

# ASUKASLEHTI

KIINTEISTÖ OY AURORANLINNA ■ 1 | 2022

MAY 2022

## HOME FIRES ON THE RISE

Battery-powered devices, broken cords and extension cords cause an increasing number of fires in homes. **Pages 14–16**

## ECOLOGICAL CLEANING REQUIRES LITTLE EFFORT

Ecological cleaning is a combination of good methods and equipment as well as ecological cleaning agents. **Pages 4–5**

## FROM A BALCONY TO A GREEN HOME PARADISE

Expert tips for selecting and tending to balcony flowers and plants. **Pages 8–9**

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THE ASUKASLEHTI  
MAGAZINE  
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OUR WEBSITE  
[www.auroranlinna.fi](http://www.auroranlinna.fi)**

## SUOMENLINNA IS A WONDERFUL PLACE TO SPEND A SUMMER DAY

A picnic with friends or family, a museum tour, sunbathing, good food and drinks, a unique atmosphere. This is what Suomenlinna is about.

**Pages 10–12**

# MAINTENANCE BACKLOG IS BEING REDUCED



The City of Helsinki is maintaining and renovating the properties it owns with a professional, long-term, ecological and financially sustainable approach. Because of this, the ownership of the City's rental apartments is largely centralised to Heka Oy and Auroranlinna, who both have the expertise and resources to accomplish the owner's goals.

In this division of responsibilities, Auroranlinna is in charge of company housing and freely available apartments. We currently own about 4,200 rental apartments. We have

accumulated our apartment portfolio over the years when properties owned directly by the City or its utilities and properties developed with the state's interest subsidy loan have been merged into the company.

One part of taking over the ownership of properties and their long-term maintenance has been to investigate their condition and to prepare long-term maintenance and repair plans for them. In 2021, we studied the condition of all properties to determine the maintenance backlog of our properties, any future needs for repairs due to the ageing of properties as well as the order of priority of various properties and repairs. We will prioritise the repairs over the next years according to this plan. Correctly timed repairs

ensure that there are minimal disturbances to housing and secure the ecological and financial goals of maintenance operations.

We plan to catch up with the current backlog and ensure that no backlog is accumulated. This is done equally and with solidarity regarding our residents by covering the costs of repairs with our entire rental income. In addition to covering the maintenance costs, the rental income is thus used to cover a share of the costs of repairing our property portfolio. This ensures that the rental rates do not multiply suddenly as a result of a façade or pipe renovation. On the other hand, it has to be said that the rental rates have had to be increased in properties where the rates have been significantly lower than in other properties and lower than required by the long-term maintenance of the property.

Unfortunately, the shocking events abroad have already had a significant impact on the costs of construction, which is why the schedules of projects have to be re-assessed more closely during this year. With regard to the largest projects in 2022, we were lucky enough to have arranged the bidding in the autumn and the contracts were concluded before the costs started rising and no major projects have had to be postponed this year.

Despite the disheartening news this spring, I wish our residents and the readers of Asukaslehti a sunny summer. •

**TATU RASIA,**  
Managing Director  
at Kiinteistö Oy Auroranlinna

## ASUKASLEHTI

KIINTEISTÖ OY  
AURORANLINNA

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**DESIGN**  
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**PRINT**  
Tuokinprint Oy  
Helsinki 2022



## • ALSO IN THE MAGAZINE •

17



### GREEN SPACES IN EASTERN AREA

The new green space maintenance contractor for Auroranlinna's eastern area is Lassila & Tikanoja. The green space maintenance agreement emphasises sustainable development goals, maintaining resident satisfaction and the safety of yards with regard to residents as well as professionals working in them.



### HOUSING CONSULTA- TION AVAILABLE

Housing counsellors help untangle knots related to daily life. The City of Helsinki housing consultation services aim to solve issues caused by overdue rent, disturbances or poor apartment management. Auroranlinna is involved in a housing consultation pilot project.

17



### SECURITY IN PROPERTIES

Each of our properties has a rescue plan that specifies the location of the property's shelter(s). All of our properties can be found in alphabetical order at [auroranlinna.fi](http://auroranlinna.fi) > Our properties, and the rescue plan of a property can be found on the property's page.



# A PEEK INTO RESIDENT ACTIVITIES IN PUISTOLA

***Starting resident activities is easy: the residents only need to arrange a kick-off meeting where the coordinator of the activities and a deputy or several deputies for them are appointed.***



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“We set things in motion and got good advice from Auroranlinna on how to proceed,” says Filpponen.

The residents feel that resident activities are important as they give an opportunity to do things together while getting to know your neighbours.

“It is important that the club room is available to the residents and that everyone has the right to use it. It is also delightful that Auroranlinna supports these activities with an allowance,” Filpponen continues.

The allowance provided by Auroranlinna is used to furnish the club room. The room was damaged in a water damage incident, so it had to be renovated in any case. Because of this, the surface materials are brand new and modern.

## RESIDENTS THINK RESIDENT ACTIVITIES ARE IMPORTANT

The first volunteer work event was arranged last autumn and a Christmas party was held in December. An additional volunteer work event was planned for last spring, but the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

The coordinator of the activities is responsible for booking the room. The booking system is based on a digital calendar. All participants can see the booking situation in the calendar. The person booking the room is responsible for the booking and the property of the room when

**1** Residents have furnished the club room in their own way.

**2** Birthday party in the club room. The well-equipped kitchen makes it possible to arrange a variety of events.



the room is in their use.

So far, the club room has been used for parties between grown-ups, children's birthday parties, meetings, as a pop up café and even gym classes.

“Each housing association should have their own resident activities. It is a wonderful opportunity to increase the sense of community and the enjoyment of living in the building. I think it is great that Auroranlinna encourages these activities and provides an allowance. It was a good decision to get started with these activities,” says Filpponen.

Are you interested in resident activities? More information about resident activities can be found on our website [www.auroranlinna.fi/en/for-residents/resident-voluntary-activities/](http://www.auroranlinna.fi/en/for-residents/resident-voluntary-activities/). •

The coordinator of resident activities prepares an annual action plan to be approved by Auroranlinna, based on which an allowance can be granted for the activities. The plan has one condition: all residents of the building must have the right to participate in resident activities whenever they want to. Otherwise, the plan may contain almost anything. A club room or a similar space available in the building can also be allocated for resident activities.

### A SPACE SHARED BY TWO PROPERTIES

The Auroranlinna properties located at Nummitie 29 and Maamiehenkuja 5 in Puistola have joint resident activities. The properties have a total of 24 residential buildings and 71 apartments. Ari Filpponen, the coordinator, is thrilled.

