

The magazine for Acis Group customers

HOME



Winter 2023

Cost of Living

Tackling it together



Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of our Home News magazine.

I hope you all had a great festive period and enjoyed a fantastic New Year.

As we head into the second month of 2023, it's important to reflect on the previous 12 months.

With cost of living challenges becoming more and more prominent in 2022, we know how difficult it has been, especially over the winter months. On **page four** of this issue, you can find a host of websites packed with tools, tips, help and support.

2022 was a challenging but exciting year for Acis as we continue to listen to you, our customers, to improve our services.

We introduced our new repairs service, giving you direct access to our engineers when you report a repair. And according to feedback, 94% of you who have had a recent repair have liked the new way doing things, which is great!

We also launched our new website and live chat system, in response to your feedback. Thank you to our tenants who contributed to the design and site experience in consultation meetings.

We've continued to listen through our Customer Voice Panel on things like our repairs policy. If you'd like to find out more on how to get involved in having your say, give us a call on **0800 027 2057** or email yourvoice@acisgroup.co.uk

Greg Bacon,
Chief Executive

"As we head into the second month of 2023, it's important to reflect on the previous 12 months."



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Our Heroes – discover the winners of 2022

Hearing your voice

In 2022 many of you got involved in our Together with Tenants activity – from Your Voice month in February to discuss its and giving us feedback.

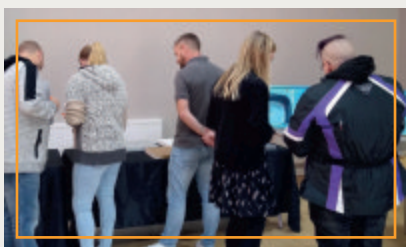
What have we been doing recently?

At the end of the summer we held a repairs discuss it where you discussed our new repairs policy and recommended any changes you wanted to see.



In October we headed to Dunstall Walk in Gainsborough to Love your Street. Local residents, West Lindsey District Council and members of our team all came together to clean the street and work together as a community.

In October, we also asked for your opinion on our new kitchen provider. We asked customers to choose between different types of kitchen units and cupboards to help us put together our options for new kitchens.



improve it

Our Customer Voice Panel and Scrutiny Group discussed topics from empty properties to safer communities and provided recommendations of how we could improve our service.



Claire Tunstall, our Customer Engagement Coordinator, said:

"We have a longstanding commitment to customer engagement, having been accredited by TPAS (the tenant engagement specialists) since 2008. Our customers are our number one priority."



And in December we held our annual Christmas event, with many of you coming to Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre to make reindeer food, do some Christmas crafts and have lunch.



Find out how you can get involved – follow the QR code or email yourvoice@acisgroup.co.uk

Cost of living – tackling it together

Here at Acis we're here to help where we can. If you're struggling with rent payments or general day-to-day cost of living, give us a call on 0800 027 2057 and we'll see how we, or any of our partners, can help.

Here's some handy websites to go to:

Acis Group

(www.acisgroup.co.uk)

Our website has a range of helpful tools and links for you to access at any time. Just head to the Your Home section and scroll down to our cost of living blog.

BBC – cost of living

(www.bbc.co.uk)

Search the BBC for some really useful articles, tips and videos on things like cutting energy costs and discounts you could make use of.

Moneyhelper

(www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

Moneyhelper is a great tool for hints and tips on everything from living on a budget, saving money on household bills to managing Universal Credit and other benefits.

Universal Credit calculator

(www.uc-helper.co.uk/acisgroup)

If you head to the website above or over to www.acisgroup.co.uk and find our 'your money advice' section, you can access the Universal Credit calculator. There you can find out if you're eligible to receive Universal Credit support and how much it would be.

Riverside Training and CLIP

(www.riverside-training.org.uk / www.cliplearning.com)

Our education and training providers Riverside Training and CLIP offer a range of courses and programmes to help with things like budgeting, and learning maths in creative ways that help with everyday life.

