

Tenant Matters

Lincs
RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Winter 2023



Chair's message

As winter approaches I have been busy putting my garden and allotment to bed. It has been a good harvest for pumpkins and squash this year as you can see from my photo and I still have some to pick. The shops are full of spooky Halloween decorations and costumes, which shows the influence of American culture and traditions in the UK, perhaps it may only be a matter of time before we too start to celebrate Thanksgiving. This is the story of the Pilgrim Fathers who arrived on the coast of Massachusetts, in the middle of winter, but with the assistance of local Native Americans they persevered and survived. Their trials and struggles are a matter of folklore and are of course a very important holiday for Americans as it is no doubt seen as a key part of their culture and heritage.

Lincolnshire plays a fundamental part in that story, many of the 26 families who set sail on the Mayflower were from here and those families played a pivotal role in the formation of America. This can be seen from the naming of their new homes after the old homes that they had left behind. There are 35 places called Lincoln and 16 different cities called Boston in America and of course we both share a New York, ours is a little smaller though.

John Billington, one of the original Pilgrim Fathers was originally from Cowbit and has the dubious honour of being the first person executed in America for shooting dead another man in a quarrel.



The story of the Pilgrim Fathers is a powerful one and a reminder to us all in the power of people. Our calendar this year is focusing on supporting communities and shows us some of the fantastic community spirit we see in our area.

LRHA has had its own pioneering Founding Fathers (and Mothers): Mr Young, Mr O'Neil, Mrs Cheeseborough, Mr Markham and Mrs Kime, although these names may not be instantly familiar to you, our head office is named after the last two people. These forward and community minded people recognised a local issue, the need for good quality local accommodation and decided to do something about this and so set up LRHA. Without their commitment, forethought and determination we would not be the organisation that we are today and we like to think that we remain passionately committed to their original principles.



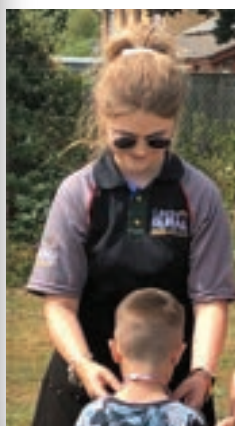
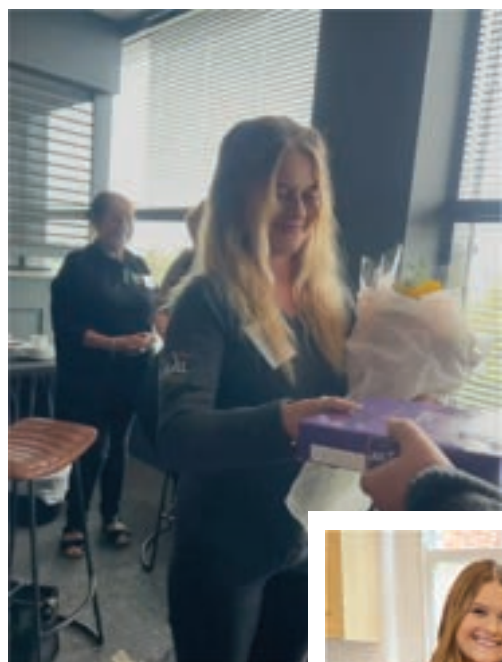
Goodbye

Leah

Resident Engagement Assistant

Our Resident Engagement Assistant Leah has left her role here at LRHA to pursue a new career. I think we can all agree that Leah was an asset to this organisation and those who have spoken to her will know her passion for the job and helping people.

Congratulations Leah and best of luck in your new role. It has been a pleasure working with you and you will be an asset to your new working team.



