

ASUKASVIESTI ²₂₀₂₂

A photograph of two women outdoors. One woman with red curly hair and glasses is standing behind the other woman, who is sitting in a wheelchair. The woman in the wheelchair has long black hair and is smiling. They are both wearing jackets. The background shows green foliage and a gravel path.

**"I'VE FOUND
SUCH A DEAR
FRIEND
NEXT DOOR!"**

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OPERATIONS OF VTS-KODIT GUIDED BY RESPONSIBILITY

RESPONSIBILITY is one of the priorities of VTS-kodit's strategy and guides our operations in many ways. This takes the form of environmental responsibility, for example. We are making housing as environmentally friendly as possible, thus reducing the carbon footprint of our operations.

We do this work in cooperation with our residents. We are making many efforts to ensure that you have the opportunity to contribute to the health of the environment and make a difference through your actions. Our properties have a wide range of sorting options, making it easy to recycle your household waste. Recycling has a major impact on the carbon footprint of housing, and it is particularly important to separate biowaste from mixed waste. Recycling other types of waste saves significant amounts of natural resources as well.

Flat-specific water meters bring big savings on water consumption. Therefore, more than 70% of our homes already have a water meter, and the water in these homes is billed according to usage. A third good example is the residents' Eco Team, which promotes a sustainable lifestyle.

With the LUMO programme for biodiversity, we are taking ecological aspects into account in our yards. In this magazine, we explain how we are increasing biodiversity.

We are also working on a yard

concept for VTS-kodit. Our aim is to make our yards even more welcoming, and, to this end, we wanted to hear our residents' ideas. Many thanks to those who responded to the survey. Your opinions will be very useful to us.

A comfortable living environment requires functional maintenance and cleaning. We are developing an operating model in this regard – responsibly, of course. When putting our cleaning and maintenance services out to tender, we place the highest priority on the quality of service.

Responsibility is also reflected in our role as an employer – we want to provide meaningful work for our partners. The block cleaners and caretakers of VTS-kodit work full-time in their own area, where they get to know the residents and where the workload is appropriate. Although, last winter our maintenance was under a lot of pressure, with snow falling heavily month after month. Our caretakers worked long hours, for which we owe them many thanks.

At last, the restrictions were eased and resident activities got underway. Now I invite you to get together at Särkänniemi, VTS-kodit's neighbourhood events and the resident activities of your own building – let's have a great summer together!

Satu Eskelinen
CEO, VTS-kodit

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A COMFORTABLE LIVING ENVIRONMENT REQUIRES FUNCTIONAL MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING."

TROUBLES IN THE ECONOMY AND JOY IN KÄRÄJÄTÖRMÄ

THE current social situation is worrying. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is causing not only human distress but also economic concern. VTS-kodit is also helping Ukrainian refugees by providing them with housing where possible.

Inflation has taken off in Finland, reaching as high as 5.8% in March. Housing costs are on the rise and prices are at risk of rising even faster. In the board, we have been thinking about how to stay within the budget and how to make savings. For example, could we take further steps to reduce heat and electricity consumption? We also need to be able to manage all other activities as cost-effectively as possible.

We are particularly concerned about renovations and new construction, as these projects should be taken forward in line with the works contracts. Construction costs – especially the prices of wood, metal, electricity and fuel – have risen significantly due to the war, and the availability of materials has deteriorated. This is a truly exceptional situation, as many construction companies are no longer making any offers at all. We may have to put some projects on hold until the costs are more predictable again.

Then on to more pleasant things. Two new members have joined the board this year: **Sari Yli-Kuha** as the tenant representative of Tampereen Vuokratulosäätiö and **Sami Eloranta** as the tenant representative of Vilusen Rinne. We warmly welcome them to the board.

In April, I received an invitation to Käräjätörmä, where the residents organised a spring event. There were pony rides for the children, and crêpes, sausages and pea soup were served along with great company. It was great to meet the people of Käräjätörmä for the first time as chair. The building manager, the chair of the tenant committee and the residents told us what was happening in the area and presented the wide range of activities.

Many thanks to all the active residents for the valuable work you do for the community and comfort of the area – both in Käräjätörmä and at other locations of VTS-kodit. It makes a big difference.

Pekka Anttila
Chair of the Board

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VTS-KODIT IS ALSO HELPING UKRAINIAN REFUGEES BY PROVIDING THEM WITH HOUSING WHERE POSSIBLE."



FLOURISHING NATURE IN YOUR OWN YARD

BIODIVERSITY – the diversity of ecosystems, species and genes – sustains life on Earth. It is also the basis of human well-being.

Without biodiversity, there would be no natural ecosystem services – the vital benefits we gain from nature. These include clean air, water and food.

A thriving urban nature also plays an important role. Natural environments within the built environment improve air quality, provide shade and recreation, and help moderate heat and rainwater floods.

