

**Upgrades to** your services

Pages 6-7

**Your neighbourhood improvements** 

Page 8

**Dot smart speaker** 

Page 15

## What's **Inside**



Pages 2–3



How we are performing
Pages 4–5
Local contacts for your neighbourhood
Page 6
275 households to benefit from funding
Page 7
New app to book repairs 24/7

Pages 7
Investing in your neighbourhoods
Page 8
Delivering the services that matter to you

Page 9



"We keep each other going" Page 10 "It's always been about the music" Page 11



Blooming brilliant Page 12 Your chance to make a difference Page 13 Pride is for everyone Page 14



Win an Amazon Echo Dot smart speaker Page 15



## Rent a garage

Applications to rent a garage are open!

You can choose up to three preferred locations and we'll be in touch when you reach the top of the shortlist and a garage becomes available. You'll then have 24 hours to confirm your interest.

If we don't hear from you within that time, your application will be cancelled.

Garages cost £12.42 per week for Eastlight tenants and leaseholders, and £14.90 per week for private customers, with four weeks' rent required upfront when signing your garage tenancy.



Call us or visit www. eastlighthomes.co.uk/ find-a-home/garages

Proposed charter takes step forward

Thank you to everyone who took part in a recent consultation on our proposed Resident Members Charter.

In March, we invited Eastlight residents to have your say on proposals to include a commitment in our rules to involve residents in how Eastlight is run.

This follows a review into our Shareholding offer, which active residents told us did not give them the opportunity to influence the things that matter most to them.

During the consultation, 67% of respondents supported the proposal to introduce the



Charter, with only 5% against. The remaining 28% were neutral.

Following the consultation, the Board has decided to call a Special General Meeting in June, where shareholders will be invited to vote on whether to introduce the Charter. We'll publish the outcome on our website, social media and in your next edition of Shine magazine.



A new playground has been opened for residents at Mount Hill, Halstead.

Named 'Bumble Bee Park' after young resident, Lilly Norris, 7, won an Eastlight competition, the park is open to the development's families.



I really love the new park. I get to meet lots of new friends."



# New Building Safety App

Residents living in Housing for Older People schemes will be able to get safety information about their home in a new trial.

Information is going up in 22 schemes which include a QR code linking to information about fire safety, asbestos, lifts, gas and more.

The information will hopefully give residents peace of mind and be useful to visitors such as contractors and the fire service.

We are trialling the Building Safety App to see if it should be introduced at all Eastlight blocks of flats.



## **DID YOU KNOW?**

If you want to know how you can stay safe at home, you may be eligible for a free home visit from your local fire service.

Simply contact your fire service to find out more.

## DIGITAL SWITCHOVER

If you have a traditional analogue phoneline, then you have until January 2027 to change to a digital phoneline.

We have been preparing for this Digital Switchover by upgrading phonelines in communal areas, including warden call alarm systems, CCTV and emergency call out systems in lifts.

To update your personal landline, you should contact your service provider. They should explain the steps you need to take, including what to do if you have items like personal care alarms or security alarms which are connected to your landline.

## NEW DEAL FOR FASTER REPAIRS

We have entered into an agreement with builders' merchant Travis Perkins to support our repairs service.

The agreement will allow our repairs teams to source materials from Travis Perkins branches near where you live, allowing us to complete your repair more quickly and reduce our carbon footprint.





# HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

EVERY YEAR, WE ASK MORE THAN 1,000 EASTLIGHT RESIDENTS A RANGE OF QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW HAPPY THEY ARE WITH THE HOMES AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE.

The latest results for these surveys, called Tenant Satisfaction Measures, show that more tenants are satisfied with Eastlight now than a year ago.

The results reveal that 72.7% of tenants surveyed were satisfied with Eastlight. This is a 3.1% increase on the previous year.

### **Emma Palmer, Chief Executive, said:**

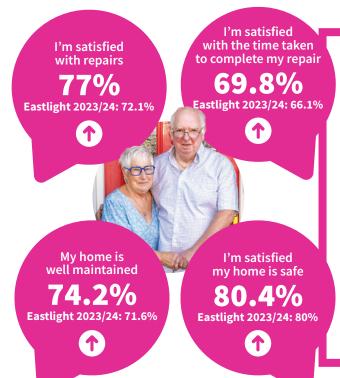
66

The progress we've made is a direct result of my colleagues and residents working together to ensure our services meet residents' needs, and I'd like to thank everyone who is striving to shape Eastlight for the better.

"There's work to be done however, and my colleagues and I are committed to ensuring you get the homes and services you want and need."