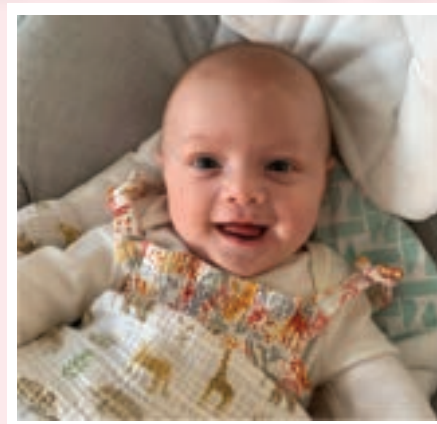
Marji

Income Manager

A huge congratulations to Marji who has had a beautiful little girl, Ivy in August!

“ My lovely little girl Ivy arrived on the 11th August. She is such a joy to us and i am so grateful to spend this special time with her. My maternity leave so far has been filled with lots of cuddles, smiles and watching her grow far too fast. ”

Congratulations



Community Fridge

Reducing food waste and empowering communities

A Community Fridge is a space that brings people together to eat, connect, learn new skills and reduce food waste. It is a site where local people can share food, this includes surplus from supermarkets, local food businesses, producers, households and gardens. Fridges are run by community groups in shared spaces such as schools, community centres and shops, their main purpose is saving fresh food from going to waste.



The Community Fridge Network is coordinated by Hubbub and it connects fridges across the UK. It is a support network for groups running fridges to share knowledge and skills and to ask questions. The Network offers free guidance on how to set up your own fridge and provides comprehensive support, design assets, a knowledge sharing forum, health and safety templates and discounted fridges and freezers!

There are currently over 300 fridges across the UK and counting, Hubbub have partnered with Co-op to fund 500 fridges by the end of 2023.

Community Fridges in Lincolnshire

Sleaford Community Fridge – NG34 7JP

Rutland Community Fridge – LE25 9JS

Newark College – NG24 1PB

Bridge Central Community Café Fridge – LN5 7NN

Crosby Community Fridge – DN15 7JT

Sutton On Sea Community Food Larder – LN12 2HB

For more information on community fridges visit www.hubbub.org.uk/the-community-fridge

Periodic Electrical Testing

As your landlord we have a legal duty to ensure that an annual electrical safety check is carried out in your home. In order to comply with these regulations, we will commence the process to carry out this inspection approximately 2 months prior to the anniversary date of the previous inspection. You will be given plenty of notice to request access including a text message on the 1st of the month before your service is due to remind you that your annual electrical service is approaching.

You must allow access for this check to take place. This is for your safety and the safety of your neighbours so please ensure that you are in for your visit. If the appointment that you have been provided with doesn't suit, then please contact the maintenance department.

What happens during your check?

- A qualified electrician will visit your home to do an electrical safety test.
- This usually takes between 2 to 4 hours depending on whether any faults are identified.
- Your electricity will need to be switched off for the test. This is usually for around 1 hour.

What will be checked?

- The electrician will check that circuits aren't overloaded.
- There are no electrical shock risks or fire hazards.
- All electric wiring is safe.
- Your home is safe.

If you need to reschedule your appointment, please get in touch with us on 01790754219, option 1 as soon as possible to do so.

Christmas Dinner on a budget

How to save some cash on Christmas dinner

The cost of living has risen significantly this year, causing many of us to be more concerned about the upcoming Christmas season. Not only do we need to purchase presents for our family and friends, but the cost of meals and refreshments can also have a significant impact on our finances. Here are just a few ways you could keep the cost of your Christmas food bill down.

Look down & don't look up!

Supermarkets will often place more expensive items at eye level and place the better value items on the bottom shelves. Don't be fooled by these tactics and look down!

Homemade is where the heart is

Making things from scratch is more time consuming but it can save you money. Consider making your own versions of Christmas classics by using own brand and frozen ingredients, such as Yorkshire puddings or roast potatoes.

Ignore the fancy packaging

We tend to go all out at Christmas and buy the 'best' of everything to treat our loved ones. However just because the packaging looks fancy it doesn't mean the food inside is better. Marketing experts want us to believe it is, however, if you check the list of ingredients for yourself you will see they usually aren't that different. Make some swaps and see if your family can tell the difference.

