out by our contractors and the results are fed back to the Resident Review Committee. Len Baird, pictured below, is one of the newly trained team. He tells us about his experiences so far.



Len Baird has been a Peabody resident since 1951 and lives on a west London estate. When he heard about the opportunity to be a resident repairs inspector, he was curious. "I'm a carpenter by trade, so I have a lot of experience in that field," he said. Also, although now retired, Len had originally worked for Holland, Hannen & Cubitts, the construction company that used to do all the maintenance for Peabody and who were also responsible for many of Peabody's pre-war buildings. Len worked with Peabody from 1948 until 1993 – he was a works manager for the final twenty years – and spent a lot of his day inspecting the quality of repairs. "It's what I used to do for a living," he said, "so this was already of interest to me."

Out on inspections

Len went out on his first inspection in January, having been through the training process. What was it like?

"We looked at lots of completed work. For example, a new door, new flooring put in following a water leak. Another resident had had a window adjusted. Another had had an extractor fan put in."

'Horses for courses'

Len particularly enjoyed working with the surveyor. "I got on with Tony (Ayling) like a house on fire. We had a lot in common," he said. He appreciates, however, that other potential inspectors may not have his repairs background so may not be on such familiar ground. Would that be an issue?

"I'd recommend this to people who have some interest in repairs. It's like everything, 'horses for courses'. Some people will like doing this, some won't," he said.

Resident repairs inspectors offer Peabody a useful opportunity to get feedback about customers' service experience and, generally, Len thinks they are a good idea. "It's good to get residents involved in inspections," he said. "It's also helpful for residents to hear what someone else thinks about a job – another resident."

Updated repairs policy

We have reviewed our repairs policy following the introduction of a repairs handbook, changes to our tenancy agreements and the appointment of a new repairs contractor.

The new policy will focus on how tenants and Peabody can make sure that repairs are carried out 'right first time' and includes up-to-date information on tenants' and Peabody's rights and responsibilities for repairs.

We have had feedback from over 250 residents on the new policy. Some of the main changes we are making are:

- The policy has been updated with more flexible repair appointments – all appointments will be made when the repair is first reported and a text message sent to the resident to confirm the appointment.
- Repairs for elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents are dealt with differently, and in certain cases, have shorter response times. We may also carry out some repairs for elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents that are not normally our responsibility.

For more information please contact the Policy and Insight Team through Peabody Direct.

Recruitment

We're looking for resident volunteers to join our customer inspection team. This will improve and shape our services, identify good and poor practice and allow you to give us your opinions and influence decisions. Full training and support will be provided.

To be a resident repairs inspector, you need to:

- Be able to commit 14 hours every 2-3 months
- Be available for training, have great team-working skills and a positive approach

Contact Genevieve George on 020 7021 4013 (Genevieve.George@peabody.org.uk) or Dan Thomas on 020 7021 4549 (Dan.Thomas@peabody.org.uk) to find out more.

Please contact us if you are in severe financial difficulty and feel that you are unable to make mortgage and/or rent payments on your home. We can provide advice and may be able to direct you to other organisations who can give you further assistance.

FEATURE



Your neighbourhood manager

Jessica Robinson, above right, is one of Peabody's neighbourhood managers. She looks after mixed-tenure properties in Barnet, Enfield, Tottenham and Haringey. She has worked in the housing sector for 30 years and joined Peabody in March 2009.

Like all of Peabody's neighbourhood managers, Jessica Robinson's workload is varied, sometimes challenging – but always rewarding. Her patch covers a wide area of north-east London, which means that she sometimes finds herself driving 20 miles a day.

Jessica, pictured above with resident Kate Angel, is fully involved in all aspects of housing. She is always accessible and holds regular walkabouts on her estates and a surgery every Friday.

Her background in sheltered housing means she is especially sensitive to vulnerable or elderly residents. "If I haven't seen someone for a while, I'll go and check on them or ask around," she says. This approach works. She and her team have already been instrumental in obtaining additional care for a resident in need of help on at least one occasion.

"Residents are the priority"

Whenever possible, Jessica tries to sort out issues directly with the people concerned. "I believe in sorting things out at source," she says, "That way, things don't escalate." She adds: "I want to hear about issues as they crop up, and will do all I can to help."

