Autumn 2026

Shine

Your Eastlight residents' magazine

Eastlight Community Homes

2,000 HOMES BUILT FOR 2,000 FAMILIES

Read more on pages 12–13



Help with damp, mould and home safety

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Residents shape your Annual Report

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Could you afford to **replace your belongings?**

No one likes to think about things going wrong, but unexpected events can happen. Whether it's a fire, flood, theft or another serious incident, contents insurance can help protect the things that matter most to you.

Through our partnership with Aviva, Eastlight residents can access contents insurance from as little as 90p per month* for £4,000 of standard cover, with no excess to pay if you need to make a claim.

It's important to compare policies and choose the cover that best meets your needs. Eastlight receives no commission or financial benefit from promoting Aviva insurance.

Find out more: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/contents-insurance**



*Price for £4,000 standard cover, includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) charged at the appropriate rate. Acceptance restrictions may apply for conviction and claims experience. Terms and conditions apply. The policy is arranged by Aon UK Ltd and underwritten by Aviva Insurance Limited and administered by Wessex Administration Services Limited who are all authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. FP.TCI.2026.1089.GG.



ESSENTIAL HOME SAFETY CHECKS

We're now carrying out more checks to help keep your home safe.

These checks are done by our new auditor, PCM, and are for:

- Gas inspections
- Electrical inspections
- Large repair works
- The installation of new boilers.

PCM will visit 10% of homes that have received these works – look out for a letter two weeks before, then a text three days before. Feel free to change your appointment if it's not convenient.

New **Board Chair**

We're delighted to welcome Peter Baffoe as Eastlight's new Chair from 1 November.



A social housing resident himself, Peter brings extensive experience in housing governance and resident engagement. His appointment reinforces our commitment to being a resident-led organisation, ensuring your voices continue to shape homes, services and communities.

HEAR FROM OUR **EXECUTIVE**



By Charlotte Todd, Chief Property Officer

As winter approaches, we're here to help you keep safe and warm in your homes.

In October 2025, Awaab's Law came into effect, which aims to make sure your homes don't have dangerous levels of damp and mould.

Named after two-year-old Awaab Ishak, who tragically died from a respiratory condition caused by prolonged exposure to mould in his family home, the law requires us to act within strict timeframes, so you get the support you need.

When you report damp and mould, our dedicated Healthy Homes Team will work quickly and efficiently to help clean the affected areas, identify issues, and get them resolved.

Phase 2 of the Law launches on 30 November 2026, meaning that additional safety hazards you report to us will now be responded to within similar timescales. Please see pages 4 to 5 to find out what this means for you and the support we offer.

When you need us, please do reach out. We're here to help.



HELP WITH DAMP, MOULD AND HOME SAFETY

AWAAB'S LAW: DAMP AND MOULD

The first phase of Awaab's Law set out strict timeframes for social landlords, like Eastlight, to follow. It makes sure we investigate and fix the causes of damp and mould, whilst communicating with you clearly about what's being done and when.

When you report damp and mould to us, our Healthy Homes Team will:

- Address all emergency issues within 24 hours
- Investigate other reports of damp and mould within 14 calendar days
- Clean affected areas, while checking levels of damp, moisture and humidity
- Complete minor repairs on the spot, if they can, and book any further repairs that cannot be completed
- Contact you within two days with a summary of their visit and any next steps.

Last year, residents raised around 1,700 reports of damp and mould. Our teams were able to respond to and manage all cases in line with our policy and within target timescales.

But soon, Awaab's Law is expanding to cover a wider range of serious hazards that could occur in your home.



Your Healthy Homes Team is here to help you

WHAT IS CHANGING THIS YEAR?