I'm satisfied with Eastlight overall

72.7%
Eastlight 2023/24: 69.6%





#### **MY HOME**

Satisfaction with our repairs service increased 4.9% to 77%, while more residents were happy with the time it took to complete their repair.

Our repairs team have introduced a range of improvements, including patches for our trades operatives. We also launched our Repairs Pledge, which was designed with residents and outlines the service you should expect to receive us.

But we recognise there's more to do to reduce the time you sometimes have to wait for repairs and to improve communication, particularly when you're waiting for a complex repair.

Communal areas are clean and well-maintained

58.9%

Eastlight 2023/24: 58.9%



Eastlight makes a positive contribution to my neighbourhood

**59.6%**Eastlight 2023/24: 58.9%

1

I'm satisfied with
Eastlight's handling
of anti-social behaviour

**58.4%**Eastlight 2023/24: 54.6%





#### **MY NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Our Intervention & Enforcement Team have made changes to improve the support we offer when residents experience anti-social behaviour.

As a result, residents are more satisfied with this service than they were a year ago.

These results show that many residents feel we do not make enough of a difference in their neighbourhoods. This year, we are developing a more local approach to providing key services, as well as making a significant investment in residents' communal areas. More information about these projects are elsewhere in this magazine.



#### YOUR COMPLAINTS

Last year, we received around 40% fewer complaints than we did the previous year, and our teams have worked hard to deal with any issues you might have with our services before they become a formal complaint, in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

However, satisfaction with how we handle complaints remains low, which we are addressing.

I'm satisfied with Eastlight's approach to handling complaints

33%

Eastlight 2023/24: <u>35.1%</u>





Eastlight keeps me informed about things that matter to me

69.3% Eastlight 2023/24: 70.4%

1

Eastlight treats me fairly and with respect

**77.5%**Eastlight 2023/24: 77.7%





#### COMMUNICATION

More residents feel Eastlight listens and acts on their views, and this magazine includes information about applying to join the resident-led Customer Influence Committee and taking part in your Eastlight Residents Group.

Communication remains an issue, and last year Eastlight residents joined staff to launch an internal 'Think Customer' campaign, asking five crucial questions every team member should ask themselves during their workday.



WE ARE DEVELOPING
PLANS TO INTRODUCE
MORE NEIGHBOURHOODBASED STAFF WHO CAN
HELP YOU WITH A RANGE
OF ISSUES IN YOUR HOME
AND COMMUNITY.

We believe that having a stronger presence in your neighbourhoods will result in a deeper understanding of the challenges you might face, stronger local relationships and help us build greater trust with you.

Feedback from residents, including the Tenant Satisfaction Measure results on the previous pages, show that too many of you don't feel that we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood.

We also recognise that you sometimes experience poor service because you need to deal with a number of Eastlight staff members for a single issue, This is a major change for Eastlight and the way we provide your services."

which often results in delays and difficulties in finding a resolution.

#### **HOW WILL THIS WORK?**

We are developing our approach, but we believe it will mean that you will have a contact or a team that you can trust to resolve issues for you and anyone in your local area.

This is a major change for Eastlight and the way we provide your services, so we are taking the time to find an approach that works for you. We are working towards launching this new approach this winter. We will update you when we have more details, and this will include how to reach your local contact or contacts and what they can help you with.

The resident-led Customer Influence Committee are helping to shape this neighbourhoodbased approach, while 30 residents told us how they would like it to work during a session at our Resident Conference in March.

If you have any thoughts or questions about this, then we'd love to hear from you.

## LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK



0330 128 0330



customer.services@ eastlighthomes.co.uk



WE'RE PLEASED TO SHARE THAT WE'VE SECURED GOVERNMENT FUNDING WHICH MEANS WE CAN INTRODUCE ENERGY-SAVING IMPROVEMENTS FOR RESIDENTS LIVING IN 275 HOMES.

are currently testing My Eastlight to make sure it works for you.

## **275 HOUSEHOLDS**

## TO BENEFIT AFTER GOVERNMENT FUNDING

We've agreed to match the £1.2 million provisional allocation with another £1.2 million, bringing the total investment to £2.4 million over the next three years.

The investment will go into making vital energy-saving improvements including installing solar panels to generate renewable energy, air source heat pumps for low-carbon heating and loft insulation to improve heat retention.

Charlotte Todd, Executive Director of Property Services, said:

"We know energy bills are a growing concern for many residents and improving their energy efficiency is one of the most effective ways to help.

"This investment will enable us to help residents save money, stay warm in their homes and reduce their carbon footprint to support wider sustainability efforts."



eastlighthomes.co.uk



year, so you can be proud of where you live.

