

Autumn 2022

Keeping Connected

Your newsletter

Eastlight
Community Homes

**£££s of
shopping
vouchers up
for grabs!**
click to complete
our survey

A cost-of-living crisis support special

Here for you: When to contact us for help: Page 2

A little extra: Support and services available to you: Page 3

All In: How you're tackling the cost-of-living
in your communities: Page 4-5



Hello, from Emma

“Welcome to the latest edition of Keeping Connected, your newsletter.

Many of you will sadly now be struggling to pay your bills and expenses as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, due to rising fuel, food and energy costs. The crisis is fundamentally caused by higher inflation and low wage growth, which has been exacerbated by the Ukraine war and the coronavirus pandemic, leaving most households worse off.

We want to remind you that we are here for you, if you need us. Most importantly, if you're struggling to pay your rent or bills, get in touch immediately so we can see how we can help you – see below for more information.

We've funded a confidential 24/7 helpline so you can speak to experts about a range of issues, from childcare & parenting issues to debt advice. We've also funded a free app to help you cope with stress and improve your mental health – see page 3.

Our website now includes a new 'Cost-of-Living Support' section, with a wide range of information and support available – please visit **www.eastlighthomes.co.uk**

Our All In Community Teams are also focused on tackling the crisis and making a difference to the lives of local residents, especially those impacted the most – see more on pages 4 & 5.



And finally, please **click here** for a chance to win £20 worth of shopping vouchers.

I can't stress enough how important it is to reach out if you're in difficulty. Don't suffer in silence. We are here for you.”

Emma Palmer

Chief Executive, Eastlight Community Homes



When to contact us for help

If any of these sound like you, please contact us immediately on 0330 128 0330 (local rate) or visit our website www.eastlighthomes.co.uk to see how we can help.

I can't pay my rent

I can't heat my home

I can't afford to buy enough food

I don't have essential equipment at home

My mental health is struggling

What other support is available to you?

1. Call our free and confidential 24/7 helpline


We've funded a new Tenant Support & Well-being Service (TSWS) that's free for you to call 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, to talk about anything you might be struggling with.


Call **0330 094 8845** for any of the following:


 **Stress, anxiety & depression**

 **Improving mental health**

 **Health & well-being advice**


 **Debt & budgeting advice**

 **Practical information & guidance**

 **Domestic abuse (please call 999 if you are in immediate danger)**


 **Relationship difficulties**

 **Childcare & parenting challenges**

 **Controlling feelings of anger**

 **Elderly & disability care**

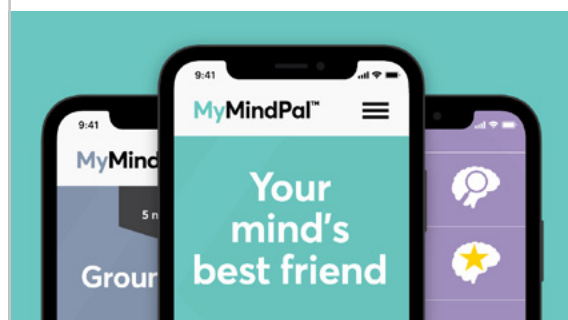
 **Bereavement & loss**

 **Sleeping problems**

 **Alcohol & drug issues**

2. Download MyMindPal app

We've funded an app which can help improve your mental health in an interactive way. The app aims to reduce stress levels, handle life's challenges and make positive changes. If you are using an Android or Apple device, open your 'Play Store' or 'App Store' and search for "mymindpal".



3. Visit our website

We recommend visiting the new '**Cost-of-Living Support**' section on our website, which includes:

- **Financial help** available from the Government
- Information about **foodbanks**
- **Links to** independent sources of **financial advice**, such as the MoneySavingExpert website
- Access to the **TSWS online platform** and **MyMindPal app**

Visit: www.eastlighthomes.co.uk

WE ARE ALL IN

ALL INVOLVED PROBLEM SOLVED

ALL IN is Eastlight's new community programme which works hand in hand with local people who want to change our communities for the better.

As part of this initiative, four **ALL IN** Community Teams are dedicating a year of their lives to tackle one big social issue affecting our communities. These are:

Braintree – mental health

Colchester – cost-of-living

Halstead – opportunities for young people

Witham – social isolation

We spoke to two Community Entrepreneurs on the **Colchester Team** to discover what they're learning and the difference they hope to make to those struggling with the cost-of-living.



Karen Badenoch

Karen, why did you join the team?

"All In is about helping, educating, equality and fairness. I was keen to assist in what is an exciting way of establishing solutions with a true focus on what is needed and suggested by the community itself."

Why did you want to focus on cost-of-living issues?

"It's about people with no money to budget with. The cost-of-living has proved to be an extreme, volatile and emotive subject which is constantly evolving. Part of our role now is keeping up with changes and trying to predict what is going to be the next hit."

What have you learnt about the impact this is having on your community?

"That everyone is effected in some way. There are different levels of struggle, and any downward adjustment to lifestyle is difficult for the person going through it. There are definitely those who are hit the hardest, but also a high number of people just feeling the pinch, with a long, unknown journey ahead."

What ideas have you started to form about what people can do to survive this crisis?

"We are currently in the research phase, so ideas are very tenuous. We're also realising that the smallest things are essential to people but not necessarily affordable – like kettles!"





Do you want to make a difference in our communities or have particular skills around money management?

Join the journey by contacting
colchester@weareallin.co.uk



Jessica Taylor

Jessica, why did you join the team?

"I was intrigued. I really like the team I work with and want to see exactly where the programme will end up and to be a part of it."

Why did you want to focus on cost-of-living issues?

"I have definitely been as close to the breadline as most people. I feel that more people, including children, need educating about budgeting in more detail. The biggest problem is the lack of knowledge."

What have you learnt about the impact this is having on your community?

"That this is affecting everyone and, despite having different incomes, if someone can't afford something they could previously, it is still a loss to them. We should all try to empathise and support each other."

What ideas have you started to form about what people can do to survive this crisis?

"I feel that some of our best ideas are based around communities working together and helping each other in all aspects of life impacted by the crisis."



We look forward to seeing the impact our four community teams make on our communities over the next 12 months and beyond.

To find out more about **ALL IN**, please visit
www.weareallin.co.uk

Useful contacts

There are a number of helpful resources and contacts you can reach out to below, should you need them.

Alternatively, call us on **0330 128 0330** or visit our website for more information:

www.eastlighthomes.co.uk

Help for Households

(Government cost-of-living support):

helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk



Citizen's Advice:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk



Childcare support:

helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs



Age UK Energy Advice:

www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/debt-savings/energy



Benefit Calculator:

www.entitledto.co.uk



Turn2Us:

www.turn2us.org.uk/About-Us



Money Saving Expert:

www.moneysavingexpert.com



Find your nearest **Foodbank at Trussell Trust:**

www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank



Click here for a chance to win £20 worth of shopping vouchers!

Call: 0330 128 0330 (local rate)

Text: 07860 024 511

Email: customer.services@eastlighthomes.co.uk

Write to: Eastlight House, Charter Way,
Braintree, Essex, CM77 8FG

Visit: www.eastlighthomes.co.uk



facebook.com/eastlighthomes



instagram.com/eastlighthomes



twitter.com/eastlighthomes



linkedin.com/company/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 newsletter in a different format or language, please let us know.

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