

# PULLING Together



TOWER HAMLETS

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Issue 119 February 2009

The magazine for Tower Hamlets Council's staff



Welcome

## General news

# Council's gay pride

Effective partnership working is at the heart of so much that has been achieved in Tower Hamlets and will continue to define our approach to improving the quality of life of all our residents.

Many of our most important priorities can only be delivered by engaging with others and securing their support and commitment. This is why the Tower Hamlets Partnership (THP) is so important – giving a host of organisations representing our residents and other stakeholders the opportunity to help shape a better borough.

The THP is widely recognised as one of the best there is. And to ensure it stays that way it has just published the Community Plan 2020 - the borough's blueprint for the next decade. Now it's up to all of us – in the council, in local health services, residents, housing associations, and businesses – to turn that plan into reality. You can see it at [www.onetowerhamlets.net](http://www.onetowerhamlets.net)

On a different note, recently I was delighted to declare Uma Akther as the new Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets. Uma beat 23 other candidates and it was really good to see so many young people – almost half – using their vote. A few days after her election Uma made a short speech at the official launch of the new Community Plan, and it is clear that she is going to be a fantastic ambassador for Tower Hamlets in 2009. Many congratulations to her.

**Martin Smith,**  
Chief Executive

The council has broken into the top ten of the Stonewall Equality Index, making us the most gay-friendly council in London.

We were ranked 7th in the annual Index, which celebrates the top 100 employers in the country for lesbian, gay and bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

Service Head for Scrutiny and Equalities, Michael Keating, said: "This is great news, particularly as the list isn't just for local authorities, but includes large businesses and organisations from around the country.

"Our new ranking, up ten places from last year, was partly based on an anonymous staff survey, so it's fantastic that staff think we're doing a good job

supporting and engaging LGBT staff members – although we're always looking to do more."

Breaking into the top ten in 2009 is a particular achievement as nearly 400 organisations applied to Stonewall (130 more than in 2008) to be assessed against an even tougher criteria.

Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust is also on the list as the only NHS Trust in the top 100, ranking 58th.

The council and the PCT are currently working with the borough's LGBT Forum and LGBT staff forum to promote events and activities for LGBT History Month, which takes place this month.

Check out the intranet for more information about key events.

## Take part in LGBT month

To celebrate LGBT History Month an exciting programme of staff and borough-wide events is taking place this month.

Produced in partnership with the Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum and Tower Hamlets LGBT Staff Forum, the programme will be taking place across February. We hope that all staff will join the celebrations. Staff events include:

- 'The Struggle for LGBT equality – Past, Present and Future' - A panel discussion with guest speaker Ben Summerskill, Chief Executive of Stonewall
- 'What if the world was gay?' - Film screening and debate



of 'Homoworld' a film about a world where heterosexuals are a minority

- LGBT equalities training workshops for both managers and staff.

If you have any queries please contact Barry Clark from the Diversity and Equality team on ext 5347.

Also look out for the details of the large programme of borough wide LGBT History Month events that will soon be available on the council's Intranet and Internet.

## General news

# "Good, honest food" on the menu at new café

Staff were saying yum! to new caterers Pabulum as they launched the new staff canteen and food service on January 19.

Their service covers the staff restaurant on the 9th floor Anchorage, a trolley and a lunchtime service in M79 at Mulberry Place.

Pabulum is also the sole supplier of refreshments for meetings in all council buildings.

The new service, which will take over from existing provider Eurest, will aim for a fresh new approach.

Rob Willis, Senior Operations Manager at Pabulum, is keen to get lots of staff in to try out their wares.

He said: "We're delighted to be working with Tower Hamlets Council. Our fair trade policy and "good, honest food approach" means that we use only the finest, most honestly sourced ingredients to go into the food we serve."

In the staff area in Anchorage House, Pabulum will be laying on two hot meat dishes for lunch every day plus vegetarian options.



All meat products except pork is halal. There will also be a fresh organic salad bar, a deli, a Panini bar and a full sandwich range. All food will be labelled to show whether or not it is Halal

Hot drinks will also be available, including a fresh Gaggia style coffee and a range of cakes and pastries.

The new service will be opening from 8.00am to 3.00pm and so will include a full breakfast service.

Facilities Operations Manager, Paul Harvey, said: "We're delighted to offer a revitalised food service for council staff. As ever, we'll welcome feedback from staff about what they think of the new service!"

