

You said we did! All our housing centres are now open to residents from 9am to 4.30pm

A group of young people from the Bede Estate got together recently to make a bid for the funding of their youth centre. They gave a presentation to the "Youth Opportunity Funding" scheme at the Town Hall. The panel was impressed by their presentation and they raised a fantastic £5,000 for the youth centre. Sam, Megan, John, George and Faron are seen here with their cheque which is to be used to buy furniture



In this issue...

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



Our rents compare well to other social landlords
Value for Money



Green Living
Energy Savng, Think Pink, Cleaning up



Fire Safety Partnership
Don't be a victim

- Stop those Housing Cheats • Trees for Cities • Get online at home
- Anti-Social Behaviour • East End Lives • Debt Management
- Top Ten Targets • Estate Advice Surgeries • Noticeboard

How does my rent compare?

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) website provides a comparison of the average rent levels of all social landlords in Tower Hamlets. In 2008/2009 the average rent for an EastendHomes property was £72.75, which compares very favourably with the average rents charged by other social landlords operating in the Borough. In fact, the Tenant Services Authority comparison shows EastendHomes has the second lowest average rent of local housing providers in Tower Hamlets.

Looking at the private sector and considering that a large number of EastendHomes leasehold properties are privately let, rent levels compare even more favourably. The maximum housing benefit payable by bedroom size in the private market is reviewed each month by the Borough. In February 2010, the local housing allowance for Tower Hamlets was set at £422.50 for a four-bedroom property. This compares to EastendHomes average rent for a four-bedroom property of £94.33 in 2008/2009. Full details of local housing allowances and how these impact on housing benefit entitlement are available at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk. On the Tower Hamlets website go to Housing, Benefits and then Local housing allowance.

Meanwhile, EastendHomes will continue to work hard at providing high quality, value for money housing services with the annual rent increase, planned for April, to remain low, thereby helping our tenants cope with the financial impact of the recession.



**EastendHomes
offers the second
lowest average
rent of all
social housing
providers
working in the
Borough**

Tenant Services Authority website



Trees for Cities
Breathing life into your neighbourhood

Island Gardens

Trees for Cities is continuing to work in partnership with EastendHomes to enhance the green spaces on the Manchester estate. Last year the areas around Urmston House and Farnworth House were transformed into a mix of attractive shrubs, fruiting trees, wildflower meadows and woodland copses to attract wildlife. There are two new community gardens around Salford House and we are continuing our programme of community engagement through consultation and volunteer opportunities to generate a better understanding of wildlife and trees and involve local residents in transforming their local environment. The work on the estate has won a 2009 London Tree and Woodland Award.

Glamis Estate

Working in partnership with EastendHomes, Trees for Cities is getting involved in the regeneration and greening of the Glamis Estate. This year's project focuses on two garden areas used by the senior residents of the estate and one of the main residential entrances on Glamis East Estate.

Through community consultation and planting workshops, residents will be able to get actively involved in improving their green spaces and transforming areas into beautiful wildlife friendly gardens to be enjoyed throughout the seasons. This project is supported by EastendHomes, the City Bridge Trust and Esmee Fairbairn.

Help stop those housing cheats!

The majority of people who apply for housing wait their turn in order to be allocated a home. Housing cheats don't wait. They simply find a way of jumping the queue. They take up valuable housing spaces which deprive those in greater need. They are guilty of housing fraud.

There are three main different types of housing fraud:

Unlawful subletting:

This is when a tenant lets out their home without the knowledge or permission of EastendHomes.

Obtaining a house by deception:

This is when a person obtains a home by giving false information on their application, for example, not informing the landlord that they are renting another council or housing association property. They are committing housing fraud.

Wrongly claimed succession:

When a tenant dies, there are rules as to what should be done with the tenancy of a particular property. Wrongly claimed succession is when someone tries to take over the tenancy to which they are not entitled. One way this may occur is that they might declare that they lived with the tenant before the person died, but the truth is that they in fact lived somewhere else. This is housing fraud.

We will be working hard to track down housing cheats and ensure that homes are given to those entitled to having a home and also to those in greatest need.

What can you do to help? Your help in reporting housing fraud is important because you can see what is going on in your neighbourhood. If you suspect someone is a housing cheat, let us know. It could make a real difference.

