

# ASUKASVIESTI <sup>1</sup> 2023



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## GOOD LIVING IS CREATED TOGETHER

**AT** VTS-kodit, we highly value our tenant activities. They promote the overall comfort of living in our properties and enable building a community among residents. When residents of a building know each other, a sense of community spirit and safety is created. Tenant activities also support maintaining a reasonable rent level, as residents, for their part, ensure that the properties stay in a good condition and comfortable all round.

Instead of being planted from the outside, tenant activities always come from the tenants themselves and represent their interests. Participation is completely voluntary. Tenant activities and discussions about shared issues are also increasingly conducted via electronic channels.

In addition to the traditional volunteering work and seasonal celebrations, VTS-kodit properties have organised activities, such as handicrafts, sports watching, urban farming, multicultural food events, gym nights and chair workouts. Over a thousand different tenant events were organised at our properties in 2022. Furthermore, many organisations offer a variety of activities in our common facilities through the year, free of charge.

The tenant activities are covered by the Act on Joint Management of Rental Buildings that guarantees residents' opportunities to impact their own living environments. VTS-kodit is a pioneer in this field, as we have organised tenant activities right from the start of our operations, long before the legislation came into being. At VTS-kodit, residents have many opportunities for having their say. Our tenant committees allow you to discuss the issues of your own building, whereas the tenant democracy group deals with questions regarding the residents in a broader sense. In turn, tenant members of our board are making decisions on the level of the entire foundation.

Tenant activities also take place outside the official tenant committees. For example, based on your own hobbies, you can encourage other tenants of your home building to take part in shared activities by joining an eco-team or establishing a jogging club. If you have any ideas on how to develop our tenant activities, do not hesitate to contact VTS-kodit (asukastointa@vts.fi)!

**Kristian Unkuri**  
Director of Customer Relations

||  
**TENANT ACTIVITIES ALWAYS COME FROM THE TENANTS THEMSELVES AND REPRESENT THEIR INTERESTS."**

## CHANGES IN THE BOARD

**HAPPY** New Year, dear Asukasviesti readers! The start of the year has been an interesting one, as two members of the board have changed. **Ari Kaperi** and **Katja Nisumaa-Saarela** moved on to new challenges at the turn of the year.

Our former vice-chair Ari Kaperi has an extensive competence in financial matters which has been vastly important to our operative management and board. Katja Nisumaa-Saarela also worked as a valuable member of our board for a long time, and her work will continue in the boards of Vilusen Rinteen Vuokra-asunnot and Annalan Vuokra-asunnot. I express my warm thanks to Ari and Katja for their work for the benefit of VTS-kodit.

The new members of the board are **Elisa Saarinen** and **Markus Klöf**. Elisa Saarinen has decades of experience from the banking sector, and as vice-chair she now complements the economic know-how important to the foundation. I warmly welcome Elisa and Markus to the board.

Inflation will still be bothering us all in 2023, and we are coming up with ways to tackle it. In November 2022, inflation was at approximately 9%, and in 2023 it is expected to be around 5%. With the rent increases entering into force in March, we

aim to maintain the current quality of housing despite inflation.

The division of Vilusen Rinne Oy has progressed as planned in early 2023. Vilusen Rinne has been divided into two new companies: Vilusen Rinne Vuokra-asunnot Oy and Annalan Vuokra-asunnot Oy.

Amidst changes, VTS-kodit continues to invest in its properties. In January 2023, the board was able to visit the newly-overhauled Helaraitti 13. The work had been carried out competently and tidily. Of this, we send our warm thanks to the contractor and construction site supervisors.

We were also able to study the VTS-kodit work satisfaction survey that had excellent results. The survey shows that we have a well-functioning working community and management. It is important that people like to work for us.

It is equally important that our residents are happy. Our tenant activities are also perking up after the pandemic, and hopefully this year will see a great deal of activities at our properties!