## Mr Recycle More at the New Year's Day Parade

Mr Recycle More, the council's recycling ambassador took part in the annual Lord Mayor's New Year's Day Parade on 1 January 2009 and was awarded overall second place in the Let's Help London Challenge (open to the London Boroughs); earning the Mayor of Tower Hamlets £6,000 for his annual charity drive.



## News in brief

### > Housing team move

The Housing Link Team, previously based at Gladstone Place, moved on 26th January 2009 to 54-86 Old Montague Street, E1 5NN.

The new telephone number is 020 7426 2420.

### > Anti-Bullying Campaign

The new year brings new hope to people affected by bullying in Tower Hamlets.

Children's Services has launched a dedicated Anti-Bullying Helpline for parents and children to call if they have any concerns about bullying.

This locally based service is delivered by Step Forward on behalf of the council.

It offers advice and support to children, young people and parents in Tower Hamlets and is open Monday to Friday from 3.30 till 6pm.

At this stage the helpline is a pilot service running until July 2009, and all calls from landlines are completely free.

The number is 0800 1216 753.



## News in brief

### > New ICT courses in 2009

From February to April, staff can take advantage of a range of ICT courses being delivered by the council's Lifelong Learning Service. Running from the Professional Development Centre (PDC), courses range from 'IT for the Terrified' to topics including touch-typing, web design and accounting.

Courses start on a range of dates in February and will be running at various times, including some evenings. Whether you want to learn new ICT skills, need a refresher course, or want an introduction to computers, Lifelong Learning has something for everyone.

The PDC is located in English Street near Mile End tube station, and is currently home to a number of Lifelong Learning courses. Pop in to the centre or call 020 7364 5665 for more information about ICT courses starting this New Year.

If your New Year's resolution was to try something completely different, visit [www.learningladder.co.uk](http://www.learningladder.co.uk) to see the new Lifelong Learning course brochure for January to July 2009. Language, photography and cookery courses are just some of the subjects on offer. For more information call 020 7364 5665.

## General news

# Free adult cycle training

Free adult cycle training is available to anyone who works, studies or lives in Tower Hamlets.

All council staff can take advantage of the offer and so can friends and family that live, work or study in the borough.

The scheme offers one to one sessions with a qualified cycle instructor rather than in a group. Whether a total beginner or a more competent cyclist you are now guaranteed more time with the instructor and a better chance of improving your cycling skills.

Sessions are available at a time and day of the week that suits you (within normal Monday - Saturday working hours). For those who would prefer a female

cycling instructor this can be arranged upon request.

Cycle training sessions last for one hour and for most beginners will be based in the safety of Victoria Park where our training provider, Bikeworks, is located. For more experienced cyclists training sessions can be arranged to start from a different location within Tower Hamlets that suits your requirements.

For further information visit [www.bikeworks.org.uk](http://www.bikeworks.org.uk) or to book a cycle training session email [cycletraining@bikeworks.org.uk](mailto:cycletraining@bikeworks.org.uk) or call them directly on 020 8980 7998.

If you have any further queries, please contact Sam Margolis, Tower Hamlets Council Travel Awareness Officer, on 7364 6707 or [sam.margolis@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:sam.margolis@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or look on the intranet at [http://townet/Intranet/staff\\_services/human\\_resources/travel\\_transport/cycling.aspx](http://townet/Intranet/staff_services/human_resources/travel_transport/cycling.aspx)

Remember, if you work, live or study in Tower Hamlets the cycle training programme is free for you to use!



## New Year new you?

If you're struggling to stick to your New Year's resolution to get fit and healthy in 2009, don't worry help is at hand.

There are lots of opportunities to incorporate activity into your day-to-day life, so why not start at work? You could get off a bus or DLR stop early and walk the rest of the way.

Early morning activity helps kick start your metabolism so you'll arrive at work feeling refreshed and ready to go. Then instead of waiting for the lift why not take the stairs. You might feel a bit

puffed out at first but once you start doing it regularly you'll soon notice the difference. In no time you'll bounding up the stairs taking them two at a time.

You can also take advantage of the health and leisure facilities in the borough. Along with seven leisure centres, four swimming pools, an athletics stadium and lots of parks and open spaces there's a wide variety of sports clubs and an outdoor gym in Mile End Park.

To find out more these facilities visit the sports section of the website, [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## General news



# Our new Community Plan

We launched our new Community Plan on January 24.