TO REPORT HOUSING FRAUD, Please contact us by phone on: 020 8880 7836

or email: editor@eastendhomes.net

Anything you tell us will be confidential and any reporting of housing fraud can be made anonymously. We will investigate your concerns and if we find someone has committed housing fraud, that person may then lose their home.

TOWER HAMLETS HOUSING

Housing Demand

Demand by bedroom need and Community Group (CG) as at 24/02/2010

| Bedroom(s) needed | CG1 | CG2 | CG3 | CG4 | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1 bed | 889 | 597 | 7,566 | 2,308 | 11,340 |
| 2 bed | 452 | 629 | 3,060 | 534 | 4,675 |
| 3 bed | 171 | 852 | 3,489 | 255 | 4,867 |
| 4 bed | 52 | 306 | 1,016 | 79 | 1,453 |
| 5 bed + | 23 | 82 | 137 | 12 | 254 |
| Total | 1,587 | 2,466 | 15,268 | 3,298 | 22,599 |

The table below shows the length of time applicants are currently waiting on the Housing list. However, it is NOT an indicator of how long applicants can wait for rehousing.

Applicants Currently Waiting (years)

| Bedroom(s) required | 1 bed | 2 bed | 3 bed | 4 bed | 5 bed + | Total |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| Up to 1 Year | 2,105 | 1,046 | 733 | 153 | 27 | 4,074 |
| 2 Years | 1,911 | 758 | 684 | 138 | 22 | 3,513 |
| 3 Years | 1,712 | 620 | 568 | 130 | 17 | 3,050 |
| 4 Years | 1,762 | 585 | 607 | 180 | 21 | 3,155 |
| 5 Years | 1,145 | 494 | 611 | 125 | 16 | 2,381 |
| 6 Years | 728 | 317 | 608 | 118 | 26 | 1,697 |
| 7 Years | 611 | 229 | 368 | 140 | 16 | 1,364 |
| 8 Years | 454 | 184 | 258 | 106 | 18 | 970 |
| 9 Years | 277 | 101 | 152 | 61 | 18 | 609 |
| 10 Years | 181 | 79 | 120 | 60 | 13 | 462 |
| 11 Years | 152 | 58 | 70 | 48 | 12 | 341 |
| 12 Years + | 349 | 296 | 392 | 182 | 38 | 1,247 |
| Total | 11,338 | 4,877 | 4,871 | 1,454 | 254 | 22,599 |

Homes Let

Homes Let between 01/04/2009 & 31/12/2009

| Bedroom Size | CG1 | CG2 | CG3 | CG4 | Total |
|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| (Bedroom) 0 | 1 | 18 | 113 | 1 | 128 |
| 1 | 96 | 377 | 271 | 9 | 753 |
| 2 | 58 | 428 | 177 | - | 663 |
| 3 | 39 | 156 | 71 | - | 266 |
| 4 | 19 | 63 | 23 | - | 105 |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 3 |
| 6 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Total | 208 | 1,039 | 656 | 10 | 1,913 |

Landlord and property type of homes let

| Landlord | Bungalow | Flat | House | Maisonette | Total |
|--------------|----------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| COUNCIL | 4 | 452 | 17 | 103 | 576 |
| RSL | 5 | 1,060 | 86 | 167 | 1,397 |
| Total | 9 | 1,532 | 102 | 270 | 1,913 |

Floor level of homes let

| Basement | Ground | 1st | 2nd to 4th | 5th to 10th | 11+ | Grand Total |
|----------|--------|-----|------------|-------------|-----|-------------|
| 0 | 497 | 572 | 764 | 108 | 73 | 1,913 |

HOUSING FRAUD

Green Living

Help Clean Up Your Neighbourhood

To boost recycling levels to even higher levels, Tower Hamlets Council has launched a new initiative, Recycling Champions. Recycling has increased by a whopping 40% in the past two years. *"We've come on in leaps and bounds over the last two years, but we've still got a long way to go. Since we introduced our recycling campaign, We Can Recycle More, and improved the services, we now recycle almost a quarter of all household waste in the Borough. But throwing our rubbish away into landfill sites is not a sustainable option and we need to do everything we can to recycle more,"* says **Councillor Abdal Ullah**, Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener at Tower Hamlets Council.

Being a Recycling Champion is all about encouraging your neighbours, friends, family and colleagues to reduce, reuse and recycle. It is a great way to meet new people, make a positive difference in your community and learn new skills.