As a neighbourhood manager, Jessica is a point of contact and support for local groups, including tenants' and residents' associations, MPs and other agencies as well as other

employees in Peabody. She also needs to keep on top of whatever is happening locally, including antisocial behaviour.

Throughout, her residents come first. "I'm only happy when the resident is happy," she said. "I always put their satisfaction first and always listen to them – whether it's an issue with repairs or anything else – the residents are the priority."

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Peabody has 26 neighbourhood managers who now look after leaseholders too.

You can find out who your neighbourhood manager is and when your next neighbourhood walkabout is scheduled by calling Peabody Direct or visiting the Your Estate page on our website.

10%

Neighbourhood managers carry out tenancy audits covering 10% of their area each year. This ensures Peabody has up-to-date records of all household members. It also highlights illegal occupation and abandoned properties and captures specific support needs for residents.

A day in Jessica's working life

05:30am-07.00am Get up, get ready, sort out the house. Get the kids up and moving.

07:00am Log on, open emails, check diary.

08:00am Leave to travel for early morning eviction in Edmonton.

09:00am Arrive at address. Locksmith on site waiting for bailiffs to arrive. Major security problem here – locksmith has nothing to secure the rear of property so have to arrange for extra security to prevent the property from becoming squatted. Told to return at 2pm to meet the operatives.

10:00am Attend walkabout inspections on my Tottenham/Haringey Estates.

Visit all five estates with the Caretaker Manager (Richard Kitchener) the Patch Surveyor (Jermaine Davis) along with any interested residents. We inspect for cleanliness and pick up on any communal repairs issues.

12:00 noon Off to talk to a disabled tenant experiencing damp problems in flat (joint visit with Patch Surveyor).

12:30pm Quick stop to eat lunch in the car.

1pm Follow up on issues arising from morning visits and admin. Make calls to report repairs from walkabout and reply to messages from residents.

2pm Return to this morning's property. Wait for contractor to come along to secure residence – they are stuck in traffic so have to wait a while.

3pm Arrive at the community centre in Barnet. Have appointments with two residents from Strawberry Vale. Discuss antisocial behaviour issues on the estate with the local Safer Neighbourhood Police and phone social services on behalf of a resident who needs support.

4.30pm Dash over to Willow Walk in Tottenham to carry out a door-knock exercise to deliver notices for the Tenants and Residents Association Annual General Meeting. Chat to several residents about the importance of involvement in the local community.

5.45pm Text my manager to say I am finished for the day and head home to start work again as a mom in the kitchen.

If you need somewhere to store bulky items or household items, then Peabody has a limited number of storage sheds and garages available to rent. No flammable materials or toxic chemicals can be stored. Ask your neighbourhood manager for more details.

YOUR HOMES



Here comes the sun

Peabody is bringing solar electricity to its homes. From summer 2011, solar panels will be installed in suitable Peabody properties.

Solar panels are made up of photovoltaic (PV) cells which trap the sun's energy and convert it to electricity. They can be fitted to a roof that is south, south-east or south-west facing and not overshadowed by nearby buildings and trees. From this summer, we will be installing solar panels on suitable roofs on our properties.

Fitting the panels also depends on the structure of the roof and obtaining the relevant planning permission.

When installed, solar electricity brings many benefits:

- Fuel cost savings. Residents living in houses may benefit from savings on their electricity bill of up to £150 per year, based on current electricity prices.
- A reduced carbon footprint. Solar electricity is green. A typical system can save around 1 tonne of CO₂ per year – that's around 25 tonnes over its lifetime.
- Reinvestment in existing homes, buildings and core services. Income from generating solar electricity on blocks will be reinvested because the panels on blocks will be connected to the communal electricity supply and not to the flats. This is to make best use of the electricity generated.

We will not charge tenants for solar panels. Leaseholders living in a block where solar panels are being introduced will also not

have to pay but leaseholders living in a leaseholder-only block or detached home are likely to incur costs if they want panels fitted.

Environmental Sustainability Officer, Tessa Barraclough "We are delighted to be able to bring the power of the sun to our residents through this ambitious and groundbreaking project. It shows that saving money and being green can go hand in hand."