The plan describes the place that people living and working in Tower Hamlets would like to see in the future, and builds on the work we have already achieved.

The launch brought together residents and services such as Tower Hamlets Council, the health service, the police, community groups and the voluntary sector so they could learn more about the importance of working together to make Tower Hamlets a better place.

Shazia Hussain, director of the Tower Hamlets Partnership said: "The Community Plan is not just a set of ideas written down; we intend to make it a reality to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the borough."

"The Plan aims to ensure services and the community are working together more effectively for residents; and that people believe they have the same opportunities as their neighbours - creating 'One Tower Hamlets'."

The Community Plan is split into four themes:

- A Great Place to Live

- Prosperous Communities
- Safe and Supportive Communities
- Healthy Communities

The theme of One Tower Hamlets is a key feature of all the other themes.

Visitors at the launch were encouraged to 'experience' the Community Plan themes through a range of activities set up in Community Plan Zones.

The Great Place to Live zone included a carbon rowing machine, which inflated three columns representing the amount of CO2 emitted travelling 2kms by air, car and train. It aimed to enable the rowers to visualise the volume of CO2 produced by their travel choices, giving them a clearer understanding of the impact of their lifestyles and how it can contribute to climate change.

Consultation on the Community Plan began in autumn 2007. During that time hundreds of residents provided their views and opinions about the type of borough they would like to live in.

For a copy of the Community Plan call, Tower Hamlets Partnership, tel. 0207 364 4058 or visit [www.Onetowerhamlets.net](http://www.Onetowerhamlets.net)

## Truly a one stop shop

Staff at the council's One Stop Shops are now processing parking permits and payments in addition to their existing services.

During the autumn, the Customer Access Team has been introducing the new services into each One Stop Shop, to bring services closer to residents.

Service Head, Claire Symonds explains: "It's all about making things as easy as possible for the customer. Bringing parking services into the One Stop Shops means people can deal with their permits and fines whilst also looking at job vacancies or asking about their housing benefit."

Payments for parking permits can be made at any One Stop Shop by credit or debit card, and cash or cheque payments can be made at the Cashiers in Albert Jacob House.

There's also a free 24-hour phone line and a web option which residents can use to make their parking fine payments at any time.

The Parking Shop on Bethnal Green Road has now closed, but the five One Stop Shops are situated conveniently all round the borough.

Public service parking permits and scratchcards are now available only by post, from Permit Processing, P.O. Box 60465, London E2 6LG (temporary internal address: Permit Processing. c/o Parking Shop Back Office.

You can send a fax to 020 7364 3765 or email [Permits@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Permits@towerhamlets.gov.uk) (excluding a new pool permit)

## A top three Idea

Tower Hamlets Idea Stores and libraries made the Capital's top three in a survey on the number of people using public libraries.

The Active People Survey by Sport England in partnership with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport shows that 56.6 per cent of people in Tower Hamlets use the borough's Idea Stores and libraries. Tower Hamlets ranked joint third with the London Borough of Hounslow and is well above the national average of 48.5 per cent.

Head of Idea Stores and Libraries, Judith St John said: "Our Idea Stores and libraries have so much to offer residents. Along with books, CDs, DVDs and free internet access, there are a wide variety of activities, events and learning opportunities.

"They grow in popularity year on year, and it's fantastic that Tower Hamlets has one of the best performing library services in London."

Last year they attracted a record number of visitors, with more than two million people passing through their doors.

Idea Store Whitechapel is one of the busiest public libraries in the capital, with an average of 12,500 people using the facilities there each week.

The survey also showed that Tower Hamlets was above the national average when it came to residents visiting museums and galleries.

## General news

# Uploaded – new website launched

Staff returning to work in 2009 will notice that their resolutions aren't the only things that are new.

A quick look online will show a newly redesigned and rejuvenated council website.

The website ([www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)) has been re-launched and should now provide local people with easier access to information.

Claire Symonds, Service Head for Customer Access, is excited about the new site. She said: "The new look website has been designed with the customer – local residents – in mind. It's much more user friendly and appealing. And most importantly, it should be easier to use.

