

CBHA news

The newsletter for CBHA residents

Autumn 2008



CBHA is chosen to give jobs and training help across the borough

CBHA has been chosen to give employment and training advice through WorkNet to residents of other social landlords across Waltham Forest. The selection of CBHA to provide this important and life-changing service is a clear recognition of its expertise in helping residents get into jobs and training.

Head of economic development Sharon Wint-Gordon said: "We have a track record of successfully placing residents in training and work and we are delighted to now be able to offer this help to more people."

Five areas of particular need in the borough have been identified and through WorkNet, CBHA will be offering people in those areas:

- job preparation
- job screening
- help with writing CVs and application forms
- child care and in-work benefit advice
- tips for successful job interviews
- links to local training programmes
- support in dressing for success at an interview.

Sharon said: "As well as screening people for what work they would be suitable for, we work directly with employers –

including big high street names such as Clarkes, WH Smith, Carphone Warehouse and Wallis – to find what jobs they have and what sort of people they are looking for."

She said the job screening included doing a pre-interview with the candidate – which was also a great practice interview for them.

"We also organise work trials. If a company is unsure of a candidate we put forward, we ask them to take them for one week. This enables both the employer and employee to make sure they are happy. Recently we have organised six work trials. And we have 10 people who are now in employment."

There is a wide range of opportunities available and many people including lone parents and those wishing to return to work can be helped. One-to-one sessions are used to explore the skills the candidate has.



Kelly Anthony, of Leytonstone, is one woman who was helped to find work by CBHA's training and employment team.

She had been looking for work since leaving college before finding a job at Wallis clothes store in central London.

Kelly, 21, said: "Khalid and Shofique were really supportive and would call me and tell me about vacancies so I knew about lots of job openings. They showed me how to look on the internet and helped me with interview techniques too."

Kelly is working part-time while she studies psychology and social studies at college. She hopes to do a psychology degree.



Training and employment team Julia Undennis, Shofique Rahman, Tasnim Seedat and Khalid Fysal

Billboards show jobs

Look out for billboards outside CBHA's Chingford area office which will be showing live job vacancies and advertising that job screening is going on that day.

If the billboards are showing vacancies, residents can come inside for a screening when their skills and the type of work they are seeking will be discussed,

But residents must be registered for the service – so make sure you register now. The new billboards will also be at Leytonstone and Leyton by November.

GARDENING COMPETITION

Autumn tasks: plant spring bulbs, sow vegetables, put in winter bedding

A gardening competition organised by CBHA is starting to inspire residents to get busy outside with autumn tasks.

They have been removing summer plants and putting in winter bedding to provide colour as the days get duller.

Why not brighten up the outside of your home with violas – in blues, purples and yellows. The good news is that you do not even need a garden to enter CBHA's competition. Use window boxes, hanging baskets and tubs to add a splash of colour.

Now is also a good time to put in bulbs ready for the spring. There are many varieties of daffodils and tulips to choose from and kids will love helping you bury them about four inches



down in the soil.

You might like to grow vegetables too - crops that can be sown at this time of the year include broad beans and winter-hardy varieties of lettuce (grow under cloches to protect from frost).

The competition will be judged in three age groups – up to 10 years, 11 to 18 and 18 and above. Let CBHA know you have a display worth checking out by calling Sue Graham on 020 922 8500.

Gardening workshops

Want to learn more about gardening? Please let CBHA know if you are interested in gardening workshops by ringing 020 922 8500 or emailing services@cbha.org.uk.

All aboard the digivan...



See story inside



View from the chair

Susan Nwalema talks about the new Group logo plus changes happening on the Board

buildings and hoardings across London. And CBHA will become better known as a result. This is important when we seek money from big funders like the Lottery Fund or the LDA.

If you visit our new-look website, www.cbha.org.uk, you will see it has already been updated with our new logo and style.

I would stress it is simply a new look and nothing else has changed about CBHA including our relationship with Peabody.

• More changes are underway, this time with the CBHA Board. Earlier this year we consulted residents about proposed changes to increase further the status of our resident-led Board within the Peabody Group and these were supported by you.

In the next few months, we will be advertising for new resident Board members so please look out for these announcements which will be delivered to your home, placed on our noticeboards and on our website.

There will also be a CBHA News Special about becoming a Board member. If you cannot wait for our special publications and want to know more about becoming a CBHA Board member now, please contact our Board support officer, Tom Fleming, on 020 7922 8557 or email tomf@cbha.org.uk.

You will have noticed that CBHA News has a new masthead, including a new logo.

This is part of a new look developed for the whole of the Peabody Group, of which CBHA has been a part of since we were established in 1996.