The programme is being funded by energy suppliers through the Government's 'Clean Energy Cashback Scheme'. You can contact Peabody's Sustainability team to find out more on 0800 022 4040 or email [info.sustainability@peabody.org.uk](mailto:sustainability@peabody.org.uk). For more information on home energy generation technologies, contact your local Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre on 0800 512 012.

Every Peabody estate has a neighbourhood manager to deal with any local issues that come up concerning residents, the community or the estate itself. If you need to contact your neighbourhood manager call Peabody Direct. If they cannot answer your enquiry, they will arrange for your manager to contact or visit you.

Looking for a handy person?

Home Solutions provides a convenient, value-for-money option for those small jobs around the home.

Our Home Solutions decorating and handy person service was originally offered to Southwark residents and has since been extended to homes across London. Run from Darwin Court in SE17, and offering reduced rates for customers on benefits, the friendly and professional team can take care of a range of jobs, including installing taps, replacing fuses and putting up shelves.

Walworth Resident Jacqueline Morse tried the service and was delighted with the results. "Sean [O'Reilly] put my mirror and curtains up," she said, "I was pleased and nothing was too much trouble for him."



Call 020 7021 4670 between 9am and 8pm, Monday to Friday, to find out more or book an appointment.



Safety in the home

We've recently added a section to our website covering a whole range of home safety issues. Subjects include fire, electrical, gas and water safety,

It's written in a straightforward style, with links to help you find out more – including important advice about asbestos.

If you need further information about safety, please talk to your Neighbourhood Manager or call Peabody Direct on 020 7021 4444.

Arson awareness

Protecting residents and visitors from fire isn't just about preventing accidents; we also work hard to prevent deliberate fires – arson.

Arson attacks on domestic property and communal areas are an ongoing problem. They are less likely to be opportunistic – domestic arson is often linked to other crimes such as burglary, domestic violence or hate-related crimes. We tackle this problem by training our staff to recognise and manage potential risks and work closely with other organisations, like the fire brigade, police, and local authorities.

Everyone can make a contribution to reducing arson and taking simple steps can make a big difference. So please try to remove rubbish, report abandoned vehicles, suspicious behaviour or fly-tipping. Also, don't let your children carry matches or lighters.

Contact
Peabody Direct for more information



Gas Safety check

If you have gas at your home and haven't had a gas safety check within the last year, please contact Peabody's gas team on 020 7021 4610 and we will arrange for a gas safety inspection for you.

If you need further safety advice, please talk to your neighbourhood manager or call Peabody Direct on 020 7021 4444.



Every issue we highlight a selection of news from around Peabody estates. Are you proud of something that's happened where you live? Let us know and your estate could be featured.

Contact: Editor, Engage

YOUR ESTATES

PEABODY AVENUE



Exciting developments in Pimlico

Work on Peabody Avenue in Pimlico has been completed. Sixteen residents from existing homes are moving into new-build properties, freeing up their three-bedroom properties for new families.

Resident Jean Dixon has just moved into a two-bedroom flat there, having spent 40 years in a three-bedroom home which she felt was getting too big for her. She said: "I couldn't help wanting it when I saw it. I love everything about it: the layout, the units – everything."

Mrs Dixon was particularly pleased about the balcony. "It's the first time I've ever had one," she said. "The views are lovely."

Eighteen shared-ownership flats have been sold and new landscaping and door entry systems have been introduced.

Also, following extensive consultation with local residents, a community centre is opening. Called The Thamesbank Centre – reflecting the historic name for the area – there will be a resident management committee, community activities and an arts worker running programmes for older people (thanks to a generous philanthropic donation). In addition, staff from Peabody's Activate programme will be organising sessions promoting healthy living.

Contact

To find out more, please contact Claire Bennie on 020 7021 4050 (Claire.Bennie@peabody.org.uk) or Duncan Clelland on 020 7021 4767 (Duncan.Clelland@peabody.org.uk).

PEABODY HILL

Neighbourhood charter

Making your voice heard in your local area

Peabody held a neighbourhood charter consultation in Peabody Hill recently, the first of a series being planned across our estates. The primary aim of these events is to introduce neighbourhood charters tailored to local requirements, but they will also give residents access to a range of our services. We also hope they will increase resident involvement and further localise our services.