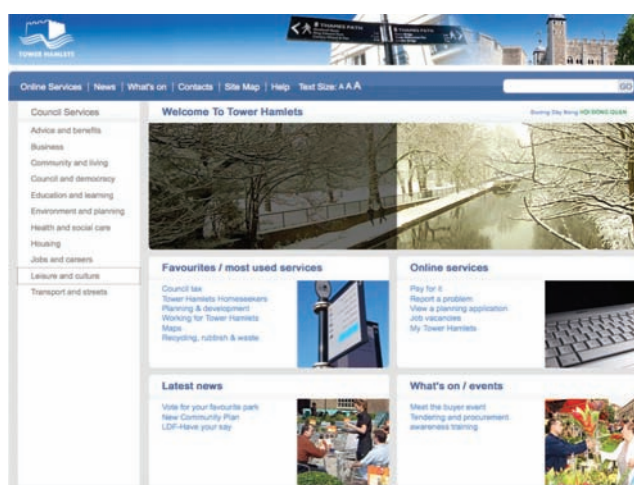
"This launch has been the culmination of a lot of hard work by a large number of people from across the council. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and hope that you like the new site. If you do have any comments or feedback then please send them to the web team

[webteam@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:webteam@towerhamlets.gov.uk)" And Claire added: "The much

improved usability of the new website will allow a greater use of online web services by local people, such as the ability to make online payments for parking Fines, Council Tax and Parking Fines, Council tax and Business rates amongst other things.

"There is also a much improved news section as well as an events calendar which combines events across services where practical and displays relevant events based on location within the website. In addition, local residents will be able to make requests for special collections and recycling queries via online forms instead of having to use the telephone. The aim is to develop the site to the point where people who want to resolve the majority of their business with the council online will be able to do so

Twenty per cent of local residents would like to get information about the council from the website and in one month alone last year 152,186 people visited the site. It's therefore vital that it is easy to use and provides the right sort of service.



The new and revitalised site is part of a range of Customer Access work being launched in the New Year as part of the Council's refreshed 'Customer Promise'.



## General news



# Homelessness Strategy launched

The council has laid out its ambitious plans to tackle homelessness in the borough.

Over ninety representatives from the council, local homelessness charities, the Primary Care Trust, advice agencies and Housing Associations were at Oxford House for the launch of the Homelessness Strategy 2008 – 13.

The strategy outlines how we will work with our partners to get to the heart of tackling worklessness, child poverty and health inequalities amongst homeless people in the borough.

Since the first strategy was published in 2003, some significant steps have been taken to tackle homelessness. As a result, the number of homeless applications has fallen by 50 per cent and the number of households placed in temporary accommodation has fallen too.

Homelessness Service Head John Roog told Pulling Together: "The essence of the strategy is to see people and their families in terms of the needs and circumstances that make up their whole lives

including their health, wellbeing, safety, employment or training needs, and financial position.

"For many people their problems with accommodation are only a part of more complex difficulties they face. That is why the biggest message in the strategy is the need to join up all the work we do so that we can, where needed, support people in their overall quality of life as well as finding a home."

The key proposals in the strategy are:

- Plans to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by half;
- The aim to review the allocations policy to help overcrowded families;
- Plans for a pilot scheme to end the poverty trap and make work pay for those homeless families trapped in expensive temporary accommodation; and
- Proposals to place all homeless 16-17 year olds (where returns home are not possible) in supported accommodation by 2010.

## Training

February 2009

- 2nd** Managing Sickness Absence
- 3rd** Programme and Project Management Refresher
- 3rd** Corporate Performance Management Framework
- 4th** Completing Application Forms and CV Writing
- 4th** Overview of the Local Government Pension Scheme
- 5th** Performance Development Review
- 6th** Programme and Project Management Sponsor Training
- 9th** Procurement Module 2 – Letting Contracts
- 10th** Effective Writing
- 10th** Diversity and Equality Workshop
- 11th** Stress Management
- 12th** Business Process Improvement
- 12th & 13th** Presentation Skills for Beginners
- 23rd** Introduction to Programme and Project Management
- 24th** Efficiency and Value for Money
- 25th** Minute Writing
- 26th** Data Quality Workshop
- 26th & 27th** Preparing for Retirement
- 26th & 27th** Recruitment and Selection

## Comprehensive Performance Assessment

# "An Engaging and Constructive Review"

Teams that have taken part in the Team Plan Peer Review in the past have been positive about the experience and thought the process – including advice from peer reviewers – would help them to develop a better plan in subsequent years.