Anyone who is over 18 and is passionate about recycling and environmental issues can become a Recycling Champion, and the amount of time you commit is completely up to you, every little bit helps! To support you, the Council will arrange regular meetings where you can meet other like-minded people and send regular email bulletins with information on recycling services and forthcoming events. To sign up to be a Recycling Champion or for more information, please phone **020 7364 5004**.

Think Pink

40% of the waste we produce can be easily recycled through the pink bags and purple recycling bins.

You can recycle all of the following materials using your pink bags and purple bins.

The materials can all be mixed together as they are sorted out after collection at a materials recovery facility.



Your collection service

Recycling is collected weekly. If recycling is collected from your doorstep please make sure it is out

by 7am and is clearly visible to the collection crews.

If you aren't sure about what service you have access to phone **020 7364 5004** or email generalenquiries@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

Recycling sacks

Recycling sacks are delivered to residents doors every few months. If you run out of pink sacks you can order some more:

- Phone **020 7364 5004**
- Email generalenquiries@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Visit your local housing centre

Only recycling left out in pink sacks will be collected from your door.

Become a Recycling Champion!





For more information
 Visit: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/recycling
 Email: recycling@towerhamlets.gov.uk
 Call: 020 7364 5004



TOWER HAMLETS
CAN RECYCLE MORE!
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk





Energy saving tips

Here are some simple measures you can do right now.

Turn your thermostat down.

Reducing your room temperature by 1°C can cut your heating bills by up to 10% and typically save around £55 per year. If you are able, set your heating and hot water to come on only when needed, rather than have it running all the time.

Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows and check for draughts around windows and doors.

Always turn off the lights when you leave a room and use energy saving lightbulbs in all rooms.

Do not leave electrical appliances, like televisions and DVD players, on standby. Also remember not to leave laptops and mobile phones on charge unnecessarily, or chargers left on, plugged into wall sockets.

If possible, fill up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher. One full load uses less energy than two half loads.

Only boil as much water as you need at a time, but remember to cover the element if you are using an electric kettle.

A dripping hot water tap wastes energy and in one week wastes enough hot water to fill half a bath. So fix leaking taps and make sure they are fully turned off!

Loss of Water Supply on St George's Estate

In the early hours of Saturday 20th March a loss of water supply at St Georges estate was reported to the emergency call out service. It was found that there was severe flooding of the water tank chamber in the basement of Shearsmith House. This chamber contains the water pumps for all the tower blocks on the estate.

In response to the emergency, Thames Water turned off the water mains supply to the St George's estate. The water supply was diverted and restored to all flats up to the 6th floor.

EastendHomes staff and their contractors were on site throughout Saturday and Sunday. Orders were placed for standpipes to be erected. It took a number of hours to fully pump out the submerged tank chamber, and on inspection it was confirmed that the pumps (each serving a separate tower block) were beyond repair and needed to be replaced.

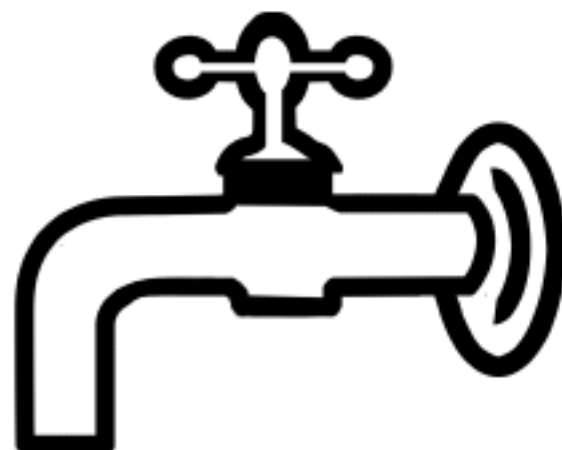
Throughout the weekend EastendHomes staff, worked hard to ensure that residents in the tower blocks were

provided with as much assistance as possible. All residents were informed of the nature of the problem with a phone number provided for emergency assistance. Supplies of bottled water were purchased and delivered to residents in the towers, starting with the elderly and vulnerable.

The temporary booster pump was delivered to the estate on Monday afternoon and EastendHomes engineers started the installation. Water supplies to all flats were reinstated at approximately 9pm on Monday 22nd March.

Replacement booster pumps have been ordered. Independent specialist technical consultants have been commissioned to carry out an investigation and to report on the cause of the fault which led to the booster pump breakdown.