From modernising communal areas with new doors and floors chosen by residents, to making important structural upgrades, this investment is all about creating safer and more welcoming spaces.

We recognise that we can't improve all communal areas at once.

We've planned this investment by looking at our data and seeking residents' views about which areas should be a priority.

Residents in the priority areas will shape how these upgrades look and feel, from choosing colour schemes to selecting preferred flooring.

If you feel your building or estate could benefit from improvements, please get in touch.

#### **CHANGES SO FAR**

- We installed a brand-new playpark on North Crescent in Steeple Bumpstead to replace the previous unsafe equipment. Residents chose their favourite colour schemes and the type of play equipment they wanted for the village's young children.
- In Halstead, residents in Tweed Close and Conies Road have seen big improvements to their communal spaces after telling us what would help to combat anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and neglected spaces. Their feedback enabled us to install new fencing around the communal gardens, 16 bin store pods and five CCTV cameras.
- Plus, residents at Bendyshe Court in Steeple Bumpstead have received brand new storage for their mobility scooters, we've improved the bin stores and recycling facilities at Jubilee Court in Witham, and added parking control measures at Hunt Avenue in Heybridge.

Want to make an active difference in your neighbourhood? Join your Eastlight Resident Group - see page 12.



EASTLIGHT IS REFRESHING THE WAY WE DELIVER SERVICES SO WE CAN FOCUS OUR TIME, ENERGY AND RESOURCES ON THE THINGS THAT MATTER MOST TO YOU.

We're protecting and investing in the core services you rightly expect from us as your landlord. These include:

- Letting and managing homes
- Tackling anti-social behaviour and safeguarding
- Keeping estates safe and well maintained
- Repairs and damp and mould services
- First contact support by phone, web and digital channels
- Domestic abuse support.

We're making sure our services reflect today's diverse communities and are delivered fairly. This means prioritising support that benefits the greatest number of residents, and ensuring we get the best value for money in everything we do.

#### **SUPPORT WITH HOUSEHOLD ITEMS**

We are sometimes contacted by residents seeking help to get essential furniture or household goods. While we no longer provide this support directly, these local and national organisations may be able to help.

Gov.uk - www.gov.uk/budgeting-help

Salvation Army, Braintree - 01376 425900

**Emmaus Colchester - 01206 768887** 

**Tendring Furniture Scheme** – 01255 476068

Witham Hub - 01376 617998

**Lighthouse Furniture Project** – 01277 222050

Turn2Us - www.turn2us.org.uk

**Glasspool** – www.glasspool.org.uk

Our teams are happy to help signpost you to the most appropriate organisation if you're unsure where to start.



# 66 WE KEEP EACH OTHER GOING

LAST YEAR, MORE THAN THREE MILLION ADULTS IN ENGLAND REPORTED OFTEN OR ALWAYS FEELING LONELY – AND THIS FIGURE IS RISING.

ne group helping to buck the trend is the Silver End Friendship Group, so we paid them a visit!

"I've been coming here for over 30 years", says Josie, a spritely 94-year-old who is sat in the middle of a group of ladies who clearly love having a laugh. The club formed in 1977 at the same time as the village celebrated its Silver Jubilee anniversary. The 50+ members, all aged 60 or over, pay just £10 a year and meet weekly at Silver End Bowls Club on Fridays, from 2pm-4pm.

Jeff, an Eastlight resident and club entertainment secretary, said: "It's friendly, and we have a laugh. I first found out about it because I'm a coach for the Bowls Club, and, around two years ago, I heard some music coming from the clubhouse and I started to groove on the green!

"It turns out the music was coming from the Friendship Group's weekly meet-up, and I got roped in and haven't looked back. "We have weekly raffles to help subsidise trips out, and we charge a bit extra on the door when we have entertainment, like a singer or bingo."

When Maureen became chair in 2015, she felt even more could be done to help reduce isolation and bring people together.

She said: "The club used to stop meeting during December and January, but I think it's particularly important that people meet during the darker months, so they now meet weekly throughout the year."

We have weekly raffles to help subsidise trips out."



Maureen helps organise four outings per year, from strolling around garden centres to cruising on the Norfolk Broads.

As John says: "We all get along together and keep each other going. Their problems are our problems. We pick each other up – it's a good thing for all of us."

## WHAT'S HAPPENING WHERE YOU LIVE?

Like to get out more and meet new people? Try your local council, community Facebook pages, and parish and community newsletters and noticeboards (including your local shops and supermarkets).