On 30 November, Phase 2 of Awaab's Law comes into effect. This means that, as well as damp and mould, Eastlight must act within strict timeframes to promptly address the following hazards under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS):

EXCESS COLD: Inadequate heating, insulation or indoor temperatures that could lead to hypothermia, cardiovascular or respiratory problems

EXCESS HEAT: High indoor temperatures that increase the risk of heat exhaustion, dehydration or heat stroke

FALLS ASSOCIATED WITH BATHS, SHOWERS OR TOILETS: Risk of falling due to poor design, lack of grab rails, slippery surfaces, and poor layout in washing or toilet facilities

FALLS ON LEVEL SURFACES: Slips and trips caused by uneven floors, loose coverings or poor maintenance

FALLS ON STAIRS AND BETWEEN LEVELS: Risk of falls due to unsafe stair design, broken steps, poor lighting or missing handrails

STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE, FALLING ELEMENTS OR EXPLOSIONS: Risk of building failure, falling masonry, subsidence or explosion (e.g. gas-related)

FIRE: Increased likelihood of injury or death from fire due to poor detection, means of escape or fire spread

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS: Risk of electric shock, burns or fire from unsafe or defective electrical installations

DOMESTIC HYGIENE, PESTS AND REFUSE: Poor sanitation, pest infestation or refuse storage that can cause infection or disease

PERSONAL HYGIENE, SANITATION AND DRAINAGE: Lack of adequate washing, toilet or drainage facilities leading to health risks

FOOD SAFETY: Unsafe or inadequate kitchen facilities affecting safe food storage, preparation or cooking.

Similar to Phase 1, Eastlight must investigate and make all emergency hazards safe within 24 hours. For significant hazards, we must investigate your home and make it safe within 10 working days, scheduling any longer-term repairs quickly.

We will always do our best to ensure you are safe in your home. Please let us know if you are experiencing damp, mould or any of these additional safety issues so that we can act quickly and provide the necessary support.

See tips to manage damp and mould on our website: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/damp-mould**

HOW TO REPORT DAMP, MOULD AND SAFETY ISSUES

eastlighthomes.co.uk/damp-mould/

'My Eastlight' app or portal: portal.eastlighthomes.co.uk/

0330 128 0330

customer.services@eastlighthomes.co.uk.

KEEP YOURSELF WARM THIS WINTER

DIY TIPS TO HELP KEEP YOUR HOME WARM

It's not always necessary to call out an engineer to make your heating more effective and keep your home warmer for less. Sometimes an issue can be solved with a simple DIY fix that you can try yourself, if you wish to.

From isolating, draining and unfreezing your pipes to bleeding your radiators and more, we've published some guides on our website that help you take control.

Visit: eastlighthomes.co.uk/repairs

STRUGGLING TO PAY YOUR HEATING BILLS OR RENT?

We've got a range of useful guidance and advice on our website if you're concerned about your finances during the winter period. Please contact us if you need support, and our teams will offer the right advice. We're here for you.

Visit: eastlighthomes.co.uk/cost-of-living

NEED A REPAIR OVER CHRISTMAS?

If you've got a repair, big or small, over the Christmas period, you don't need to wait!

Please continue to raise all repairs to us in the usual way.



If your boiler is broken or needs an urgent repair, please contact us immediately.

NEED TO REPORT A REPAIR?

eastlighthomes.co.uk/repairs

'My Eastlight' app or portal: portal.eastlighthomes.co.uk/

0330 128 0330

customer.services@eastlighthomes.co.uk



UNDERSTANDING STAIRs: YOUR RIGHT TO INFORMATION

THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOW INTRODUCED THE SOCIAL TENANT ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS (STAIRS) TO MAKE SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDERS MORE OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE.

It gives you greater access to information about how we manage your homes and services.

This follows previous serious failings in the sector, including the death of Awaab Ishak and the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

OCTOBER 2026

Housing associations must now publish key information online through a publication scheme. This includes details about governance, decision-making, performance, spending, strategies and policies, and the management of homes and services. You can see Eastlight's publication scheme here: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/STAIRs**

APRIL 2027

From 01 April 2027, eligible residents will gain a legal right to make formal requests for information from their landlord. This is only in relation to the management of social housing services, such as anti-social behaviour, complaints, health and safety, repairs, estates and more.

You must raise the request in writing, either by email, by letter or through Eastlight's online form.

Requests can only be raised by you or someone you have given written permission to act on your behalf, like a family member, friend or lawyer.

