



## WINTER 2024

# Welcome to the winter edition of our Local Space newsletter.

## In this issue:

### Service improvements

- 2 You said, we did!
- 2 Our repairs process

### Money matters

- 3 Life just got easier with My Account
- 3 Direct Debit competition winners
- 3 Paying your rent this Christmas

### Health and safety

- 4 Staying safe over the festive period
- 5 Keeping communal areas clear
- 5 How to dispose of your rubbish
- 5 Would adaptations to your home help you or your family?

### News

- 6 K&T Heating is changing its name
- 6 Christmas opening hours
- 6 Accessibility on our website
- 6 Local Space donates IT equipment to local school
- 7 Did you miss our Residents' Report 2023-24?
- 7 Top rating retained from the Regulator of Social Housing
- 7 Local Space Property Services Manager award nomination
- 7 Black History Month 2024

### Get involved

- 8 Help us improve our services
- 8 Update your details



# Service improvements

## You said, we did!

In this section, we'll update you on how we've listened to your feedback and used it to improve our services.

### Visit our newly refurbished reception

In response to your feedback, we've created a safe, welcoming and accessible space for you to visit and meet our staff.

Our reception is open to all customers between 9.00am and 4:30pm, Monday to Friday, with no appointment necessary. We'll keep our opening times under review to make sure it meets our customers' needs.

Our Customer Service Officers, Lola, Val, and Theo are on hand to help with any queries you might have. If they can't help, they'll contact someone who can. Our phone lines will remain open, but we appreciate that some customers may prefer to speak to us face to face.

## Our repairs process

You said that you'd like to know more about how we assess the urgency of repairs, so we've put together an overview of the different types of repairs and their priority levels below.

### Emergency repairs

Emergency repairs require immediate attention to prevent serious damage or safety risks. If you call to report an emergency repair, we aim to attend the repair within 24 hours. Emergency repairs could include:

- Burst pipes or major leaks causing flooding or significant water damage.
- Gas leaks posing a risk of fire or explosion.
- Electrical faults affecting essential services or causing power outages.
- Heating or cooling failures in extreme weather conditions.
- Security breaches such as break-ins that need immediate repairs.
- Structural damage threatening you and/or your family's safety.
- Sewage backups causing health hazards.

### Have a say in our performance – join our customer performance meetings

We welcome customer feedback and encourage you to hold us accountable, helping us to ensure that we meet your needs and improve our services. For better transparency, we'll be holding monthly meetings with the Resident Policy and Scrutiny Panel to review our performance.

If you're interested in attending or learning more, please contact [customerengagement@localspace.co.uk](mailto:customerengagement@localspace.co.uk) for further details.



### Urgent repairs

Urgent repairs require prompt attention but don't pose an immediate threat.

While not emergencies, we aim to attend an appointment for urgent repairs within five days to prevent escalation into more serious problems. Urgent repairs could include:

- Minor plumbing issues such as slow drains or minor leaks.
- Essential appliances not working, but not causing immediate safety hazards.
- Minor electrical issues such as flickering lights or malfunctioning outlets.
- Minor roof leaks that could worsen if not addressed soon.
- Non-critical repairs that affect the property's functionality or appearance.

## Routine repairs

Routine repairs don't require immediate attention and can be scheduled at a convenient time. We aim to attend a routine repair within 28 days. Routine repairs could include:

- Cosmetic repairs such as painting or fixing minor wall imperfections.
- Non-critical appliance repairs that don't impact daily activities.
- Minor plumbing tasks such as dripping faucets or slow drains.
- Minor electrical repairs that are not safety risks.

- General maintenance such as cleaning gutters or landscaping.
- Fixing non-essential features that don't impact functionality.
- Upgrading fixtures for aesthetic or efficiency improvements.

If you have any questions or need assistance with repairs, please call us on **020 8221 4000** or email us at [info@localspace.co.uk](mailto:info@localspace.co.uk)

# Money matters

## Life just got easier with My Account

My Account makes accessing our services easy, safe and convenient. You can manage your rent, repairs and update your contact details in one place on our website. As it's online, you can access it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from your phone, laptop, PC, or tablet.

