



Award Winners

The Jack Petchey Foundation that awards grants to youth organisations in London recently gave six of our young residents Achievement Awards in recognition of their commitment to their football team, Mile End United. In addition, the vice chair of EastendHomes, Bernard Cameron, also received a Leaders Award for his encouragement, support and ability to motivate people. Bernie and the youngsters, Courtney Chin, Nashir Hussain, Ali Aktar, Fiaz Miah, Nazarat Younis and Afjol Hussain received their presentations from special guest James Haskell, England Rugby star.



Our mission:

EastendHomes will provide a local housing service which is efficient, gives value for money and meets the needs, priorities and aspirations of all residents.

Our vision:

To achieve the comprehensive regeneration of our estates and to bring about a sustained improvement in the homes and quality of life for residents.

Our core values:

The core values which support, inform and guide our work at all levels in the organisation are:

We value and support resident involvement

We recognise and value the commitment and hard work by our staff

We always strive to provide the best possible service

We welcome and support diversity and we are committed to equality

We want to improve and succeed in all aspects of our work

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We passed our exams!

EastendHomes gets two stars



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Overcrowding

Eastendhomes launches overcrowding reduction scheme

There are over 22,000 Tower Hamlets residents registered for housing in Tower Hamlets and the demand for housing exceeds supply.

EastendHomes works closely with Tower Hamlets Council and other Registered Social Landlords in sharing a single common housing list and lettings policy. Although we share a common policy with other landlords we have recently put into operation our own overcrowding reduction scheme exclusively for our residents.

EastendHomes is aware of the seriousness and negative impact that overcrowding has on families. The Lettings Team recently surveyed all families that have a housing application registered for a transfer to larger accommodation to ask their opinion on a new scheme to reduce overcrowding and the majority of residents who responded were in favour of the scheme being introduced.

The scheme has only been recently launched and fourteen families have received offers to date. Some of these families had been waiting to move for more than twenty years.

Gaye Brown the Lettings Team Manager said "It is very pleasing to be able to help those families that have been waiting a long time to move and the response from residents that have recently been re-housed makes our job worthwhile."

Too crowded? We're doing something about it.

The overcrowding reduction strategy... how will it work?

- Our goal is to make sure that every family, experiencing overcrowding and registered on the waiting list, will receive one offer of accommodation of the correct bedroom size.
- Offers of accommodation will be allocated strictly to those tenants who have waited the longest. Medical recommendations by the Council's Health Advisor will be taken into consideration.
- If an offer is unreasonably refused, you will no longer qualify for an offer of housing under the overcrowding strategy. This will NOT affect the status of your Common Housing Register transfer application, and you will remain eligible for an offer of accommodation in this way.
- Tenants in rent arrears will not normally be considered for an offer of accommodation under this new scheme.
- Three families will be invited to view each property at the same time. The family who has been waiting the longest will be given first refusal. If they refuse it is offered to family number two and so on.
- We will continue to consult tenants annually to ensure that all overcrowded families, newly registered for a transfer, have the opportunity to be included in this scheme.



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Independent Watchdog

gives EastendHomes two stars

In our August Newsletter, we told you about our inspection by the Audit Commission's Housing Inspectorate and invited residents to let us know if they would like to meet the inspectors. The Audit Commission spent a week at EastendHomes in October meeting residents and looking closely at the way in which services are delivered and we are pleased to tell you their findings:

EastendHomes provides a 'good' housing management service, which has 'promising prospects for improvement'

"On a scale from zero to three stars the Audit Commission inspection team gave the EastendHomes service two stars because of the ease of accessing services, the quality of estate management and success with rent collection."

(Audit Commission press release 18th December 2008)

The inspectors highlighted a number of key strengths including our *"five well used local offices which along with good quality literature and a positive attitude by staff create a service that is easy to access."*

They also said that our "void properties are relet quickly, gas servicing is strong and aids and adaptations are carried out on target with a high level of satisfaction."

Against a background of improving services, the inspectors also highlighted areas that we need to tackle, including the need to improve *"the consistency of services between estate*



offices" and ensuring that service charge bills are based on *"leaseholders actual costs and improving the collection rate for these charges"*.

Martin Young, Chair of EastendHomes, has welcomed the report and said:

"This is an excellent result. A relatively few organisations achieve two stars during their first inspection and this result represents the hard work of both staff and residents since EastendHomes was set up."

