

April, May & June 2011

The Volunteer

Quarterly news for all Peabody volunteers



Volunteers get involved in the 2012 Olympic games



Steering Group members: Volunteers still needed

People are still needed to join the Peabody Volunteer Involvement Steering Group. Our volunteers do a great job with helping Peabody carry out community work, and the Steering Group members have the chance to help us make decisions on the way we improve the support we offer to you, our volunteers.

We are looking for two final members who are able to discuss with us the support we can offer our volunteers, the policies and procedures put in place to help our residents, volunteers and service users. The member must be a resident, volunteer, or benefit from the work carried out by our volunteers. Please contact **Yolanda Sissing**.

Computers made easy!

Net Worx is Peabody's digital inclusion project. We are always on the look-out for people to volunteer to help residents who find using computers challenging. There are learners of all abilities—some of our learners are new users and computers are a concept they have not come across before. Other learners are already have some experience using computers but would like to improve their skills.

Sabrina Jantuah, Peabody's Project Facilitator, describes the Net Worx project as "very rewarding", and the knowledge that you helped somebody to send their first email can be really exciting.

If you would like to be a part of Net Worx contact **Sabrina Jantuah**. The sessions take place at various Peabody centres, dates and times—the Gateway Centre, Leander Court on Ship Street, Deptford Bridge, Lillie Road Estate, the Hugh Cubitt Centre near Kings Cross, Lomond House, and Pembury Annex.

Volunteers took to the Athletes' Village on 29th March

There are only 476 days left before the biggest sporting event in the world comes to London and Peabody would like our volunteers to get involved. We are looking to recruit a team of 100 Hackney-based volunteers for our Hackney Host project.

Peabody are working with Hackney Council to provide help in the months leading up to and including the 2012 Olympic and Para-Olympic games. The council will be hosting a series of events for Hackney residents and tourists who will be flocking to London in 2012. Volunteers are being recruited now to get involved in their local community and assist at these events in the borough.

All volunteers will receive access to free training, including accredited First Aid training after your first 5 hours of volunteering with us. By 2012 you will be an expert on next year's Olympic and Para-Olympic games!

There are 44 volunteers who have been recruited to the project so far and some of them have been the first to visit Olympic Sites. Most recently, a coach guided the volunteers through the upcoming Athletes' Village.

There are many benefits to volunteering with us on this one-of-a-kind experience. The more hours you dedicate to us, the more you will in turn receive from Peabody. You could even become a 2012 Champion—Peabody's Peer Befriender Karthiga describes it as "almost like an ambassador for Hackney, there are some great opportunities to represent the Hackney Host project in Hackney and at the Olympics".

You can volunteer as much or as little as you like, and your travel and lunch expenses will be re-imbursed. If you are interested in joining the Hackney Host project, please contact **Karthiga Kulendran**.

Volunteer feature: Cyprian Amadi

It's Friday morning, and I'm discussing porridge and bananas with a volunteer. Meet Cyprian. Despite living alone, he thinks if he could have dinner with any three people in the world it would be his three daughters. He's been living on the Pembury estate since 1997, which is even longer than Peabody have been there!

He's also one of our most celebrated volunteers, and has volunteered both at Head Office and at the Pembury estate office - assisting our Financial Inclusion Coordinator and being at the front desk. Right now, he's involved with Peabody's Net Worx project.

So, what brought him to volunteering? "It didn't mean very much to me until I studied a course in Housing & Management", he tells me with a smile. He finished his studies in 2009 and stepped straight in when voluntary experience was needed. His ambition is to be a housing officer, and within Peabody he aims to shadow benefits, finance and lettings to build up his skills.

Being able to see the systems in



practice is important to him, as it makes practical use of his interest in housing. He's looking for a job, and volunteers only with Peabody. He says he's still with Peabody because "the people are very good. They maintain a clean environment, and they work hard". Thank you Cyprian!

Having worked in Security until 2005 and a chemical company before that, he's now excited to see how Peabody will develop. "People say to me, 'why are you still volunteering for Peabody?'" he exclaims, telling me about the valuable work experience he has had with the trust. We're all very grateful for the work he has done for us, and we're looking forward to seeing how he progresses in the future.

Dates for your Diary

We have 3 regional support meetings coming up:

- The Gateway Centre, 12th April 2011, 11am-1pm
- Hugh Cubitt Centre, 19th April 2011, 11.30am-1.30pm
- Tachbrook Social Club, 14th April 2011, 11.30am-1.30pm

A free lunch will be available at all of these meetings. A full agenda, map and details will be sent out to the attendees.

- Net Worx Spring celebration, 21st April at Seven Dials Club
- Net Worx @ Pembury Launch: Fridays

If you are interested in joining one of these events or would like more information, please contact **Toni Smith**.

Your questions, answered by us...

How can I get my money back when I'm volunteering?

If you would like to claim your expenses back after an event or opportunity, you are welcome to. During the interview process, expenses will have been explained to you—there is also a section in the volunteer handbook. Your expenses will be refunded if:

- You have had to travel anywhere on behalf of Peabody,
- You have needed to buy food whilst out volunteering with Peabody (up to £5 per day, after 4 hours of volunteering)
- You have needed to pay for childcare—you must have agreed with your volunteer supervisor in advance.

To reclaim your expenses, you must hand in your receipts as soon as you can as well as an expense claim form from the volunteer handbook, in order for you to get your money back as soon as it has been authorized with the minimum inconvenience to you.

Opportunities for training

Induction Training—12 May 2011

Food Hygiene—April 2011, date tbc

Customer Service Skills—May 2011, date tbc

First Aid— July 2011, date tbc

Hackney Host: 2012 Champion training—end of May, date tbc

If you would like to be booked onto any of these, contact **Toni Smith**.

Contact us

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