

# Up the Nile

The 'mixed-tenure' development by Peabody Trust in Nile Street, N1, gets the approval of top design experts **Lee Mallett** and **James Soane**

**P**EABODY Trust is known for quality social housing in London, and occasionally dips its toe in the private market. One such scheme, which includes private and social housing for rent, is in Nile Street, N1, near Old Street Tube station, on the fringes of "Hoxton-shire".

Nile Street is a substantial, nine-storey "mixed-tenure" apartment scheme, with private owner-occupiers cheek-by-jowl with key workers, such as nurses and teachers, who rent from Peabody — an arrangement that makes mainstream housebuilders nervous, but which Peabody seems to have pulled off in this development. It is part of an ambitious policy to mix owners and renters to produce more "sustainable" communities.

The private occupiers are in the most valuable, southern zone of the scheme overlooking the City.

The block is designed by architects Munkenbeck & Marshall, who also designed the Gainsborough Studios scheme on New North Road. The practice's signature zig-zag balconies form the Nile Street elevation, but its most striking attribute is the pre-painted, turquoise copper cladding, offset by timber elsewhere, on its distinctive external façade.

A generous and appropriately



**Lee Mallett (above left) and James Soane feel Peabody's Nile Street development is a success**

**'Overall, the scheme is exciting and quite radical'**

large entrance hall in Provost Street leads directly, via the lifts, to calm corridors with good finishes and quality fittings — always a good sign in common parts of a housing scheme and important for long-term investment performance.

The apartments are elegant and simple, and still quite small. The high point is the straightforward kitchens. A simple run of five cupboards,

made of lacquered MDF, and a glass splashback, it is simple and functional, leaving the majority of the rectangular living/dining space free for those purposes. Full-height windows run along the whole of the external wall where there is a generous balcony. Flooring is solid wood throughout.

Bathrooms are also simple, while the bedrooms can be a bit of a squeeze, but are well lit. Wardrobe doors seem disappointingly wobbly in an otherwise well-specified apartment. Electric wall-mounted radiators looked clunky but do the job.

Overall, the scheme is exciting and quite radical. We felt that it scores highly, being a great collaboration between architect and developer. The punters seem to think so, too.

*To register interest in similar developments, contact Peabody Trust on 020 7021 4496 or visit its website at [www.peabody.org.uk](http://www.peabody.org.uk); the architects, Muckenbeck & Marshall, can be contacted by on 020 7739 3300.*



**High society: the nine-storey development by Peabody Trust in Nile Street, N1, aims to attract a mix of key workers and young City types with its striking turquoise copper cladding and spacious balconies**



**Grand entrance: the impressive access from Provost Street, N1**



**Simple and functional: the straightforward kitchen design at Nile Street features a run of five space-saving units and solid wood flooring**