### What are the benefits?

My Account can be used to:

- View your account statement.
- Pay your rent online.
- Request a repair.
- Check the status of a repair.
- Update your contact details.

### How can I access My Account?

Go to our website and select My Account in the top right corner of the screen to log in or register.

Before you fill out our registration form, please call us on 020 8221 4000 to ask for an activation code which will need to be added to your registration form alongside your tenancy agreement number.



## Direct Debit competition winners

Over the summer, we ran a competition encouraging residents to set up a Direct Debit to pay their rent. Congratulations to our winners Juliet, Ruth, Kaylee and Cristiana who won £200 off their rent. One of the winners, Juliet, said:

*"Life is full of many surprises and special moments that are worth hoping for, keep hope alive and pray that yours comes next. God bless you."*

The easiest way for you to make payments is by setting up a direct debit with us. Payments will be taken directly from your account at a set monthly date convenient to you.

For more information and to set up a direct debit with us, please call us on **020 8221 4000**.

## Paying your rent this Christmas

As the festive season approaches, we understand that this time of year can add financial pressure. However, we would like to remind you of the importance of keeping up with your rent payments during this period. Staying on top of your rent payments means that you can have peace of mind in a safe and secure home and helps us maintain the quality services we provide for you.

If you're facing financial difficulties or need support and guidance, please call us on **020 8221 4000** or email us at [info@localspace.co.uk](mailto:info@localspace.co.uk) – we're here to support you.





# Health and safety

## Staying safe over the festive period

It's a wonderful time of year where friends and families come together, decorate their homes and celebrate. During this festive period, it's important to stay mindful of fire safety, so we've put together a few safety tips to stay safe.

### Take care of your Christmas tree, menorah and festive decorations

It's fun to decorate your Christmas tree and your home to bring some festive cheer and following these tips can help you stay safe from the risk of a fire:

- Watering a real Christmas tree regularly can prevent it from drying out and catching fire.
- If you're displaying a menorah in your window, make sure your curtains, blinds, shutters, and any other flammable materials are kept away from the candles.
- Keep decorations and greeting cards away from open flames and keep candles away from Christmas trees and furnishings.
- Consider using battery-powered, flameless LED candles. If you decide to use candles, keep them away from Christmas trees, curtains, or anything else that could catch fire.
- Switch off any fairy lights by the plug socket when you leave your home.
- Make sure you buy fairy lights from a trusted supplier and check them for any damaged wires or loose connections before use.

### Avoid overloading plug sockets

Don't overload plug sockets by adding multiple extensions and adapters. If you've been gifted an e-bike or e-scooter this Christmas, you can find tips on how to charge them safely at [london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk)

### Fire safety in the kitchen

More than half of fires in homes start in the kitchen. To prevent a fire:

- Double check the cooker and hob are turned off when you've finished cooking.
- Never put anything metal in the microwave.

You can find more kitchen safety tips at [london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk)

### Check your smoke alarms

Test your smoke alarms regularly. If your alarm is not mains powered, don't forget to replace the batteries when needed.

### Prepare for an emergency

Have a fire extinguisher on hand and learn how to use it. Familiarise your family with the escape plan and make sure everyone knows how to evacuate safely in case of an emergency.





## Keeping communal areas clear

It's important to keep your communal areas clear when it comes to fire safety, but we need your help to make sure it happens. By working together, we can keep homes clear, tidy, and safe. Here's some advice on how you can help:

### Keep it clear

Make sure your communal areas are clear of any rubbish so that the fire escape routes are accessible to everyone. In addition to blocking the escape route itself, rubbish and personal items can cause accidents if people need to exit the building in a hurry.

### Keep all personal items inside your home

Make sure no prams, bikes, scooters, clothing racks, furniture or similar items are left in communal areas. Shared areas such as hallways, communal areas and courtyards are critical in an emergency situation as they offer escape routes for residents and make it easier for firefighters to do their job.