Look out for yellow stickers and special offers

Head out to the shops near closing time and grab some of those yellow sticker items. Keep an eye out for special offers too.

The freezer is your best friend!

In the weeks leading up to Christmas start to buy yellow sticker items and freeze them. This is a good way to spread the cost. Before Christmas there are often good deals on frozen party foods which are great for boxing day and new year!

Plan Ahead

Remember, Christmas is only one day! Buy only what you can afford and what you can reasonably eat, to avoid waste. Plan what you will do with leftovers and make a meal plan for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.



Portable Gas Heater Dangers

Using portable gas heaters carries the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, so you should have a carbon monoxide alarm in the same room.

The fire risk of portable gas heaters

There is a lot of risk with using gas heaters. If you are using one, make sure that you store the spare gas cylinders safely. The cylinders must live somewhere outside of the home, well away from direct sunlight or any frost.

Portable gas heaters are also a big risk if anything is placed too closely to them. So again, give them some space.

If not serviced regularly and correctly gas heaters can pose a serious threat to health from Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

If you are using this type of appliance in a Lincs Rural home please contact us so that we can discuss this with you and assess if we can help.



Humidity Damage

These appliances also create a very high level of humidity and condensation in the home.

This condensation directly results from the heater's efficiency and the creation of methane that is released into the room.

Because there is no vent to collect the water vapours produced in the creation of heat, the water vapour moves into the open space.

Adding too much humidity to an area can result in the following:

- Wooden furniture may warp and rot.
- Paint and wallpaper may begin to bubble and peel.
- Mold may grow within the plaster.
- Severe health problems for homeowners, especially those who have allergies or asthma.
- The heater's efficiency has to be reduced from 99% to 90% (via improved ventilation) to reduce water vapour in the air.

If you are planning to use this type of heater in an LRHA home this winter period, please contact us so that an additional Carbon monoxide detector can be installed. Thank you

NEW FREE resident discount app



HOUSING PERKS

Housing Perks provides discounted vouchers for virtually all spending at over 100 brands. Helping you to save on the essentials.

If you're looking to save money on your essentials, LRHA has got you covered! We've teamed up with the Housing Perks app, so you can get up to **18%** off over 100 different brands and stores. You will shortly be receiving a letter containing your login for the app. All you have to do is download the app for free, log in and you're good to go!

6%	Groceries	5%	Fuel
9%	Clothing & School Uniform	6%	School & Work Equipment
7%	Home Furnishings & DIY	5%	Pharmacy
9%	Charity Shops	9%	Family Days Out

How it works:

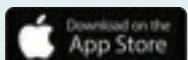
1. Head to the app, search and select the brand you would like to get a discount for.
2. Enter the amount you would like to spend on that brand and press pay securely.
3. Check the information and make sure you are happy with how it will be used.
4. Choose how you want to pay for the gift card.
5. When your payment is successful an eGift card will appear in your wallet on the app.
6. View the eGift card and use it in store or online



It's fast, free and easy to sign up!
Just head to the Apple App Store or Google Play Store



SCAN ME!



SCAN ME!



Condensation Prevention

Moisture naturally builds in our homes from daily activities, such as breathing, cooking, washing and drying clothes, showering and taking a bath

Here are some simple things you can do to prevent excess moisture.

1.

Dry your windows and windowsills every morning when you wake up. Make sure to wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator. Open your curtains or blinds to help ventilate the space.

2.

Dry your laundry outside. The moisture that comes from wet clothes needs to go somewhere, and over time this can accumulate on cold spots, creating damp patches or watery windows. If you can't dry your clothes outside, leave a window open, or use a dehumidifier.

3.

Keep your lids on! This is something that many of us are guilty of, but leaving your pots and pans lidless while you cook not only wastes energy, it also contributes to condensation. Just like your wet clothes, the moisture from cooking needs to go somewhere! Keep the lids on your pots and pans when cooking and not only will you be saving yourself some money on your energy bills, you'll reduce the risk of condensation.

