

HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE HELPS WITH HOUSING- RELATED PROBLEMS

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KODIT

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RESPONSIBLE OPERATIONS ARE ALSO ECONOMICAL



II ELECTRICITY AND HEAT ARE THE BIGGEST SOURCES OF HOUSING EMISSIONS.

NOWADAYS, responsibility is a major topic in the operations of companies and foundations alike. Environmental and social responsibility are important values that we must all attend to. Companies and foundations are also subject to a fairly extensive reporting obligation related to responsibility.

Sustainability actions require time and resources. The question may then arise as to whether they generate more costs than benefits. However, responsibility and economy are not opposites, quite the contrary.

Responsibility work is a long-term and concrete activity that also leads to cost benefits. This also benefits the residents of VTS-kodit, as the cost level of properties directly affects the rent level of apartments.

For example, the costs of waste management at VTS-kodit amount to approximately EUR 1.2 million per year, most of which consisting of mixed waste treatment fees. Mixed waste fees also increase year by year.

The recycling rate of waste at VTS-kodit was 39% in 2023, while the recycling target for municipal waste set at the EU level is 55% by 2025. If we succeed in making sor-

ting more efficient, savings can be up to hundreds of thousands of euros per year.

Another good example is energy investments. Electricity and heat are the biggest sources of housing emissions. Investing in energy efficiency is not only environmentally friendly, but it can also have a long-term impact on heating and electricity costs. For this reason, VTS-kodit is investing in Energy Class A properties, and the first property utilising solar energy is also being planned.

At VTS-kodit, we actively invest in sustainability actions that also have a positive long-term impact on the foundation's finances. Residents can help with responsibility actions by sorting waste carefully and keeping their electricity consumption and apartment temperature reasonable, for example. Together we can both reduce emissions and achieve clear economic benefits at the same time.

Juha Nuutinen
CFO, VTS-kodit

STRATEGY PROGRESSING AS PLANNED

DEAR readers of the Asukasviesti magazine – I hope your summer is starting out well!

The Board and management of VTS-kodit held a strategy seminar in April 2024. At the seminar, we reviewed the objectives of the strategy launched in 2019, which are divided into four areas: operations guided by responsibility, convenience is the key, digitisation improves efficiency, and developing VTS employee develops. In addition, we were presented with the future objectives.

We have worked hard in every area and have successfully reached our milestones. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all the staff for a job well done. The work will continue for the benefit of all of you, the residents.

The financial situation of VTS-kodit is currently stable. However, the temperature in January and early spring 2024 was exceptionally cold, so the budgeted heating costs for properties were significantly exceeded. The coming months will hopefully be warmer than normal to balance the budget.

In the spring, the Board had the opportunity to receive VTS-kodit's new property in Härmälänranta. The property has 84 apartments and first-class services, such as a

rooftop sauna with a view. The lake view on the top floors is also impressive. The quality of the work is really high, and I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the construction team for that.

Lease agreements have already been made for all apartments in Härmälänranta, so there is clearly demand for the property. All new properties at VTS-kodit receive a large number of applications, which unfortunately means that only a small percentage of the applicants will get a new apartment.

In the previous Asukasviesti, I said that the shortage of plots for VTS-kodit has been alleviated, as many construction companies have given up the plots they have reserved. The Board of VTS-kodit has now decided on the construction of four new reasonably priced properties and the Käräjätörmä community house. The properties will be brought to completion during 2025.

I wish you readers sunny and warm summer days!

Pekka Anttila
Chair of the Board



II THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF VTS-KODIT IS CURRENTLY STABLE.

Tuula Heikkari, Mari Miettinen, Anne Putkonen and Marjo Virtanen help the residents of VTS-kodit resolve housing-related problems.



Sustainability

HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE HELPS IN HOUSING-RELATED PROBLEMS

An unexpected change in life may change your financial situation or state of health so that paying rent or taking care of your apartment becomes challenging. However, you don't have to deal with problems alone.