EastendHomes regrets very much the inconvenience experienced by residents during the emergency at the weekend and is grateful for the patience and understanding of residents and also for the expressions of thanks that were made to our staff for their efforts during the emergency



London Fire Brigade Fire Safety Partnership



Following a tragic fire in Southwark in July 2009, residents have asked if we could explain what we are doing to ensure the safety of our blocks in the event of a fire.

EastendHomes manages many types of buildings but there are none that have the same design issues that are likely to have caused the serious problems at Lakanal House in Southwark. We are still, however, awaiting the final official report and not until then will we be completely clear as to what exactly caused the fire and the tragic deaths in Southwark.

We have been working hard behind the scenes and here are some of the things we have achieved to put our residents' minds at rest;

- Carrying out risk assessments in all blocks, not just the blocks identified as being high risk
- Introducing systems to keep an eye on the completion of the works identified by risk assessments
- Highlighting issues of fire safety awareness with residents, including the need to correctly dispose of rubbish and bulk furniture correctly
- Working closely with the London Fire Brigade to promote their home fire safety visits.
- Promoting free London Fire Brigade smoke alarms
- Installing fire safety notices on all landings in high rise blocks
- Carrying out smoke alarm checks for vulnerable residents
- Introducing parking enforcement across estates to ensure emergency access
- Informing residents of the increased risk with all properties that have window grills and security gates
- Including fire safety information in new tenancy start up packs.

Allan Lamb said "London Fire Brigade is taking every opportunity to try to keep residents safe. Working with local partners makes this task so much easier, so having EastEndHomes on board is a fantastic bonus, and will increase the amount of Londoners we can keep safe and therefore we are very grateful for all their help."

To arrange a free home fire safety visit, phone the freephone number 08000 28 44 28, and quote reference "TH 02" when you make this call. This service is open to all London residents. Translation assistance can be provided and special arrangements are also in place for residents with any sight or hearing impairments. A female Fire fighter can also be present during a Home Fire Safety Visit so please ask when booking an appointment. Together we can keep all our communities Safe and Sound.



A fire safety plan for flats and maisonettes

Flats and maisonettes are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors will hold back flames and smoke for a time. If there is a fire elsewhere in the building, it is usually safer for you to stay in your flat, unless heat or smoke is affecting you.

If you live in a flat or maisonette, and in the event of a fire, please follow this extra advice:

- If there is a fire in your own flat, leave the building closing the door to your flat behind you
- If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer
- If you live in a building with a lift, do not use the lift if there is a fire. Leave the building by the stairs instead
- Call 999 from any phone. Give them the address, including the number of your flat, and tell them the floor on which the fire has started.

DO YOU HAVE A WORKING SMOKE ALARM AT HOME?

IF NOT YOU ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO DIE IN A FIRE



200 people die each year in accidental fires in their homes, caused by smoking materials, candles, and other factors such as cooking appliances.

You can reduce the risk of fire in your home by following some simple fire safety steps.



Fit smoke alarms on each level of your home.



Test your smoke alarms weekly. Never remove the batteries.



Put it out. Right out! Make sure you put cigarettes out properly and never smoke in bed.



Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows it and where door and window keys are kept.

Social Housing landlords have a responsibility to you and your home and must ensure that gas and electrical appliances they supply are safe and in good working order. Your landlord may also fit smoke alarms in shared accommodation and communal areas. Speak to your landlord if you have any questions or concerns.

Your local fire and rescue service offers free Home Fire Risk Checks and may be able to fit free smoke alarms in your home. For more information visit our website below:

www.direct.gov.uk/firekills



Please do not pour oil down the sink!

Water and oil simply do not mix! When any form of oil is poured down the sink, the oil hardens and therefore blocks the pipes. EastendHomes has been spending a considerable amount of time and money on clearing out oil from blocked sinks and drains. Residents will be asked to pay the cost for clearing blockages if found to be caused by oil being poured down the sink.