'Engaging and constructive' is how Richard Finch (Team Leader – Strategic Transport Development) describes the process, which involved '...discussing the work of my team with peers from across the council to help improve the work of the strategic transport development service for the council, local citizens, communities and other stakeholders'.

In February and March of this year teams from across the council will be taking part in the annual Team Planning Peer Review.

The review looks at all aspects of the team planning process in order to learn lessons and improve team planning across the council.

Teams first self assess their plans against a set checklist, and then their plans are peer assessed by other team managers from across the council.

The purpose of the assessment is to help team managers ensure that their team plans help them manage their resources to best deliver what they need to, when they need to.

The peer assessment also helps to ensure that good practice is shared, and that teams can benefit from the experiences of other managers.

This year 19 teams will be taking part in the review.

Including:

Electoral Services (a team from Legal)  
Environmental Health & Trading Standards (CLC)  
Corporate Health & Safety (CLC)  
Operations (CLC)  
Policy & Victims (CLC)  
Land Charges (D&R)  
Development Schemes (D&R)  
Audit (Resources)  
Procurement and Project Management (Resources)  
ICT (Resources)  
Fostering Development Team (CS)  
E-Learning (CS)  
Programme Management (CS)  
Community Languages (CS)

The schedule for the review is detailed below:

- Between 16th February and

6th March 2009, peer challenge sessions will be held involving all 19 teams and reviewers

- The Strategy and Performance team will then produce a report detailing the results of the review along with any recommendations for CMT on the 24th March (dispatch 19th March)

The learning from this process will be used to review and further improve the team planning managers' guidance which is available on the intranet: ([http://townetnet/Intranet/staff\\_services/business\\_planning/service\\_plans\\_team\\_planning.aspx](http://townetnet/Intranet/staff_services/business_planning/service_plans_team_planning.aspx)).

If you would like any further information or support please contact Kael Long, Strategy & Performance team on ext. 4710.







# Comprehensive Area Assessment

Last year, the council was awarded 4 stars in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) – the highest rating possible. CPA measured how well the council was delivering services for local people and communities.

CPA will shortly be replaced by the CAA – the Comprehensive Area Assessment, which will begin in April.

CAA will look at how well the council and its partners understand the priorities and needs of Tower Hamlets, and how effectively we are working together to deliver services that improve the quality of life for local people.

A crucial difference between the CPA and CAA is the greater focus on partnership working – looking not just at what the council is doing but other organisations in the area. It's a joint assessment that will be carried out by a range of inspectorates such as the Audit

Commission, Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).

CAA is made up of two parts: an area assessment and an organisational assessment.

The area assessment looks at the results that the council and its partners are delivering and their ability to continue improving.

The organisational assessment considers how well individual organisations (including the council, the police, the PCT and the fire service) are doing and their use of resources.

CAA supports the approach of the council and its partners of working together to tackle the challenges facing local people and provide first class services.

Final details of how CAA will work are expected shortly and the first assessment is expected to be published in November 2009.

## The Council's Strategic Priorities

### One Tower Hamlets

1. To reduce inequalities, foster strong community cohesion and provide strong leadership and inclusive services
2. Working efficiently and effectively as One Council

### A Great Place to Live

3. Provide affordable housing and strong neighbourhoods
4. Strengthen and Connect Communities
5. Support vibrant town centres, and a cleaner, safer public realm
6. Improve the environment and tackle climate change

### A Prosperous Community

7. Support lifelong learning opportunities for all
8. Reduce worklessness
9. Foster enterprise

### A Safe and Supportive Community

10. Empower vulnerable people and support families
11. Tackle and Prevent Crime
12. Focus on Early Intervention

### A Healthy Community

13. Improve health and reducing differences in people's health by promoting healthy lifestyles
14. Support mental health services to improve mental health
15. Improve access to, and experience of, health services

## Thank you



Sometimes it can feel like your hard work goes unnoticed, but this is often not the case. Without the tireless hard work and dedication of staff we could not have been named as a four star authority.

Your efforts really do make a difference, both to your colleagues and to members of the public.

On this page you can thank a colleague for the extra work or excellence they have demonstrated that makes a difference.

So if you want to say thank you to a colleague simply pick up a Thank You card from Human Resources, fill in the details and return it to Steve Wiggett, 6th floor Anchorage House, c/o Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, E14 2BG. All entries will be entered in to a prize draw with one member of staff being selected at random for a £25 gift voucher.