4.

Keep doors closed when showering. Where moisture is inevitable, it's important to trap it in a controlled manner. Boiling the kettle, or taking a bath or shower all create moisture that we can't quite so easily put a lid on. So, wherever possible in these situations close the kitchen or bathroom door to contain the moisture and make it easier to deal with, rather than allowing it to travel throughout your home.

5.

Use your extractor fans. It's an easily forgotten bathroom or kitchen feature, but using extractor fans is key to removing the moisture created in situations like showering or boiling the kettle. This is particularly so where the room doesn't have a window or any other means of ventilation.

6.

Control the Temperature. Having a low background heat is a good way to help cut down on the amount of condensation in your home.

- Try to keep your property at a constant temperature. A thermostat will help control your heating and your energy bills.
- Make sure you seal your doors and windows properly to help regulate the airflow and temperature in your home.
- Close your blinds or curtains once it gets dark to help keep heat in. Remember to open them again during the day to help the airflow around your windows and doors. Opening your curtains will allow any available sunlight to provide some heat into your home.

7.

Good ventilation. Condensation is less likely to happen in well-ventilated and warm homes. Make sure that the trickle vents on your windows are open. Opening windows will remove any moist air, even having windows open for 5 minutes a day can make a big difference.



Scan me!
To Report any
Mould in your home

Our priority is to make sure your home is warm, safe and dry. If you have problems with damp, mould or condensation in your home, please let us know at <https://lrha.co.uk/damp-mould-and-condensation/>

Warm Home Healthy Household

With the cost of living rising we are all feeling the pinch, especially when it comes to keeping ourselves and our homes warm. Here is some information that will hopefully help you to keep your heating on and keep you warm and healthy.

WARM HOME DISCOUNT

<https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

You could get £150 off your electricity bill for winter 2023 to 2024 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

The money is not paid to you - it's a one-off discount applied to your electricity bill between early October 2023 and 31 March 2024.

You'll usually get the discount automatically if you're eligible. Contact your energy supplier to apply.

If you are eligible, you'll receive a letter by January 2024. If you do not get a letter and you think you're eligible, you must contact the Warm Home Discount Scheme before 29 February 2024. You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity and you're eligible. Contact your supplier to find out.

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT

<https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>

If you were born before 25 September 1957 you could get between £250 and £600 to help you pay your heating bills. This is known as a 'Winter Fuel Payment'.

The amount you get includes a 'Pensioner Cost of Living Payment'. This is between £150 and £300. You'll get this extra amount in winter 2023 to 2024. This is in addition to any other Cost of Living Payments you get with your benefit or tax credits.

COLD WEATHER PAYMENT

<https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment>

You'll get a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees celsius or below over 7 consecutive days. You'll get £25 for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. After each period of very cold weather in your area, you should get a payment within 14 working days. It's paid into the same bank or building society account as your benefit payments.

Find the best tariff for you!

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk>

Energy companies have so many tariffs with different gas and electricity prices it can often be confusing trying to find the best one.

We suggest using an energy comparison site recommended by **OFGEM**, the energy regulator. Make sure you have your fuel statements with you when you contact the energy providers. You'll need three things:

- **Your postcode.**
- **The name of the tariff you're on.**
- **You annual usage information** (how many kWh's of energy you've used in the year).

Most people are on a standard variable tariff (SVT) and pay at a level set by the price cap for each kilowatt hour (kWh) they use.

However, wholesale prices have recently fallen and suppliers are now beginning to offer fixed rate energy tariffs. These allow you to lock your energy price per kWh for a specified period of time.

Fixed tariffs can offer benefits such as knowing what your unit rate will be in advance, and this can help with household budgeting. They also offer protection if prices start to increase again. **However, you won't be able to take advantage of cheaper prices if they continue to fall.**



Our priority is to make sure your home is warm, safe and dry. If you have problems with damp, mould or condensation in your home, please let us know at <https://lrha.co.uk/cost-of-living-support/>



Scan me!
To read more on cost
of living support

Garden Competition Winners

You may have noticed in our Summer edition of Tenant Matters we hosted a Garden Competition. We have had so many beautiful entries from over 30 different properties!