HOUSING advice is available for the residents of VTS-kodit, the purpose of which is to help them resolve challenging housing-related situations. Social advisors **Anne Putkonen, Mari Miettinen** and **Marjo Virtanen**, in addition to social worker **Tuula Heikkari**, meet housing advice service clients by appointment. You can usually get an appointment fairly quickly.

"People come to us mainly because of rent arrears and other

financial challenges, but we also help in other matters, such as problems with apartment maintenance, clarifying the housing situation, and in cases of impending eviction," says Anne Putkonen.

"At the first meeting, we clarify the resident's situation together with the resident. We provide advice and guidance in matters related to finances and housing.

We also clarify the housing situation and the need for assistance

with regard to rent payments, for example, and refer the client to other services if necessary," says Mari Miettinen.

Versatile support for different challenges

The aim of housing advice is to reduce residents' rent arrears and the costs caused by poor maintenance of their apartment, as well as to extend residence times and general comfort at properties.

"This also prevents homelessness, so this also has social significance," says **Jaana Lehtinen**, resident coordinator and member of the VTS-kodit sustainability team.

Housing advisors work in close cooperation with landlords, Kela and other authorities. If necessary, they can help in applying for Kela benefits.

"Residents do not always know which Kela benefits they are entitled to. Sometimes benefits may not be applied for at all, or the applications may be rejected due to missing attachments," says Marjo Virtanen.

Housing advisors also provide advice on managing the apartment during housing. The aim is to get the problems under control

It is advisable to contact us at an early stage.

– Anne Putkonen –

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– Marjo Virtanen –

so that living in the apartment can be continued.

"We also cooperate with the property manager and, if necessary, help the tenant make the apartment fire safe, for example. Together, we can think of suitable solutions for the current situation," says Mari Miettinen.

Contact us at an early stage

The housing advice service can be contacted with a low threshold. If your housing situation has become challenging due to unemployment, illness or divorce, for example, you should not let the situation slide too far. You can easily monitor your rent payment situation through OmaVTS, so the accumulation of possible rent arrears will not come as a surprise.

"It is advisable to contact us at an early stage if the situation seems to be escalating. Even if you only have a small amount of rent arrears, you can already contact us at that point," Anne Putkonen encourages.

"You should also not be afraid to contact us, even if you are unsure whether a specific issue is covered by housing advisory services. We provide information and guide you further if necessary."

INFO

WHAT IS HOUSING ADVICE?

Housing advice is a service available to the residents of VTS-kodit, where experienced social advisors and workers provide advice in housing problems, such as rent payment difficulties. The housing advice service does not handle matters related to renting arrangements.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Housing advice can be sought by any resident of VTS-kodit who has challenges with the payment of rent, for example, or with taking care of the apartment. The service is intended for people who do not have their own social worker appointed by social welfare services.

HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH?

Housing advisors serve by appointment at the Asuntori office at Puutarhakatu 8. It is also possible to arrange a meeting at a regional health and social services centre.

- **Telephone:**
+358 40 5513350
(weekdays 9-14)
- **E-mail:**
asumisneuvonta@pirha.fi

Housing advisors can also be met at the open housing advice service, which operates in conjunction with the Financial Advice Clinic of the Pirkanmaa Wellbeing Services County.

- **More information:**
pirha.fi/palvelut/sosiaalipalvelut/tukea-taloudellisiin-ongelmiin/talousneuvola

Risto Suonpelto from Huoltolux Oy encourages tenants to repair household appliances on order to extend their life cycle.



YOU CAN NOW ORDER MAINTENANCE FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCE VIA VTS-KODIT

STARTING from June 2024, Huoltolux Oy will offer residents of VTS-kodit a new maintenance service for household appliances. Residents will get maintenance for their household appliances at a fixed price, and the service can be easily ordered via VTS-kodit.

“We have engaged in cooperation with VTS-kodit for a long time, and with this service, our cooperation will become even closer. We want to provide the residents of VTS-kodit with an easy and quick way to have their household appliances repaired,” says **Risto Suonpelto**, Partnership Manager at Huoltolux Oy.

“The aim is to provide our residents with a clearly priced maintenance service, for which one contact is sufficient,” adds Annamarja Sukkila, Technical Property Manager at VTS-kodit.

Repairing household appliances pays off

The maintenance service provided by Huoltolux is intended for large household appliances owned by the residents, such as dishwashers and laundry machines. Huoltolux services all brands of household appliances, and through the service, you can also get a profes-

THE FRIDGE AND STOVE ARE THE LANDLORD'S RESPONSIBILITY

Household appliances that are the landlord's responsibility, such as refrigeration appliances and stoves, are not covered by the new maintenance service. If you need servicing for appliances that are under the landlord's responsibility, submit a fault report to the maintenance company of your property.

sional estimate of the repair costs of a household appliance for home insurance.

“Repairing appliances extends their life cycle and is therefore an ecological choice,” says Risto Suonpelto.

The maintenance service can be easily ordered by sending e-mail to palveluisannoitsijat@vts.fi. From VTS-kodit, the order is forwarded to Huoltolux.

“When the order is received in our system, we contact the resident the next business day and agree on the next steps to be taken.”

HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCE SERVICING PRICE LIST FOR VTS-KODIT RESIDENTS

Prices include a maximum of two service visits and travel expenses. Spare parts will be invoiced according to a separate price list. See more at vts.fi

Inspection / minor repair..	€79
Repair of household appliance	€114
Other work charged by the hour	€75/h

Careful with warranty service

If you have a fairly new household appliance that is still under warranty, be sure to check the warranty terms before ordering service. The manufacturer often has specific requirements for service to be covered by the warranty.

“Some manufacturers require that you first contact the manufacturer directly for warranty service. In this case, servicing cannot be ordered via VTS-kodit,” Risto Suonpelto explains.

HOW TO RECYCLE PLASTIC PACKAGING

ALMOST all properties of VTS-kodit now have a collection bin for plastic packaging. Plastic collection is intended for empty, clean, and dry plastic packaging.

Grab instructions on how to sort plastic here, so recycling will go smoothly!



DO INCLUDE:

- food packaging (e.g. yoghurt cartons, butter boxes, cold cuts and cheese containers)
- detergent, shampoo and soap packaging
- other household packaging (e.g. plastic bottles, jars, tubes, utensils packaging)
- plastic sacks, bags and wrapping
- EPS (styrofoam) packaging

DO NOT INCLUDE:

- mixed waste
- very dirty plastic packaging
- plastic products (e.g. toys, buckets, plastic cups and boxes)
- packaging containing residues of dangerous substances (e.g. ignition fluids, oil, paints, chemicals, medicines)

WHAT DOES CLEAN ENOUGH MEAN?

Only clean plastic packaging may be placed in plastic collection bins. This means, for example, that the package has been wiped with paper towels or rinsed with cold water and then dried.

As a rule of thumb, it should be possible to store plastic packaging waste indoors for a week or two.

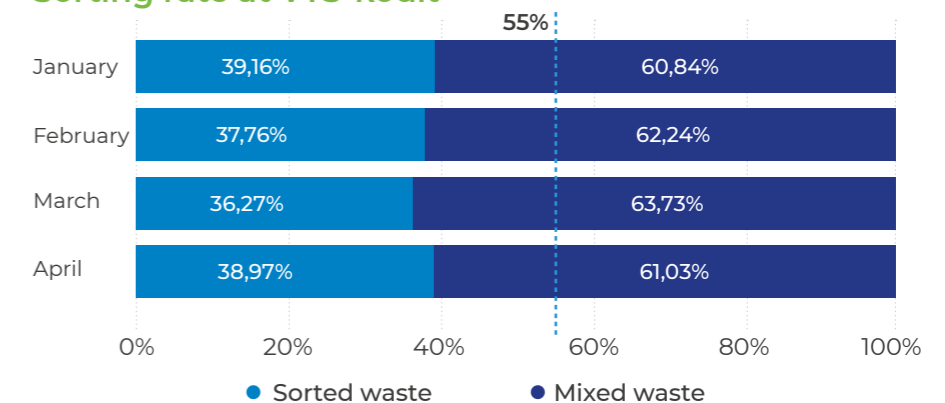
Source: Pirkanmaan Jätehuolto Oy

Join the sorting effort!

ACCORDING to the EU target, the sorting rate of municipal waste should be at least 55% by 2025. In the spring of 2024, the sorting rate of VTS-kodit has been just under 40%.

Sorting preserves nature and saves money. So let's increase the sorting rate together!

Sorting rate at VTS-kodit





HOW TO COOL YOUR APARTMENT BY HOME METHODS

- Cover windows during the day: close curtains or blinds, especially in sunlight.
- Ventilate at night when it's cooler outside. If possible, make use of cross-draught.
- Avoid using appliances that increase heat, such as an oven.
- Prefer lightweight and light curtains, as they reflect light and heat better.
- Use a desk fan to boost ventilation.
- Close the doors to rooms where no one is staying.
- Cool down by taking a cold shower or go swimming.
- Be sure to drink enough water.

SOLUTIONS BEING DEVELOPED TO PREVENT HIGH TEMPERATURES IN APARTMENTS

Climate change will also bring hot spells to Finland that may be long in some areas. In this case, temperatures in apartments can reach high levels. In the future, warmer weather will have to be taken into account more carefully in construction solutions, but luckily the overheating of one's own apartment can also be eased by home methods.

TO investigate the challenges related to overheating of apartments, VTS-kodit was involved in the SEASON project, which studied the heating of apartments during long hot spells. Heating was studied by modelling different window and film solutions and by having a survey conducted among some of the VTS-kodit residents. The EU-funded study was carried

out by the University of Tampere, with PIHLA-ikkunat also participating in the study.

Of the residents who responded to the survey, 92% said that it was too hot in summertime especially in the upper floor apartments facing south, east and west. This is important information for real estate development – thank you to all those who responded to the survey!

The Finnish way of building does not take hot spells into account

“With the exception of recent years, the Finnish building stock has not been designed for hot climates, quite the contrary. Well-insulated and airtight building materials can bind heat inside the apartment in hot weather,” says **Miska Pöyry**, Development Engineer at VTS-kodit.

“In future, it would be good to think about developing the methods of construction to adapt to climate change. Different window solutions are a good example of how the matter can be influenced.”

JOIN US FOR SUMMER 2024 EVENTS!

SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT VTS-KODIT BLOCK EVENTS

All nearby VTS-kodit residents are welcome to attend the joint block events for the whole neighbourhood. There will be small snacks and activities for both adults and children.

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|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Wed 22 May 2024 | at 17–19 Virontörmäkatu 4 |
| Tue 28 May 2024 | at 17–19 Ritakatu 5, 7, 9 (yard area) |
| Wed 5 June 2024 | at 17–19 Opiskelijankatu 21–23 |
| Thu 22 August 2024 | at 17–19 Huikulankatu 16 |
| Tue 3 September 2024 | at 17–19 Multisillankatu 7 |

The block events will also be attended by TITRY ry and Pirkanmaan Jätehuolto Oy, who will be sharing information about recycling.



COME AND JOIN THE FUN! RESIDENTS' DAY AT SÄRKÄNNIEMI SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2024, 9–12 AM

Exciting thrills ahead! As a VTS-kodit resident, you get to join the fun at an amazing price. Tickets are available starting on Monday, May 13, 2024 on our website vts.fi. Tickets can be purchased until June 6, 2024, or until they are sold out.

Ticket prices

- Resident ticket 5 €
- Friend ticket and VTS partners..... 10 €
- Children under 3 years old 0 €

Buy tickets: www.vts.fi



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