“We appointed five people to a team coordinating the resident activities in a resident meeting. The activities began in January 2021,” says Filpponen.

The idea came from the residents' need for volunteer work and waste skips in the yards in late summer 2020. One of the buildings on Nummitie has a club room that is available to all residents of the buildings.

# ECOLOGICAL CLEANING IS A COMBINATION OF METHODS AND PRODUCTS

***Cleaning is a way to act for the environment at home. Ecological cleaning is easy by combining the right equipment and methods with environmentally friendly cleaning agents. Many agents used in ecological cleaning can be found from the kitchen cupboards.***



**1** “Basic cleaning of the floors includes cleaning the surfaces regularly with a damp microfibre cloth or a mop by mixing some multi-purpose cleaner with water,” says Tarja Marjomaa, a researcher from Työtehoseura.

**2** A correctly shaped toilet brush with a rim cleaner is a basic cleaning tool of every home. It is also a good option for cleaning the bottom of the toilet bowl. This brush is more ecological as the head can be replaced.

**3** Vinegar is a good ecological option for cleaning windows, for instance.

Työtehoseura (TTS) studies, tests, develops and provides education about matters related to cleaning. Tarja Marjomaa, a researcher from TTS, says that ecological cleaning requires little effort at home. She says that the first thing to do is to review your methods and how ecological they are.

“You should start by mapping the areas of the home that need to be cleaned and how often this is required. The size of the family, pets and hobbies, such as knitting and cooking, affect this, of course. There are different areas of the home that require different methods, such as the bathroom, the kitchen and the living room. How often the entryway needs to be cleaned depends largely on whether it is accessed immediately after entering the building or not. Nevertheless, all entryways should have an entryway mat and an area for shoes so that dirt is not spread around the apartment, and, in addition, the possibility of leaving outerwear in the entryway is also helpful,” says Marjomaa.

“You should also establish a cleaning routine. Regular light cleaning activities such as vacuuming and wiping visible surfaces ensure that the surfaces do not become grimy. You can also use more ecological agents than when cleaning more efficiently while the cleaning requires less effort. The dirtier it is, the more cumbersome it feels to grab the mop and bucket and get everything clean. It is easy to spend a full day cleaning dirty surfaces instead of just a few hours.”

“I also recommend using an annual cleaning calendar with the cleaning needs of different areas at different times of the year. For example, it is easier to clean the windows, balcony glasses, floors and railings in the spring, do the cleaning after Christmas or wash the shower walls, tiles and seams in time when they are marked in a calendar,” she continues.

“Using and cleaning the machines and equipment according to their instructions is also ecological. Cleaning the filter of a dishwasher makes the dishes cleaner and vacuuming behind the refrigerator are acts for the environment that anyone can do. Both save energy as well,” reminds Marjomaa.

You should also study the maintenance instructions





of different surfaces so you do not use wrong cleaning methods or agents when cleaning. More tips are available at the Martha Organization's website (in Finnish).

### GOOD CLEANING EQUIPMENT...

Tarja Marjomaa recommends investing in high-quality equipment when purchasing cleaning equipment.

"Microfibre cloths provide clean results even without any agents if the dirt is not grimy. The cloth can be used dry or lightly moist. The cloth is ideal for kitchen countertops where hygiene is important and cleaning should be done more frequently according to how much cooking is done there. Using cloths with different colours for the kitchen, bathroom and other areas ensures that they are not mixed up. Soft sponges or brushes that do not scratch the surfaces are ideal for bathrooms, in particular," she says.

"Microfibre cloths should be washed at 60 degrees Celsius every now and then and separate from other laundry as cotton lint can block the interstices of the cloth and reduce the cloth's cleaning capacity. Softeners should not be used either as they do the same," says Marjomaa.

Marjomaa also emphasises the significance of high-quality vacuums. The vacuum should be equipped with efficient filters and a variety of nozzles that can be tagged along with the vacuum. A good filter controls dust. By having a powder nozzle for vacuuming hard surfaces like countertops, behind the TV and keyboards as well as a crevice nozzle and an upholstery nozzle for sofas, couches and other textile surfaces easily available, they are sure to be used as well.

"A cleaning robot is a nice accessory. It requires having the floors free of piles of magazines and newspapers and cords and cables. But this applies to other light cleaning activities anyway. A steam cleaner is also a good option as it makes it possible to clean windows, tiles and seams without any agents, for instance," says Marjomaa.

"A correctly shaped toilet brush with a rim cleaner is a basic cleaning tool of every home. Round brushes that are typically sold in stores do not go as deep into the bowl as correctly shaped brushes. You should check that the toilet flushes correctly after each use and that there is no grime at the bottom of the bowl," she says.

### AND LESS CHEMICALS

"Strong or disinfecting agents are not needed at all if the home is cleaned regularly. Of the options available at stores, a multi-purpose cleaner is ideal for cleaning the floors, various other areas only need dish soap. Using products marked with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel ensures that the agent used has been produced safely in terms of the environment and health. Decalcifying dishwashers and washing machines can be done with a citric acid powder instead of cleaning agents sold in stores," says Marjomaa.

"Kitchen cabinets hold a variety of good cleaning agents. Vinegar is useful for cleaning steel pots and pans, removing calcium from seams and the toilet

bowl, washing windows and mirrors and cleaning the coffee maker. Dish soap is also good for windows. Baking soda is good for decalcifying and whitening and cleaning laundry efficiently. A spray with 4 dl of water, 1 dl of vinegar and 1 tsp of washing soda is good for cleaning the kitchen. Ovens can be cleaned with a powder with 2 dl of baking soda and 2 dl of washing soda. The edges of cast iron burners and the bottoms of pots can be cleaned by brushing them with a sugar cube dipped in water," Marjomaa says about various biological cleaning agents.

"Sweat stains on clothes can be removed by rubbing them with a microfibre cloth soaked in water mixed with salt. Oil and grease stains can be removed by soaking them in water mixed with soda. Salt is also good for red wine when it is sprinkled plentifully on the stains before washing. Fresh blood, fruit and



wine stains can also be removed with mineral water or soaking them in milk. Mould spots and dandelion and blueberry stains can be removed by soaking the clothes in sour milk," she adds.

"Scouring powders should not be used as they wear down the surface agents. Grime can stick hard on a worn down or scratched surface. For example, it is easy to keep a toilet seat clean with a soft toilet brush or using a dish soap or multi-purpose cleaner regularly. If the grime sticks, you should try acetic acid, citric acid or oxalic acid powders sold in pharmacies according to their instructions. Putting leftover Coca-Cola in the toilet bowl overnight can also work miracles," says Marjomaa.