Cost of living support - Gov.uk

(www.gov.uk/cost-of-living)

The Government's website is another great tool for finding help and support for things around and support for things like travel costs, childcare and if you have a disability. Here you can also read more about how the Energy Price Guarantee limits your energy prices.

Warm Spaces

(www.warmwelcome.uk)

Warm Welcome is the central hub for finding a warm space this winter. Warm Spaces are an initiative provided across the country to support people who find themselves in fuel poverty – or to prevent people falling into it. The website offers a great deal of information, including where your closest warm space is located.



**With challenges
around cost of
living hitting us all,
we want to share
some handy links
and support tips.**



Damp and mould treatment and prevention

Damp and mould can build up over time, especially in kitchens and bathrooms. These simple steps can help to prevent and treat mould in your home.

What you'll need



Sponge



Gloves



Dust mask



Mould spray



Did you know?

It costs around £1.96 a year to run an extractor fan in your kitchen and £1.75 a year in your bathroom.

Step one:

Keep an eye on the humidity levels in your home. Make sure your house is as dry as possible - open windows, turn the heating down when it's hot and let the sun in as much as possible. But close any open windows when you put the heating on.

Step two:

Most damp is found in bathrooms and kitchens where it is often wet and warm. To prevent damp happening, make sure you open a window after a shower or cooking to let the steam out.

Step three:

To prevent damp occurring on tiles it's a good idea to use a sponge to dry the walls after having a bath or shower.

Step four:

Another cause of damp is drying wet clothes inside. If you don't have a dryer or prefer to line dry clothes to save energy, always hang your clothes outside if you can. Any water that evaporates from the clothes will otherwise hang in the air in your home.

If you still have an issue you can find more advice on our website by following the QR code or call us on 0800 026 2057.

Step five:

In winter, if you have to hang clothes to dry inside, make sure the room is well-ventilated and that air is circulating.

Step six:

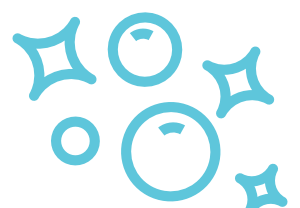
If you spot mould it isn't the end of the world. You can take action to get rid of it yourself. Before you tackle the area make sure you're well protected with a dust mask over your nose and mouth and put on rubber or plastic gloves.

Step seven:

To tackle the mould you can buy mould prevention spray at most supermarkets and hardware stores. Simply spray the mould area and clean it once it's dry. Read the instructions on the spray carefully and be sure the spray can be used in the area where the mould is.

Step eight:

The best way to tackle mould is to prevent it happening in the first place. Although some prevention methods seem excessive there's no better way to prevent damp than keeping a nice, clean and airy house.





Customer feedback

We continue to welcome feedback from our customers and it's great to hear where you feel we're doing well. Details on how you can give feedback are on our website: <https://www.acisgroup.co.uk/feedback/>

We also like to hear where you feel we can improve. Our website includes our complaints policy and process. If you need to make a complaint, you can do this verbally or in writing by contacting:

✉ Acis House, 57 Bridge Street,
Gainsborough, DN21 1GG

@ info@acisgroup.co.uk

f Acis Group

🐦 @AcisGroup

You can also complain through the Housing Ombudsman Scheme at any time. For more information visit: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

We work to the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code which means we respond to complaints effectively and fairly. We support a positive complaint handling culture. For more information, please visit: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords-info/complaint-handling-code/>

Or you can write to them at:
Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 152
Liverpool
L33 7WQ

Woodthorpe, Sheffield TARA AGM

The Woodthorpe Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) Annual General Meeting is being held on 23 February at 6pm at the TARA building in Woodthorpe, Sheffield.

Everyone is welcome to attend and there is also the chance to join the committee at the meeting.

The TARA AGM is an opportunity to discuss what's happening on the estate and find out more about help and support available in the area.

For more information call: 0114 264 5055



How are we doing?

Every three months we ask a group of you, our customers, what you think about the service we offer and how satisfied you are.