There was lots to do at Peabody Hill on the day – including raffles, face-painting and a bouncy castle for children – as well as food and drink and a DJ. Staff from our grounds maintenance, revenue and financial advice teams, amongst others, came along to



offer advice, while representatives from our contractor, Osborne, ran a DIY session. Four members of our Tenant Liaison Committee and three local councillors also attended.

Feedback from residents was positive and we had close to 100 people giving us their views during the day. We held a similar consultation at Abbey Orchard in March and will be holding other events during the next 12 months to explore how we can continue to adapt our local services.

Please contact Kemi Lofinmakin on 020 7021 4503 for further information (Kemi.Lofinmakin@peabody.org.uk)

WHITECROSS

How does your garden grow?

Growing produce on estates across London



Peabody has signed up to the Capital Growth initiative, which aims to create 2012 new community food-growing spaces across London by the end of 2012.

As part of this project, raised beds were placed in Roscoe Street on the Whitecross estate near Old Street recently. Residents and Capital Growth volunteers – including staff from local law firm Hogan Lovells – came along to help on the day (above right).

Chris Kimberley (above left), chair of the garden club, is an award-winning gardener who has already carried out a lot of gardening work on the estate. Enthusiastic about the project, he was particularly appreciative of the help provided by "diamond geezers" John Russ and Martin Durrell, the estate caretakers.



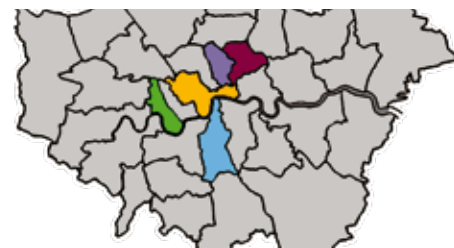
Residents hope to grow strawberries, potatoes, tomatoes, courgettes, marrows, and lots more fruit and vegetables. Peabody has separately funded a new greenhouse for the estate.

Capital Growth is a partnership between London Food Link, the Mayor of London and the Big Lottery's Local Food Fund. It is championed by the Chair of the London Food Board Rosie Boycott. Peabody has pledged to find 20 growing spaces by 2012, including spaces already established through the Activate project (eg, Whitecross and Wild Street).

If you would like to start a food-growing project on your estate, please contact **Layla Conway on 020 7021 4228 or email Layla.Conway@peabody.org.uk**

Boroughs featured

- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Lambeth
- Islington
- Hackney
- Westminster
- Redbridge

**HACKNEY**

Hackney host

An exciting project means that Hackney residents will be involved in preparations for events taking place during the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



We've launched a new project in partnership with Hackney Council to offer Hackney residents the chance to volunteer in the build-up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Hackney Host will give volunteers the opportunity to get involved in events and activities across the borough, with placements in areas like sports coaching, administration and arts. The project aims to recruit 100 volunteers. Participants will have the chance to gain valuable skills and experience, as well as having access to free training and employment support. It will be run from Peabody's Pembury estate office.

If you'd like to find out more about the project, please contact Karthiga Kulendran on 020 7021 4154 or email Karthiga.Kulendran@peabody.org.uk.

WESTMINSTER

Crossrail update: Bond Street Station

Residents living near Bond Street station, W1, will already be aware of plans for over-station development above Bond Street West Crossrail station by Grosvenor and Crossrail.

Some residents may have attended the recent exhibition of the proposed design, which will be integrated with the existing

Tube station to form a combined station that will stretch from Hanover Square to Oxford Street.

Grosvenor will be submitting an application for planning permission and Westminster Council will shortly be sending out letters seeking comments, so it's important that residents of Hanover and Moore flats send their response to this application.

For more information please contact Gian Kataora on 020 7021 4462 or email: Gian.Kataora@peabody.org.uk

More News

ROYAL WEDDING PARTIES

The Tachbrook estate in SW1 will be holding a fancy dress party to celebrate the royal wedding on Friday, 29 April. The party will begin at 2pm and there will be prizes for the best costumes. It will take place on the estate if weather permits but will move to the tenants' hall if it is raining.

There will also be a party from 2pm in the Senior Citizens' Hall on the Pembury estate.

WHEELIE BINS ON VICARAGE LANE

The residents of Vicarage Lane estate in Ilford recently received 240-litre wheelie bins to store household waste. The bins were acquired with funds from the Estate Controlled Environmental Improvement Budget (ECEIB) and will go a long way towards improving the cleanliness of the estate and reduce the incidences of pests. Redbridge Council will dispose of the contents of each bin on collection days even though it does not supply individual wheelie bins across the borough.