To request any personal information we hold about you, such as your tenancy or repair history, you will need to submit a Subject Access Request (SAR) instead.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

eastlighthomes.co.uk/STAIRs

0330 128 0330

STAIRs@eastlighthomes.co.uk



A HELPING HAND AT HOME



DOMESTIC ABUSE IS NOT YOUR FAULT

ABUSE DOESN'T ALWAYS START WITH BRUISES.

It can involve someone isolating you from your friends and family, making you feel on edge all the time, criticising, guilt-tripping or making you doubt yourself, or someone threatening you about what might happen if you leave.

If any of this feels familiar, you are not alone, and you deserve better.

Please tell us if you think you're experiencing abuse or just need someone to talk to. We're here to listen, support and help you access the right assistance.

If you are in immediate danger, call 999. If you don't feel safe speaking, press 55 when prompted and the operator will know you need help.

See more advice and guidance here:
eastlighthomes.co.uk/domestic-abuse



COULD YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, BE ELIGIBLE FOR PENSION CREDIT?

MANY PEOPLE ARE ELIGIBLE WITHOUT EVEN REALISING IT

Claiming pension credit could unlock extra support with energy costs, housing expenses and other household bills.

Check today to see if you could qualify and to ensure you're getting the support you're entitled to, just in time for winter.

Visit the Government website here:
gov.uk/pension-credit

LANDLORDS GAIN STRONGER POWERS TO TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

THE NEW CRIME & POLICING ACT 2026 IS DESIGNED TO GIVE SOCIAL LANDLORDS MORE EFFECTIVE TOOLS TO ADDRESS BEHAVIOUR THAT CAUSES HARASSMENT, ALARM, DISTRESS, NUISANCE OR DISORDER TO OTHERS.

The Act became law in April this year. Here are three key things you should know:

1. **Quicker action can be taken:** The introduction of Respect Orders gives Eastlight stronger powers to address ongoing ASB. It means we can act quicker to stop repeated nuisance and help you feel safer in your community. For example, the Respect Orders can prevent individuals from entering certain areas where they have been causing problems

2. **More consequences for people who refuse to change:** Breaches of Respect Orders are now criminal offences. If someone breaks the conditions of an order, they could be arrested, which means tougher consequences for repeat offenders

3. **More peace of mind for neighbours:** Closure Orders can be used to limit access to, or temporarily close, a home that is linked to serious ASB or crime. This gives neighbours quicker relief from ongoing problems while long-term solutions are worked out.

If you need to report ASB, you can do this via the **My Eastlight portal**, the **Eastlight website** or by calling us on **0330 128 0330**. Visit: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/ASB**.

MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU TO ACCESS OUR SERVICES

WE KNOW THAT EVERYONE'S NEEDS ARE DIFFERENT, WHICH IS WHY WE OFFER OPTIONS CALLED "REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS" TO HELP YOU ACCESS OUR SERVICES IN A WAY THAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU.

This could include things like providing information in large print or audio, offering flexible appointment times, contacting you by text or email rather than a phone call, or providing extra support during appointments or complaints.



If something isn't working for you, please let us know — we'll always do our best to help.

You can request an adjustment by contacting our Customer Services Team by phone, email or in person. For more information, visit: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/reasonableadjustments**

RESIDENTS SHAPE THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL REPORT



IN MAY, A GROUP OF RESIDENTS JOINED EASTLIGHT'S COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FOR A WORKSHOP TO DESIGN AND SHAPE YOUR ANNUAL REPORT FOR CUSTOMERS 2025–26.

Together, they shared their views on what matters most to them and how we can make the report more useful and engaging.

During the session, they told us what information they'd like to see included, what helps make a report easy to read and navigate, and where we could do more to communicate clearly.

Their honest feedback highlighted what already works well and gave us plenty of ideas for improvement.

As a result, we've made lots of changes to help ensure the information you receive focuses on the topics that you care about, presenting it in a clearer, more accessible way.

Instead of a long, physical report, we've now created:

- **A website page** that gives an in-depth look at the past year
- **A small booklet** that focuses on the information you want to hear about most: repairs, complaints and resident engagement
- **A short video** summarising key areas in one go.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part.