### HOUSING ETIQUETTE IS ALSO IMPORTANT

The general basic instructions for looking after a home, i.e. a certain housing etiquette, also increase the environmental friendliness of living. Tarja Marjomaa says that cleaning the drain of the bathroom regularly and not putting anything that does not belong in the drain are also ecological acts. For example, grease and food waste belong to waste bins and not the toilet bowl.

"Order is also helpful. Having the cleaning equipment and items in their own places makes it easy to find and use them and you do not buy anything extra just because you didn't happen to find something you needed," Marjomaa specifies. •

# HOUSING CONSULTATION PILOT PROJECT UNDERWAY



**1** Auroranlinna is involved in a housing consultation pilot project of the City of Helsinki.

**2** Help with problems looking after the home is available.

and promising results are expected even though it is carried out in a rather small and limited area. At Auroranlinna, we hope that the cooperation could be continued and expanded regionally after the pilot project.

## HOUSING COUNSELLOR –PROPERTY MANAGER COOPERATION

The need for housing consultation is assessed when the lessor becomes aware of a resident's difficulties. The first step is to talk with the resident. Sometimes, this is enough to fix the situation. In some cases, however, a talk does not lead to the desired results. In this case, the lessor can perform an inspection

make the resident's life difficult in many respects.

## HOUSING CONSULTATION IN HELSINKI

In addition to the pilot project currently in progress, the City of Helsinki has several housing counsellors acting in four different social instruction units: Southern, Eastern, Northern and Western Helsinki. All residents of Helsinki can turn to them, if necessary. They are able to provide very extensive help in rent payment problems, risk of homelessness or issues with looking after the home, for instance.

The detailed contact information and service hours of the City of Helsinki's housing consultation services and frequently asked questions about housing consultation can be found at <https://www.helsinki.fi/helsinki/en/social-health/social-support/housing-consultation/housing-consultation>

**We** are involved in a housing consultation pilot project of the City of Helsinki. Initially, the project only included rent payment problems in the areas of Auroranlinna where the City had not yet appointed a housing counsellor. As the responses to the customer satisfaction survey indicated a need for more efficient addressing of disturbances, we were delighted to have the opportunity to expand the pilot to cover other disturbances related to housing. In the expanded pilot, housing counsellors and property managers work together. The current plan is for the project to run until the end of September 2022

## WHAT IS HOUSING CONSULTATION?

Housing consultation is social work aimed at preventing homelessness and evictions. Anyone of us can face financial difficulties or other challenges related to housing in various life situations. The aim of housing consultation is to solve issues caused by rent payment problems, disturbance to neighbours or poor home management, for instance. •

## HOUSING CONSULTATION SERVICES HELP RESIDENTS OVERCOME PROBLEMS

tion of the apartment together with a housing counsellor to assess the severity of the situation.

During the inspection, any possible follow-up actions are assessed, including written notices or warnings. The housing counsellor starts working with the resident if the methods applied by housing consultation services include effective alternatives to solve the challenges. Optimally, the resident can change their behaviour after being warned so that the situation does not escalate into an eviction. After being evicted, it is typically impossible for the resident to get a new apartment from Auroranlinna or the City of Helsinki. In addition, failure to pay rent may lead to a payment default entry, which will

A housing counsellor should be contacted at a low threshold as soon as any problems arise so that the help and support needed can be provided as soon as possible and that the housing relationship can continue normally. •



# RESIDENT SATISFACTION MEASURED AGAIN

***Our annual resident satisfaction survey was carried out as an online survey and through phone interviews in October and November 2021.***

Nearly 750 residents took part in the survey by the deadline. The majority took the online survey. Thank you for your activity!

As is our tradition, we asked the residents to evaluate Auroranlinna's customer service, housing management, communications, rent payment matters, property maintenance, waste management, cleaning and matters related to the location and condition of apartments, among other things.

## **STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

According to the feedback, the residents are rather satisfied with our customer service. The evaluations are relatively good and the change from previous year is only minor. An area for development in customer service was pointed out in the improvement of contactability. In the future, the person receiving the message will attempt to reply to the resident as quickly as possible. If they cannot provide a direct answer, they will explain to the resident where the message is being forwarded and who from Auroranlinna will contact the

about the pilot project on page 6 of this magazine. The residents were not fully satisfied with the adequacy of information provision. Information will be provided in a more timely and informative manner in the future. We are also planning the development of our digital information channels.

With regard to property maintenance, the challenges related to winter maintenance have been our stumbling block. The issues of the past winter season have been reviewed with our partners on a property-specific basis and the maintenance plans for the next season will be updated accordingly. The ease of use of fault reports and the service attitude of property maintenance personnel and repairers were praised.

Feedback related to waste management was primarily about the waste bins. The residents felt that the mixed waste bins were dirty and that the bins for cardboard were often full. In the future, the bins and the floors below them will be cleaned and washed twice a year instead of just once a year as before. This work will be carried out every spring and autumn.

## **THE CONTACTABILITY OF CUSTOMER SERVICE WILL BE DEVELOPED**

resident to resolve the matter. In addition, Lassila & Tikanen, our partner providing support services, has set up a callback service.

In terms of housing management, there were wishes that disturbances would be addressed better. Kiinteistö Oy Auroranlinna is currently coordinating a housing consultation pilot project related to disturbances in cooperation with the City of Helsinki. Read more

The interval of emptying the cardboard bins will be monitored and made more frequent, if necessary. The loose waste collection service content will also be updated.

Residents feel that the laundry and drying rooms are somewhat in disorder and the filters of the machines are typically uncleaned after they have been used. We aim to improve these aspects by updating the laundry room instructions,

**1**



**1** The results of our resident satisfaction survey revealed good areas for development in our activities that have already been advanced.

informing the residents of cleaning practices and investing in the quality of cleaning and informing the property maintenance services about the removal of belongings.

The drains of sauna facilities will be cleaned weekly in the future.

According to the feedback, residents who have lived in an apartment for a long time wished for the interior surfaces of the apartments to be cleaned and the fittings to be repaired or renovated. During this year, the possibility of renovations in occupied apartments will be assessed and specified in a pilot project.

The evaluations related to rent control were positive. According to the experiences of the respondents, the contactability and expertise of the personnel were at a very high level.

Auroranlinna thanks everyone who took part in the survey. Three respondents were drawn to receive an S Group gift card worth EUR 50. The winners of this draw lived on Siilitie, Luutnantinpolku and Paciuksenkaari. The prizes have been delivered to the winners. •



# TURN YOUR BALCONY INTO A GREEN OASIS

***Turning your balcony or patio into the green oasis of a sunny home is ultimately relatively easy. Plant some herbs, strawberries, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, bell peppers, chillies or runner beans in addition to flowers that please your eyes to add a small garden of useful plants to your oasis. When purchasing seedlings, you should consult skilled experts, says gardener Sari Seppelin.***



Herbs are excellent for balcony gardens.