A rich urban nature also contributes to people's physical and mental health. For example, the immune system requires constant exposure to a diverse microbiota.

Let's stop the biodiversity loss!

Now, however, this diversity of life is being threatened, as biodiversity is deteriorating at an accelerating rate. With the expansion and densification of cities, the space left for

nature is decreasing and biodiversity in cities is deteriorating.

Biodiversity programmes for the City of Tampere and the Pirkanmaa region have been prepared for the period 2022–2030. They drive the development of ecologically sustainable practices and the protection of biodiversity.

Now VTS-kodit is also drawing its own LUMO programme for biodiversity.

“The LUMO programme promotes awareness of biodiversity and develops methods for preserving it in the green areas of VTS-kodit,” says **Mari Ylikauppila**.

She is studying to become a Bachelor of Natural Resources in the built environment programme at HAMK and is completing the LUMOtarihuri partial degree at AhlmanEdu. The LUMO programme for VTS-kodit is part of her diploma work for both qualifications.

“The aim is to strengthen the connectivity of Tampere's green network on the plots of VTS-kodit; increase biodiversity in the yard

areas; create comfortable, healthy, safe and diverse yards and inspire residents to take care of the local nature.”

Dead wood, meadows, rain gardens...

This year, the VTS-kodit LUMO programme is being tested at three pilot properties: Riipuksenkatu 5, Nikinväylä 10 and Osmonraitti 6.

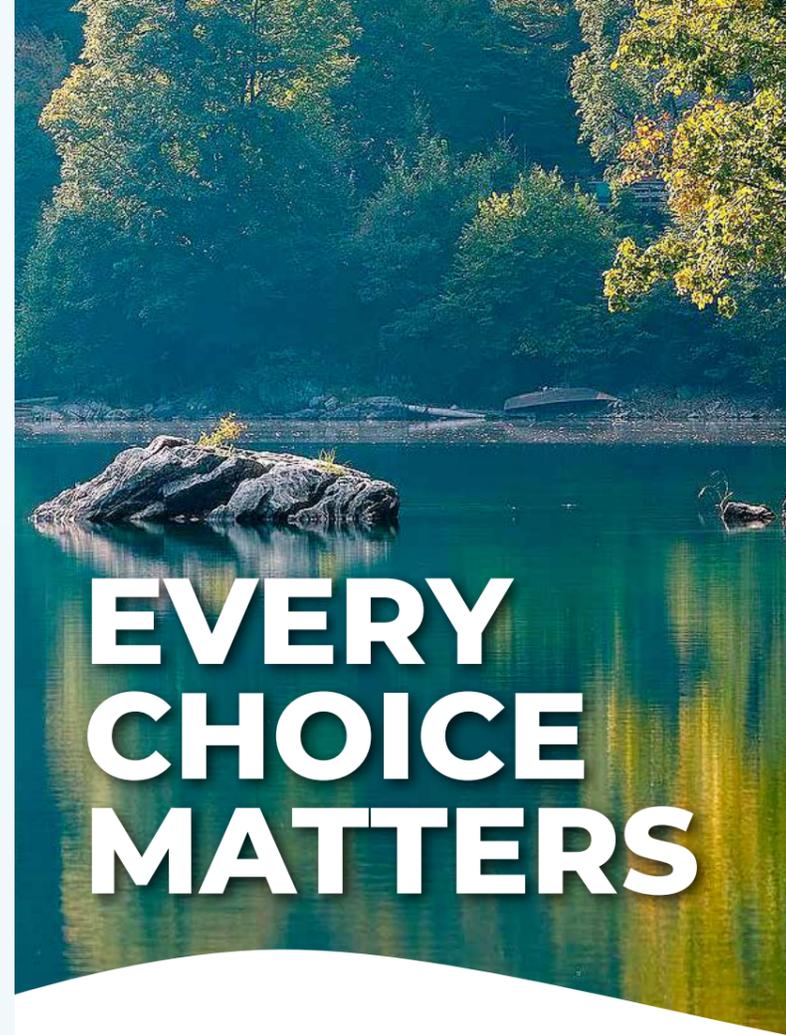
There are many ways to increase biodiversity in yards, such as building dead-wood fences as insect habitats, cultivating small meadows, building green roofs and rain gardens, and planting large amounts of diverse native vegetation.

Instead of raking, leaves are shredded in autumn and spread on the ground to make use of their nutrients. Whereas in the summer, some of the lawns can be left uncut to provide food for pollinators, as clovers and other wildflowers are left to bloom in peace.

More attention is being paid to natural values in the design of VTS-kodit's properties and in the maintenance of yard areas. The LUMO programme helps improve the biodiversity of yards by means such as turning some lawns into meadows.

EXPLORE NATURE AND SHARE YOUR OBSERVATIONS!