We will be sharing the 'kaleidoscope' symbol with other members of the group but have developed our own CBHA version of it. One of the advantages we will get from sharing this symbol is that it will become a familiar sight on

Ask Naz, Nigel and Sandra



Welfare benefits advice with CBHA money advisers Nigel Harrison, Nazeerah Ravat and Sandra Alaezi

Can a single person who has one child below 15 years and also receives Disability Living Allowance work without it affecting their benefit?

Yes, a person who receives Disability Living Allowance can work as well. If they do receive some Housing and Council Tax Benefit, they can also be exempt from deductions from their Housing Benefit if for example they have someone living on the premises who works.

Disability Living Allowance is not taken into account for Housing Benefit Council Tax Benefit. Contact a CBHA money adviser if you require further information.

Can a person who is not receiving full Housing Benefit/Council Tax benefit because of high rent from private landlord be able to get further help towards the shortfall?

Yes, there is the Discretionary Housing Benefit Scheme and extra benefit can be applied for. Please note that not all applicants are successful. It is, however, worth trying.

What is the difference between priority and non priority debts i.e. why is it more important to pay your rent or mortgage instead of a catalogue debt?

Priority debts are the ones that the legal penalty can make you lose your house or liberty e.g.

- rent/mortgage arrears could lead to your house being repossessed
- council tax arrears could lead to committal to prison
- your supplier could disconnect your gas/electricity if you are in arrears
- maintenance payment
- hire purchase and magistrate court fines.

Non-priority debts have lesser penalty than the priority ones.

- credit cards
 - bank overdraft
 - bank loans
 - catalogue sales
 - money owed to family or friend and such like.
- You may not go to prison for these debts but they may affect your credit scores which may hinder your eligibility in obtaining further credit.

Please phone to make an appointment: 020 7922 8572 or 020 7922 8575

Sandra joins Naz and Nigel on money advice team



New money adviser Sandra Alaezi has joined the money guidance team. She is pictured above, right, with Nav Ravat and Nigel Harrison.

Money priority is pay your rent

Paying your rent is a priority - that's the message from CBHA money guidance team.

The cost of living is rising, meaning many people are finding it harder to make ends meet. But this is not a reason to get into arrears with your rent.

Head of revenues Martins Aimiuwu said: "We all know food and petrol prices are rising but residents must remember that keeping a roof over their head is a priority.

"And with Christmas coming up, some are tempted to spend rent money on presents.

"Our message is - do not do this unless you want to face possible

eviction in the new year."

Several tenants are very close to being evicted within the next month for non-payment of rent.

Money workshops

Martins added residents could take advantage of some money advice workshops to help residents cope with the credit crunch and manage their finances.

Please call 0208 7922 8500 to speak to a money adviser for more details.

"These workshops are a great opportunity to get some professional advice for free," said Martins.

Check out if you can get an energy grant to pay bills

Could you be entitled to an energy grant?

CBHA, in partnership with East London Financial Inclusion Unit (ELFI), is encouraging the take-up of energy grants.

CBHA residents are able to make an appointment to see a worker from ELFI on Wednesdays at the Leytonstone office.

If you have an outstanding debt of gas and/or electricity, are a customer of EDF Energy or British Gas and have an income of £15,000 a year or less or you are receiving:

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance

A large proportion of CBHA residents have pre-payment meters which can be between £90 and £300 more expensive per year than for direct debit or quarterly bill customers.

They are also used by companies as a way of collecting debt. They do this by deducting money towards an existing debt each time the metre is credited.

- Working Tax Credit
 - Child Tax Credit
 - Housing Benefit
 - Council Tax Benefit
 - Disability Living Allowance
 - Pension Credit
- you might be eligible to apply for a grant to pay your bill in full.

For more information ring Naz on 020 7922 8572.

Former PC Colin joins anti-social behaviour team

Former police constable Colin Liddle has joined CBHA as an anti-social behaviour officer.

He worked all over London during his time with the police, including 11 years on the River Thames where he took part in the recovery of the Marchioness pleasure boat which was involved in a collision with a dredger. The last 10 years of his service were in Waltham Forest.

Colin said: "I worked closely with local people on the safer neighbourhoods initiative and I have attended many courses in community and neighbourhood policing. So I am used to the partnership approach to dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour.

"There are many similarities now I am working for CBHA. I was based at the office in Ching Way so I have just moved downstairs! I am still out and about talking to people and interacting – which is essential in gathering information. I am a professional investigator so I investigate complaints and gather and record evidence."

Colin has been kept busy since joining CBHA in July and has issued Notices of Seeking Possession in some extreme cases and Anti-social Behaviour Agreements.