“**T**here is still plenty of time to get flowers and plants for your balcony or patio in June, but the more specific your wish list is when it comes to different species or colours, the earlier you should get the seedlings. Beginners in particular should take enough time for their shopping to talk about the purchases and how to look after them with the staff with expertise on gardening. We are happy to help, but we can only serve one customer at a time,” says Sari Seppelin, who works as a summer gardener at the Pukinmäki garden.

Seppelin says beginners should first buy plants that are the easiest to look after. Everyone should check how different plants thrive in their garden or yard and then avoid purchasing any plants that do not make it the next year.

“The conditions of the balcony or yard affect which plants should be chosen and how they are tended to. Plants that enjoy the shade cannot tolerate direct sunlight while strawberries, tomatoes, bell peppers and chillies, for instance, need heat to ripen. Wind can affect the microclimate even if the place is otherwise sunny, which should also be considered. Each growing site should be considered unique in order to avoid over- or underwatering the plants,” says Seppelin.

## PLANT SPECIES FOR EVERYONE

Sari Seppelin says that good gardening stores sell plants for those who need low-maintenance plants as well as those who want to take a little effort to look after their plants in addition to seedling pots for different species. A combination of balcony boxes, pots and hanging baskets, where you can also grow tomatoes in addition to flowers, for instance, is an easy way to make even small balconies flourish with green. Sari Seppelin recommends experimenting with new things along with familiar solutions.

“Geraniums, calibrachos and million bells are flowers that require little effort. Violets like to have fading petals to be nipped away throughout the summer and, like snowflakes, enjoy being planted in a hanging basket. Geraniums can be planted in the same balcony box or pot with edible herbs. For example, runner beans as a vine or snowflakes, different types of ivy and lavender are also excellent companions for





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**1** There are a lot of low-maintenance plants and plants that require some effort for balconies. However, without appropriate watering and fertilisation, no plant can thrive.

**2** “At the Pukinmäki garden, we are glad to help our customers to select the plants for their balcony or patio and give advice on how to look after them. Many of the seedlings we sell are grown by us,” says gardener Sari Seppelin.

geraniums. Tomatoes and bell peppers require space, so they should not be planted in a balcony box. Basil is a good companion for tomato, they enjoy each other’s company. Oregano is also an ideal plant to be potted.”

“When planting seedlings, you should remember that they will grow and avoid planting too many of them in the same space. For example, you should plant only three geraniums or violets in a 50–70 cm long balcony box in addition to some snowflakes,” says Seppelin.

## BALCONY OR YARD CONDITIONS AFFECT WHICH PLANTS SHOULD BE CHOSEN

“One way to make a balcony more lively is to use a mix of plants that grow to different heights as well as plants that hang over the edge of a pot or balcony box and plants that grow upwards as a vine, if they can be supported in some way. For example, strawberries, peas, beans, silver falls plants, variegated hops, which provides a strong edge growth, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, cucumber and Virginia creepers can very well be planted into a personal garden. However, vines require a special pot to survive winters. Even a small amount of plants can create a diverse garden if you include different colours of a same plant, such as a violet, geranium or snowflake, in addition to different species,” she says.

“Daffodils can survive nights on a balcony even in early spring, but most plants should be taken inside

for the night if there is a risk of the temperature falling below zero degrees. Glazed balconies are of course less risky than open balconies or patios. On the other hand, glazed balconies need to be ventilated in the summer to avoid the plants from being exposed to excess heat,” says Seppelin.

Patios are ideal for perennial plants. Even with perennial plants, you should remember that berry bushes will grow and that the saplings require space. If there are flowers and perennial plants too close to each others, some of them can be dug up and re-planted. A yard can provide joy for a long period of time by combining summer flowers with perennial plants that bloom at different times.

“Bulbous flowers need to have their bulbs dug up, dried and stored in a cool, dry environment for the winter by covering them in sand, for example. The bulbs cannot survive in an uninsulated storage space but do not withstand room temperature either. Daffodils can remain planted for the winter though,” says Seppelin.

### LONG-TERM JOY WITH GOOD CARE

A good growing medium is of course the key to successful gardening. If the old soil smells fresh, you should only replace some of it with new soil. When the plants have been planted, it is important to monitor their growth. If the growth or blooming starts to fade away, fertilising the growing medium is usually required as the nutrients in new soil are not enough for the whole summer. Seppelin recommends a watering fertiliser for home gardeners.

In addition to ensuring the nutrient content of





It is important to remember that the plants will grow when planting them. Because of this, balcony boxes should not be stuffed with flowers, herbs and other useful plants. Combining plants that grow to different heights, plants that grow over the edge of the box, vines and flowers of different colours is an easy way to make your balcony lively.

the soil, correct watering is part of the basic tending required by plants. Plants that grow on the ground or outside the balcony railing require a bit different watering than plants growing on a glazed balcony or inside an open balcony. Furthermore, it should be remembered that violets, for instance, require more water than geraniums whereas lavender cannot tolerate being drenched all the time. When it comes to geraniums, you should stick your finger into the soil to check if it is moist enough.

The larger the container is, the better it keeps the soil moist. Punching holes onto the bottoms of boxes and pots or placing gravel or lightweight expanded clay aggregate at the bottom is important to drain excess water caused by rain or overwatering from the pot. Balcony boxes that hang outside the railing are particularly exposed to heavy rain. Balcony boxes and pots that allow for bottom watering are good for several types of plants but not succulents, for instance. Self-watering stakes are a good way to keep plants alive during holidays.

## CORRECT WATERING AND FERTILISATION ARE BASIC CARE

“Each balcony box, pot, hanging basket or garden should be considered unique and watered as needed. Mould is a clear sign of overwatering. Beginners in particular should ask us for watering and tending instructions when purchasing plants. These things can also be learned, of course. We will also give advice throughout the summer after the plants have been purchased from us,” Seppelin specifies.

In the summer of 2021, aphids were a big problem with all types of balconies. They are present even in normal summers, especially in glazed balconies. Sari Seppelin recommends observing the plants regularly and addressing the aphid problem as soon as one is detected.

“If there are only few aphids, mechanical control or pinching them with your fingers might be enough. If their number grows, the problem can be controlled with biological pesticides. There are plenty of good tips on how to get rid of aphids in an ecological way online,” says Seppelin. •

# SUOMENLINNA HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

***We hopped on board a ferry from the Market Square to Suomenlinna to spend a wonderful spring day at the UNESCO world heritage site. Suomenlinna is a great day trip destination for adults and children alike, especially in the summer.***



↑ It is easy to tour Suomenlinna without a map as well.

