



VTS-KODIT TENANT BECAME A REAL ESTATE MANAGER

VTS
KODIT

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YOUR OWN RENTAL HOME ALLOWS YOU TO AFFORD MORE



I would like to wish a wonderful Christmas time to our tenants!

AFFORDABLE living is an important attraction and retaining factor for cities. Living in Tampere must not take up too big a portion of residents' income, ensuring that they are left with enough money to enjoy life in their home city.

Affordability has been the core idea behind the operations of VTS-kodit for 50 years. This will continue to be the case also in the future, as specified even in the foundation's rules. However, we are not making living affordable no matter what the cost. We always offer affordable prices together with quality and comfort of living. This means for example that our apartments have been designed to be functional and sufficiently large, that the services of VTS-kodit are effective and that the tenants have real housing security. We make rental homes feel like residents' own homes.

The combination of affordability and comfort is made possible in part by our skilled real estate development and maintenance professionals. On our new construction and renovation sites, we produce good quality in one go, as it is in our interests to consider the building's entire lifecycle.

We also pay close attention to the maintenance of our properties. For us, it is definitely more important to find skilled and service-minded cooperation partners than it is to commission work at the lowest possible price. This autumn, we hired block janitors and cleaners with a new negotiation procedure in which quality was the most heavily weighted selection criterion. Its proportion was as much as 80 per cent.

In the procurement process, the maintenance of a total of 28 properties and the cleaning of 23 properties was put out to tender.

The houses received their own block janitors and cleaners who only work at the properties of VTS-kodit and become familiar to all tenants. This increases the meaningfulness and the quality of work and the comfort of living at the same time. We want to be a responsible employer and contractor.

With the anniversary year approaching its end, VTS-kodit is now a vibrant fifty-year-old. We utilise the experience we've gathered over the years and strive to continue as pioneers of housing development. At the moment, for example, we are already building our second wooden apartment block and are involved in wood construction developing projects. We also cooperate with architecture students. Our aim is to receive fresh new ideas from the young designer generation for renovation and complementary construction.

The period of office of VTS-kodit's current management board is coming to its end, and I would like to thank each of its members for a well-managed task. I am especially grateful to **Anneli Kivistö**, who has steered VTS-kodit as its chairperson for 12 years and been a management board member for 24 years. The management board's deputy chairperson **Seppo Rantanen** and tenant members **Taisto Aaltonen** and **Kauko Ahmala** have also been involved for many years – a big thank you also to them. These four veterans of the management board have had a significant role in the development of VTS-kodit into Tampere's biggest landlord and producer of affordable housing.

Satu Eskelinen
CEO, VTS-kodit

Let us know what you think



WHAT would you like to read about in Asukasviesti magazine? Is there something great happening in your building, something you would like to share with us? Would you like to see changes in the magazine?

Please send your wishes and story tips to asukastoiminta@vts.fi by 8 January 2021 to participate in a competition to win movie tickets. The prize is a set of two tickets, and the winner will be notified individually.



AN ATMOSPHERIC WINTER – SAFELY, OF COURSE

IN THE middle of the polar night, people yearn for gentle, warm light – a need met to the fullest by candles.

If your candlestick was stained with candle wax last Christmas, do not worry. Just put it into the freezer or out into the freezing outdoor temperatures for a while, because candle wax is easy to remove when frozen.

If the candle does not fit into the holder, you can make the bottom of the candle thinner by rotating it in hot water until it sits firmly in its place without the risk of tilting.

Put out the candle by bending its wick momentarily into the molten wax. This eliminates the smell of smoke and the wick can be ignited more easily when it is next used.

Always make sure that the candle or lantern is on a non-flammable surface – even outdoors – and that there are no curtains, shelves or other flammable things in its vicinity or above it. Keep your cand-

les at safe distances and make sure that small children and pets cannot reach the flames.

Don't let the candle burn all the way down

Put out table, chandelier and lantern candles when there is still around two centimetres left of them. If a candle is left burning out by itself, the resulting molten wax pool may develop into a pool fire. In such instances the non-flammability of the underlying surface does not help any more, as the blaze can easily ignite a wooden lantern or other surrounding materials.

Have a LED Christmas free of worries!

For this reason all candles, including those in outdoor lanterns, must be put out before the residents go to sleep. Outdoor fires are generally prohibited on balconies,

and the same goes for areas of the yard that are close to structures or under a shelter.

LED candles and lights do not heat up, which makes them a safe choice for homes with people of all age groups. On the other hand, the transformer of the lights usually heats up significantly. Therefore it is important to make sure air can circulate freely around the transformer.

When buying Christmas lights, check that the product comes with a CE marking. Old Christmas lights that flash unexpectedly, make buzzing sounds or display other strange behaviour must not be used, like all electrical devices operating unpredictably. They pose a risk of fire.

It is good practice to ensure before Christmas that the smoke detectors in the apartment are functional. The detector must be replaced at least every ten years, and the battery each year.



VTS-kodit tenant Reeta Jääskeläinen sorts all recyclable waste for which there is a container in her home yard: biowaste, plastic and glass packaging, metal, paper and cardboard. There are lots of different bins in the kitchen, making waste sorting easier.

RECYCLE YOUR PLASTIC PACKAGING

Comprehensive waste sorting facilities, which we recommend utilising, are available to VTS-kodit tenants. A little sorting work can help the environment a lot.

THE MORE of us who sort recyclable waste, the more of existing material can be recycled and used as raw material for new products. Recycling saves resources and energy, cuts carbon-dioxide emissions and keeps waste management costs down.