## How to dispose of your rubbish

As the festive season approaches, we'd like to remind all customers about the importance of proper refuse disposal. With the extra waste generated by the holiday celebrations, it's important we all do our part to keep the community clean and safe.

Please remember to:

- Check your local waste collection schedule, as there may be changes over the Christmas and New Year period.
- Place your bins out on the correct day to avoid missed collections.
- Break down cardboard boxes and packaging to make it easier for collection.
- Avoid overloading bins and use recycling where possible.

If you have large items like old furniture or appliances to dispose of after the holidays, please contact us on **020 8221 4000** to arrange a bulky waste collection.

## Would adaptations to your home help you or your family?

If you need help making your home safer or more comfortable, we're here to support you. We can assist with minor adaptations, and in some cases, we may be able to cover or contribute to the costs. If you require major changes to better suit your needs, we can connect you with professionals who can assess your situation and provide expert guidance. Don't hesitate to reach out – your comfort and safety is our priority.

To ensure that our services best reflect your needs, please fill in our equality and diversity form with your up-to-date information at [bit.ly/localsp-form](https://bit.ly/localsp-form)

# News

## K&T Heating is changing its name

As part of a rebrand, K&T Heating is changing its name to Sureserve Compliance South.

You'll continue to receive a high quality, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year service. For a short while, you'll continue to see the old K&T Heating vans and uniforms as they move over to the new branding with the new Sureserve Compliance South logo, but we want to reassure you that it's still them.

All their operatives will have information cards explaining the new brand change, but if you're not sure, please ask to see their ID badges and phone **020 8269 4500** to check.



## Christmas opening hours

Local Space will be running an out-of-hours service from 5.00pm on Tuesday 24 December 2024 and will reopen at 9.00am on Thursday 2 January 2025.

During this time, you can use the following contacts to report emergency repairs, gas leaks or gas boiler breakdowns:

- To report an emergency repair, please call Axis Europe on **020 3597 2093**.
- If you have a gas leak, please call the National Grid on **0800 111 999**. Lines are open 24/7.
- For gas boiler breakdown repairs, please call K&T Heating on **0800 193 0477**.

You can also raise non-urgent repairs using My Account on our website.

If your tenancy is managed by Newham Council, please call **0800 952 5555**.

## Accessibility on our website

Did you know we have speech, reading and translation support on our website? The ReachDeck toolbar can help those who need to use a screen reader, have a visual impairment, or prefer to read in another language.

### How does it work?

To launch the ReachDeck toolbar on our website, click the icon in the top right corner and a toolbar will appear at the top of the screen. To find out how to use the features, click the question mark on the toolbar. You can also hover your mouse over any of the icons on the toolbar to find out more.



### How does the ReachDeck Toolbar help?

The ReachDeck toolbar will help you to read and translate the content on our website. Its features include:

- Text-to-speech: click on or select any text to hear it read aloud.
- Translation: translate content into over 100 languages.
- Text magnification: enlarge text and hear it read aloud.
- MP3 generation: convert selected text into an MP3 audio file.
- Screen mask: reduce glare with a tinted mask.
- Web page simplifier: remove clutter from the screen. Display only the main text.
- Picture dictionary: displays pictures related to text selected on the page.

If you have any accessibility needs, please fill in our online form at [bit.ly/localsp-form](https://bit.ly/localsp-form) so that we can support you as much as we can.

## Local Space donates IT equipment to local school

In September, Local Space donated 14 laptops to TCES East London School which offers specialist education to exceptional neurodiverse children aged seven to 19 years old. Helping local students gain access to digital equipment is part of our commitment to contributing to the community we work and operate in.





## Did you miss our Residents' Report 2023-24?

Our latest Residents' Report shares how we've invested in your homes and improved our services by listening to your feedback. You can read the report or watch a short video, providing a quick overview of our performance, at [localspace.co.uk/residents-report-2023-24](https://localspace.co.uk/residents-report-2023-24)



## Top rating retained from the Regulator of Social Housing

Our customers are always at the heart of everything we do, so we're excited to share some good news with you.