**H**SL's season, value and single tickets allow you to take the Suomenlinna ferry from the Market Square to the main pier on Iso Mustasaari, where you can find the Suomenlinna tourist information, the island's own brewery, a restaurant and a small grocery store. In the summer, Suomenlinna is also accessible by water buses that take you to the Tykistölahti pier between Iso Mustasaari and Susisaari, Kustaanmiekka in Kuninkaanportti or the nearby islands of Vallisaari and Lonna.

This time, we decided to tour Iso Mustasaari, Susisaari and Kustaanmiekka and enjoy the sunny spring weather and the museums of Suomenlinna. As we were touring the islands in spring, we didn't enjoy a summery picnic and instead visited the local restaurant at lunchtime. Did you know that Iso Mustasaari is home to one of Auroranlinna's rental home properties?

## INFORMATION ONLINE AND FROM A FREE MAP

The main islands have lots of various cafés, bars and restaurants, but since there are so many visitors to Suomenlinna in good weather, they can be easily full of people. If you want to have lunch in a restaurant,



**1** The Vesikko submarine has been grounded on the coast of Susisaari and restored as a museum after the Continuation War.

**2** Suomenlinna is a delightful place to spend a relaxing summer day.

**3** The private Toy Museum that hosts a private collection and its café can be found on the lower floor of a lovely villa on the coast of Iso Mustasaari.

**4** An example of the Toy Museum's exhibition.

you should be early like us or book a table in advance and be prepared that it may take a hour and a half or even two hours for the meal. More information about the cafés, bars and restaurants and Suomenlinna in general can found at [suomenlinna.fi](http://suomenlinna.fi) > For visitors.

The website also informed us that you can order a delicious picnic basket from a certain establishment in advance (type in picnic Suomenlinna to a search engine) to enjoy a picnic on a rocky cliff in Kustaanmiekka while watching the ferries travelling to Tallinn and Stockholm and other seafarers. This is a good alternative for bringing your own snacks or buying them from the Suomenlinna's grocery store.

We used the website to plan our visit in advance by checking what places were open and any events taking place on the day of our visit. We also checked which restaurants serve dishes that fit our diets. The preliminary schedule for the day was prepared at the same time. When we arrived on the island, we picked up a brochure from the tourist information and used the map on it to enjoy fresh outdoors, visit the museums that were open and a correctly timed lunch that happened to take place right next door to Auroranlinna's property. Unfortunately, we didn't have the chance to relax with drinks produced on the island as the bar next to the Military Museum was closed due to an illness.

## MUSEUMS ARE WORTH VISITING

There are a total of six museums open in Suomenlinna in the summer, all of which can be accessed with the Museum Card. The Suomenlinna Museum next to the bridge to Susisaari gives a good overall picture of the history of the island, dating back to the 18th century. Back then, Sweden had lost the easternmost parts of Finland to Russia and decided to build a new fortress off the shore of Helsinki. The fortress was initially named Sveaborg, which was translated into Finnish as Viapori. When Russia invaded Finland and Finland became part of Russia in 1809, the fortress gained its current form, which has of course been somewhat altered in the time of our independence since 1917. These phases and a lot of other interesting aspects are covered well at the Suomenlinna Museum, with additional





**1** You can move inside the walls of the fortress next to the Ehrensvärd Museum on Susisaari, for example.

**2** The Suomenlinna library can be found behind this historical gateway on Iso Mustasaari.

**3** The Suomenlinna church was renovated into its current form after Finland gained its independence.

**4** The Military Museum can be found in an old riding hall and a building next to it. One of the island's many cafés, bars and restaurants can be found next to the museum.



**1 2 3 4**



The Piper park hosts the oldest café on the island. The Governing Body of Suomenlinna is currently renovating the park and the pathways of Suomenlinna. The park renovation will be completed this year.

information regarding the fortress under Swedish rule provided by the Ehrensvärd Museum, open in the summer. The Customs Museum that presents the history of customs and smuggling, open only in summer on Susisaari, is also an interesting place.

The Military Museum on Iso Mustasaari and the Vesikko submarine on Susisaari, open only in the summer, tell more about the years when Finland was in the same situation as Ukraine is now when it was neighboured by the Soviet Union. If you are feeling overwhelmed by the news about the events on the coast of the Black Sea, you should probably skip the Military Museum. The same cannot be said about the Toy Museum that houses a private collection, located next to a nice café on the shore of Iso Mustasaari on the lower floor of a villa in residential use, a little away from the main passageways of Suomenlinna. For us, the Toy Museum was the final museum of the day and it gave us a positive mood and energy instead of the difficult thoughts evoked by the Military Museum.

The size of the museums of Suomenlinna is ideal. This allows them to be incorporated into the schedule of a nice day off. Of course, it is possible to spend an entire day visiting the museums of Suomenlinna, if you want to. A lot of time can be spend especially if you are previously unfamiliar with the history of Suomenlinna and the wartime of independent Finland.

### AN ATTRACTIVE BEACH AND DARK CAVES

Many people think of Suomenlinna as a place where you can enjoy the sun, swim and hang out in fresh air with your friends and family. Susisaari and Kustaanmiekka, in particular, offer plenty of cliffs and beaches for this.

On a hot day, you should get refreshed on the charming cozy beach between Susisaari and Kustaanmiekka. It is also possible cool down by touring the dark hallways and caves of the fortress. These can be found right next to the Ehrensvärd Museum, for example. You can also take shelter from the sun by visiting the Suomenlinna library if it is open on the day of your visit and there is an event or exhibition that interests you.

In addition to the main island, visitors can use bridges to access the islands of Pikku Mustasaari and Länsi-Mustasaari, which do not host any so-called attractions. However, they present the history and present day of Suomenlinna in their own interesting way.

All in all, Suomenlinna offers a variety of activities for a beautiful summer day, especially when you include the Suomenlinna summer theatre. The theatre is definitely one of those places that require booking in advance. The islands are reasonably accessible with a wheelchair and baby strollers, but the ancient cobblestone paths and the surfaces of the island can provide a challenge. You should not try to access the island with a motor vehicle. The fortress is a car-free zone, with the exception of maintenance vehicles and the vehicles of the residents. •



# MAINTENANCE BACKLOG CAUSED BY AGEING BUILDINGS

***The majority of our properties have been built in the 20th century, and even the newest buildings at the beginning of the 21st century. Because of this, even our newest buildings are beginning to show a need for major repairs. Smart property maintenance is about avoiding unnecessary repairs too soon.***

**“We** studied the condition of all our properties in 2021. The information about the needs for repairs collected in these studies has now been added to long-term plans and as part of our annual repair programme, in which the projects and properties have been set in an order of priority,” says Tatu Rasia, Managing Director of Auroranlinna.