**It's now even easier to nominate colleagues that you think deserve a special thank you.**

The thank you card is now available to download from Townet, the council's intranet, making it quicker and easier for you to let colleagues know that you appreciate the work they do.

To nominate someone visit [http://townet/intranet/staff\\_services/learning\\_development/staff\\_recognition\\_strategy/staff\\_thank\\_you\\_scheme.aspx](http://townet/intranet/staff_services/learning_development/staff_recognition_strategy/staff_thank_you_scheme.aspx)

Name: **Abdul Hassan**  
Job: HR assistant  
Thanked for: Being proactive getting access for the HR managers and colleagues to the Ipods and HR TV network.

Name: **Darren Ingram**  
Job: Commissioning officer  
Thanked for: Taking over an important piece of work with skill and generosity

Name: **Mark Dell**  
Job: Senior Building Attendant  
Thanked for: Helping set the room for an important all-London meeting

Name: **All Post Room staff**  
Thanked for: All their hard work through the past year

Name: **Maggie Sampson**  
Job: Committee Officer  
Thanked for: Exceptional contribution and support to the team

Name: **Alan Ingram**  
Job: Senior Democratic Services officer  
Thanked for: Exceptional contribution and support to the team

Name: **Mark Dell**  
Job: Senior Building Attendant  
Thanked for: Going the extra mile during the room set up for the LIEG meeting. Your effort was greatly appreciated and went a long way to ensuring the success of the meeting.

<p>An opportunity to thank a colleague for a job well done</p> <p>going the extra mile</p> <p>Dear _____</p> <p>_____ would like to thank you for:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Please give this half of the card to the person you are thanking and for a chance to <b>win £25 in the monthly 'thank you' prize draw</b> complete and return the entry form opposite.</p>	<p>Tower Hamlets Council <i>thank you</i> Staff Prize Draw</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Job Title _____</p> <p>Directorate _____</p> <p>Team _____</p> <p>Thanked by _____</p> <p>Thanked for _____</p>
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## Occupational health

# Importance of being fit

## What is "fitness"?

Fitness is not about being athletic. It's about having plenty of energy to do your daily activities and a bit more besides.

Why is it important to be active?

Inactivity contributes to the development of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and stress.

Being active has many health benefits besides reducing the risk of disease. It helps you to:

- Feel more energetic
- Have greater concentration.
- Relax & sleep better.
- Maintain or achieve a healthy weight.
- Develop more strength and suppleness.
- Look more toned and confident.
- Retain your independence as you grow older.

## How much activity do I need to do?

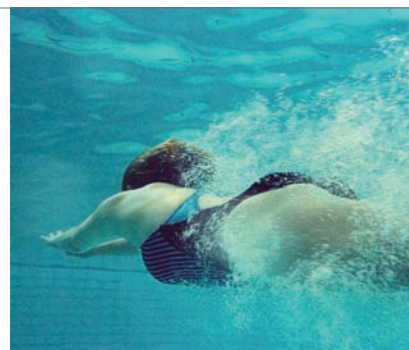
It is recommended that you do 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days of the week. The activity should be enough to make you feel warmer and breathe more heavily, but it should not leave you gasping for breath or unable to talk and be active at the same time.

If you haven't been active for a while, this may seem daunting. So, make 30 minutes of continuous activity your overall goal, but have smaller targets to start with; ten minutes initially, then build up to 20 minutes and finally 30 minutes on five days out of seven per week. Gradually build up not only the duration but also increase the intensity of the activity you do as you start to feel fitter and more confident.

## What type of activity should I do?

Ideally your activity should be something that you can incorporate into your everyday life and that you will enjoy. A variety of activities will increase the effectiveness of your efforts and stop you becoming bored. Easy, rhythmic exercise such as brisk walking, cycling and swimming give an all round workout, but other activities such as digging the garden or painting and decorating will also contribute towards your target. There are also many organised events such as spinning classes, aqua aerobics, pilates, tai chi and other Asian arts.

Remember, don't overdo it! If you feel any pain, dizziness, nausea or feel unwell when doing



an activity, stop! If it has been a long time since you exercised or if you have a medical condition, it is probably advisable to talk to your GP before you start.

Do not try to exercise within an hour of a heavy meal or if you are feeling unwell.