If you have any feedback on your new-look Annual Report, we'd love to hear from you.

Share your views by emailing **shine@eastlighthomes.co.uk**

READ IT HERE

Simply scan the QR code

Visit: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/annual-report**

TAMMY'S SUMMER OF PRIDE



EASTLIGHT RESIDENT, TAMMY, SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF ATTENDING EASTLIGHT'S PRIDE EVENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR.



Eastlight residents and colleagues at summer Pride events

"This summer was my first time attending Eastlight's Pride events, and it was magical.

"I attended Essex Pride, Colchester Pride and Braintree Pride, with Eastlight proudly sponsoring the Braintree event. Each celebration had its own atmosphere, but they all brought people together in a welcoming space where everyone could be themselves.

"Eastlight hosted a stall where people could decorate bunting, join in activities and stop for a chat. It was lovely seeing people get creative and have a laugh together. Residents could also meet colleagues from different teams and connect with local organisations.

"For me, Pride is about belonging. I'm part of the LGBTQ+ community, as is my son who is also my full-time carer. Being able to attend together was really special. He met people like him, found a sense of community and felt accepted for who he is.

"Things were very different when I came out in the 1990s. Back then, there was far less understanding and acceptance. That's why Pride still matters. It reminds people that everyone deserves to feel safe, respected and included.

"Behind the scenes, EastPride, Eastlight's LGBTQ+ staff and resident network, worked incredibly hard to make these events happen. Their passion and commitment have inspired me to become an EastPride member myself.

"My message to other residents is simple: give it a go!

"Your voice matters, and you deserve to be heard."

GET INVOLVED

Find out more about what's coming up on our website calendar: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/activities**



2,000 HOMES, 2,000 NEW BEGINNINGS

WE'VE NOW BUILT OUR 2,000TH NEW HOME SINCE BECOMING EASTLIGHT COMMUNITY HOMES IN 2020.

While we're really proud of the numbers, what matters most is what they represent: 2,000 households who have a safe, warm and affordable place to call home.

Our milestone 2,000th home is part of the Rectory Fields development in Rivenhall, near Witham. Residents, staff and partners recently came together to celebrate the achievement and the positive difference these new homes are making to people's lives.

Since 2020, we've helped to build homes across Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, supporting people and families to take their next step, whether that's moving into a rented home or getting on the property ladder through shared ownership.

A HOME TO BE PROUD OF

One of the newest residents at Rectory Fields is Michelle Duffy, who recently moved into her Eastlight home with her son and two dogs to make a fresh new start.

Michelle said: "Coming into my new home was amazing. I can only say it was like winning the lottery, because it's beautiful. Lovely garden, and downstairs toilet – bonus!



> **"Me and my son and the dogs love it. It's lovely – everything I could have ever asked for."**



Homes being built on the Rectory Fields development



BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Today, Eastlight owns and manages around 15,000 homes, and we're continuing to invest in both new and existing homes to help create thriving communities across the East of England.

Last year alone, we exceeded our annual target by delivering 341 new homes, and we have around 300 more affordable homes planned during the current financial year. Watch this space!

LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME?

There are lots of options available if you'd like to move home, including exchanging your home with another housing association resident, joining your local authority's waiting list or applying for a shared ownership home.

If you're aged 55 or over, you can also apply to live in one of our Housing for Older People schemes.

Contact us or see more on our website here: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/find-a-home**



Watch the video about the achievement and what it means for residents here: **eastlighthomes.co.uk/2000**

#47 IN TOP 50 BIGGEST BUILDERS LIST

Eastlight has been recognised as one of the UK's 50 biggest housebuilders, ranking 47th in the latest list published by Inside Housing.

Behind the ranking is something that matters far more to local residents: more affordable and shared ownership homes for people who need them.

More than 91,000 people are currently on council housing waiting lists across the East of England, including nearly 25,000 in Essex. And over 131,000 households, including a record 177,530 children, are currently living in temporary accommodation in England.

Every new social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership home gives people the opportunity to build a brighter future.