**Pekka Anttila**  
Chair of the Board

||  
**AMIDST CHANGES, VTS-KODIT CONTINUES TO INVEST IN ITS PROPERTIES."**



In her earlier building, Anne Lautamo was the chair of the tenant committee. "It is all about cooperation," Anne says.



Elementinpolku 19's tenant committee is investing in safety as well as comfort of living.

# PLENTY TO DO AT ELEMENTINPOLKU

**I**n the past couple of years, tenant activities have really begun to thrive at Elementinpolku 19. The active tenant committee regularly organises activities for the whole building, and the club room has also received an overhaul.

"We acquired donated furniture for the club room. I also brought in some dishes," explains **Anne Lautamo**, who is the secretary of the tenant committee. Anne has long been an active member of tenant activities and is involved in nearly everything possible at her home building.

The committee has invested in the clean use of the common facilities, in addition to safety.

"I have created an information package for new tenants, available in OmaVTS. Furthermore, we created instructions for the laundry room and club room which have also been translated into English,"

Anne explains.

"**Marko Saarinen**, who is responsible for matters related to safety, has also taken part in safety training provided by VTS-kodit," continues tenant committee chair **Heli Saarinen**.

## Active whatever the weather

Shared activities are organised for the residents of Elementinpolku all year round.

"We have a Wednesday club that meets every other week, and we have also arranged flea markets, volunteering and Christmas, May Day and Shrove Tuesday celebrations," Heli Saarinen explains.

The tenant committee also arranged a meeting for the building's child residents, where they could express their wishes for events. The result was a kids disco party with

lively music and a great atmosphere. The adults have also been eager to join the shared events.

"Our volunteering event in the autumn had up to 20 participants. It was raining cats and dogs, but people were still raking the yard. I made crepes for the volunteers, and in the end we spent two days taking care of our building," Anne Lautamo reminisces.

## Information travels in WhatsApp

Anne Lautamo has set up a WhatsApp group for the residents of her building to easily inform everyone about events and other important things. The tenant committee also has its own email address for residents to send their questions and ideas.

"Sometimes, residents also come to talk to us committee members

directly," Anne says.

WhatsApp also helps in the internal communications of the tenant committee. Decisions on smaller matters can be made in a WhatsApp meeting without gathering the whole committee in the same place. Records of WhatsApp meetings are kept in a similar manner to regular ones.

## Tenant activities can start small

At Elementinpolku, the tenant activities began with getting a coffee maker and kettle for the club room. The first Christmas coffees were enjoyed the following Christmas. That is all you need to set up tenant activities.

"Even if only two people show up the first time, do not be discouraged, and try again. Little by little, people will notice and become interested in the events," tenant committee member **Maria Öisti** says.

"The same does not work for everyone. You should bravely try out what works at your building," Anne Lautamo encourages.

## Why join tenant activities?

**WOULD** you like to impact the comfort of your living environment or create a communal spirit in your building? Tenant activities aim to increase the comfort of living and secure a reasonable rent level, as residents, for their part, ensure that the properties stay in a good condition.

Anyone can start creating tenant activities in their home building – including you!



**ANYONE CAN START CREATING TENANT ACTIVITIES IN THEIR HOME BUILDING – INCLUDING YOU!**

## It all starts with the tenant meeting

A tenant meeting is held annually at each property, and all residents are invited. The meeting provides information about topical matters and gives you a chance to impact the enjoyability of living. The meeting also selects the tenant committee for the property.

The meeting is called either by the tenant committee or the property manager (if the building does not yet have a tenant committee), and decisions are based on a vote. All residents over 18 years of age are eligible to vote at the meeting.

## Tenant committee represents the tenants

The tenant committee represents the tenants of the building towards the landlord. The tenant committee also organises activities that increase the living comfort and community spirit. Each year, VTS-kodit grants tenant committees an

activity grant downloaded on an S Group payment card for organising activities and buying what they need for the common facilities.