This year we had three different categories to enter into.

Each winner will receive a shopping voucher. Thank you so much to everyone who has participated and sent in photos, it really was very hard to pick a winner.

Keep up the good work and keep your eyes peeled for next year's competition.



Winner of
BEST OVERALL
GARDEN

**Mr & Mrs Brown
Potterhanworth**

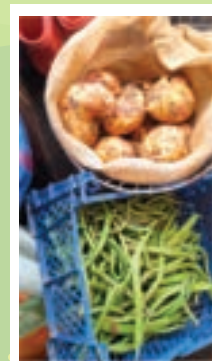
Winner of
BEST CONTAINER
GARDEN

**Mrs Aston & Mr
Pearce
Alford**



Winner of
BEST PRODUCE
GARDEN

**Mr & Mrs Minns
Long Sutton**

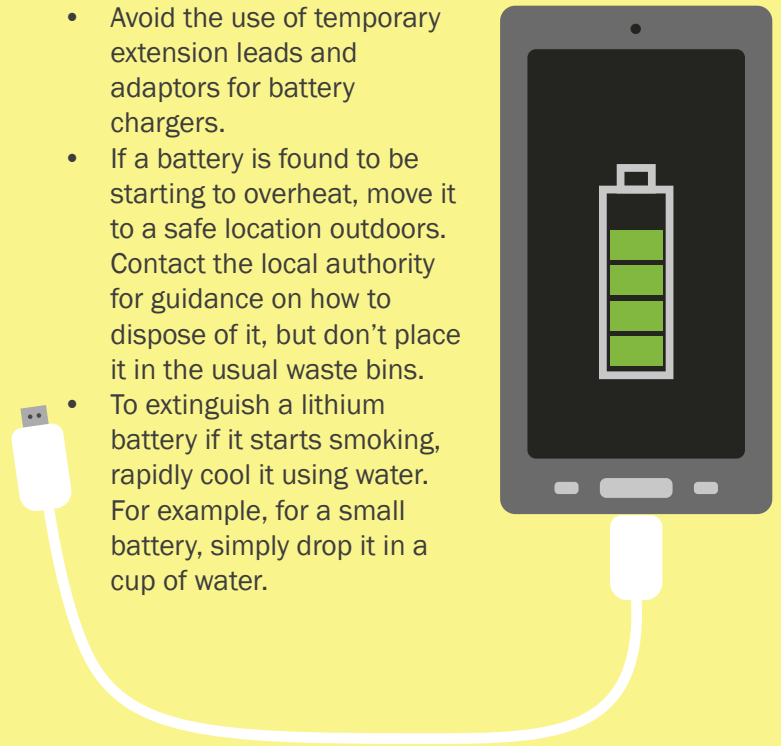


Fire Risks From Lithium-ion Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries are found in all types of domestic electrical equipment including e-cigarettes, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, power banks, e-scooters, mobility scooters and electric bikes. They contain a flammable electrolyte and other flammable components and have a history of frequent accidental ignition, leading to substantial amounts of smoke, intense fire, ejection of flames and even explosion if overcharged, overheating or short circuiting. The risk is greatest when the battery or charging equipment has been damaged.