A copy of the full report is available from EastendHomes or from the Audit Commission website (www.audit-commission.gov.uk.)

Free low energy light bulbs to be delivered to all EastendHomes residents

The Housing Corporation recently wrote to EastendHomes inviting us to make an application for energy efficient light bulbs, to be distributed in partnership with EDF Energy and eaga plc. Our application has been successful and all of our tenanted and leasehold properties will each receive four light bulbs. The light bulbs, which use about 80% less energy than traditional bulbs, will be delivered to homes in March.





Making History

Win a copy of the book!
The 20th Century History of the Isle of Dogs

The Island History Trust is a community history project dedicated to recording and preserving the history of the Isle and the people who live there.

People on the Isle of Dogs started collecting photographs and reminiscences in 1981. This was at the time when the docks and most of the local factories had just closed. Feelings of loss of local identity and of traditional ways of working and living were countered by the activity of recording and preserving local history. Tape-recorded interviews were made with elderly Islanders. Other people wrote down their memories, with some producing complete autobiographies and diaries. Photographs were

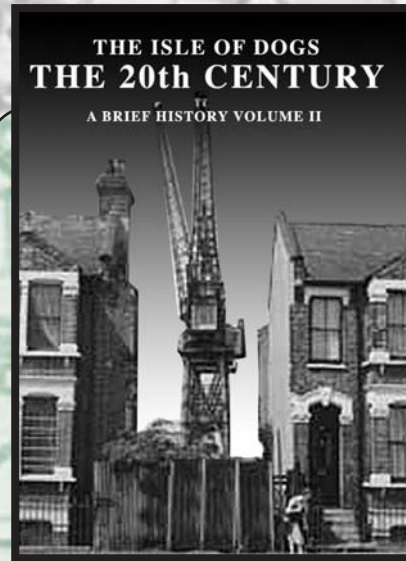
brought out of family albums and biscuit tins, copied and returned to their owners. New prints were made and stored with every print and information was gathered - names, dates, stories. This information was then indexed for easy reference and today there are almost 5,000 pictures in the Photograph Collection.



You can find the Trust at 197 East Ferry Road, London E14 3BA. Telephone 0207987 6041 or visit their website www.islandhistory.org.uk.

The Collections are open to the public on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1.30 to 4.30pm and at the same time on the first Sunday of each month. Although there is a part-time curator of the Collections, the Island History Trust has always been well supported by voluntary workers.

EastendHomes is pleased to sponsor the work of the trust.



Win a copy of *The Isle of Dogs - The 20th Century - A Brief History*

To enter the prize draw you must be an EastendHomes resident. Send your name, address and telephone number to: The Editor, EastendHomes, Tayside House, 31 Pepper Street, London E14 9RP or send an email to editor@eastendhomes.net to arrive at our office no later than 27th February 2009. Best of luck!



Some of the Island History Trust volunteers and friends at the Trust Christmas Party





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Mystery Shopping

Would you like to be a mystery shopper?

EastendHomes receives many telephone calls, emails and letters each year. The efficiency of our responses to these enquiries is measured by recording how quickly enquiries are answered. What we don't always know is the quality of the answers given to residents.

Last year some EastendHomes residents began the process of carrying out a number of anonymous visits to housing centres, phone calls, letters, or emails to test the standards EastendHomes have set themselves. More residents are now needed to carry on this helpful work.

If you would like to volunteer to be a mystery shopper or to find out more about what you would have to do, please contact Peter Griffiths, the Resident Adviser on **020 7456 6718**.



How are we doing?

THE TOP TEN TARGETS CHOSEN BY RESIDENTS

No	Performance Indicator	2007/8 Performance	2008/9 Target	April to June 2008	April to September 2008
1	Voids Turnaround Times	25 days	24 days	21 days ↑	21 days ↑
New lettings					
2	New tenant satisfaction with condition of home	53%	85%	72% ↑	57% ↑
Repairs					
3	Repairs completion in target overall	93%	95%	94% ↑	93%
4	Appointments kept	92%	95%	91% ↓	92% ↑
5	Repairs satisfaction	93%	95%	94% ↑	Not available
Rents					
6	Rents satisfaction with help if in arrears	Not available	80%	(monitored annually)	
Anti-social behaviour					
7	ASB satisfaction with outcome	Not available	80%	100%	90%
Gas servicing					
8	Properties with valid CP12	99%	100%	99.2% ↑	99.5% ↑
Estate cleaning					
9	As above for external areas	Not available	95%	92%	98%
Complaints					
10	Satisfaction with case outcome	Not available	80%	Not available	17%