The Regulator of Social Housing has reconfirmed Local Space's V1 viability grade and G1 governance grade in its latest regulatory judgement. This means we meet governance requirements, viability requirements and have the financial capacity to deal with a wide range of adverse scenarios.

## Local Space Property Services Manager award nomination

We're delighted that Nicola O'Neill, Property Services Manager at Local Space, was shortlisted as Team Leader of the Year (Residential) at the Property Week Inspiring Women in Property Awards. We're very proud of the work that Nicola has achieved in the past two years since joining Local Space, including leading her team to transform our repairs and maintenance function. The Property Week Inspiring Women Awards recognise the collective efforts and achievements in advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within the property sector.



## Black History Month 2024

In October, we marked Black History Month at Local Space. We learned about untold stories and reclaiming the narrative by:

- Holding staff events including a lunch and learn session.
- Decorating our office with poster displays of untold stories and black historical and contemporary figures.
- Promoting our Black History Month internal resource hub full of videos, book recommendations and much more.
- Encouraging staff to share their reflections and attend events outside of work, which will be reimbursed by Local Space.
- We were lucky to be joined by Alwyn Lewis and Pamela Leonce, Board members at Local Space, as well as our own staff who shared their stories at our lunch and learn session.

If you want to find out more about any of these news pieces or keep up to date with the latest news at Local Space, please visit [localspace.co.uk/news](https://localspace.co.uk/news)



# Get involved

## Help us improve our services

We're looking for Local Space engaged residents to become members of our:

- Scrutiny group (open to all residents).
- Resident policy and scrutiny panel (two members).
- Customer services committee (two members).

**Residents who actively engage in meetings and projects on our panel and group will be paid for their time and the committee members will be paid annually for their contribution. We'll also provide an induction, training and ongoing support.**

This is your opportunity to make a real difference to those living in Local Space homes by helping us identify areas for improvement and deliver high-quality services that meet residents' needs. You don't need to be an expert, but you should be able to share your views and contribute to effective decision making.

### Scrutiny group (open to all residents)

As a scrutiny group member, you will contribute to short, one-off projects which scrutinise different aspects of Local Space's services. This is a flexible role for those who wish to engage on a project-by-project basis.

### Resident policy and scrutiny panel (two members)

As a resident policy and scrutiny panel member, you will play a vital role in scrutinising Local Space's services, ensuring that residents' concerns are heard, and driving service improvements. You'll help shape decisions that impact the wider community by providing valuable feedback on policies, performance, and service delivery.



### Customer services committee (two members)

As a customer services committee member, you will contribute to the committee's oversight of services provided to Local Space residents. You'll bring your unique perspectives, helping the committee and the Board make informed decisions about how to deliver high-quality services that meet residents' needs.

The deadline for all applications is Friday 10 January 2025. Find out more and apply at [localspace.co.uk/residents-help-us-improve-our-services](https://localspace.co.uk/residents-help-us-improve-our-services)

### Update your details

To make sure we can provide tailored services and understand your (and your household) needs, we need to have your up-to-date information. If any information has changed within your household, please get in touch with us as soon as possible. These changes can be anything from:

- Members of the household, for example, someone has had a baby or someone has moved out.
- Health conditions.
- Changes or updates to contact details and preferences.

You can make these changes over the phone on **020 8221 4000**, email us at [info@localspace.co.uk](mailto:info@localspace.co.uk) or fill out our online form at [bit.ly/localsp-form](https://bit.ly/localsp-form)

At home with

**LOCAL SPACE**



Local Space, 58 Romford Road, London, E15 4BZ  
[info@localspace.co.uk](mailto:info@localspace.co.uk) • 020 8221 4000  
[localspace.co.uk](https://localspace.co.uk)

Local Space is a charitable registered society (Reg. Number: 29840R)  
Registered Social Landlord (Reg. Number: LH4454)

Design by Graphic Impressions