

# Rising Star

April 2023



## 1. Year ahead

The new year 2023-4 has begun and this is a very important year for us at Peter Bedford. This is the penultimate year before we want to achieve being Tenant Lead. This means there will be plenty of opportunities to influence and produce services together, and to make sure your priorities drive us forward.

We have changed our contractors and now have smaller local companies carrying out repairs with good feedback. We will be tendering for all our repairs this year including gas servicing, cleaning and gardening. We are looking for good value and quality delivery. Alongside a large programme of fire alarms and doors upgrades, we expect to begin a programme of insulation and energy efficiency works. We are also planning to improve access to Clissold Hub.

We are currently recruiting and actively fundraising to grow our Enterprises and Training team so we can deliver a full programme of courses and events this year. We have had some recent fundraising success which will support this.



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## 2. Tenant Portal

We can now set up a Tenant Portal Account for any tenant so you can see some details of your account. You can view and update your Personal details, Accounts and Payments, Repairs and Satisfaction Surveys, and Get in Touch with us. You will need an email address and access to the internet either on a smartphone or on a computer. You can find the app by searching for SASSHA ICE in the App store or equivalent. Please email: [admin.email@peterbedford.org.uk](mailto:admin.email@peterbedford.org.uk) or ask your Housing Worker to request an account for you. Once an account has been set up for you, you will receive an email inviting you to log in.

## 3. Complaints

We have been working hard to improve how we respond to complaints this year, and have been able to respond within 2 weeks to the majority of complaints since October 2023. We aim to respond to 4 out of 5 within 2 weeks, and are pleased to say we are doing better than planned.

There is a lot of publicity about poor quality Housing Association homes in the press currently. The Government are strengthening their powers to compel Housing Associations to resolve complaints quickly. We very much believe we respond to your requests as well as possible, however we do not always get everything right. If you have reason to make a complaint, details of how to do so are here [Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions - Peter Bedford Housing Association](#). You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time for advice or information. More particularly, if the complaint is still not resolved to your satisfaction after Stage 2, you can refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman to investigate on:

[www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)



## 4. You said, We did

Since last year's Tenant Conference, we have done the following, based on tenants' suggestions:

- Improved responsiveness to tenant phone calls and emails
- Made better use of text messages to communicate important information
- Set up the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Panel for tenants and staff
- Improved our support to victims of ASB
- Re-established the Peer Support Group
- Agreed an annual calendar of events for tenants
- Committed finances to improving accessibility at Clissold Hub in 2023/24
- Improved the percentage of repairs completed on time; currently 97% in 2022/23
- Made more use of Isledon Hub, using it as a Warm Space, to host events and run classes



## 5. Hello and Goodbye!

We would like to welcome the following new staff to PBHA:

- Beatrice (Newham Recovery)
- Chevonne (EHM Hackney)



Sadly we have had to say goodbye to the following staff who have moved on:

- Kevin (Housing Officer/ASB Lead)
- Junior (EHM Hackney)
- Tim (Tenant Board Member)



## 6. Anti-Social Behaviour Panel

Following requests of tenants, we have set up a Panel of tenants and staff to review and improve PBHA's handling of anti-social behaviour. Our first meeting took place in January and was successful. We are very grateful to the six tenants who attended and contributed. The two main goals are:

1. Tenants to advise PBHA how we could handle specific ASB cases better
2. Staff to explain the options available to PBHA in handling ASB



We will be meeting every three months and are really looking forward to what we can achieve together.

All cases discussed are anonymised.

## 7. Tenant Conference

We held the Tenant Conference at the end of March which gave some great insights into how we are doing and what we should focus on going forward. There was appreciation for improvements to repairs as our contractors have improved over the year, and for the Peer Support group which was very highly valued.

In terms of improvement, tenants asked us to:

- give more regular feedback on repairs and their progress,
- to send an annual letter to tenants or explain plans for their home in house meetings,
- use the Community Hubs more for events and activities, and explore offering a weekend service again,
- hold more events such as a Summer daytrip, a BBQ at Clissold and possibly celebrating the Coronation

We discussed how we can improve the rent increase information and be more transparent. We also explained that the Tenant Portal is available for tenants to access information about their tenancy and report repairs. Tenants were pleased to hear the Housing Officer will soon resume their drop ins so you can informally report concerns.