Download the
iNaturalist app on your
phone to record and
identify your nature
observations:
[inaturalist.laji.fi](https://www.inaturalist.fi)



EVERY CHOICE MATTERS

Our well-being has improved through small habits adopted along the way, such as brushing our teeth. Now we are learning to change our consumption behaviour to reduce our carbon footprint and overconsumption. By making small changes to our everyday habits, we can have a significant impact on the future of humanity and the planet.

VTS-KODIT is on its way to carbon-neutral housing.

Much has already been done: The carbon footprint of VTS-kodit has been calculated, carbon emissions are monitored and all activities are steered towards low-carbon rental housing.

“Most of the emissions from our properties came from heating, electricity and waste,” says **Miska Pöyry**, Development Engineer at VTS-kodit.

“We have already upgraded our building electricity to fully zero-emission, which has significantly reduced our emissions. Now we are focusing on reducing the carbon footprint of heating together with Tampereen Sähkölaitos.

Our aim is to reduce emissions from heating by as much as 90 per cent by 2030.”

Effective cooperation

In this effort, everyone has an important role to play – VTS-kodit, the power utility and residents alike.

Tampereen Sähkölaitos is making district heating almost zero-emission through its own investments, which will increase the percentage of renewable energy.

VTS-kodit reduces the consumption and emissions of buildings, particularly in connection with modernisations and new construction. This is done through energy

investments, equipment replacements and maintenance.

Savings from the shower

Residents' actions play an important role in reducing emissions from housing.

“Residents still have a lot of potential to make a difference through their consumption behaviour. For example, if everyone took two-minute showers instead of ten-minute ones, it would significantly reduce heat consumption,” says **Milla Havanka**, who develops environmental matters at VTS-kodit.

**Sorting
biowaste is
a great service
to the environment**



THE amount of waste from VTS-kodit has taken a nice downward turn. Indeed, it is a good idea for everyone to sort their waste, as it is an easy and effective way to reduce the carbon footprint of housing and save natural resources.

It is particularly important to separate biowaste from mixed waste. Mixed waste is the fuel for the Tammervoima power plant, which produces electricity and district heat. The less wet biowaste there is in the mixed waste, the more efficiently the plant will produce energy for the people of Tampere.

The sorted biowaste, in turn, is processed into environmentally friendly transport fuel, and the nutrients it contains are recycled back into the soil as fertiliser.

Therefore, waste is a source of clean local energy that can improve Finland's self-sufficiency and replace imported fossil fuels. Please do not waste a valuable raw material!



FRIEND FOUND NEXT DOOR

SARI Lehtonen and **Tanya Sonntag** moved to Käräjätörmä 4 in 2015 and became next-door neighbours. They met at a tenant meeting, where they both joined the tenant committee, and always stayed to chat after the meetings. "One evening, Tanya had an allergic reaction at home and came to ring my doorbell," says Sari.

"She had already called the ambulance herself and I went to open the building's front door to the helpers. Tanya then gave me

roses as a thank you, after which we started to get to know each other better. Soon we were having pyjama dates in the stairwell, borrowing milk and whatnot from each other and exchanging shopping lists."

A hug on demand

The friends give each other both practical help and emotional support. They encourage others to get to know their neighbours as well,

because you never know what kind of a gem might be living next door.

"It's truly wonderful that I've found such a dear friend next door! We can talk to each other about anything," says Tanya.

"Once I was feeling really down and called Sari to ask if I could have a hug. And then we hugged and oh how much it helped."

Sari has been there to look after her neighbour's boys after school if their mother has been away. In

Tanya Sonntag (left) and Sari Lehtonen enjoy living in Käräjätörmä, as they have nice neighbours, a peaceful living environment and nature nearby. "I love having a barbecue shelter in our own yard. I make little outings there with the children to grill sausages," says Tanya.

return, the boys look after Tessa the cat when Sari is travelling.

"The boys know that they can always go to Sari's door or call her if they need anything. And likewise, Sari can contact us at any time," says Tanya.

The two women are both mothers of three, but Sari's children are already living on their own.

"They all found homes of their own from VTS when they moved to live on their own. I moved here to Käräjätörmä from my VTS flat in Kalkku when my youngest son came of age. This is my first time living on my own, so that's another reason why it's good to have a friend so close by," Sari says with a smile.

An accessible home was easy to arrange

The friendship between the neighbours is still going strong, even though they no longer meet on the same stair landing. In the spring, Tanya had to move into an accessible home for health reasons. It was difficult for her to climb to the third floor of the building, which had no lift, as her legs were weakening.

"Even then, Sari came to my rescue and carried my wheelchair downstairs if I left home without an assistant. But I didn't want to move away from Käräjätörmä 4 because this is our home."