FASHION AT PEMBURY

We're holding fashion courses for girls aged 10-18 at the Pembury Girls' club in Hackney. The project will be launched on Saturday, 16 April at the Pembury Youth and Community Centre between 12 noon and 4pm.

Contact Natalie.Bell@peabody.org.uk or call 07713 083 995 to find out more.

ADVICE ABOUT MONEY

Free and confidential money advice will be available at a number of Peabody centres across London. The sessions are being held on the following days (until the end of June):

Wednesday mornings: Strawberry Vale

Wednesday afternoons: Hugh Cubitt Centre

Thursday afternoons: Gateway Centre

Call Leigh Andrews on 020 7021 4016 to find out more.

RE-BALANCE IN EAST LONDON

Peabody resident Nevres Niyazi is a Reflexologist and Reiki practitioner. She practices from East London, but can travel London-wide for mobile visits/treatments.

She offers a sliding scale of payment, depending on your financial situation and can be contacted at www.re-balancetherapies.co.uk or on 07939 573029.

**Contact**

Your neighbourhood manager

Peabody relies on volunteers in many areas of our work.

If you'd like to donate your time and make a difference to someone's day contact **Yolanda Sissing** through Peabody Direct or email your.time@peabody.org.uk

YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

Employment and training

How to improve your skills – for free

Our local centres offer a wide range of training opportunities, including help for those seeking work. Terence Garwood (pictured right), 47, lives in WC2 and has been attending Bruce House in Covent Garden. He speaks of his experiences below.

"I started just before Christmas. I started coming in at 10 o'clock on Friday mornings to apply for jobs. I became a regular and got friendly with staff. I continued with a UK Online course.

"I did have a part-time job last year. That finished around October/November and ever since, I have been guided by the staff here. I've passed a job screening process and now I am waiting for confirmation for an interview. I am looking for warehouse work.

"I've been learning online skills, composing CVs and covering letters and keeping them up to date. I've been told about things that might happen at interviews and possible jobs. I've received very practical help. I've also had a week's work experience here. Part of my duties was to book meetings between staff and students – that was fun. I helped out on the admin side, photocopying. It has helped me – without a shadow of a doubt.

"I would recommend The Bruce House centre and have done so. The same could be said for all the other Peabody centres around London. All you've got to do is show a little bit of willing and the staff here will do their best to help you."

You can find a full list of Peabody's local centres on page 16.



Terence Garwood, above, at Bruce House

Get online with Net Worx

How you can learn computer skills through our Net Worx project



Net Worx is a volunteering project, bringing young and older people together to tackle 'digital exclusion' – the divide between people who already make the most of technology and those who are left out.

Nigel McKeown (pictured left), 66, goes along to the Gateway Centre on Fridays to learn computer skills. He thinks the Net Worx programme is "fantastic".

He explains: "I couldn't have learned this on my own. It's a tremendous idea and has helped me a lot. The young people, particularly Sabrina, are very helpful. It's all free so you can't go wrong – I couldn't have afforded to pay for this."

Nigel has just learnt how to upload images from his camera – you can see some of his photographs on the right, taken during an art class at Bruce House, WC2, one of Peabody's local centres.

We hold Net Worx sessions at locations across London. Please contact Sabrina Jantuah on 07534 282 184 to find out more (Sabrina.Jantuah@peabody.org.uk).



If you'd like to be involved in making things happen on your estate and in your community then call Peabody Direct and ask us about residents' associations and community groups in your area.

Social homebuy



Did you know some residents can get a discount to buy another Peabody property? They can also pick up a discount if they want to buy a home on the open market. Find out more below.

What is social homebuy?

It's a Government scheme funded by the Homes and Communities Agency which allows some tenants to buy their home. It means Peabody residents can get a discount to buy other Peabody properties or properties available on the open market.

What's the discount?

It's a maximum of £16,000, falling to £8,000 depending on the proportion of the property purchased.

Can anyone apply?

You need a secured and assured tenure with Peabody and have to have been a resident for two years at the date of application (and not have breached your tenancy agreement in that time). You also need to have sufficient income to pay service charges. If you're successful you will have to give up your Peabody property when you move into your new home, though.