“Of course, the buildings’ conditions have been monitored before, based on which we have decided on the projects for 2022, including façade repairs at Parmaajantie 4 and Petter Wetterin tie 3, the renovations of about 270 bathrooms located in various properties and the basic renovations at Hietaniemenkatu 4 and Laajasuontie 32, which will be put out to tender this year,” Rasia adds.

“Professional property maintenance is about performing smart repairs towards the end of the life cycles of various build-

ing elements and systems. Thus, maintenance backlog is a natural part of the properties’ life cycles, and carrying out the repairs in a timely manner is sustainable in terms of ecology, technology and finances. We are clearing the backlog caused by the ageing properties in a determined manner to ensure that living in our apartments is as disturbance-free as possible over the long term,” Rasia emphasises.

it remains to be seen whether some basic renovations have to be postponed for a while and whether projects that are largely unaffected by the increased prices of energy and supplies have to be brought forward,” he says.

“The areas around the Jokeri light rail are being developed. Because of this, additional square metres have been allocated for the space currently occupied by a parking area at Kivalterintie 18 for construction, and, together with other property owners in the area, we are developing a parking garage that will provide new parking spaces. The contract offers for the garage show that it is really hard to estimate the costs of construction at the moment,” Rasia says.

## VARIOUS CHALLENGES REGARDING RENT

In addition to covering the costs of maintenance, the rent paid for the apartments is used in the repairs of properties. Due to future repairs, Auroranlinna has already had to adjust the rental rates of properties where the rates have been significantly lower than in other properties and, first and foremost, lower than required by the long-term maintenance of the property. For example, buildings built in the 1980s and 1990s are beginning to need periodic repairs to be performed at the same time, for which the current rental rate adjustments are needed.

“We have to keep the rental rates at a level that provides us the financial resources to make repairs. In a big housing association, everyone pays their share of the repairs in an equal manner even if their building does not have any major repairs going on or planned in the near future. To compensate for this, no one’s rent suddenly goes higher when a major renovation is about to take place. Our philosophy has been to keep the rental rates in different various areas moderate in comparison to the general rental rates in each area,” Rasia says about the company’s principles.

“In addition to repairs, the costs of maintenance are a challenge for us and



**1** As properties get older, they begin to show needs for repairs. Because of this, there is a façade renovation going on at Parmaajantie 4 this summer, for instance.

**2** In 2022, a total of 270 bathrooms will be renovated as part of Auroranlinna’s property repair programme.



ing elements and systems. Thus, maintenance backlog is a natural part of the properties’ life cycles, and carrying out the repairs in a timely manner is sustainable in terms of ecology, technology and finances. We are clearing the backlog caused by the ageing properties in a determined manner to ensure that living in our apartments is as disturbance-free as possible over the long term,” Rasia emphasises.

“Recently, the unfortunate geopolitical news has started to have an impact on the availability and prices of construction products and has increased uncertainty over the performance of projects. As we have a certain budget set for the repairs,

increase the pressure to adjust rental rates. We are part of the Kiinteistöalouden instituutti (KTI) maintenance cost monitoring system, which indicates that there have been major pressure to increase the prices of electricity consumed by properties and heating household water and the buildings, in particular. It certainly eases the pressure that we have carried out a variety of energy conservation measures over the years.”

“All of our residents can contribute to easing the pressure to increase rental rates and act for the environment with small effort. For example, if everyone would turn down their thermostats, take short showers instead of spending a lot of time in warm water and stop washing their dishes or clothes in running water, it would generate a lot of savings in terms of finances and emissions,” Rasia says. •

# ELECTRICAL FIRES ARE A SAFETY RISK AT HOME

***Unsupervised open fires, such as candles, tealights and fireplaces, plastic bags and containers stored too close to a hot stove as well as careless use of an oven cause many apartment fires every year. In recent years, fires caused by negligent or erroneous use of battery-powered and electrical devices have become more common.***



In a small apartment, even a two-litre liquid extinguisher that can be stored in a place where it does not attract too much attention is adequate first aid extinguishing equipment when accompanied by a fire blanket. The operating and maintenance instructions of extinguishers should be studied carefully.

**“F**ires in homes usually start from a tealight, fireplace, candle, cooking, a sauna stove or from electrical and battery-powered devices. The most typical reason for a fire is that the source of fire or device is not supervised or the devices are used incorrectly. Cooking itself does not cause fires, but instead, the actions taken by the cook are to blame: for example, forgetting to turn off a burner or placing an item that can melt or catch fire on a hot stove or right next to one. Fires may also be caused by leaving a laundry or dishwashing machine running when popping out and returning to a fire caused by a malfunctioning machine,” says Ilpo Leino, Senior Advisor at the Finnish National Rescue Association (Suomen Pelastusalan Keskusjärjestö, SPEK).

“In addition to the traditional fires related to electrical devices, fires caused by using or charging battery-powered devices have recently become common. For example, people may put their phones charging under their pillow and wake up to a fire caused by the heated battery,” says SPEK’s Fire Safety and Security Advisor Lauri Lehto.

“The need to change people’s behaviour when new technologies are introduced is a key aspect of our training activities when discussing the safety of homes,” adds Lehto.

**MAJORITY OF HAZARDS STILL LIE IN THE KITCHEN**  
Statistics show that most fires occur in the kitchen.

Forgetting such basic rules as removing any flammable items the area around the stove, removing plastic scoops or spatulas from dishes on hot burners and turning off the burner when you are done cooking. The risk of a fire in a home is even higher if the condition of toasters, electric kettles, coffee makers, hand vacuums and other similar devices is not checked regularly or makeshift systems with extension cords are used or the condition of extension cords used in a kitchen or a home office or entertainment centre is poor.

“It is easy to forget the basic rules until something occurs to you. In addition, studies show that many residents have the attitude that the safety matters of their home belong to the authorities or property maintenance services, not the residents themselves,” says Lauri Lehto.

“New coffee maker models turn off automatically, which is a welcome safety feature. A stove guard that switches off the stove in exceptional circumstances would be a good addition, but, unfortunately, stoves in Finland are required to have a fixed connection. If you want to install a stove guard, you need to ask the lessor’s permission before calling an electrician. In other Nordic countries, specific outlets for stoves are allowed, which make it possible and easy to install a stove guard between the stove and the outlet. I hope that this would be possible in Finland as well at some point,” says Ilpo Leino.