## I don't have time to be active, what can I do?

- For short distances walk briskly rather than take the car. It probably won't take much longer as you lose time finding the car keys, waiting at traffic signals and parking.
- Park the car further away from the place you're visiting and walk the remainder of the distance.
- Use the stairs rather than lifts or escalators.
- Don't sit for longer than 30 minutes without moving around.
- 30 intense minutes is all it will take to increase your health.
- Involve your family or friends. If they're joining in the activity they won't have as much opportunity to deter you.

Remember 30 minutes is only a short period of time out of a day. Try keeping a diary for a week and identifying gaps in your day when you may be able to be more active, even if the time is broken down into shorter 10 minute sessions. Being more active often means that you can do things more efficiently, thus ending up making yourself more time.

### Engine Room Fitness Centre

**30 minutes is all it takes**  
fitness activities for older people

The current recommendation for physical activity is: 30 minutes of fitness activities twice or three times a week is all it takes to feel a difference it can:

- Make you feel good and give you more energy.
- Help reduce stress level and help you sleep better.
- Keep your heart strong.
- Reduce blood pressure.
- Help to manage your weight.

At the Engine Room Fitness Centre we offer a range of group activities and fitness programmes aimed specifically at the mature adult and those who require sessions tailored to meet their specific needs.

contact the Fitness Team on 02075389423 or email [engineroomgym@live.co.uk](mailto:engineroomgym@live.co.uk)



## Offers

# The London Stitch & Creative Crafts Show – something for everyone!

The London Stitch & Creative Crafts Show returns to London ExCeL on Thursday 26th February to Saturday 28th February. The show opens from 10.00am to 7.30pm on Thursday 26th February and 10.00am to 5.00pm on Friday 27th February and 10.00am to 5pm on Saturday 28th February.

This Stitch & Creative Crafts Show covers all aspects of quality stitch-craft including cross stitch, sewing, card making, embroidery, knitting, patchwork, quilting, scrapbooking, ribboncraft, papercraft, stamping, beading, dressmaking, tapestry, decoupage, crochet and

many more popular stitch and creative crafts.

There will be a host of crafting celebrities to entertain, educate and pass on their skills and knowledge over the three days. Stephanie Weightman, from Ideal World and Create & Craft TV and Debbi Moore and her design team, will be running workshops. Joan Gordon, sewing and craft designer, will be hosting a Sewing Clinic to answer all your sewing queries. Wendie Rhodes will be hosting her highly popular series of free demonstrations covering a huge range of topics.



Pulling Together has ten pairs of tickets for staff to win.

Simply send a postcard with your name, address and a contact telephone number to Eastend Life Competition, The London Stitch and Creative Crafts Show, Trident Exhibitions Limited, West Devon Business Park, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 9DP.

To book tickets or for more information visit our website on [www.sccshows.co.uk](http://www.sccshows.co.uk) or simply call the Ticket Hotline on 01822 617744. Group discounts available and children under 16 are free of charge if accompanied by an adult.

## The Baby Show is back in ExCeL, 27 February – 1 March 2009

The Baby Show with Prima Baby and sponsored by Volvo enables parents to find everything they need for their baby.

It gives parents the chance to try before they buy, meet the experts behind the brands, and benefit from some great show discounts - with many cheaper than internet prices.

There will be nutritional advice from children's food guru Annabel Karmel and one-to-one advice from Tommy's midwives and health visitors. There will also be a stage offering a wide range of activities from fashion shows to guest speakers, such as sleep expert Jo Tantom and essential baby and toddler first aid skills from St John Ambulance.

The Baby Show provides lots of free facilities to make the day run smoother, including free nappies



and wipes from Pampers, crèche, play zones, Tommee Tippee Feeding Area as well as Shopping Drop-off, Collect by Car and Home Delivery provided by Emma's Diary. Plus many places to rest and revive.

### **Ticket Prices:**

Adult (on the door) from £13.50  
Adult (in advance) from £11.95  
Kids (0-10 years) FREE

For more information and to book tickets, visit [www.thebabyshow.co.uk](http://www.thebabyshow.co.uk) or call 0871 231 0844 quoting EX112

Pulling Together has 5 pairs of tickets to give away. Send a postcard with your name, address and a contact number to : Pulling Together, 6th floor, Mulberry Place.

## We'd like to hear from you

If you've got a story to tell in Pulling Together please contact your directorate lead or editor Claire Rudd.

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A large print version is available by contacting  
020 7364 7791

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