Can I buy any property and do I have to buy alone?

You can buy any property except one that is being sold on a shared-ownership basis. You can also apply the discount if you are moving in with someone else.

What happens if I move on from the new property?

You'll need to return money if you move within five years. The amount you will have to return is on a sliding scale – calculated according to a percentage of the purchase price. There is nothing to pay back after year five.

You can find out more from Peabody's Sales and Marketing team on 020 7021 4496. If you are not eligible for social homebuy, you may be able to apply for other affordable home-ownership schemes.



Shared ownership flats available

Saffron Court, Walthamstow, London E17

Eight two-bedroom flats and one three-bedroom flat are being sold on a shared ownership basis. Prices start from £215,000, with a minimum 30% share.

To register your interest, please call Peabody Sales and Marketing on 020 7021 4496 or email Sales@peabody.org.uk

Ever wondered who is responsible for what at Peabody?

There's a description of our four different service areas and the teams that make up each one on our website. Just go to www.peabody.org.uk and follow the links 'about us', 'governance' and 'executive team'.

YOUR MONEY

Other adults in the household

Important information for Housing Benefit Claimants

Most of us agree that working adults living in the family should contribute to household costs. The Government sets fixed amounts that an adult should contribute towards the rent when a tenant claims housing benefit. **This is known as a non-dependent deduction.**

Housing benefit claimants with a son/daughter or other adult over 18 years old in the household will be familiar with this appearing on their Housing Benefit award letter.

The contribution expected from non-dependents is set to rise in April 2011.

It is therefore vital to check the letter your Local Authority sends you to see how much the non-dependents will need to contribute.

Common problems include:

Wrong assumptions about income. If you don't tell the Local Authority what the non-dependent actually earns they will deduct the maximum amount from your Housing Benefit.

Local Authorities assuming a person works full-time when they only work part-time. Part-time earnings only attract the lowest deduction.

Non-dependents who aren't working, but aren't claiming any benefits. These groups must declare how they are managing otherwise they will face the highest deductions.

Tenants who receive Disability Living Allowance care component or Attendance Allowance. No non-dependent deductions should be made but frequently still are!

University students. No non-dependent deductions are made during study periods – but often are.

The Peabody Welfare Benefits Team can assist you to put these matters right and save you money each week. The service is free and confidential. Call 0800 022 4040 or 020 7021 4444 and ask for the Welfare Benefits Team.



Need help with gas and electric bills?

Tap into the help available

Gas and electric prices have increased dramatically but, don't worry, there's help available if you're struggling to meet payments.

- **Consider switching suppliers**
Energy Helpline compares all major suppliers in the UK to help you find the best deal, and then takes all the hassle out of switching with simple online forms or arranging the switch over the telephone. **Call 0800 074 0745 or visit www.energyhelpline.com to find out more.**
- **Apply for a grant from one of the energy company's charitable organisations.**
You can telephone for an application or apply online (read the criteria carefully to check you are applying to the correct organisation):
British Gas Energy Trust (01733 421060)
www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk
EDF Energy Trust (01733 421060)
www.edfenergytrust.org.uk
Npower Energy Trust (01733 421060)
www.npowerenergytrust.org.uk
Thames Water Trust Fund (0300 123 6001)
www.twtf.org.uk
- **You're not alone**
There are free independent organisations that can help:
 - **Call into your local Citizen's Advice Bureau**
 - **Contact Money Advice Plus on 01323 635 999 and ask for Monita Le Roux who specialises in dealing with fuel debt.**

Peabody's website also has information about available help.

YOUR LETTERS

Dear Editor



A resident from Islington asks: "I'd like to know what activities there are and how I can get involved? I'm new to Peabody."

Thank you for contacting us. I'm pleased to say that there are lots of ways you can get involved, either through the work we do or the opportunities and services we provide.

If you'd like to find out more about our resident involvement initiatives, including information about resident inspectors (see page 6), please contact Genevieve George (tel: 020 021 4013, Genevieve.George@peabody.org.uk).

If you're interested in training, we offer free programmes and activities locally through our local centres – there's a list of contact details on the back of this issue (hotline number: 0800 587 8215). We also organise lots of different events across London, which you can read about on page 16 (hotline: 0800 587 8215). Younger people can find more things to do in our Young London supplement, which accompanies this magazine.