80%

Overall Satisfaction
(target 2022/2023 87%)



85%

Customers satisfied with the quality of their home
(target 2022/2023 87%)



88%

Customers satisfied with the value for money of services provided
(target 2022/2023 88%)



79%

Customers satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service provided
(target 2022/2023 78%)



86%

Customers satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
(target 2022/2023 86%)



71%

Customers satisfied that their views are being taken into account
(target 2022/2023 80%)



77%

Customers satisfied that we did what we said we would do
(target 2022/2023 84%)

(This data is from October-December 2022)



Our six-monthly direct debit draw has been drawn and one of our customers has received £150.

In six months, this could be you! All you need to do is set up your rent payments by Direct Debit to be entered into our draw. It's that simple.

Our latest winner is Mr Dotor of Nottinghamshire!

If you don't currently pay your rent by Direct Debit and want to be in with a chance of winning £150 in vouchers, give us a call on **0800 027 2057** and ask to speak to you income officer or email **info@acisgroup.co.uk** to request a form to set up your Direct Debit.

Better homes, better services, better lives

Our customers

Customer Service Centre opening hours extended and embedded - 8am-9pm



MyAcis portal
2,586
people managing tenancies online



Growing support services

2,172
customers involved in YourVoice initiatives



Our efficiency



Launched pilot of 'repairs on demand'

New material suppliers



Quicker sales process embedded



New finance system implemented

Our growth

Affordable Homes programme launched



138
new homes at Bowling Green started

Investors in People Silver award gained



Head office renovation

Our partnerships



2,072
engagements with

854
stakeholders including
136
new stakeholders

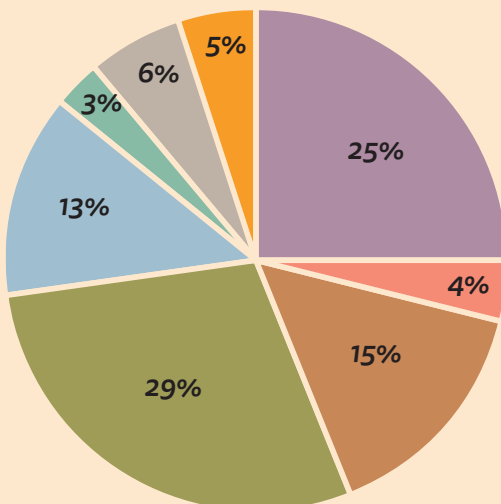
2

partnership events held with Acis HomePlus



Matrix accreditation
gained through Riverside Training

How your rent is spent



- Finance Costs
- Heating Servicing
- Housing Management
- Property Improvements
- Routine Maintenance
- Service Costs
- Empty Properties
- Other Costs



(This data is from 2021-2022)

OUR HEROES

2022

Acis celebrates community with annual Our Heroes awards

A church volunteer, a green-fingered resident, a community-focused young boy and an Acis neighbourhood manager have all been recognised for their achievements with this year's awards.

The Our Heroes awards help recognise the unsung heroes in our communities.

Church volunteer Jill Carson picked up the 'Neighbour of the Year' prize for her tireless efforts helping out anyone in the local community. She has raised thousands of pounds for the church by setting up a second-hand emporium for the local community. Jill also organises activities for youngsters during school holidays, day trips for older members of the community and even supports local businesses in getting the word out.

On the award, Jill said: *"This is amazing, thank you.*

"It's been a lot of hard work but I just wanted to try and help the church and do a bit for the village.

"This is a nice extra little reward."

An Acis tenant in Sheffield scooped the 'Garden Guru' award for their work to brighten up her garden with flowers and she even grows her own vegetables.

Winner of the award, Carol Robinson said: *"This is amazing. I'm so shocked to have won.*

"If your garden is nice, your home is nice. I'm so happy with this."

Gainsborough youngster, Freddie Burton-Plumtree won the 'Young Person of the Year' award after his focus on his community didn't go unnoticed. Young Freddie loves helping out in his area by supporting litter picks and keeping his streets tidy.

Freddie's mum, Sophie said: *"I'm really proud of Freddie. Whenever I ask if he wants to go out anywhere he just wants to go out and litter pick to help the community."*

And finally, our own Taylor Gibson scooped the Customer First award after being nominated for his work supporting tenants and communities, as well as helping his own colleagues.

