



Welcome to the winter edition of our Local Space newsletter

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INVESTING IN YOUR HOMES

Insulation work begins on first 150 homes

We know that many of our customers are struggling financially, and rising energy bills are a concern, which is why we're committed to making our homes more energy-efficient and reducing energy costs.

One of the ways we're doing this is by insulating lofts. We've started work on the first 150 homes we think might benefit from loft insulation.

Working with Axis Europe, we've been talking to customers about the benefits of loft insulation, and, with their permission, have started the insulation work in their homes.

This work is free of charge for our customers and forms part of our Carbon Reduction Programme, which aims to provide greener, warmer homes that cost our customers less.



Redecorating works are underway

Our customers told us that the communal areas in some of the blocks we own were looking tired and needed a fresh lick of paint. So we arranged for nine blocks most in need to have their communal areas fully repainted.

These spaces now look much cleaner and brighter, and our customers have told us how pleased they are with the results. We're about to start redecorating the external areas of some of these blocks and they should be completed before Christmas.

We regularly inspect the blocks we own, and over the last six months, our new contractors have been cleaning

the communal areas (Tenon FM) and maintaining our outside spaces (John O'Connors). We're getting some great feedback about the work they're doing.

Please let us know if you have any concerns or if there is anything else we could do to improve your estate. We want to hear from you even if the communal areas are managed by someone else.

We pay managing agents to look after the space and want to ensure the areas you live in are clean and well-maintained.

GET IN TOUCH: info@localspace.co.uk



Making our homes more energy efficient

Local Space is committed to making our customer's homes warmer, and more energy efficient, reducing carbon emissions and cutting the cost of energy bills.

This is why we've been investing in a pilot programme at two properties to see what measures work to improve their energy efficiency.

We have undertaken extensive work at two properties to see if we can improve their energy efficiency, which in turn will help reduce our customer's fuel bills.

Work has included installing internal wall and floor insulation and new windows as well as an air source heat pump that's better for the environment and has low running costs. The air tightness of the property has also been improved to reduce air leakage and unnecessary heat loss.

The EPC band rating of a home is a good indicator of how energy efficient a property is. EPC Band A is the most efficient, with Band G being the least efficient - the better the rating, the lower our customer's energy bills will be.



We're pleased to inform you that this project is nearing completion and there are early signs that the EPC ratings will be significantly improved.

We'll keep you updated with any further developments. In the meantime, if you have any questions for us, please get in touch by emailing: info@localspace.co.uk

GET IN TOUCH: info@localspace.co.uk

Local Space bid for government funding

We've already been investing in a pilot programme to improve the energy efficiency of our homes and are now applying for government funding to help accelerate this programme.

Our bid for funding will be made under the Government's Social Housing De-carbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2.1 and aims to improve the energy performance of social rented homes and upgrade their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band rating to a 'C' rating by 2030.

The SHDF Programme also forms part of the Government's commitment to 'Net Zero' - cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible by 2050 and includes improvements to the way homes are heated.

Competition for these funds is expected to be strong and we'll find out if we've been successful in early 2023. We'll keep you updated with the outcome of our funding bid.

If you have any questions - please email us at info@localspace.co.uk

GET IN TOUCH: info@localspace.co.uk



MONEY MATTERS

Understanding your financial situation

Specialist independent market research agency, IFF Research has carried out a survey to help us better understand how our customers are coping financially during this difficult time.

Thank you to the 251 customers who took part. We really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us and for sharing what we know is very personal information.

We'll use the information you provided to see how we can help individuals and identify any patterns or trends that will enable us to provide further support to our customers.



How you can access government help

The Government now offers over 40 schemes to help with the cost of living.

These include income support and help with the cost of childcare, energy, household expenses, and transport. They can also help with finding work.

Some of the key payments are:

- **£400 off your energy bills** - automatically paid to every household.
- **Council Tax rebate of £150** - for everyone living in Council Tax bands A-D.
- **£650 cost of living payment** - for households on means-tested benefits. This was paid in two instalments.

Find out what other schemes or help you may be eligible for on the Help for Households website.



Support with claiming benefits you're entitled to

Are you unsure what benefits you're entitled to or need help claiming?

Our Housing team can help you apply for support such as Housing Benefit and Universal Credit. We can also signpost you to specialist debt advice charities who may be able to help.

To find out more, please email housingteam@localspace.co.uk or call 0208 221 4000 (option 3)



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please check your door closers

Local Space has installed door closers in your home to keep you safe.