Safety tips

- Only use electrical products that have the UKCA or CE mark.
- Ensure use of the correct charger designed for the device/battery.
- Cheap alternatives (devices, equipment, batteries, and chargers) should be avoided as they are not subject to the same rigorous testing and certification procedure.
- Regularly check chargers (plugs and cables) for signs of damage and overheating, and any change in colour or appearance. Dispose of immediately if found to be damaged in any way.
- Do not expose batteries to high temperatures or heat sources directly or for extended periods of time e.g. direct sunlight. Battery cells should not be subject to temperatures in excess of 70°C during storage.
- Charging should take place in a well-ventilated area free of readily ignitable materials e.g. a kitchen work surface with no cupboards above. Never charge on soft furnishings e.g. beds and sofas.
- Only charge during the day when there is the opportunity to detect faults early. The area selected for charging should have automatic smoke detection at ceiling level.
- Avoid the use of temporary extension leads and adaptors for battery chargers.
- If a battery is found to be starting to overheat, move it to a safe location outdoors. Contact the local authority for guidance on how to dispose of it, but don't place it in the usual waste bins.
- To extinguish a lithium battery if it starts smoking, rapidly cool it using water. For example, for a small battery, simply drop it in a cup of water.



Shed Contents Responsibility

Our insurance covers the building and fixtures of your home but NOT your personal items. We can provide information on contents insurance but we are not responsible for damage to the contents of your home unless we were negligent. It is most important that you arrange insurance to cover your belongings and house contents against any losses due to fire, theft, flood or damage.

The cost of such a policy is low considering the cost of replacing all your possessions. In addition, the insurance should include third party cover in case someone makes a claim against you, for example, if you left a tap running and flooded your neighbours' home.

The contents of your shed should be included in your home contents insurance. Responsibility for accidental damage to your belongings will not be taken by LRHA.



Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Thank you to everyone who filled out a Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey. We now have the responses and data back from you. This data will be shared with all residents shortly in a reader friendly report.

We asked,

“Are you interested in being involved with LRHA”

And here are your answers...

19

A resident Armchair Panel

9

Resident Representative Network

7

Complaints Process

6

Resident Services Contracts

4

TSM/ New Consumer Regulation



Ingredients

350g Butter
600g Dark Chocolate
150g Golden Syrup
600g Assorted Biscuits
150g Mixed Marshmallows
300g Maltesers Teasers
Chocolate Spread
300g Maltesers
150g White Chocolate

Malteser Christmas Pudding



**We would love to see how yours turns out,
Email us a picture of your pudding!**

Method

Place the butter, chocolate and golden syrup in a heatproof bowl and melt together over a pan of gently simmering water. Allow to cool a little.

Add the biscuits and marshmallows. Stir together. Line a small bowl with clingfilm and pour the rocky road mix into it.

Level out and freeze for 1-2 hours or until set.

Take your rocky road and remove it from the mould. Spread the Maltesers Spread all over it then stick on the Maltesers.

Set for 20 minutes in the fridge.

Melt the white chocolate. Pour the white chocolate over the top and let it drip down. Garnish with holly.

Festive Facts

On 16 December 1965, the song 'Jingle Bells' made history by becoming allegedly the first song to be played in space.

In Japan Christmas is a secular holiday with less than 1% of the Japanese population being Christian. When KFC launched their "Kentucky for Christmas" marketing campaign in 1974, it was an instant hit and KFC is now a popular choice for Christmas dinners in Japan.

'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' was originally used as a threat. The song was often sung by crowds of servants as they demanded alcohol from their masters during the festive period. The lyric 'We won't go until we get some' was used to enforce their point across.

Oklahoma became the very last state to make Christmas legal again in 1907 despite the US making it a federal holiday in 1870.

In 1912, Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock authorised local postmasters to allow employees to respond to letters addressed by children to Santa Claus and the program came to be known as Operation Santa.

The origins of Father Christmas in England date back to ancient pre-Christian midwinter festivals where an unnamed pagan figure, robed in a green hooded cloak and wearing a wreath of holly, ivy or mistletoe, would come to cheer people during the winter and hardest time of the year.

Queen Victoria was the first official person to send a Christmas card, but the first commercial card came in 1843 when Sir Henry Cole produced 1000 and sold them for a shilling each. There are currently only 12 of these cards left in the world with one going up for auction a couple of years ago for £30,000.