Then we finished by tenants telling us how they want to co-design and produce services. The ASB and Property panels were considered very important, as was having a more frequent Tenant Conference visiting each hub every year. Tenants wanted to be advocates to assist each other and for lead tenants to build bridges between tenants who do not take part in what Peter Bedford can offer.



## 8. Board Recruitment

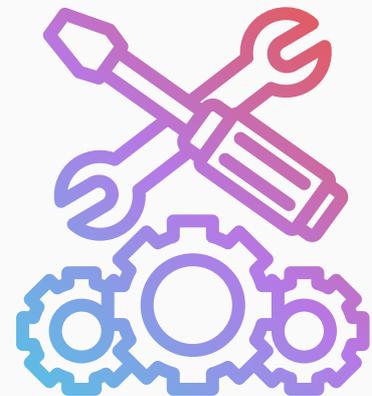


We are recruiting for a new Board member with Lived Experience of using Peter Bedford's services. It is important to us that your experience is brought to the Board and that tenants and participants can lead the organisation. If you are interested in applying or finding out more, here is a link with the details [Volunteer Board Members - HR Experience & Lived Experience - Peter Bedford Housing Association](#)

## 9. Major Improvement Works to Homes

Each year we invest money in refurbishment works across our homes. The Board has recently approved our plans for April 2023 to March 2024 which include:

- £375,575 replacement fire alarms
- £99,290 insulation works (dependant on a funding bid)
- £22,091 replacement kitchens
- £16,805 replacement bathrooms
- £46,068 replacement boilers



We have already completed phase 1 of our fire alarm replacements. This year we will complete this area of work. All homes have existing and working fire alarms systems which are serviced every 6 months. However, we want to improve the standard of the alarms across our homes.

Our hope is to have a much larger programme of kitchen replacements in 2024/25.

All new boilers have the maximum rating for energy efficiency, helping reduce gas consumption and the cost of use.

We hope to begin a programme of insulation works across our homes with an EPC rating of D or below. This will make our homes warmer and cheaper to heat. This is dependant on a funding bid.

## 10. Energy Bills Support

Tenants in HMOs haven't been able to access the government's £400 help. They have now launched a portal for people to apply – this is only applies where PBHA pays the utility bills and recharges to tenants.

To apply:

- Type '**Apply for energy bill support if you do not get it automatically**' into the search bar on GOV.UK or an internet search engine.
- If not online, call 0808 175 3287 to do the application over the 'phone
- This is for tenants whose gas & electricity bills are paid by PBHA and re-charged to tenants

You will need to provide:



- An email address or phone number
- Your bank account details
- If you're not registered for Council Tax, you'll need to upload proof of address (e.g. your tenancy agreement)

Applicants will receive a progress letter or email within 6 weeks of the application.

Alternatively, if you pay your bill directly to a supplier and are struggling with your bill, the Energy Trust makes two recommendations:

1. Contact your supplier. Energy companies want to hear from their customers when they are struggling with bills. They are required to maintain a Priority Services Register (PSR) – a register for vulnerable customers or those who need additional support with their bills.
2. For general advice, tenants should go to Citizens Advice or another debt advice charity



## 11. Changes to Voting

From 4 May 2023, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections.

This will apply to:

- Local elections
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections
- UK parliamentary by-election
- Recall petitions



From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections.

If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

Find out more about accepted forms of photo ID, how to apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate, and what to expect on polling day.

An alternative to the above is applying to vote by post, the deadline for this is the 18th of April 2023.

You can download the voting by post application form from:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/apply-vote-post>

## 12. Government Council Tax Rebate

If you live in a property in council tax bands A to D, you are likely to receive a £150 council tax rebate from the Government to help with the cost of living.

### How will my household get its £150?



- Your council will confirm how the rebate will be paid in your area.
- For people who pay council tax by direct debit, in most cases, the rebate will go directly into bank accounts. If you don't already pay by direct debit, you might want to sign up. This will make sure the rebate is paid to you quickly.
- For those who do not pay council tax via direct debit, your council will confirm how the rebate will be paid to you. Please make sure that communication is from your local council before providing payment details.
- The rebate will not need to be repaid.