## EVERY HOME SHOULD HAVE A FIRE BLANKET AND A LIQUID EXTINGUISHER

### A FIRE ALARM PROVIDES BASIC SAFETY

Leino and Lehto say that an adequate number of fire alarms installed in right places comprise the basic safety equipment for a home that can be supplemented with other items, if necessary. Consequently, a stove guard cannot be the only safety solution, for instance. In addition to basic fire alarms, there are now smart alarms available in the market if you want to receive a notification on your phone.

“The entryway and bedrooms should have their own fire alarms, but also the living room, for example, if the structures of the apartment prevent fire gases



**1** Only a functioning fire alarm will react in the event of a fire. Both batteries and the alarms themselves have a certain life cycle. Alarms should be replaced with new ones ten years after their installation at the latest, typically even earlier. Residents are responsible for testing regularly that the alarm works and changing the batteries whenever necessary.

**2** Lauri Lehto (left) and Ilpo Leino, both advisors of the Finnish National Rescue Association, consider a fire blanket and a liquid extinguisher to be excellent first aid fire fighting equipment for apartments. Together with a functioning fire alarm, they typically prevent major damage if a fire erupts in a home for some reason.

from spreading from one room to another or if the living room has a lot of electronic appliances. The provision of one alarm per every new 60 square metres is the absolute minimum. In practice, the recommendation to install an alarm in the entryway and bedrooms means that even one-bedroom apartments with fewer than 60 square metres should have at least two alarms. There is no need to install an alarm in the kitchen or near a fireplace as they are likely to give a lot of false alarms. When it comes to fire alarms and carbon monoxide alarms, understanding the airflow of the apartment is important when determining the right places for the alarms so that the smoke or carbon monoxide is detected by the alarm. A carbon monoxide alarm is a good additional safety feature, especially if the home is equipped with a fireplace,” Leino and Lehto explain the basics of safety.

## IF THE FIRE ALARM DOESN'T WORK, IT'S OF NO USE

“If the fire alarm doesn't work, it's of no use. All alarms must be replaced with a new one at least every ten years, but the cheapest options available in the market have been shown to begin to lose their sensitivity significantly earlier. If the recommended time to replace the alarm is not indicated on the alarm and you are not sure when it was purchased, you should replace it immediately. It should also be mentioned that you should not vacuum a fire alarm so that it doesn't start working incorrectly. The most important aspect of looking after an alarm is to replace it with a new by the indicated date at the latest,” says Lehto.

“A basic safety measure is to check regularly that the alarms work and that their batteries are not empty. Alarms that don't work or alarms that have been removed from the ceiling do not provide any safety at all in the event of a fire. You should study the features of the alarms and batteries as well as their manuals when purchasing them. There are clear differences between the descriptions of what different products can do and the durability of different batteries,” adds Leino.

Since 2010, new and renovated apartments have been equipped with fire alarms connected



## OPEN FIRE ON A BALCONY IS FORBIDDEN

The Auroranlinna code of conduct specifically mentions that all kinds of open fires on balconies are forbidden in the properties owned by the company. This means that the following may not be lit on a balcony, for instance

- candles
- tealights
- fireplaces
- coal, wood and gas grills.

This prohibition is imposed to ensure fire safety. There have been serious fires in Finland caused by an open fire on a balcony. A gust of wind or a severe unforeseen pool fire on the balcony can spread the fire fast to a flammable material and onwards. •





**1** A lot of fires in homes are related to cooking. One reason for these is that flammable items are placed on hot burners or next to them, especially if the burner is left on.

**2** “Creative” extension cord systems and cords in poor condition are typical fire safety risks in homes.

**3** The apartment’s entryway and each bedroom should at least be equipped with a fire alarm. The living room should also have one if there are lots of electrical appliances.



to the main grid. Residents are responsible for testing these alarms, but the repairs and maintenance should be performed by the housing association.

### INCREASING RISKS WITH ELECTRICAL AND BATTERY-POWERED DEVICES

Lauri Lehto is worried about the increased use of batteries in electrical devices and the proper use of these devices. He recommends that no devices should be charged overnight or left unsupervised when charging them. For example, latest phones and tablet computers can be fully charged after waking up or when cooking and eating.

“Both battery-powered devices and devices connected to the main grid have the same fire risks. If a device is acting strangely, you should take it immediately to be inspected by a professional or take it out of use. As the number of electrical devices in homes increases, many people have to use makeshift extension cord systems. Damages caused by moisture or broken jackets or plugs can lead to fires. In addition, you should always consider the environment for which each cord or device has been designed and what are the operating instructions of the cord or device. For example, there have been incidents where someone has used an extension cord to take power from inside the apartment to a balcony or yard and incidents where an extension cord designed for indoor use only has been used on a balcony or to heat a car. All of these are absolutely forbidden due to safety reasons, just like hanging Christmas lights designed for indoor use on a balcony,” says Lehto.

“Malfunctioning batteries pose a fire risk. If the battery starts heating or it is drained all the time, something is wrong. High-quality devices have protective mechanisms that turn off the device if it starts overheating, for example. The fault may lie with a wrong type of charger as well. Only devices specified in the instructions and known brands and their own spare parts should be used or preferred. All of these products are tested. This can’t be said with certainty about all products available online, for instance. Cheap prices often mean fewer safety mechanisms,” say Leino and Lehto.

“We also recommend turning off TVs, computers and other electrical appliances whenever they are not used. If you go away for a while, you should also unplug them. This may even be cost-efficient with the current prices,” they say.

When it comes to electrical appliances, refrigerators and freezers should also be regularly defrosted and cleaned on the inside and vacuumed from the behind in order to reduce fire risks. Degreasing the exhaust hood regularly is also an important way to prevent fires.

## BOTH BATTERY-POWERED DEVICES AND DEVICES CONNECTED TO THE MAIN GRID HAVE THE SAME FIRE RISKS

### BLANKETS AND FIRE EXTINGUISHERS PROVIDE SAFETY

As it is impossible to know what might happen, every home should have a fire blanket and a liquid extinguisher and study how to extinguish battery, electrical and grease fires.

“A fire blanket and a liquid extinguisher are enough for most apartments as a mode of first aid fire fighting. Extinguishing liquids do not make a mess like extinguishing powder, which is why we recommend liquid extinguishers,” says Ilpo Leino.