Tenant activities always represent their makers. Only your imagination is the limit. In addition to volunteering work in the spring, would your building enjoy a casual movie evening or a table tennis tournament?

## Support from the property manager and VTS-kodit

Are there no tenant activities organised at your home building? Come to the next tenant meeting to select the tenant committee or nominate yourself for the committee! Each building also has a designated property manager advising the tenant committee on practical matters.

VTS-kodit also regularly arranges meetings and trainings on tenant activities. You can also send questions about tenant activities via email to [asukas-toiminta@vts.fi](mailto:asukas-toiminta@vts.fi).

## RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LIMELIGHT

“**RESPONSIBILITY** is one of our foundation’s strategic focus areas. Similarly to our values and rules, it runs in the background of all that we do,” explains VTS-kodit Development Manager **Juha Aerikkala**.

A new responsibility working group began its operations at VTS-kodit in autumn 2022. The group is tasked with monitoring the operations of the foundation from the perspective of responsibility and addressing shortcomings as necessary. The group creates an atmosphere of responsibility within VTS-kodit, and collects ideas for developing the theme.

The working group has members from all units. The group members include Development Manager **Juha Aerikkala**, Marketing Planner **Ritva Pirttilahti**, Tenant Coordinator **Jaana Lehtinen**, Building Services Manager **Raimo Leskinen**, Development Engineer **Miska Pöyry** and Financial Manager **Ville Salo**.

### Responsible right from the start

Responsibility is no new idea in the VTS-kodit operations. In a way, responsibility is self-evident in the everyday work of our personnel without people consciously thinking about it.

“Foundation activities are based on responsibility. As a non-profit foundation, we exist only for our residents,” Miska Pöyry summarises.

One task of the responsibility working group is to highlight how responsibility is already evident in the VTS-kodit operations. For example, VTS-kodit has been awarded the Key Flag Symbol and the Finnish Social Enterprise Mark. Furthermore, VTS-kodit is a Fairtrade Workplace and one of the Tampere Region’s Climate Partners, and also takes part in the national Down a Degree campaign.

“Over the years, we have also

engaged in cooperation with universities. As part of their theses, students have created our carbon footprint calculation and environmental programme,” Juha Aerikkala explains.

### Reporting measures different areas

Responsibility is divided into three themes: financial, social and ecological responsibility. Financial responsibility covers e.g. ethical acquisitions and a reasonable rent level. Social responsibility is linked to resident satisfaction and safety, in addition to us offering a positive working community for our personnel. Ecological responsibility covers themes related to the environment and sustainable development.

The task of the responsibility working group is to equally promote all of these areas. One tool is the responsibility report that was

“**FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES ARE BASED ON RESPONSIBILITY. AS A NON-PROFIT FOUNDATION, WE EXIST ONLY FOR OUR RESIDENTS.**”

carried out for the first time in 2020. The report created once every few years measures the responsibility of the foundation’s activities on different areas.

“The first report was quite simple. Our future aim is to create more extensive indicators,” Jaana Lehtinen says.

### Working towards responsibility – together

The responsibility working group operates internally, but the future plan of VTS-kodit is to provide a role in the shared responsibility work to the residents.

“We want to highlight the themes of responsibility to the residents and also highlight their perspectives,” Jaana Lehtinen explains.

The Asukasviesti magazine will also include articles on different themes of responsibility and their realisation at VTS-kodit.

## Let’s save energy in the winter as well

**THE** energy crisis is not yet over, which is why energy saving in our everyday lives is just as important now as in the autumn. At some VTS-kodit properties, the tenant committee has cancelled shared sauna hours that only had few visitors so that the sauna is not heated unnecessarily. We at VTS-kodit are also continuously developing the energy efficiency of our properties.

Each of us can mitigate the energy crisis with small choices. This also results in savings in your own electricity or water bill.