↑ = Improved on 2007/08 performance

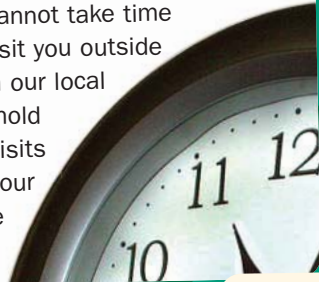
↓ = Not as good as 2007/08 performance



Noticeboard

At your service outside office hours

If you are working full-time and cannot take time off work, then we are happy to visit you outside normal working hours. Staff from our local housing offices, rents and leasehold services team can make home visits to deal with your enquiries. See our contact details on the back page to make an appointment.



Service charge accounts

Leaseholders will see a new charge on their annual service charge accounts. In order to fully comply with the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, a new charge for audit fees will be included in the annual service charge accounts. This will cover the costs of an independent auditor at the end of each year.

Making Our Mark

HouseMark is jointly owned by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) and the National Housing Federation (NHF), two not-for-profit organisations dedicated to improving housing standards. They are the affordable housing sector's leading provider of performance improvement and value for money services. At a recent Housemark conference EastendHomes were identified as having the most improved performance for turning around properties when they become vacant and making them available to new tenants.



Disabilities Focus Group

If you have a disability, then a great place to have your say is at the Disabilities Focus Group. EastendHomes is committed to improving our homes to the disabled.

You will be encouraged to share your experiences with others and to help us to put into practice our Equality and Diversity policies. The meetings are informal and we can arrange transport for you.

If you are interested or want to know more, please contact Peter Griffiths, the Resident Adviser on 020 7456 6718. The next meeting of the group is on 3rd February 2009 at the St George's OAP Club Room, Swedenborg Gardens, London E1 8HP

Paying your rent



Where tenants pay their rent by Direct Debit our administrative costs are reduced.

To encourage more people to pay in this way, we have set up a scheme which means if you set up a Direct Debit arrangement to pay your rent and continue for a minimum period of six months, we will send you vouchers for £20.

We are now introducing the option to pay your rent by Standing Order. Although we don't recommend this option because you have to instruct your bank to make the payments and complete a revised form each time your rent is adjusted, we nevertheless feel that some people would prefer this arrangement.

If you would like to know more about any of the payment options please contact Mary Collier, Rents & Arrears Manager, on **020 8880 7811**.

Rents Quarterly Prize Draw

Congratulations go to Mr Pickard of Stockholm House who was selected as the winner of our quarterly prize draw for tenants who have maintained a clear or credit balance on their rent account.



FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT
23 February – 8 March 2009

MAKE IT HAPPEN
CHOOSE FAIRTRADE





Leyton Orient launch Football Player Development Centre at George Green's School

Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme (LOCSP), the long-running and established community charity set up by Leyton Orient Football Club (LOFC), have announced the addition of another Player Development Centre in East London.

George Green's School, opposite Island Gardens DLR on Manchester Road, will start developing young, local players and boosts LOCSPs number of centres in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest to twelve.

Starting in January 2009 and continuing every Friday, except on school holidays, the centres cater for 5 to 7 year olds (4:30pm – 5:30pm), 8 to 11 year olds (5:30pm – 6:30pm) and 11 to 19 year olds (7pm – 9pm). Sessions are free for 11 to 19 year olds and £2 for the two younger age groups.

Taking place in the Sports Hall and outside playing area and run by fully FA qualified and experienced coaches, the sessions are mixed sex, mixed ability and, overall, fun for those involved as they include a variety of skills and techniques to improve and develop young footballers.

Daniel Fenner, Football Development Manager, Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme said:



"The establishment of the Player Development Centre at George Green's School on the Isle of Dogs represents a potentially huge audience of young players looking to learn and develop skills to take their knowledge, understanding, appreciation and skills to the next level.