Colin (centre) with tenancy support officer Gary Brown (left) and fellow ASB officer Matthew Coates

He added: "One difference is that people are much happier to talk to CBHA and willing to complain about anti-social behaviour problems than they were to the police. This is good news because ultimately it will lead to us improving the quality of life for residents."

Domestic violence help

Did you know CBHA can provide help in the home for victims of domestic violence? In partnership with Waltham Forest, CBHA can fund and deliver the Sanctuary Project which looks at making homes more secure in cases of domestic violence.

Book place on DIY workshop

Need some tips on putting up shelves, assembling pre-packed furniture and carrying out small DIY jobs in the home? Then you could benefit from CBHA's new workshops in DIY starting soon.

Anyone interested can contact Amira Aslam on 020 922 8510 to book a place.

Residents: have your say

CBHA is consulting resi-dents to find out how they would most like to be involved.

Resident involvement officer Matthew Weekes said: "CBHA prides itself on being cutting edge for resident involvement. We have residents on the Board who run the organisation.

"But now we are interested in people's views on other ways they would like to have input."

Current options are the customer panel and focus groups.

The customer panel has about 60 members who have agreed to be consulted on any issues or on areas they are particularly interested in such as repairs and street cleaning. They are then either sent a survey or asked for their views on the phone. They receive a voucher as a thank you for giving their views.

"We want to know if more people would like to take part in internet surveys which could be very quick and convenient to do," said Matthew.

Focus group meetings are held occasionally to talk about specific issues.

For more information, contact Matthew on 020 7922 8553.



Resident involvement officer Matthew Weekes

Digivan will drive you to succeed with jobs support, IT, homework and more



Look out for the Digivan out and about in the borough. It will be rebranded with the new CBHA logo soon. Inside the van are eight computer terminals.

The Digivan will tour round Waltham Forest to offer all sorts of employment support, life skills, IT and homework clubs.

Ring 0207 922 8587 to see when it will be visiting your area.

Join the brunch job club...

Croissants, juice, tea and coffee are on offer at the Aim High Brunch Job Club, now in Leytonstone. The idea is that people looking for work – or to find a better job than their current position – can call in for brunch and advice. The club is already running at Chingford.

They will be given support in creating a CV, filling in application forms, surfing the net (Chingford only) to look for work or improving their skills. The brunch club is open from 9.30am to 1pm at Leytonstone and Chingford area offices.

Fast forward to an exciting career in the media

An exciting new media studies programme called Fast Forward aims to get young people into work or training. There are 100 places available.

The two-year programme will work with people aged between 16 and 19 in Waltham Forest who are not currently either working or training at college. The aim is to get young people into media-related work or to achieve an accredited qualification.

Fast Forward will start at the end of October. Anyone interested can contact Tasnim Seedat at CBHA on 0207 922 8587 for more information.

Simple to ring us

It is now even easier to contact CBHA's money advisers or employment and training staff, thanks to additional options on the telephone switchboard.

When ringing 0207 922 8500, simply press:

- option one for repairs
- two for rents and payments
- three for the money advise helpdesk or
- four for employment and training.

Well-being roadshow

A well-being roadshow was due to take place on Saturday October 25, as CBHA News went to press. The Black History Special event was at the Paradox, Chingford, from 4pm to 8pm.

Hire CBHA's Paradox or Pavilion venues

Any residents looking to hire a venue can book the Paradox in Chingford or the Pavilion in Leyton. Both places are available to the public for one-off events or regular activities and meetings.

Please call the area office for rates.

Exciting prizes to be won in draw

There are some exciting prizes to be won in the next resident reward scheme draw, to be made at the end of November. There is still time to join the scheme if you are not yet a member. You must have clear rent and service charge accounts and no breaches of tenancy to be eligible.

And if your membership has lapsed due to rent arrears, you can still re-join once you pay off your arrears.

The prizes will include £50 supermarket vouchers for four lucky winners.

The winner of the latest draw was a Walthamstow resident who enjoyed his prize of a break at Pontins holiday camp.



The reward scheme logo

CBHA works with local managers

CBHA is now working with two new neighbourhood managers to improve what residents feel are the top priorities for the areas.

Uke Agwu, who is covering Walthamstow, and Razaul Karim, whose patch is Leytonstone, have found 'environmental crime' is among the top issues on residents' lists. This includes fly tipping, graffiti and litter.

Uke (pictured below) said: "As neighbourhood managers, we act as a lynch pin between the residents and the service providers. We will make sure they deliver what they are supposed to."

"Other issues include youth matters, crime, anti-social behaviour and on-street prostitution."