There are number of things, however, you can do with your oil instead of pouring it down the sink! Cooking oil in particular can be strained and used many times before it has to be thrown away

To dispose of oil safely and efficiently, always allow the oil to go cold. Here are some ideas:

- **Let the oil cool** and then soak up excess oil with kitchen towel or any absorbent paper, and then it is safe to throw away in the bin
- **Pour the oil into a plastic or glass jar** with a lid, and put the container in the bin with your rubbish
- **Recycle your oil.** Tower Hamlets Council is able to recycle cooking oil. This is a service free of charge offered from their Northumberland Wharf site in Poplar Dock. The site is open every day from 8am to 8pm on Mondays to Saturdays, and from 9am to 8pm on Sundays. Cooking oil is then converted into green fuel (LF100). The average deep fat fryer contains around 3 litres of cooking oil, but with just 1 litre alone, that can be converted to produce enough clean electricity to make 240 cups of tea!

Estate Advice Surgeries

Advice surgeries are held at local Housing Centres. If you are unable to make one of our daytime appointments, we are able to offer you early morning or early evening home visits. **Please phone to make an appointment.**

Rents 020 8880 7811 Leasehold Services 020 7517 4711
Lettings 020 8880 7817

Mile End 020 8880 7055

Mile End Housing Centre, 38 Wager Street, London E3 4JE

- **Rents Service** – fortnightly on a 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 10am to 4pm (some surgeries are also held at The Centre on the British Estate – phone for details)

St George's and Glamis

020 7791 7947 or freephone 0800 0281587

St George's Housing Regeneration Project Office and Area Housing Centre, 61A Swedenborg Gardens, London E1 8HT

- **Rents Service** – fortnightly on a Tuesday 10am to 12 noon at Glamis and 2pm to 4pm at St George's
- **Right to Buy and Leasehold Service Charges** – 3rd Friday of each month 10am to 12 noon at Glamis and 2pm to 4pm at St. George's
- **Lettings Service** – 2nd Tuesday of each month 10am to 12 noon at Glamis and 2pm to 4pm at St George's
- **Housing management (Glamis)** – every Tuesday 10am to 12 noon a drop-in is held and every Friday 10am to 12 noon by appointment at Glamis

Holland 020 7456 6700

Holland Housing Centre, 35 Commercial Street, London E1 6BD

- **Rents Service** – fortnightly on a Thursday 10am to 4pm
- **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 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm

Island Gardens 020 7538 2340

Island Gardens Housing Centre, 137 Manchester Road, London E14 3DN

- **Rents Service** – fortnightly on a 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 Wednesday of each month 10am to 4pm

Partnership tackle anti-social behaviour

Working with our partners in the Police and with Tower Hamlets, EastendHomes has taken out twelve Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's) with the youths who have been causing trouble outside the shops in Cubitt Town and also congregating on the stairwells in Glengarnock Avenue.

A group of young people have recently been upsetting shoppers and shopkeepers on Manchester Road by stealing and throwing fireworks. Tower Hamlets Council, the Police and EastendHomes joined forces and took action to stop the anti-social behaviour. Six boys aged 15 and 16 have now signed Acceptable Behaviour Contracts which means that they have promised to behave in a way acceptable to the community.

EastendHomes continues to work hard both individually and with its partners to prevent anti-social behaviour in and around our properties. The campaign never stops.

But the continual support of its residents to combat vandalism and low level criminality is needed. To assist EastendHomes it is important you remember the following:

- Do not allow strangers into your block if they buzz your intercom
- Do not allow strangers to follow you into your block
- Notify the local housing office if there are people loitering on the stairwells or in entrance lobbies
- Notify the Police or the local office of any suspicious behaviour

If we all work together we can continue to reduce anti social behaviour.

Colin Hewitt, Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Co-ordinator said, "Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are just one of the many tools and powers used to tackle anti-social behaviour in Tower Hamlets. Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour that negatively impacts on other people's quality of life and will simply not be tolerated. Help and support is available but we need you to report any such behaviour to the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Reporting line on 0800 917 5918. It is free and lines are open 24 hours a day."

Contact Us

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 & Glamis Regeneration Project Office and Area Housing Centre

61A Swedenborg Gardens
London E1 8HT
Phone: 020 7680 8640

St George's and Glamis residents can also contact us on freephone 0800 0281587

Holland Housing Centre

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

Out of Hours

Emergency Repairs

020 7364 7070

Rents

020 8880 7811

Right to Buy and Leasehold Services

020 7517 4727
or **020 7517 4713**

Debt Crisis

EastendHomes works with debt and welfare agencies to help residents in financial difficulties. The agencies with whom we work are independent, and offer advisors who you can talk to in confidence.