Macmillan Coffee morning



This year we held a Macmillan Coffee morning in partnership with The New Life Centre in Spilsby. We had over 30 visitors on the day which is a new record for LRHA. Thank you to everyone who came and supported this great charity.



We raised a whopping

£152

CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING COMPETITION

This year we are hosting a Christmas tree decoration competition! We love Christmas here at LRHA and we would love to see your Christmas creations!

This is your opportunity to showcase your decorated tree and perhaps bag yourself a bonus Christmas gift.

To enter, please send your photos to us with your name and address. Please send your photos to residentengagement@lrha.co.uk or by post to our office no later than 20th December 2023. If you have any questions please get in touch with the Resident Engagement Team.

Christmas Food Quiz!

- 1) The most popular Christmas dinner main is turkey, but what is the most popular vegetarian alternative?
- 2) In 'The Christmas Song' what was 'roasting on an open fire'?
- 3) Which way do you stir a Christmas pudding mixture for good luck?
- 4) In Tudor times, they roasted a bird before putting it back together (including the feathers) and served it to impress guests at a Christmas banquet. Which bird was it?
- 5) In Japan, which famous fast food restaurant brand is a traditional Christmas treat?
- 6) What is the meal consisting of leftover vegetables served on 26th December?
- 7) Which fruit was often found in children's Christmas stockings in the UK and considered to be a luxury?
- 8) What should be eaten on each of the 12 days of Christmas to ensure good luck for the year ahead?
- 9) True or false: Before turkey became popular, the traditional Christmas dinner in England included a pig's head smothered in mustard?
- 10) What was the Goose Club in the Victorian era?

Download your free Christmas activity pack

Head to www.Irha.co.uk/freeactivitypack to download your free pack. Alternatively You can email residentengagement@Irha.co.uk if you would like one posted to your home.



“ YOU SAID ”

WE DID

You said: Create and put a flyer on the LRHA website and Facebook regarding electrical safety.

We Did: Our Communications Specialist has been working in conjunction with the Electrical Technician to create a webpage for electrical safety. Here you can find electrical safety information as well as a link to Electrical Safety First’s website. We have also included some articles in this issue of Tenant Matters.

You said: We would like to see more about what is happening within the association.

We Did: We have made the ‘You said we did’ page part of our Local Offer. This page will be included in every issue of tenant matters going forwards. We hope to keep you informed of any changes we are making and listen to your suggestion. If you have any suggestions for us at LRHA please send them in to customerservices@lrha.co.uk

You said: We are struggling financially with the cost of living and increase of all bills.

We Did: introduced the Resident Support Fund in March 2022 which has helped over 30 LRHA residents so far. The fund is available to any residents who are experiencing immediate or significant hardship. If you feel you may need to use the support fund please contact the resident engagement team.

LRHA have teamed up with Housing Perks to give you access to their discount app. You can save money on everyday spending including food shopping and many other big-name brands. We try to help as much as we can where possible including signposting on our website Lincs Rural | Cost Of Living Support (lrha.co.uk) and in Tenant Matters.

You said: We want to report our repairs as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We Did: We are promoting reporting your repairs online. Lincs Rural | Report a repair (lrha.co.uk)

Customer Service Contact Details

Our staff are available

Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.00pm

Telephone 01790 754219

customerservices@lrha.co.uk

www.lrha.co.uk  

Christmas Opening Hours

Friday December 22nd
8.30am to 12pm

Christmas Day
Monday December 25th
Closed

Boxing Day
Tuesday December 26th
Closed

Wednesday December 27th
Closed

Thursday December 28th
Closed

Friday December 29th
Closed

New Years Day
Monday 1st January
Closed

We will re-open on Tuesday 2nd
January 2023 at 8:30am.

If you are an LRHA Resident and have an emergency repair out of office times,
please contact our out of hours repairs service on 07483 916770.

Markime House • Pooles Lane • Spilsby • Lincolnshire • PE23 5EY
customerservices@lrha.co.uk • 01790 754219 • www.lrha.co.uk