**EVERY WEEK, DJ DAVE LESLIE PLAYS HITS ON HIS RADIO SHOW** TO THOUSANDS OF LISTENERS - ALL FROM THE COMFORT OF HIS HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE SCHEME HOME

ave, whose brother, Steve Harris, has played bass for internationally famous heavy metal band Iron Maiden for nearly 50 years, has enjoyed his successful DJ career since he was a teenager.

Now living in Western House in the "smashing village" of Kelvedon, 74-year-old Dave has a regular show on Storm FM in Brighton, a station with 20,000 listeners a week.

#### **A PAYING HOBBY**

"DJing has always been a paying hobby of mine, ever since I was asked to 'keep the crowd happy' at my school's end of year dance until the band turned up," Dave recalls.

That experience set 'Dave the Rave' on his way, and he began working as a roadie and warm-up DJ in 1968 before launching his own mobile disco a few years later.

If you've been to a wedding or party in Essex, then there's a fair chance you have been entertained by Dave, who retired the mobile disco aged 65.

But the great grandfather didn't stop there, and now broadcasts from his living room at Western House, one of 24 Housing for Older People schemes managed by Eastlight, which are available to residents aged 55 and over.

**DJing has** always been a paying hobby of mine."

Dave was inspired to get into DJing by his beloved, recentlydeceased Dad, who played guitar and banjo and helped to cover the cost of Dave's first set of equipment.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Dave describes DJing as a "paying hobby": "I just love music – it's always been about the music."

## **LISTEN TO DAVE BY VISITING**



stormfm.uk/home

home, and with a picture of his inspiring dad.



## BLOOMING BRIL

THE EASTLIGHT RESIDENTS'
GROUPS (ERGS) HAVE BEEN
BUSY FINDING WAYS TO SPRUCE
UP YOUR NEIGHBOURHOODS.

The residents' groups have begun going on regular walkabouts on local estates to identify areas needing some TLC.

They then use their budget to fund improvements, such as the raised flowerbeds in Honeysuckle Way and Alan Road that the Witham-based group have introduced. Nearby residents have kindly volunteered to water and tend to the flower bed to keep it looking blooming lovely.

Witham ERG Chair, Mary, says: "A big thank you to Grahame from Greenfingers for all their hard work on the raised flower beds.

"They've really brought out the community — neighbours are coming out to sit on the bench and look at the flowers, and they've even started taking turns watering the new plants.

"The beds have brightened up the area, especially after issues with fly-tipping, and it's really lifted people's spirits. Everyone's talking about it!" Eastlight Resident Group members and Eastlight staff with new flowerbeds in Witham.

Halstead's ERG is getting picnic ready by installing a brand-new picnic bench at Colne Valley Close. They'll also be funding a picnic and garden bench at Conies Road, as well as stationing new communal planters ready for the summer.

And over in Braintree, the group has chosen to install two planters and benches into the communal gardens at Godric Place, giving residents an opportunity to relax outside and admire their handiwork.

They've also kindly funded the gifts for Santa's grotto at this year's Christmas event (yes, we're talking about that already!) and treated the Black Notley Guides to some shiny new camping equipment. Nice one!

If you think your area could do with some TLC, then why not join your local group and help them decide where to use their budget next.

#### **TO GET INVOLVED**



community@ eastlighthomes.co.uk



0330 128 0330

## ARE YOU A KEEN GARDENER?

Snap a quick pic of your colourful blooms and email them to: **TheCommsTeam** @eastlighthomes.co.uk!

We'll share our favourites on social media.



## YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

HEAR FROM CATHERINE, EASTLIGHT
RESIDENT AND CUSTOMER
INFLUENCE COMMITTEE CHAIR.

Catherine Turner, Chair, Customer Influence Committee

66 Hi, I'm Catherine – I live in an Eastlight home, and I'm proud to be part of the Customer Influence Committee (CIC) and Eastlight's Board.

We're a group of residents who make sure our voices shape the homes and services we all rely on. Our role is simple but powerful: we connect directly with Eastlight's Board and Executive Team, using our insight and experience to help steer the important decisions that affect us all.

Since joining in 2022, I've seen how our feedback leads to real change. Whether it's improving services, influencing policies, or tackling the things that matter most, our voice is heard and acted on. I've also drawn on my professional and personal experience of disability to help Eastlight improve how it caters for diverse needs.

#### **HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD**

Right now, we're looking for two new residents to join the CIC, and our Board are also recruiting a Trainee Board Member. We're a group
of residents who
make sure our voices
shape the homes
and services we
all rely on."

You could be a tenant, shared owner or leaseholder – what matters is that you care about your neighbourhood, are able to put yourself in a customer's shoes, and want to help shape Eastlight's future.