One particular agent is Fair Finance. It is able to come up with a plan to help you budget your finances. To book an appointment phone 020 7780 1777 or see their website www.fairfinance.org.uk

You can also read our Money Matters leaflet which gives information on debt advice. The leaflet is available at our local housing centres and on our website www.eastendhomes.net

Simple tips for dealing with multiple debts:

Contact all creditors

Make a list of all your creditors and write to each one explaining your difficulties and circumstances. You may also need to ask them to confirm full details of the amount owing, actual arrears, penalty charges etc. Make requests to all creditors to freeze interest and charges/actions and allow you time to resolve your current difficulties.

Maximise Income

If you are in receipt of benefit, then check whether you are receiving the correct amount and see whether you could claim any additional help.

Draw up a financial Statement

Prepare your financial statement based on accurate income and expenditure. Deal with any excess or surplus expenditure.

Decide on and deal with priority debts

Some debts carry more severe penalties than others. This means they must be dealt with first. A priority debt is usually defined as one where non-payment can result in you being imprisoned, or losing your home, or losing essential goods and services.

Deal with secondary/non-priority debts

Distribute surplus income between all secondary creditors. In case of there being no surplus income, then you need to request hold on account, or make a request for a write off or partial write off, fully explaining your circumstances.

East End Lives – The Sequel!

Last year we told you about a local history project EastendHomes was developing with film makers Phil Maxwell and Hazuan Hashim. The project is focusing on the changes that have taken place on our estates over the years. The first film *East End Lives* was premiered at the Rich Mix Cinema as part of the East End Film Festival 2009.



Filming for *East End Lives 2* is now well under way. According to Phil, this film “will have a different feel to it because there will be less characters than in the first film. We want to show how the East End is changing, and to do this we have been filming the demolition of a block on the Bede Estate and introduced Imaan - a twelve year old girl - who has just started secondary school on the Isle of Dogs. As well as filming more of the landscape of the East End,

we will be exploring the lives of different generations. Retired publicans Les and Georgina have lived in the East End all their lives, and have shared their vivid recollections of pub life and social history with us. They are an amazing, entertaining and knowledgeable couple. Imaan discusses her life and echoes the pride Len and Georgina have in the area”.

The Editor, Hazuan Hashim, is enthusiastic about the new film. Hazuan says *“They are a journey, which is always full of surprises. We are never quite sure where the film will end up. It is important that the subjects, rather than the filmmakers, drive the documentary. We respect the people in our film and allow them to have an authentic voice, rather than try to put words in their mouths. We are viewing the East End of London through the eyes and experiences of a diverse group of individuals who give the project its genuineness”.*

The film is due for release later this year...



Noticeboard

Guidance on replacing bulbs in the newly installed light fittings in WCs and bathrooms

During recent consultation with residents about the repairs service, one issue raised was that they wanted guidance on replacing bulbs in the newly installed light fittings. The bulbs are 4-pin 28 Watt Double-D fittings. They are widely available in DIY stores and specialist electrical stores. Your local housing centre can advise you how to remove the cover.

EastendHomes will replace the bulbs free of charge for elderly or disabled residents and will carry out the work on a rechargeable basis for any other resident.



What A Difference A Cake Makes

Staff at the Island Gardens Housing Centre and local residents raised a marvellous £443.43 for Bliss, the special care baby charity which provides vital support and care to premature and sick babies across the UK. The money was raised as part of a national campaign by making and selling cupcakes during Valentine's week.



Audit Commission Inspection One Year On

It's just over a year since EastendHomes was inspected by the Audit Commission and achieved a healthy "two star" good service rating. Since that time, EastendHomes has worked hard to make improvements that were identified by the inspectors. This has included improving the profiling information we hold about our residents. We have developed a new Corporate Plan and improved our service charge collection. EastendHomes wants to continue to work with residents to improve services and we are planning a further residents conference in June 2010. Further details will be made available nearer the time.

Evening Repairs Service

EastendHomes is piloting an evening repairs service on the Mile End, Island Gardens and Holland Estates. If you would prefer for your repair to be completed on a Wednesday evening please advise the Housing Officer when you report the repair. The pilot relates to most plumbing and carpentry repairs. If the pilot proves a success we will extend to other estates.

Get online at home

Home Access is a government drive that helps low-income families who currently lack access to a computer or internet access to get online at home. Low-income families who meet set eligibility criteria can apply for a Home Access Grant to buy a computer and/or internet package. Grants are available on a first come, first served basis. All Home Access packages are designed to encourage and support learning at home. Families are asked to call the Home Access Grant helpline on 0333 200 1004 where they will be taken through a simple eligibility check to see if they qualify for a grant.