People living alone should also sort their waste, even if its amount feels negligible. More than half of the households in Tampere are single-person homes, which means that the total amount of recyclable waste produced by them is huge. It is important that it too is recycled.

Collection of plastic packaging extended

The latest newcomers at the waste collection points are containers for plastic packaging, which can currently be found at twelve VTS-kodit houses. In the future, a plastic packaging collection point will automatically be added to new and renovated sites.

All other properties of VTS-kodit will also be mapped, and the collection of plastic packaging will be arranged on the condition that there is enough space at the waste collection point of the building.

There are a lot of properties and the work has just started, as the collection of plastic packaging was only extended to cover the entire urban area of Tampere in October.

The process takes some patience – but you can already start to sort your plastic packaging, as it is now collected at several ecopoints. You can find the location of the closest one at www.kierratys.info.

“Sorting is easy!”

Niemenranta resident **Reeta Jääskeläinen** throws a bag of plastic packaging into the waste collecti-

on container in the yard of her home, from where the packaging is taken away to be used as raw material for new plastic products.

“It is easy to sort plastic packaging, it’s virtually automatic,” Reeta says.

Initially, dirty packaging tended to make Reeta a bit unsure about what to do.

“Washing waste did not make sense to me, so I have decided to treat the packaging that cannot be rinsed clean as mixed waste.”

This is indeed the correct approach – packaging that is really dirty or cannot be cleaned easily is not worth washing. If cleaning requires

Collection of plastic packaging

DO include:

Empty, clean and dry plastic household packaging:

- plastic food packaging such as yoghurt pots; butter tubs; and cold cuts, cheese and ready meal packaging,
- detergent, shampoo and soap packaging,
- plastic bottles, containers and jars – preferably flattened,
- plastic sacks, bags and wrapping.

DO NOT include:

- dirty plastic packaging or mixed waste,
- PVC packaging (recycling code 03),
- other plastic products (e.g. toys, crockery, buckets) or plastic packaging that is business waste.

Empty plastic packaging that contained dangerous substances should be disposed of as mixed waste.

warm water and/or a detergent, it might be the case that recycling will not benefit the environment at all.

Dirty packaging cannot be utilised as recycled material, either. Therefore, it should be put into the mixed waste container.

Biowaste used for transport fuel production

Along with other mixed waste, dirty plastic packaging ends up at the Tammervoima plant, where it is used for the production of electricity and district heating.

Soon the biowaste of Tampe-

re residents will also be utilised as energy, as the new bio plant of the waste management company Pirkanmaan Jätehuolto is set to open shortly. There, the biowaste is used for producing environmentally-friendly biogas to replace imported fossil fuels.

In addition to this, the plant utilises nutrients recovered from the biowaste and produces fertilisers suitable for organic production from them.

For those who have not sorted biowaste until today, now is the moment to start: who would throw away fuel?

Remove caps and lids

THE PLASTIC packaging is transported to Riihimäki to a plastic refinery, where it is processed into recycled raw material and new plastic products, such as plastic bags, buckets and composite boards.

Plastic packaging can be taken to the collection container in a plastic bag, because there is a bag opener at the start of the sorting line. An optic reader recognises the different types of plastic and sorts them into groups.

The recycling process works if different types of plastic do not get mixed. So, please do not place different kinds of packaging inside each other when sorting them at home. The reader will only recognise the outer package type, which means that the rest may be sorted incorrectly. For the same reason, it is good practice to remove lids, caps and pump parts, as they tend to be of a different kind of plastic than the package body.





My mother-in-law and my father-in-law were the main reasons for me to learn Finnish.

NEW COUNTRY, NEW PROFESSION

VTS-kodit tenant Akeem Walcott studied to become a real estate manager

AKEEM Walcott, real estate manager at Lännen Kiinteistöpalvelu, is a well-known figure to many residents of Western Tampere. He manages VTS-kodit's houses and yards in the Virontörmä residential area, amongst others.

Previously Walcott worked for twelve years at a water supply plant in his native Trinidad & Tobago. Five years ago he faced a difficult decision: Should he leave his beloved home country and head for his wife's home country, Finland? The decision would also affect the home country and place of education of the couple's child, who was due soon.

Increased coffee consumption

The couple ended up in Finland and live in a VTS-kodit house in Hallila. A son was born into the family, and Akeem Walcott under-

took an apprenticeship to become a real estate manager. He says that Finnish work culture has increased his coffee consumption.

"In my home country I drank maybe one cup of coffee in an entire week. I learnt immediately that coffee breaks are very important here. In the beginning I could not sleep or do anything because I was consuming so much coffee," Walcott laughs.

Finnish lessons from son to father

Akeem Walcott learnt to speak and read Finnish quickly.

"My mother-in-law and my father-in-law were the main reasons for me to learn Finnish, as they do not speak English. Now I'm already able to chat with them. I read a lot, watch the telly and write. I've learnt Finnish through that."

His efforts have been assisted by

an outspoken five-year-old feedback box.

"For example, whenever I use an incorrect tense, my son corrects me: 'Daddy, you're saying it wrong.'"

Fast-paced everyday life

Everyday life consumes a lot of energy. Akeem's wife works on a ship every other week, which keeps the relationship between father and son close.

In the weeks when his wife works, Walcott wakes up early, takes his son to daycare and rushes to work.

"I share all my hobbies with my son. In our free time we visit the traffic park and enjoy outdoor exercise. When I have free time for myself, I often spend it sleeping," the father grins in the midst of his busiest years.