IN YOUR AREA

WHAT GOING ON ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES?

YOUR EASTLIGHT TEAM

NORTH BRAINTREE & NORTH ESSEX

Residents at Harold Sims House scheme in Earls Colne joined forces with Eastlight staff to give their communal garden a stunning makeover in just one day!

Armed with paintbrushes, plants and plenty of enthusiasm, the team rolled up their sleeves to paint, plant, turf and tidy the outdoor space, completely transforming it from top to bottom.

Neighbourhood Lead for Uttlesford, Lisa, also attends regular welfare and support hubs across the district to support Eastlight residents. Fellow partners, like Uttlesford District Council, Citizens Advice, Foodbank and more, also attend – so do come along in future!



YOUR EASTLIGHT TEAM

SOUTH BRAINTREE & MID ESSEX



Your Eastlight Team and the Eastlight Resident Group (ERG) for South Braintree & Mid Essex recently visited Cornerstone Church in Black Notley to see the incredible impact it has on the local community.

For more than 30 years, it has been a welcoming hub where people can connect, find support and get involved. From free toddler groups and youth clubs to a monthly Repairs Café and popular Fish & Chip lunches, there's something for everyone.

YOUR EASTLIGHT TEAM

CHELMSFORD & SOUTH ESSEX



A huge thank you to the fantastic volunteers at Litter Free B-on-C, who stepped in to support a recent community tidy-up around Blackwater Close in Burnam-on-Crouch. Their dedication and community spirit made a real difference, and we're incredibly grateful for their help.

Our Estate Rangers were also on hand to support residents at Warwick Court, removing two-van loads of unwanted items and leaving the area looking much tidier.

And, following discussions with residents, additional grounds maintenance improvements are planned, including cutting back overgrown bushes, creating a wildflower area and making further enhancements to help keep the neighbourhood looking its best.

YOUR EASTLIGHT TEAM

COLCHESTER & SUFFOLK

As part of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Awareness Week, Your Eastlight Team joined forces with our Intensive Housing Support Team, Suffolk Police and other local organisations at a community event in Woodbridge, Suffolk.

The area has experienced long-standing ASB issues. That's why, over the past six months, we've been working closely with residents and partners to build trust, increase our presence in the community and help address local concerns.

The team also recently attended Ipswich Community Day, providing a great opportunity to meet local people, connect with community organisations and strengthen relationships with partners, including Suffolk Police and Ipswich Borough Council.



WANT TO SEE WHAT'S COMING UP?

Keep an eye on your inbox!
If we have your email address, you should have received one of our new **regional newsletters** packed with updates, events and opportunities in your local area.

Didn't receive yours?
Email **community@eastlighthomes.co.uk** to let us know you'd like to receive it, and we'll make sure your email address is added to your account.

QUICK, SIMPLE WAYS TO GET IN TOUCH

HERE ARE THE BEST WAYS TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US ABOUT YOUR HOME OR NEIGHBOURHOOD:

The quickest and easiest way: My Eastlight Portal

With just a few clicks, you can report repairs, pay your rent, raise a damp and mould or anti-social behaviour concern, and much more.

Download 'My Eastlight' from your app store.

Call or email our Customer Services Team

Our team can resolve most of your issues on the spot. If not, they'll make sure your Neighbourhood Lead works with you to fix your concerns.

Your Neighbourhood Lead is on hand

Your Lead can help resolve any outstanding queries, bringing in specialist teams when needed. They're also a regular presence in your neighbourhood, giving you the chance to raise issues face-to-face.

See all our contact options below.

Contact us

portal.eastlighthomes.co.uk

0330 128 0330 (local rate)

Eastlight House, Charter Way,
Braintree, Essex, CM77 8FG

www.eastlighthomes.co.uk

facebook.com/eastlighthomes

linkedin.com/company/eastlight-community-homes-

instagram.com/eastlighthomes

Eastlight Community Homes

We really value your comments, compliments and complaints, as they help us to shape the services we provide to you. Please get in touch, any time.

If you need this magazine in a different format or language, please let us know.

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