He said: "I have been working with the Ward's Panel for Lea Bridge - a police forum - and passing on what residents think are the priorities they should be dealing with."

"So far I have found residents have welcomed my presence when they realise I am on their side and will act as a voice for them."



Razaul (above) said: "Youth issues are very important to people in Leytonstone. So one of my roles is to ensure all the youth services provided by the council, CBHA and others are co-ordinated. I liaise between different partners and make sure we have an integrated approach, where there is no duplication."

As in Walthamstow, Razaul has found crime-related issues are important to people. This includes anti-social behaviour, dangerous dogs and prostitution. Again, he is working with the police and other organisations to improve the situation.

Fly-tipping and graffiti, the cleanliness of the area, overgrown grass or trees and the maintenance of the streets - including pot holes - are what people are concerned about.

"I am here to highlight the priority areas to the council, contractors or police. For example, if there's a road or area that needs attention, I can pass that on to the relevant service. And where people are not satisfied with services, I work with those services to improve things."

Check out these for mutual exchange

Here are the latest details of properties where tenants wish to move through mutual exchange.

To be eligible for mutual exchange, residents must have an assured or secure tenancy, have a clear rent account and no anti-social behaviour issues.

Both properties must be in good condition and the exchange must not create overcrowding or under occupation.

When a resident moves as a result of mutual exchange they do not start a new tenancy. Tenants are responsible for their own moving costs.

Remember, CBHA now has a mutual exchange website where users can search the database to find properties that match their requirements.

Full details are available from Leticia Dowsett at the Leyton office on 020 7922 8579 or email leticia@cbha.org.uk.

Case	Current	Wants to exchange to
1	Leyton 3 bed house, 2 storey	Chingford, 2 bed house with garden
2	Leytonstone 3 bed 3 storey	Chingford/Walthamstow 2 bed house
3	Leytonstone, 3 bed disabled unit, no lift	Walthamstow, 2 bed house
4	Chingford 3 bed 3 storey	Walthamstow, Leyton, and Leytonstone, 2 bed house
5	Chingford 3 bed 2 storey	Chingford 2 bed house
6	Chingford 3 bed 3 storey	Chingford 1 bed ground floor
7	Leyton - 2 bed 2 storey	3 bed 5 person house - any CBHA area
8	Leytonstone 2 bed house	3 bed 4 person house - any CBHA area
9	Chingford 1 bed first floor flat	Chingford 2 bed house
Non CBHA tenants wanting to move to a CBHA property		
10	Chingford (Lilac close) 2 bed house with garden	3 bed, 5 person house - any CBHA area
11	Walthamstow (Blackhorse Road) 2 bed flat	Walthamstow/Chingford 3 bed 4 person house
12	Walthamstow 4 bed house	Chingford only, 4 bed house
13	Leytonstone maisonette 2 bed	Leytonstone only, 2 bed house or ground floor flat
14	Leytonstone 2 bed flat on 2 nd floor of block	3 bed house - any CBHA area
15	Dartford 2 bed flat first floor with access to communal garden	3 bed house - any CBHA area
16	4 bed property Wick road, Hackney E9 5DQ	3 bed property - Leyton, Leytonstone and Walthamstow

Ebony and Sharon join CBHA team



Two new youth engagement officers have joined CBHA's community team. They are Ebony Hope and Sharon Allert. In the picture: Ebony, youth workers Douglas Mohammed and Judy Griffiths, and Sharon.

Get Active with CBHA

As part of Active 8 London, a big Lottery Fund-sponsored project, we are running a series of free events to contribute to healthier communities. November's events are:

- Wednesday November 5**
Ladies Who Lunch, 12noon -3pm, E17
- Friday November 7**
Intercultural Food Day, 5pm - 9pm, Epi Centre, E11
- Tuesday November 11**
Pukka Tukka, 5pm - 8pm, Langthorne Park, E11
- Wednesday November 12**
Ladies Who Lunch, 12noon - 3pm, Pavilion, E10
- Wednesday November 19**
Ladies Who Lunch, 12noon - 3pm, Epi Centre, E11
- Wednesday November 26**
Ladies Who Lunch, 12noon - 3pm, Paradox, E4
- Saturday November 22**
The Good Neighbour Recruit Dinner, 6pm -9pm, Epi Centre E11
- Saturday November 29**
Wellbeing Roadshow, 2pm - 6pm, Epi centre, E11




Contact number

Contact CBHA for all four areas on our one central number:

020 7922 8500

Or email us at:
services@cbha.org.uk



Send your comments, suggestions and letters for CBHA News to:

CBHA news
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