Prepay meter victory

The National Housing Federation has won a major victory in its campaign to end premium charges to prepay meter users. British Gas was the last of the big energy providers to charge prepayment customers more for their gas and electricity. Now they have made their charging structure the same for all customers. With the removal of prepay premiums, low income customers will save money.

The National Housing Federation's Chief Executive, David Orr, said, "This is a great day for social justice, and means that almost one million people, many of whom are on lower incomes, will now find it easier to pay their energy bills and heat their homes."



Top ten target time

How are we doing?



| No | Performance Indicator | Target 2009/10 | Performance First Quarter 2009/10 | Performance Second Quarter 2009/10 | Performance Third Quarter 2009/10 |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Short term Void Turnaround Times | 22 days | 20 days | 17.6 days | 17.4 days |
| Lettings | | | | | |
| 2 | New tenant satisfaction with condition of home | 85% | Not available | 87% | 83% |
| Repairs | | | | | |
| 3 | Repairs completion in target overall | 96% | 95% | 94% | 96% |
| 4 | Appointments kept | 96% | 98% | 97% | 96% |
| 5 | Repairs satisfaction | 96% | Not available | 88% | 90% |
| Rents | | | | | |
| 6 | Satisfaction with help given if in arrears (monitored annually) | 2009 Annual Survey Results 73% | | | |
| Anti-social behaviour | | | | | |
| 7 | Satisfaction with outcome of complaint | 80% | Not available | 80% | 68% |
| Gas servicing | | | | | |
| 8 | % Properties with valid gas certificate | 100% | 99.0% | 99.3% | 99.9% |
| Estate cleaning | | | | | |
| 9 | External areas grade B or above | 98% | 99% | 99.5% | 99.7% |
| Complaints | | | | | |
| 10 | Satisfaction with case outcome | 80% | Not available | 64% | 50% |

Autumn and Winter Gardening Scheme for Elderly Tenants

Over the autumn and winter months our in house horticulture team piloted a scheme to help tidy up some of our retired residents' gardens. It was very successful and much appreciated by the residents involved.

If you are an elderly tenant (over 65) and would like to be considered for next years scheme please contact your local Housing Centre.



Safe and Well



EastendHomes staff rose to the challenge provided by the recent severe weather in terms of ensuring residents were supported and services provided.

At the start of the bad weather we had over 10 tons of rock salt in store. By the first week of January we realised that we were running very short with about one day's rock salt left. We tried to source local supplies without success. We contacted other RSLs to discuss the sourcing of further salt supplies but established that they were having

similar difficulties. Two volunteer estate staff agreed to drive to Liverpool on a Saturday in order to deliver a further 2 tons of salt.

Estate staff prioritised the laying of salt and removing compacted ice and snow. We concentrated on salting those paths next to homes and slopes and where there were two paths close to each other we focussed on gritting one.

We telephoned and called on over two hundred elderly residents who had registered with our "Safe and Well" scheme to check that they were okay and if

they needed any assistance. We feel that thanks to our staff we were able to provide a good service during the bad weather.

If you would like to join our "Safe and Well" Scheme or know one of our residents who would benefit from joining then phone Dominic Asamboia on 020 7517 4700. Once you have registered we will contact you regularly to check if you need any assistance. If any problems arise, EastendHomes will liaise with carers or organisations you have asked us to contact.

With Thanks!

Dear EastendHomes

We on Saunders Ness Estate had a power cut because of a damaged cable. I would like to commend Paul Wilson, Mark Hyams and Keith from Island Gardens Housing Office. You know about the vulnerability, severe disability and medical needs of my daughter. She is very poorly at this particular time and have had GPs out to her all last week. It was impossible to move her as it would have been seriously detrimental to her health. EDF energy said from 11am in the morning that they would get me a generator. They told this to Mark who continuously asked them where it was.

Keith was around and constantly knocking to give us updates. Paul came in and was concerned on how we were coping. Keith was there with us until 9pm when the lights etc came on. He gave me his personal mobile number and said he was answering it until Sunday evening. I must say they deserve a medal for the attention that was paid because of my daughter. I can't thank them enough. It meant so much to us as a Family to have that level of support.

Kathy M, Saunders Ness Estate

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.