“Fire blankets are available in different designs and patterns and they can be hung on the kitchen wall as a decorative element. Decorative designs for handheld extinguishers haven’t yet been allowed, unfortunately, but a place for one can be found with a little effort. Extinguishers should also be maintained on the time marked on the device,” he continues. •



## EACH PROPERTY HAS ITS OWN RESCUE PLAN

***Skilled professionals have prepared a specific rescue plan for each of our properties. The rescue plan of your building can be found on the building's page at [auroranlinna.fi](http://auroranlinna.fi) > Our properties.***

**“As** a result of the unpleasantly tense security situation, we have received questions about the locations of shelters and other matters related to safety. All of our residents should study the rescue plan of their property and the general safety instructions at [auroranlinna.fi](http://auroranlinna.fi) > Residents > Technology and safety in the home. Our properties have their own pages on our website with a link to the rescue plan of the property,” says Head of Maintenance Risto Ovaskainen.

“Many properties have a shelter that is normally used as a storage space, whereas some properties have regional shelters. In addition to a normal door, the shelters have a sealed special door that is used during crises and closed when the shelter is taken into use. The rescue plan has information about the nearest shelter and how to act in the event of a crisis,” Ovaskainen continues.

“Building safety is a combination of structural decisions made during construction and the residents’ activities and preparations for crises. Home emergency supply kits are part of these preparations, studying the instructions is another and following general information is a third. Exceptional situations may arise as a result of a major fire nearby, for instance. In addition, everyone should check that the door of the shelter is always closed and locked. This prevents the theft of supplies.”

## SHELTERS MUST BE EMPTIED WITHIN 72 HOURS

“As the property owner, we keep the shelters and their supplies in the condition required. In practice, our property maintenance services monitor the condition of the premises and the signs directing to the shelters at all times when carrying out other duties. We use centralised shelter inspection coordination, which ensures that the shelters are inspected and the sealing inspections are carried out according to the set schedules,” he adds.

“Each resident should study their building’s rescue plan and talk about safety with their neighbours. Remember, if something happens, the shelter should be in use within 72 hours. Therefore, you should think about how to empty your own storage space quickly whenever necessary,” Ovaskainen specifies. •



Each Auroranlinna property has its own rescue plan that can be found online on the property's page at [auroranlinna.fi](http://auroranlinna.fi).

## NEW GREEN SPACE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR FOR THE EASTERN AREA

***The green space maintenance contractor for the properties of Auroranlinna on the eastern side of the Vantaa river has changed. Lassila & Tikanoja are now responsible for green space maintenance according to the principles of sustainable development.***



Lassila & Tikanoja is now responsible for the green space maintenance duties in Auroranlinna's properties on the eastern side of the Vantaa river. Maija Lukander and Petteri Lukka are tending to the trees in the yard of Tilanhoitajankaaari 28 with manual or battery-powered tools, which is part of carrying out maintenance work according to the principles of sustainable development.

Lassila & Tikanoja, the new green space maintenance contractor for the eastern area, started its operations on 1 April 2022. The work is performed according to the principles of sustainable development with an aim to minimise the environmental impact of maintenance operations and to make the positive climate impacts of the activities more effective than their carbon footprint.

“In practice, the idea is to increase biodiversity, avoid the use of strong plant protection products and use as much battery-powered machinery as possible. We also invest in the safety of our employees and the residents and the ergonomics of our professionals,” says Satu Sokkinen, Lassila & Tikanoja’s Business Manager in charge of green space maintenance and construction.

The maintenance work for the summer season began already in early April with getting to know the properties and their maintenance programmes and tree tending work. L&T has a six-member team for Auroranlinna’s properties that can be complemented with additional workforce during the spring and autumn yard cleaning operations.

“Our professionals visit the properties regularly and the residents will surely become familiar with them over the summer. The contract put out to tender by Auroranlinna has been planned well as it includes all green space management tasks from early spring to late autumn. This makes the work more meaningful to our professionals and we believe it also increases resident satisfaction as we report any safety risks and repair needs in the yard we detect in addition to our own duties,” says Sokkinen.

“The contract specifies the quality level of green recreation area and it involves about 200 different duties, such as mowing grass, taking care of plantings, trimming bushes and trees, changing the sands of sandboxes and the spring and autumn yard cleanings,” Satu Soikkinen describes the content of the contract. •

# PROPERTIES BEING FITTED WITH CHARGING STATIONS FOR ELECTRIC AND HYBRID CARS

*We are currently working to introduce charging stations for electric cars into as many properties as possible. We will provide information to the residents of each property whenever charging stations are made available for rent.*

**“We** started fitting our properties that have their own parking spaces in the yard or in a garage with charging stations for electric cars last year. The bidding for installations in 2022 is currently in progress. After the bids have been processed, we will know which properties will be fitted with charging stations this year within our budget. When we have received a permit to use the charging stations, we will inform the residents that they can start renting them,” says Head of Maintenance Risto Ovaskainen.

“Some properties have parking spaces managed by a regional parking company available for rent. These properties and their respective parking companies are specified on our website at [auroranlinna.fi](http://auroranlinna.fi) > Contacts > Parking spaces. Some regional parking companies already provide charging stations if you are looking to buy an electric or hybrid car,” Ovaskainen says.

“We are only installing slow charging stations with the commonly used type 2 connectors in our properties. Each charging station is rented to a specific person and they can only operate it with their personal tag. The person renting the charging station pays for the electricity consumed directly to Helen and the station cannot be used without a tag,” specifies Ovaskainen.

“Charging cars from a heating post or regular outlets of a property is explicitly forbidden in all of our properties. This means that the use of adapter cables is also forbidden. If the property maintenance personnel sees that a car is charged against these rules, the cables will be removed and the holder of the space notified. The reason for this is that the heating outlets are not designed for charging the cars and their safety for this purpose has not been



verified. In addition, the capacity of the grid of the parking area is designed only for the engine heaters of the cars. This means that interior heaters cannot be used in our properties as well,” adds Ovaskainen.

## PROPERTY-SPECIFIC INSTALLATIONS

“The installation of charging stations to properties always requires studying the grid of the parking area. If the cabling of the entire parking area needs to be renewed to accommodate charging stations, the property is not prioritised in the first phase of installations. At some properties, like Tilanhoitajankaari 28, the alteration work allow for hybrid spaces where the same space can be used for charging the car and heating the engine. Meanwhile, some spaces with a heating post had to be turned into charging stations, like at Käpyläntie 1. The work has to be carried out according to the conditions of each property,” says Ovaskainen.

“After the residents of a property have been informed that charging stations are available for rent, they can request a charging space from the Lassila & Tikanoja customer service at [avaimet.pks@lassila-tikanoja.fi](mailto:avaimet.pks@lassila-tikanoja.fi) or by calling them on +358 (0)10 286 6245. As the charging stations should be set up systematically, some parking spaces may have to be transferred between their holders. An owner of an electric or hybrid car may have to start using a different space for charging their car if the space they have previously used does not have a charging

**1** Electric and hybrid cars can only be charged with a charging station designed for this purpose. