

# LSHANews

THE LSHA TENANTS' NEWSLETTER WINTER 2022



*We wish you  
all a very Merry Christmas  
and a happy New Year*

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With Winter nearly here, we are pleased to send you the latest issue of our newsletter. Please let us know what you think!

Don't forget we are always on the look-out for news. If you have a suggestion for our next newsletter, please tell us about it.

### CONTACT LSHA



call: 020 7735 3935

email: [info@lsha.org.uk](mailto:info@lsha.org.uk)

web: [www.lsha.org.uk](http://www.lsha.org.uk)



**OUT OF HOURS  
EMERGENCY  
REPAIRS**

If you have an **EMERGENCY** Electrical, Plumbing or Heating repair out of office hours, which cannot wait until the office is open, contact: **One Stop Contractors on 07946 314 749**

The out of hours service is for genuine emergencies only, please check your Tenants' Handbook to see what constitutes an emergency.

**I am delighted to be LSHA's new Chief Executive, leading a small but perfectly formed organisation with a history stretching back 95 years.**

I am looking forward to building on this heritage and working with Residents, colleagues and the Board to shape the services we deliver, to make them even better, and to provide homes where people are safe and happy to live.

LSHA seeks to be an Association where accountability, creativity, customer involvement, ownership and inclusiveness are central to how we work. I want to ensure we provide clear information about what we do, are ambitious and take ownership for the services we provide. We won't always get things right but, when we don't, we will try to learn from our mistakes and do better next time. I want to encourage residents to get involved by having their say and look forward to meeting many of you over the coming months as I settle in.

We do appreciate that times are tough right now for many people so this newsletter is packed full of helpful information around coping with the cost of living, keeping warm this winter and avoiding scammers. Please do contact us or any of the agencies mentioned if you need any further advice or support.

**from your new  
Chief Executive,  
Emma Keegan**

*... hello*



# Cost of Living Support

Check if you're receiving all the benefits you're entitled to. Some of these might include the Warm Home Discount Scheme, the Winter Fuel Payment, or the Cold Weather Payment...



If you're in doubt, Citizens Advice can help. Call them on 0800 144 8848 or visit [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)



▶ Someone in your home might be missing out on their Pension Credit. This benefit helps with day-to-day living costs, housing costs, council tax, heating bills, and free TV license. Citizens Advice is a great place to find out more information.

▶ Some energy suppliers offer grants to help you pay your debts with them. If you're in a vulnerable situation, you might also be able to join their Priority Services Register and agree on a payment plan. Contact your energy supplier to find out more.

▶ You could access Thames Water's support schemes, WaterHelp and WaterSure. You could either get a 50% discount on your water bills or get your bills capped. Visit [www.thameswater.co.uk](http://www.thameswater.co.uk) or call 0800 009 3652 for more information.



▶ If you're on benefits, you might also be eligible for cheaper broadband or phone services. Check with your provider if they offer these packages, also known as "social tariffs".

## Help from your Council



- ▶ Lambeth's 'Household Support Scheme' can help if you're a Lambeth resident struggling to pay your bills or afford food. The scheme could provide you with vouchers, rather than cash grants. [www.lambeth.gov.uk/cost-living-crisis-support](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/cost-living-crisis-support)
- ▶ If you're a Southwark resident, you can apply for the 'Hardship Fund' if you're in debt with household bills. You could also visit the Southwark Advice centres for independent advice, information, and guidance. [www.southwark.gov.uk/benefits-and-support](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/benefits-and-support)
- ▶ If you're a Lewisham resident in need of food support, you can access community projects that offer free or low-cost food. Visit [www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk) and search for 'Food Support Services' to find which services are available per day.

## Where you can find further support

- ▶ You could benefit from the Mayor of London 'Warmer Homes Programme', which offers grants to insulate homes, making them warmer and reducing gas bills. Call them on 0800 029 3576 or visit [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk) for more information.
- ▶ Thinking Works runs the Winter Warmth scheme, a home visit, and telephone advice service. They could help you with grants for insulation and heating works. Call 0800 118 23 27 to find out more.
- ▶ There are many places where you can find advice on how you could access benefits, find help if you're struggling financially, or give mental health support:  
**Turn2Us** [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) | 0808 802 2000  
**National Energy Advice (NEA)** [www.nea.org.uk](http://www.nea.org.uk) | 0800 304 7159  
**Mind** [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) | 0300 123 3393

### NEED HELP WITH DEBT?

This online debt advice service is available at a time that suits you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



#### Online Debt Advice Service:

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year  
[www.stepchange.org/how-we-help/debt-advice.aspx](http://www.stepchange.org/how-we-help/debt-advice.aspx)

If you would prefer to speak to someone, you can call the **Debt Advice Helpline: 0800 138 1111**  
Mon to Fri, 8am-8pm and Sat 8am-4pm

Remember: Ask before it's too late...



# Staying Warm this Winter...

## 1 Take advantage of natural light

Open your curtains to your south-facing windows to soak up the sunlight during the day and let it naturally warm up your home. Just make sure to close them at night to stop any chill from the cold windows.



## 2 Get your cook on!

Your cooker is one of the most energy-guzzling appliances in your house. Get ahead and try cooking multiple meals at once, it will save you the hassle later on in the week and save you energy.

## 3 Strong & stable heating

It might be tempting to put your heating on full blast when you're cold, but keeping your thermostat at the same low temperature rather than on-off-on-off can save you energy. This is because the boiler uses a lot of energy getting from cold to hot.



## 4 Time for some (radiator) Feng Shui

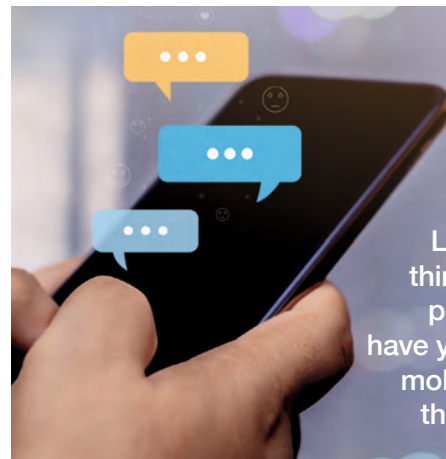
Having a sofa or a bed blocking a radiator is a prime culprit for stopping the room heating up. It gets absorbed by the item of furniture rather than warming you up. It can be handy to move it out the way so that you're the one who feels the benefits.



# BE SCAM AWARE!

**Scammers are very clever in the ways they attempt to get your money. Check out the helpful hints below to protect yourself...**

- Update your passwords on a regular basis. Do not share your password with anyone.
- If a message or email comes from a friend and it seems unusual or out of character for them, contact your friend directly to check that it was really them that sent it.
- Do not open suspicious texts, pop-up windows or click on links or attachments in emails – delete them.
- Don't respond to phone calls about your computer asking for remote access – hang up!
- Shred your bills and other important documents before throwing them out.
- Avoid using public computers or WiFi hotspots to access online banking or provide personal information.
- Always check the ID of contractors when they call at your property for repairs. If unsure do not let them in.



## TEXTING SERVICE

LSHA's text number is **07826 826823**

Let us know what you think of the service and please ensure that we have your most up-to-date mobile number by using the messaging service

## YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

It is important that you provide up-to-date contact details for yourself and your next of kin in case of an emergency. Please telephone LSHA on: **020 7735 3935** or email: **info@lsha.org.uk** to advise of any amendments



You might find this free benefits advice website helpful in making sure you're receiving all that you are entitled to:  
[www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/entitlement](http://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/entitlement)

# Make sure you're getting the help you need

## Paying Your Rent

**Making payments for your rent and service charges is important and should always be your first priority.** The consequences of not paying your rent are serious and in the worst case could result in you losing your home. There are things you can do to avoid going into arrears and we are here to help you.

### What should I do if I have problems making a payment?

**Don't ignore the problem!**

Talk to us as we can arrange for your Housing Officer to talk to you to advise on benefits you might be able to claim.

We can talk through your budget with you and make a fair repayment agreement that you can afford.

**Don't promise payments you are unable to make.**

Make every effort to pay on time. If you have problems keeping to the payment agreement, please let us know straight away and tell us if your circumstances change.

**We are here to help, and our aim is always for you to stay in your home and to help you find ways to pay your rent.** If you have a problem, we just need to know about it. So please let us know straight away.

### What happens if I do get into arrears?

We now use our texting system to send messages for rent reminders and balances.

We will contact you if you miss a rent payment to tell you the amount you owe. If you receive a letter, please read it carefully, don't ignore it.

Contact us straight away to arrange to pay the arrears. If we don't hear from you and you don't make a payment, we'll move through the stages of our arrears policy. This could mean we take you to court and you could even be evicted from your home.

## How to Pay your Rent

### Direct Debit

The easy way of paying your rent, please contact your Housing Officer to set up a convenient date to pay your rent, it is flexible and hassle free.



### Other Payment Methods

When making other payments, i.e. through Allpay, standing order or directly through our bank account, **please ensure that you use your tenant reference number and/or property reference** to ensure that we are able to allocate your payment to your rent account promptly.



If you're worried about your rent and would like some advice on claiming benefits or managing your money, call us on 020 7735 3935

Don't let money worries spoil your holidays.  
 Call us if you are concerned or need help

# Creating a community garden

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The last couple of years have been a very challenging time for all, but for those of us without access to a garden or balcony, the repeated lockdowns caused by Covid added to the hardship.



**We were fortunate to have a potential solution to that - an unloved front garden, but not much else. There was potential though, with some hard work and some neighbourly co-operation, to transform the garden into a welcoming communal space, Oh, and with a little bit of money too!**

The process began with a couple of plants from the shelves of the local supermarket. An unexpected snowfall almost finished the project before it started but the plants survived and thrived, and then a conversation began about making somewhere more welcoming, a communal space, out of this overlooked, neglected area.

We didn't know at the time but that was to be their last Summer, and they passed away earlier this year. It's of some comfort to reflect that for a few months they were able to escape the isolation of Covid lockdowns and enjoy some company outdoors as we worked together to create this new communal garden.

Over the course of last Summer residents came together. Neighbourly relationships, friendly but casual up 'til now, developed into working partnerships. One resident, frail and in poor health for some time, with the Covid lockdowns only adding to that, was happy to sit on the doorstep and watch as the garden took on a new shape, chatting, laughing, and offering suggestions, some more helpful than others!



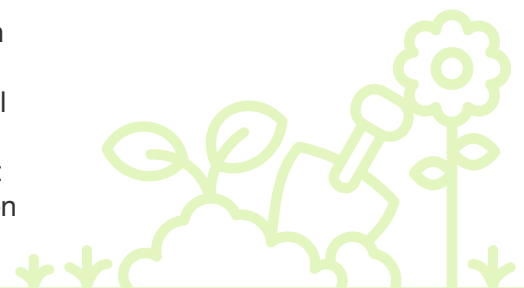
## a Resident's Story

If you have a community project you would like to develop - it doesn't have to be a garden, though getting your hands in the soil and watching something grow really is a tonic - why don't you consider making an application to LSHA's community fund?

**For more information or to make an application email: [info@lsha.org.uk](mailto:info@lsha.org.uk) or text: 07826 826823 with 'Community Fund' as the subject and someone will get back to you.**

It can be a costly business though! But thanks to LSHA's new Community Fund, we submitted an application to enable us to continue developing the garden, and the process was straightforward, with guidance and assistance on hand when we needed it. A few weeks later we received a grant of almost £500.

A couple of plants and no plan, that's how we began. Working together to develop and maintain the garden has provided a boost to our physical health and mental well-being, and has helped to foster a sense of community that the pace of life in London so often makes it impossible to build.





## Putting things right

We know we don't always get things right. That's why it is important that you can contact us easily when you have a complaint. We will then respond quickly, put things right where we need to and learn from our mistakes.

In September we updated our Complaints Policy to reflect the latest guidance from the Housing Ombudsman. A copy of our policy is available on our website or upon request by emailing [info@lsha.org.uk](mailto:info@lsha.org.uk) or calling **020 7735 3935**. It sets out our commitment to you at each stage of our complaints procedure and the timescales for our response.

The Housing Ombudsman is set up by law to look at complaints about social landlords such as LSHA. You can contact the Ombudsman at any time for support in helping to resolve a dispute.

Their service is free, independent and impartial and you can find out more about their service from their website [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Their contact details are below:

**0300 111 3000 • [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)**

## LSHA CONTRACTOR CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code covers what tenants can expect from any contractor working on their home from a LSHA contractor. It covers a number of key headings including:

**ACCESS** • Access arrangements  
• Broken promises • Use of ID cards

**BEHAVIOURS** The standards of behaviour tenants can expect from contractors

**HOME STANDARDS**

**RESIDENTS EFFECTS** Protection of furniture and possessions etc.

**OTHER PROBLEMS THAT CAN OCCUR**

**COMPLETING THE WORKS**

The code has been prepared to assist contractors and trade operatives in their working procedures and to ensure that all concerned are aware of the standards which are required. It is a condition of all contracts that contractors ensure their operatives are familiar with and conform to this code.

A full copy of the code can be found on the LSHA Website publications page: [www.lsha.org.uk/publications/](http://www.lsha.org.uk/publications/)

## MyTenancy a reminder

My Tenancy is a secure web based system that provides tenants with internet access to their rent account. Information such as account transactions, outstanding repairs and personal information is readily available online, controlled with multi-level password access.

Tenants can also view and print their rent statement, place a maintenance request or inform us of any changes in your circumstances.

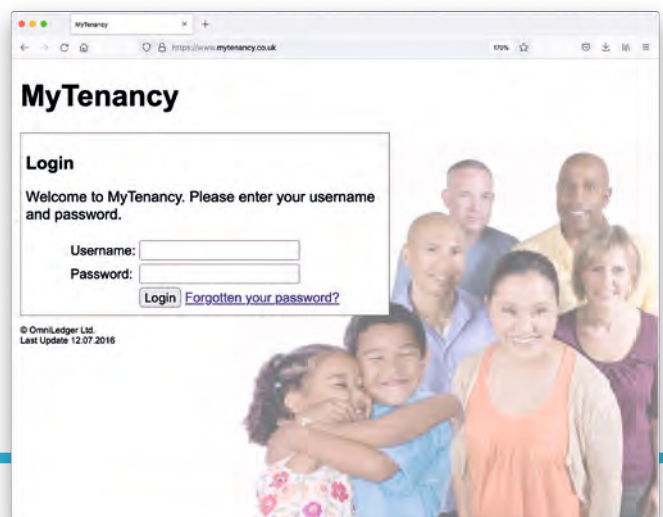
You will need to have access to a computer, either at home or at your local library. All tenants have their own individual login and password which you should not pass to anyone else as this gives you access to your rent account which is confidential to you.

*First time tenant login details will be issued by the Association. It is then the tenant's responsibility to change these details to suit their own preferences.*

To log into My Tenancy you will need to log on to our website which is [www.lsha.org.uk/tenant-services](http://www.lsha.org.uk/tenant-services) and click on **My Tenancy**

My Tenancy

- Username and passwords are now case sensitive
- New "Forgotten your password?" hyperlink that will allow user to recover their account



# Recycled Christmas Stars

**1** For each Christmas Star you will need one toilet roll tube (or half a kitchen roll tube)

**2** Gently flatten the tube



**3** Mark the flattened tube and carefully cut into five equal 'loops'

**4** Take one loop and place a dab of glue or a glue dot at one end

**5** Take a second loop and stick to the first

**6** Repeat with the remaining loops until you have a complete star

**You will need:**

- Toilet or Kitchen Roll Tubes
- Pencil • Scissors • Glue or glue dots • Paints or Glitter Paint
- Paintbrushes • Any other decorations you like • Ribbon or coloured string



# Winter Wordsearch

Find all the words listed, then use the remaining letters to spell out a favourite Christmas character!

C	S	R	E	B	M	E	C	E	D
C	H	R	I	B	B	O	N	W	E
A	A	R	Y	R	R	E	B	I	K
H	C	R	I	N	T	R	P	N	A
L	A	O	O	S	A	E	I	T	L
E	N	T	M	L	T	D	N	E	F
G	D	C	L	E	S	M	E	R	W
N	L	G	I	F	T	A	A	V	O
A	E	N	A	M	W	O	N	S	N
R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	S	S



Who is the mystery man?

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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**7** Decorate with brightly coloured paints or glitter

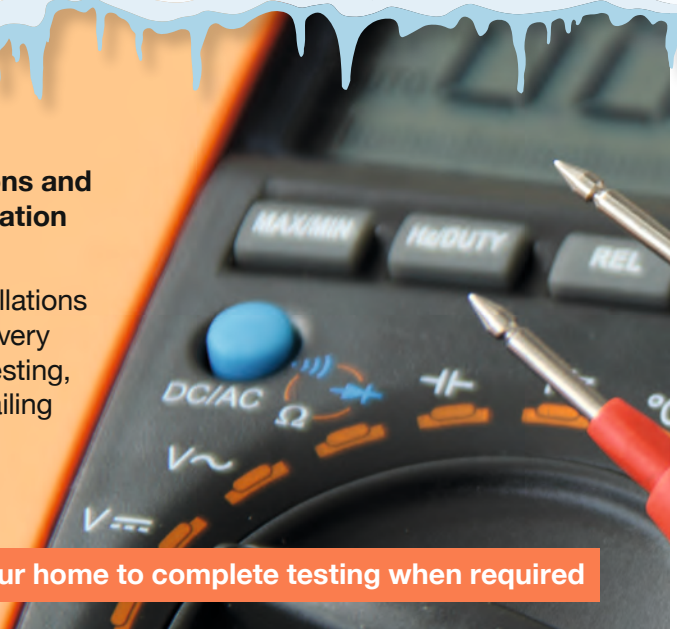


**8** Hang your stars with ribbon or string

# Electrical Inspections

At LSHA, we are required to carry out periodic inspections and associated testing to check whether an electrical installation is in a satisfactory condition for continued service.

The Regulations require landlords to have the electrical installations in their properties inspected and tested by our contractors every five years. On completion of the necessary inspection and testing, an Electrical Installation Condition Report will be issued detailing any observed damage, deterioration, defects, dangerous conditions and any non-compliance with the present-day safety standard which might give rise to danger.



Please help us by allowing our contractors access to your home to complete testing when required

# Save with Christmas Voucher Deals

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**Groupon** Get up to 70% off with local deals. [www.groupon.co.uk](http://www.groupon.co.uk)

**Amazon UK** Shop on the official site and save money. [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

**Wowcher** For local offers at unbeatable prices. [www.wowcher.co.uk](http://www.wowcher.co.uk)

**VoucherCodes** Save money with the UK's biggest voucher website. [www.vouchercodes.co.uk](http://www.vouchercodes.co.uk)

**Wayfair** Up to 70% discount on top brands. [www.wayfair.co.uk](http://www.wayfair.co.uk)



## Colour Fun

enjoy colouring in our Winter scene



We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year



**Lambeth & Southwark**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

21 Claylands Place, Oval, London SW8 1NL web: [www.lsha.org.uk](http://www.lsha.org.uk)  
tel: 020 7735 3935 text: 07826 826823 email: [info@lsha.org.uk](mailto:info@lsha.org.uk)  
*Great homes and vibrant communities*

**Our Office Opening Hours** are 9.30am-5pm. We close between 1-2pm for lunch. If you would like to see someone in person, please telephone for an appointment on: 020 7735 3935 or email: [info@lsha.org.uk](mailto:info@lsha.org.uk)

We will respond to phone calls and emails within 48 hours – at minimum to acknowledge receipt  
We will respond to letters within a week of receipt – at minimum to acknowledge receipt