Finally, if you have time to spare and you'd like to volunteer with us, you can do that too; email your.time@peabody.org.uk or call Peabody Direct.

Engage wants to hear from you. All letters to the editor will receive a written acknowledgement but due to space limitations not all can be published. Printed letters will be edited for length. Send your letters for the next issue by 21 May 2011.

Congratulations to our five lucky wordsearch winners: Mrs J Kirby, SW1; Mrs J Jackman, SW1; Betty Serwaa, E5; J Kennedy, SW1; and Mrs Patricia Everett, SW1.



YOUR PAGE

Peabody, past and present

Nags Head estate

Past ...

Nags Head estate was built by the Nags Head Housing Society Ltd between 1933 and 1947. The estate was purchased by Peabody in 1956, when it consisted of 179 flats and 4 shops.

On 11 July 1960, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother paid a visit. As Patron of The London Gardens Society she was touring gardens in the Bethnal Green area, including one at a ground floor flat in Shipton House. The Queen Mother met tenants John and Nellie Nicholls and their two children. After seeing the garden she unexpectedly asked to look inside the flat as well.



Photograph taken by Mr Charles William Gaylor, and reproduced by kind permission of his family.

Present ...

Work is currently being carried out on Shipton House, below, to convert 15 flats into 13 new self-contained extra care units. There will also be a communal lounge and staff office.

There will be structural work associated with internal alterations and balcony improvements as well as a package of new landscaping around the block. In addition, there will be a completely new glazed facade to enclose existing external walkways.

Nags Head estate is also home to the Sundial Centre, which recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. The centre provides health and social facilities for older people in the Bethnal Green area.



Peabody champions



Bob Blount (right, above) and Tom Heath are residents of Bedfordbury. Within a relatively short space of time, they have made a big difference to the lives of others who live in this sheltered housing scheme in WC2.

Resident Simone Vause wrote in to say: "They have become such a positive presence that we cannot imagine them not being with us."

She explained that, amongst many other things, "They help with watering the plants, sweeping the courtyards, guarding the gate, they advise when people are in hospital – the list goes on."

Her views were endorsed by at least nine other Bedfordbury residents as well as supported housing officer, Estelle Hill-Allen, who was very happy to support their selection as Peabody Champions for spring, 2011.

Do you know someone who should be a Peabody Champion?

Send your nomination, explaining why, to Editor, Engage at the address listed on page 2 or email peabody.engage@peabody.org.uk

Wordsearch

Continuing the royal theme, this wordsearch is all about royal references on the London map. See if you can spot ten places or streets with royal or noble associations below. Words may go up, down and diagonally. Two-word answers may be split (which makes it more of a challenge for you expert puzzlers), but the second word will always start in a square adjacent to the last letter of the first.

If your entry is one of the first five correctly drawn from the hat, you'll win a £20 voucher. The names of the winners will be published in the next issue.

R	E	R	V	S	I	E	V	X	L	U	W
L	B	K	I	N	G	S	C	R	O	S	S
S	O	P	C	R	O	Y	A	H	R	U	M
K	L	R	T	R	A	N	S	I	D	W	I
C	T	I	O	S	P	E	N	D	S	Q	D
O	Y	Y	R	S	U	E	I	R	H	U	D
D	A	Y	I	N	H	T	A	K	I	E	L
L	W	T	A	D	Z	E	W	R	P	E	E
C	S	V	S	F	U	B	E	N	L	N	T
L	G	P	T	D	O	G	B	X	A	S	C
O	N	A	A	L	B	E	R	T	N	B	O
S	I	R	T	W	Y	F	I	T	E	U	U
T	K	K	I	A	S	R	D	A	K	R	R
E	H	R	O	Y	A	L	G	U	N	Y	T
R	O	K	N	E	R	R	E	G	E	N	T
N	U	M	M	I	S	T	E	E	R	T	S

KINGS CROSS
ALBERT BRIDGE
PARK ROYAL
EARLS COURT
KINGSWAY

VICTORIA STATION
REGENT STREET
QUEENSBURY
LORDSHIP LANE
ROYAL DOCKS

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Send all entries to the address listed on page 2 by 21 May 2011.