# GOING PLACES

## Peer Support Group

- Have your say
- Build community
- Contribute ideas
- Support your peers
- Share food and talk

**Everyone is Welcome!**



2023

Thursday 11th & 25th of May

Thursday 8th and 22nd of June

Thursday 6th & 20th July

Thursday 14th & 28th September

Time: 1pm to 2.30pm



07776 769653/ 02038154032

[learn@peterbedford.org.uk](mailto:learn@peterbedford.org.uk)

  
**Peter Bedford**  
Housing Association  
Inspiring Brighter Futures

## 14. Make & Meet Activities

# Make & Meet Activities

Spring/Summer 2023

An inclusive, creative and supportive learning environment, focused on reducing loneliness and isolation. Our Make & Meet Space brings people together through free courses, activities and events. Everyone is welcome to the PBHA community. We support people to recover, progress and explore their potential.



### DIGITAL SKILLS: STRESS FREE COMPUTING FOR EVERYONE!

Contact us about classes starting in February 2023

- Learn how to update/ install software
- How to protect your device with anti-virus software
- Activating system files/file recovery
- Backing up files
- Locating settings

Days/Times: Friday's at 10am

### DIY FOR BEGINNERS: INTRO TO FURNITURE MAKING

Contact us about classes starting in February 2023

This is a beginners introduction to furniture construction methods. Make a small stool from scratch and learn skills that you can apply to other furniture making or DIY. A great introduction to working with wood!  
Days/Times: Monday's at 1.30pm

### MONEY MANAGEMENT CLINIC

Contact us for upcoming dates in Hackney & Islington!

Get 1-1 support and advice on your money matters and budgeting skills. Learn to make better decisions about debts, spending and saving.

### CREATIVE ARTS IN THE COMMUNITY (SEND )

Contact us about classes starting in January 2023

Explore your creativity, with access to a range of materials and expert guidance in a fun and relaxed setting. Learn and be inspired by poplar art movements!  
Days/Times: Wednesday at 11am

### PEER SUPPORT LUNCH GROUP

Sessions take place at Iseldon Canteen 181 Iseldon Road- Finsbury Park

Come and join us for lunch, a chat or just an opportunity to be around others. We welcome ideas on activities and can focus on particular themes of your choosing.

Thursdays 1pm to 2.30pm- Contact us to join the group.

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING: OBSERVATIONAL DRAWING

Contact us for classes starting in January 2023

Develop a range of practical drawing skills and improve knowledge of colour theory. Create your very own Zentangle which is known to promote relaxation and decrease stress.

Days/Times: Thursday's 1pm

### CREATIVE DIGITAL SKILLS: SOCIAL MEDIA & NETWORKING

Contact us about classes starting in April 2023

- Gain an understanding of social media apps and their purpose
- Create/ build either a LinkedIn or Instagram account to start your networking journey
- Learn how to create social media graphics, presentations, posters and other visual content.
- Intro to Canva, an online design and publishing tool.

Days/Times: Friday's 1.30pm

### 1:1 DIGITAL SKILLS COACHING

Contact us to get matched with a Digital Champion Volunteer!

Get tailored support to improve your digital skills. Topic areas include emails, banking, budgeting, shopping, managing health and more.

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING: RESILIENCE COACHING

Contact us about classes starting in March 2023

Learn about the skills & tools needed to cope with stress. Practice self-compassion and emerge from challenges feeling stronger.  
Days/Times: Tuesday's 1pm

Our free courses, coaching and training programmes are open to adults 19+ living within Hackney, who are on benefits or low income. PBHA is an inclusive organisation and is keen to support those that are at risk of loneliness and isolation. This may include people with lived experience of homelessness, and mental health conditions, disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and other impairments. Please contact us to learn more about course eligibility. We can also support those living in other London boroughs.

Find out more on our website, or by contacting  
020 3815 4100 / [learn@peterbedford.org.uk](mailto:learn@peterbedford.org.uk)



## London Open Gardens

Join us at Clissold Community Garden on:  
**Saturday 10th of June 2023**  
**10am to 4pm**

To register your interest, contact Anjum Ahmed:  
07776 769653 / 02038154032  
learn@peterbedford.org.uk

(For Peter Bedford Housing Association Tenants only)



Peter Bedford Housing Association

## Resilience Building Course