If you've ever wanted to hold Eastlight to account and make a real difference – this is your moment.

### **JOIN THE BOARD**

Our Board are also hiring a Trainee Board Member who can bring their day-to-day reality of being an Eastlight resident to the centre of the biggest decisions made in the organisation. Do you have experience working with data, Al or in business transformation? Even better!

This role will offer you a chance to learn how our Board works, grow your confidence and build skills that could lead to a longlasting career in social housing.

## **APPLY NOW!**

APPLICATIONS FOR ALL ROLES ARE NOW OPEN!



careers. eastlighthomes.co.uk



0330 128 0330



Governance@ eastlighthomes.co.uk



# PRDE IS FOR EVERYONE

BY MAGENTA LAVEY, EASTLIGHT RESIDENT AND CUSTOMER INFLUENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER. EastPride members enjoying Pride month in 2024.





We know that for many, Pride is about visibility, inclusion and feeling safe in your home and community."

Magenta Lavey, Eastlight resident and Customer Influence Committee member As an Eastlight resident and member of the Customer Influence Committee, I care deeply about ensuring all voices are heard – especially those in our LGBTQIA+ community. That's why I'm proud to share how we're marking Pride Month this June through EastPride, our LGBTQIA+ staff and resident network.

This year, Eastlight is thrilled to be the main sponsor of Braintree Pride on Saturday, 26 July, from 12–6pm at Weavers Park. We'll be hosting a fun, family-friendly stall with activities for all ages, as well as providing support and info – including how to report hate crime safely.

We're also excited to be at Essex Pride on Saturday, 21 June in Central Park, Chelmsford – marching proudly and welcoming visitors to our stall.

We know that for many, Pride is about visibility, inclusion and feeling safe in your home and community. That's why tackling hate crime will be a key focus for us in the coming months.

We'd love to see you at one of our events this summer – please join us!



## LET'S TALK ABOUT HATE CRIME

Hate Crime is a crime or incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic. This could be because of their race, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

If you, or someone you know, has been affected by a hate crime, please don't stay silent.

Contact us to find out more about our hate crime policy – and how to report a hate crime to us.



www.eastlighthomes. co.uk/extra-support/ anti-social-behaviourhate-crimes



0330 128 0330



AN AMAZON ECHO DOT **SMART SPEAKER!** 

## **COULD YOU AFFORD TO REPLACE EVERYTHING YOU OWN IF THE WORST HAPPENED?**

**■**e've partnered with Aviva to offer an optional Contents Insurance scheme designed for Eastlight tenants, shared owners and leaseholders\*. Cover starts from just 90p a month\*\* - giving you peace of mind that your belongings are protected when life takes an unexpected turn.

### Standard cover includes:

- Fire, theft, storm, flood and water leaks
- Lost keys and broken windows
- Malicious damage and accidental damage to TVs/computers.

### You can also add:

- Full accidental damage cover - for iPads/tablets, mobile phones, jewellery and more
- Cover away from home for personal items, hearing aids, mobility scooters and wheelchairs, worldwide.

Sign up to the scheme by Sunday, 31 August 2025 and you could win one of three Amazon Echo Dot smart speakers!

Already have Contents Insurance through our Aviva partnership? Contact us on shine@eastlighthomes.co.uk to be entered into the prize draw.

To find out more, apply online, or read the prize draw terms and conditions, visit:

www.eastlighthomes.co.uk/ contentsinsurance

Or call our Customer Services Team on **0330 128 0330** to request an application pack and prize draw terms by post.

Whilst we believe Aviva provides an excellent service at affordable rates, we cannot guarantee that the scheme provides the cheapest or widest cover. You may be able to get the insurance cover you want at a better price if you shop around.

**FEATURE** 



<sup>\*</sup> This scheme is not available to sub-let properties.

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.2025.342.GG

<sup>\*\*</sup> Price for £4000 standard cover, includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) charged at the appropriate rate.



## AT EASTLIGHT, WE AIM TO GIVE YOU CONSISTENTLY GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE.

owever, we recognise that – from time to time – we fail to meet your expectations.

Please tell us if you're not happy with the service you receive. We will work with you to try and find a resolution, and we also review our complaints to identify trends and improve your services.

We accept complaints made over the phone, in-person, by email or letter and online – including via social media. Our contact details are below.



## **Contact** us

**Call:** 0330 128 0330 (local rate)

Email: customer.services@eastlighthomes.co.uk

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

Visit: www.eastlighthomes.co.uk

facebook.com/eastlighthomes

instagram.com/eastlighthomes

x.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 magazine in a different format or language, please let us know.