Is there something happening near you that you'd like to feature in future issues of Engage? Tell us your news. Contact Peabody.Engage@peabody.org.uk or write to Editor, Engage at the address on page 2.

WHAT'S ON

Your local Peabody Centre

Peabody is offering free programmes and activities in your local area including:

- > **Help with finding work through 1:1 support and work clubs**
- > **Help with CV writing, job applications and interview techniques**
- > **IT skills**
- > **Arts and fashion workshops**
- > **Finance and benefits advice**
- > **Healthy eating tips**
- > **Music skills – writing lyrics, studio training and CD production***
- > **Basketball and football sessions***
- > **Volunteering opportunities**

* Age restrictions apply

Call our free hotline number on 0800 587 8215 to find out what's going on near you, or pop into your local learning centre for a chat and more information:

Bruce House Centre

Kemble Street, Covent Garden, London WC2B 4AW **020 7021 4160**

Clapham Centre

Flat 1A Peabody Estate, St John's Hill, Clapham, London SW11 1TY
020 7924 2594

Gateway Centre

66 Lancaster Street, London SE1 ORZ
020 7021 4400

Hugh Cubitt Centre

48 Collier Street, London N1 9QZ
020 7021 4127

Pembury Centre

Pembury Annexe, 183 Dalston Lane London E8 1HL **020 8986 9745**

Sundial Centre

11 Shipton St, London E2 7RU
020 7021 4544

Hotline: 0800 587 8215

Activate events

There's lots to do this spring with Activate London.



For more information about any of these projects please call Activate London on 0800 587 8215 (free from landlines) or email well.being@peabody.org.uk
Also check out our new Activate London page on Facebook

Ongoing Projects	Location
55 Alive Social activities for over 55s	Sundial Centre, E2
Back in Action Structured exercise sessions for elderly people	Sundial Centre, E2 Darwin Court, SE17
Bees Knees Sewing project Women's sewing, embroidery and knitting sessions	Strawberry Vale, N2 Hammersmith & Fulham, SW6
Cockney Sparrow Run by the London Wildlife trust, engaging families in bird-watching and creating an environment for birds to settle	Peabody Hill SE21 Rosendale Estate SE24 Strawberry Vale N2 Tachbrook SW1V
Elvis' Kitchen A DVD of 12 delicious healthy recipes prepared by our very own Elvis (the caretaker)	Across London
Feelgood Friday Monthly massage sessions aimed at local communities offering, reflexology, massage, Kinesiology and more	Darwin Court
Fisher Foods Weekly stall selling good quality low-cost fruit and vegetables	Whitechapel Community Centre, E1
Gardening School School food-growing project for school children, parents and local volunteers	Whitechapel estate, E1
Goldsmith's Greenhouse A food-growing project where residents learn how to grow fruit and vegetables in a greenhouse	Goldsmith and Prideaux estate, W3
Green Fingers, Healthy Food Residents can help grow a wide range of vegetables, then cook the produce at home	Whitecross Street, EC1 Wild Street, WC1V Britannia Village, E16 Lomand House, SE5
Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds Aimed at young people, offering healthy lifestyle activities through exercise and issue-based sessions	Across London
Healthy Lunch Clubs & Ladies who Lunch Local communities are welcome to come along a share a free healthy lunch with one another.	Across London
High Rise Gardening Food-growing project that allows residents to grow herbs and vegetables on their balconies	Pembury, E5 Kings Cross, N1 Darwin Court, SE17
In my Prime League Games sessions for elderly residents	Across London
Makeover Days A pamper session offering a range of treatments such as massage, manicures, pedicures	Rosendale, SE24 Whitecross, EC1Y
On Your Bike Bike maintenance project for young people offering them the skills to mend bikes and take home a bike at the end	Across London
Project Paws A Pony Day where children can spend a day at stables and learn about riding, grooming, mucking out and feeding the horses	Across London
Pukka Tukka, Street Cuisine Offering young people the chance to learn how to cook healthy meals for one another and invited guests.	Across London (for young people)
Shoots N' Spices Enabling local communities to grow their own herbs and spices	Across London (with the Activate London roadshow)
Smoothie Sessions Offering children and young people the opportunity to create a range of fruit smoothies	Across London
Walking Fit Coach trips to a variety of parks offering residents the chance to walk around and explore different environments	Across London