### KEEP AT LEAST THESE BASICS IN MIND!

#### ELECTRICITY

- ▶ Turn off any lights and appliances when you do not need them.
- ▶ Use energy-efficient LED lights.
- ▶ Avoid using many high-powered devices simultaneously.
- ▶ Keep the temperature of the apartment reasonable.

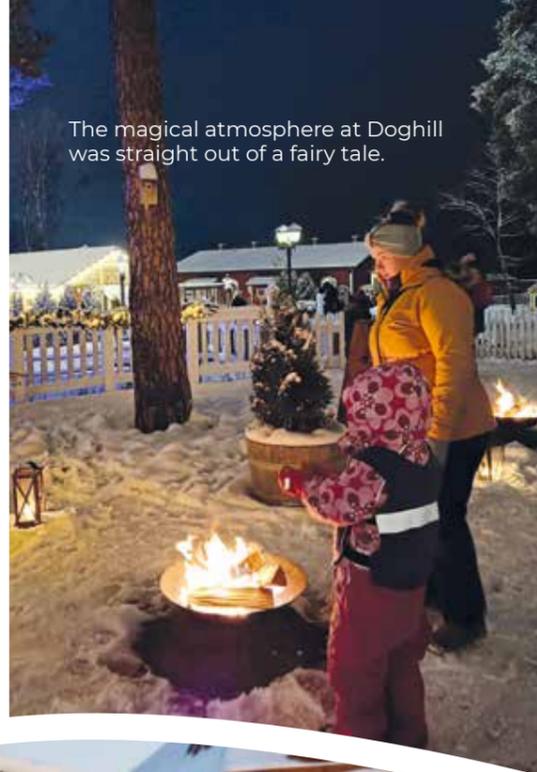


#### WATER

- ▶ Take shorter showers and do not linger too long in the sauna.
- ▶ Do not run water unnecessarily.
- ▶ Use the eco setting in dishwashers and washing machines.
- ▶ Report any leaking plumbing fixtures to the maintenance company.



# CHRISTMAS ATMOSPHERE AT DOGHILL



The magical atmosphere at Doghill was straight out of a fairy tale.



Up to 980 residents took part during the evening.



Young residents of VTS-kodit had wide smiles on their faces at the Doghill Fairytale Farm.



Fire art performances lit the darkening winter evening. There were also many adorable animals to pet.



Even Santa Claus himself was present at Doghill.

## SHARED ACTIVITIES REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY

**EVERY** Monday, the club room at Vironmäntäkatu 13 turns into a multicultural living room offering coffee, discussions, games and crafts in a relaxed atmosphere. The activities are led by **Jasmina Derkhshani** and **Dunia Saleh** from the Lähi-idän naisten yhdistys organisation.

“We usually have around 7–13 participants. Most of them are children and young people. Unfortunately, we rarely have adult visitors,” Jasmina explains.

“We have played games and billiards, chatted and done homework. The children are kind and there is always loads to do,” Dunia smiles.



In her native Iraq, Dunia Saleh was an art teacher. Now she runs the multicultural living room, carries out art projects and acts as an interpreter.

### Adults also urged to join

The multicultural living room began its operations in autumn 2022, and visitors found it right from the start. Jasmina and Dunia hope that more adults – immigrants in particular – would find their way there in the future.

“Many say that they need to practice their Finnish and that it is hard to get to know Finnish people. This is a perfect spot for that,” Jasmina says.

The multicultural living room

offers a meeting place for the residents of Vironmäntäkatu and the neighbourhood in general, regardless of age and nationality.

“Immigrant children and young people can also create contacts with native Finnish children and vice versa.”

## Join the multicultural living room!

**MEET** new friends and spend time in pleasant company. Adults, children and young people alike are welcome regardless of home country and cultural background.

**The multicultural living room meets every Monday 4–8 pm in the club room at Vironmäntäkatu 13.**