Nominated by a tenant, Taylor is recognised for his commitment to doing what's right for his customers and making sure we find solutions – putting his customers at the heart of everything he does.

On the award, Taylor said: *"I'm proud and grateful of winning the award – we all want to do a good job and get the right outcomes and results for our customers, that's what we all do each and every day.*

"We constantly see examples of how the work we do positively impacts our customers and it's great to be recognised for what we do."

Acis Head of Business Development Claire Woodward said: *"Every year it's great to see all the amazing people who make a difference in our communities.*

"At Acis we're proud that we can continue to recognise the things that people do every day to make their areas better."

Jill Carson



Carol Robinson



Freddie Burton-Plumtree



Taylor Gibson



Puzzle time

Enter our winter wordsearch for your chance to win.

Find all eight words from the list below, then return it along with the completed entry form.

R	L	B	H	A	T	I	B	K	G
S	P	L	O	Q	C	H	S	X	D
L	T	F	T	P	O	S	N	H	R
E	Y	O	C	V	A	V	O	A	V
D	V	W	O	P	T	P	W	P	H
D	O	I	C	Q	L	V	M	S	C
I	S	N	O	W	F	L	A	K	E
N	Y	T	A	G	G	K	N	Z	N
G	A	E	L	G	L	O	V	E	S
F	O	R	U	L	S	Y	A	O	T

Words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

.....

Telephone:.....

Please complete your details for a chance of winning a £20 shopping voucher. We'll draw the winner in June 2023.

Send your completed entry form to: Marketing and Communications, Freepost RTSH-THEK-SRRJ, Acis, Acis House, Bridge Street, Gainsborough DN21 1GG. Closing date: 31 May 2023.

1. Coat
2. Hot Cocoa
3. Snowflake
4. Hat
5. Winter
6. Snowman
7. Sledding
8. Gloves

£20
voucher
up for grabs!

Repairs now pinged by text

In December we rolled out the latest part of our repairs improvement work.

If you haven't already experienced it, you'll now receive text message communication from us every step of the way with any repairs you book.

This means we'll keep you right up to date with the progress from the moment your appointment is booked.

We'll send a text message on the following milestones:

- **Repair confirmation** – when your repair is booked in and an appointment has been made
- **Repair reminder** – the day before your appointment
- **We're on our way** – when our engineer is on their way to see you
- **Cancellation confirmation** – if you need to cancel your appointment we will confirm this by text
- **Satisfaction survey** – once your repair has been completed, you'll receive our satisfaction survey to give your feedback on how we did

If you're aware that your contact details may not be up to date on our systems, please call us on 0800 027 2057 or message us on live chat and let our team know.





Welcome to MyAcis.



We're here to give you the best possible service and MyAcis will help you get in touch with us and manage your tenancy whenever it suits you.

- Online at a time that works for you – noon or midnight.
- We're at your fingertips 24/7.
- It's now even easier to pay your rent, check your balance, report a repair and give us feedback.

Scan the QR code to see just how MyAcis can work for you.



Passionate about making a difference? Join our board

We're looking for people to join our Board. We're actively looking for people with a mix of skills to help us move forward as we help people to live better lives.

And if you live in one of our properties, you can make a difference by joining our Board as our Tenant Representative. Use your unique experience and insight as one of our customers to help us be even better at what we do.

You'll get:

- the chance to make a real difference for our customers
- a friendly place to take part
- the opportunity to build your skills and add to your CV
- an iPad to access documentation you'll need
- paid, and reimbursed for reasonable expenses, in accordance with your Agreement for Services and our Board Member Expenses Policy.

We'll need:

- your time and commitment (six meetings a year plus preparation, two strategy events per year – one includes an overnight stay)
- you to be prepared for meetings, comfortable reading reports and confident to share your views (we don't bite!).

To apply for this great opportunity, send us your CV with a short supporting statement letting us know why you want to join our board to legal@acisgroup.co.uk