"So when I heard that the residents of the ground floor flat in the neighbouring building were moving out, I immediately contacted VTS. The change of flat



Sari lived in Käräjätörmä as a little girl and felt a sense of comfort when she moved back to her childhood neighbourhood. Tanya, on the other hand, is from Helsinki, but likes the atmosphere in Tampere. "The people here are more relaxed and like to stop and chat with their neighbours."

went really smoothly."

Both Tanya and Sari are happy with their lessor in other ways as well.

"At VTS, the service is always friendly and informal. Our building manager is really nice, too.

It's like talking to a friend. When you call Jouko Mäki-Tarkka, you'll know that everything will be taken care off!

Extreme wheelchair riding with a friend

At the time of the interview, a week and a half have passed since the move. The boys are thrilled to have their own private yard and Tanya can move around unhindered; the front door opens at the push of a button.

Of course, it is a pity that Sari is no longer next door, but fortunately she is no further than the neighbouring building.

"Now we no longer see each other every single day, but we text all the time!"

The two meet either at Tanya's home or go out together to the kiosk or for a coffee. On Mondays, their schedule includes the food distribution event of the parishes' food bank in their yard.

"It's a really social event that has brought a sense of community to the whole Käräjätörmä area. There we have got to know the residents of other buildings as well. The people of our own building have known each other even longer, as you can't walk across the yard without someone coming to talk to you."

"At times, we have some extreme wheelchair riding. Sometimes we've had to clear snow from in front of the chair in the middle of the journey, and sometimes the wheels have skidded on ice or gritting sand. But we've always moved forward together!"

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Are you returning to working life after a longer pause? Are you missing a qualification or work experience? Or is your working ability reduced?

IF YOU live in a VTS-kodit home and find it difficult to enter working life, you can contact TITRY. As a partner of VTS-kodit, TITRY helps our residents find employment, while VTS-kodit helps TITRY employees looking for accommodation find a home.

TITRY's target groups include the long-term unemployed, immigrants and people with partial work ability.

"We are a good link to working life, offering a wide range of opportunities for jobseekers of all ages," says **Lotta Aronen**, Communications and Project Coordinator at TITRY.

"Tasks and working hours are always adapted to the person's own abilities and wishes. Our goal is to give the person a foothold in working life and get them employed either with us or elsewhere."

"We welcome newcomers with open arms and have an absolutely lovely group of people to work with."

Work try-outs and permanent jobs

Tampereen Invalidien Työtuki ry was founded in 1963 as a work centre for people with partial work ability. Over the years, the name has been shortened and the activities expanded.

Today, TITRY offers a variety of jobs in its machine tooling, sewing and packaging units. Without a vocational qualification or previous work experience, you can enter a supervised work try-out, for example. The association also hires skilled machining and sewing professionals for permanent positions.

"We have about 45 permanent employees, plus about 80-100 students, trainees and participants



Lotta Aronen encourages residents of VTS-kodit to contact TITRY. You can find a job or a work try-out here in the packaging unit, for example.

If you live in a VTS-kodit home and need a job, please contact:

TITRY ry, Lotta Aronen
045 2688 200
lotta.aronen@titry.com

in work try-outs and rehabilitative work activities every year," says Lotta Aronen.

The tasks are varied and the clients range from small domestic operators to large, international corporations. For example, the packaging unit does not only pack, but also handles orders for online shops. Many companies have outsourced their shipping to TITRY, where products are stored, collected, packed and dispatched to customers.

Turning young people into circular economy experts

There is a new project called CIR-

CULATION – Growth from a Circular Economy, in which TITRY is involved as an expert of circular economy in the packaging industry.

The project, funded by the European Social Fund, seeks new packaging and shipping solutions to reduce the carbon footprint of e-commerce, for example.

Would you like to be part of this important effort for the environment? The project is now recruiting people under the age of 30 for work try-outs to build their circular economy skills, which are increasingly in demand in working life.



Photo: Särkänniemi

COME AND JOIN THE FUN!

RESIDENTS' DAY AT SÄRKÄNNIEMI

SATURDAY, JUNE 11TH 2022, 9-12 A.M.

Exciting thrills ahead! As a VTS-kodit resident, you get to join the fun at an amazing price.

Tickets are available starting on Wed May 11th 2022 on our website, vts.fi.



TICKET PRICES

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

BUY TICKETS: www.vts.fi

Please note that tickets are limited and available only in advance. All participants must present a ticket and exchange it for a bracelet at Särkänniemi ticket desk.

The ticket entitles access to rides at the lower area 9-12 a.m. and entrance to Koiramäki Zoo between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Tickets are available for the rest of the

day for € 20 / each at Särkänniemi ticket desk in exchange for VTS-kodit bracelet.

The event is organized in accordance with current COVID-related restrictions and guidelines. VTS-kodit marketing material will be filmed at the event. By arriving you consent to being filmed.