"George Green's is a dynamic and professional location to run this centre from and their forward-thinking and enthusiasm has allowed our partnership to provide this opportunity for local young people to come down and experience the next level of coaching....We may find a future Leyton Orient player in our midst!"

Sessions are run in conjunction with LOCSP, George Green's School, Leyton Orient FC and the Island Youth Football Project.

For more information, please contact Daniel Fenner, Football Development Manager, Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme on 020 8556 5973, email daniel.fenner@locsp.org or visit the website at www.locsp.org. Alternatively, please contact Carol Moloney, Operations Manager George Green's Youth Services, on 020 7987 6032 or email cmoloney@georgegreens.com

fonesforsafety

Fonesforsafety is a mobile phone recycling scheme which turns used mobile phones into reconfigured "999 only" phone alarms for victims of domestic violence.

- Each reconfigured phone is securely reprogrammed to direct-dial 999 at the touch of any key from 1-9 and can receive incoming calls and text messages for added reassurance.
- The phone alarms are distributed free of charge by local police and domestic violence support agencies.

Fonesforsafety works within a victim protection framework which demonstrates that domestic violence can only be tackled by working together in our public and private lives. The project highlights the added value of working in partnership across professional barriers, by offering greater safety to victims and an imaginative way to mobilise our communities.

Linda Standing, EastendHomes' Domestic Violence Officer, said "EastendHomes is dedicated to stopping all forms of domestic

violence. The contribution of each mobile phone could save the life of a vulnerable individual. Think before you bin your old phone. Drop your old phone at any EastendHomes Housing Office and we will arrange for it to be put to the best possible use."





Estate Advice Surgeries

Mile End

- **Rents Service** – every Wednesday 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm
- **Right to Buy and Leasehold Service Charges** – 1st Tuesday of each month 2pm to 4.30pm
- **Lettings Service** – 3rd Friday of each month

Glamis

- **Rents Service** – every Tuesday 10am to 12 noon
- **Right to Buy and Leasehold Service Charges** – 3rd Friday of each month 2pm to 4.30pm
- **Lettings Service** – 2nd Tuesday of each month 10am to 4pm

Island Gardens

- **Rents Service** – every Wednesday 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm
- **Right to Buy and Leasehold Service Charges** – 2nd Monday of each month 2pm to 4.30pm
- **Lettings Service** – 1st Monday of each month 10am to 4pm

St George's

- **Rents Service** – every Tuesday 2pm to 4pm
- **Right to Buy and Leasehold Service Charges** – 3rd Friday of each month 2pm to 4.30pm
- **Lettings Service** – 2nd Tuesday of each month 10am to 4pm

Holland

- **Rents Service** – every Thursday - 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4.30pm
- **Right to Buy and Leasehold Service Charges** – 4th Tuesday of each month 2pm to 4.30pm
- **Lettings Service** – 4th Thursday of each month 10am to 4pm

If you are unable to make one of our day time appointments, we are now able to offer you an early morning or early evening home visit. Phone any of our housing centres to make an appointment that suits you.

At your service

www.eastendhomes.net

Contacts

You can now contact us by Text Phone 07961 941584

EastendHomes Head Office

Tayside House, 1st Floor,
31 Pepper Street, London E14 9RP
Phone: 020 7517 4700

Island Gardens Housing Centre

137 Manchester Road,
Isle of Dogs, London E14 3DN
Phone: 020 7538 2340

Mile End Community Housing Centre

38 Wager Street,
London E3 4JE
Phone: 020 8880 7055

St George's Housing Centre

Shearsmith House,
Hindmarsh Close, London E1 8HT
Phone: 020 7481 4110
Phone: 020 7702 9186
(12-2pm)

EastendHomes Housing Centre (Commercial St)

35-39 Commercial Street,
London E1 6BD
Phone: 020 7456 6700

Glamis Housing Centre

Roslin House, Brodlove Lane,
London E1 9EL
Phone: 020 7791 7947

Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

0800 376 1637

Rents

020 8880 7811

Right to Buy and Leasehold Services

**020 7517 4727 or
020 7517 4713**

Other languages and formats that this newsletter is available in

If you ask, we can provide copies of this newsletter in a range of languages and formats, including:

- in languages such as Bengali and Somali;
- in Braille;
- in large print;
- on audio tape.

To ask for a different format, please contact your local housing centre.