In the unlikely event of a fire, door closers help ensure that the fire is contained and will limit the spread of fire and smoke within your home.

There are three important things we're asking all our customers to do at home to help us keep you safe:

- Check whether there is a door closer present on your front door and the door of your kitchen.
- Check whether the closers are free from any damage and allow your door to close automatically.
- Inform us straight away if you do not have a closer on your front and kitchen doors or if they are damaged or not working correctly.

These important safety checks can allow for more time to evacuate your property safely and can help prevent the spread of fire and smoke in your property. Thank you for your help.



Gas safety checks

As your landlord, we have a legal responsibility to carry out a full gas safety check at your property every twelve months.

Local Space and K&T Heating will contact you at least two months before it's due.

To help us carry out these important safety checks you'll need to allow us access to your home. This important safety work ensures your boiler is running efficiently and helps to:

- Cut down the amount of energy you use – reducing your energy bills and your carbon footprint.
- Reduce the need for boiler repairs – protecting it from breaking down when you need it most.
- Ensure that all the vital parts are in safe working order – keeping you and your family safe from harm.

FIND OUT MORE ON OUR WEBSITE:

www.localspace.co.uk/your-gas-safety-check/



Flu vaccine and COVID-19 booster

With flu season upon us, the NHS is urging those eligible to get their free flu jab and COVID-19 booster this winter.

You can find out whether you're eligible for free vaccines, where to get them, and how to book them on the NHS website.

NHS WEBSITE:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/



GET INVOLVED

Tenants' Panel members attend resident engagement conference

We know that involving our customers in decision-making can help us improve our services, and our Tenants' Panel members play a key part in this.

We invited Bill Page, the chair of our Tenants' Panel, and panel member Joanne Harrison to join us at the Inside Housing / Social Housing Resident Engagement Conference in London and asked them if they'd like to share their thoughts about the event.



"The conference was well-organised, with a wide range of attendees and a contemporary selection of talks and workshops led by high-calibre presenters.

Two high-profile speakers included the Housing Ombudsman and the CEO of a large Registered Social Landlord. They were both adamant that landlords should now focus on a structured plan of building works to tackle the persistent problem of damp and mould, and recognise poor energy performance, rather than focusing on tenant lifestyles. This was a recognition coming from the top of what many of us have been saying for decades.

Tied in with this question are the issues of rocketing energy costs and the need to address energy efficiency. This is not as straight-forward as it sounds, because the role of modern condensing gas boilers in efficient / economical heating performance runs contrary to tackling climate change due to their release of greenhouse gases.

I am pleased to say that Local Space has recognised the urgency of addressing these complex dilemmas and tackling them is now a top priority. I shall be doing my best to ensure tenant-friendly outcomes and solutions"

Bill Page, Chair - Tenants' Panel



"I was pleasantly surprised by the upbeat mood and the appetite for change, to improve the lives of tenants. Very refreshing and invigorating!

My main takeaway from the day was the need to incorporate tenant involvement within the design of services and how attitudes to fuel poverty and its effects on damp housing are changing away from simply blaming tenants.

I found the day uplifting and feel re-energised to get the Tenants' Panel active again after the pandemic enforced snooze"

Joanne Harrison, Tenants' Panel member

Get involved in shaping our services

We're on the lookout for residents who want to help improve existing services and shape new ones.

There are plenty of ways you can get involved! Whether you have an hour to spare, or want to commit to something more long-term, all involvement is greatly appreciated.

- Join a member of the Local Space team on an estate inspection
- Sign up to be a member of our Tenants' Panel
- Take part in a focus group

Please get in touch with us if you'd like to find out more.

GET IN TOUCH:

customerengagement@localspace.co.uk



What do you think of our Residents' Report?

Have you checked out our latest Residents' Report yet?

We'd love to hear your feedback and find out what you'd like us to focus on in our 2023 report. Our report provides a summary of our yearly performance, how we've been investing in homes, and how we plan to continue improving our services.

We also share feedback from residents and provide an insight into the important work that our staff and Tenants' Panel do.

Please fill in our short questionnaire if you'd like to give us your feedback. Thank you.

FILL IN OUR SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE:
bit.ly/res-report-feedback-2022



What would you like to see in our next newsletter?

Is there something Local Space does that you'd like to know more about?

Would you like us to cover it in a future edition of our newsletter?

If you're wondering about something, there's a good chance other customers are thinking the same thing. Please get in touch with your ideas by emailing info@localspace.co.uk



At home with

LOCAL SPACE



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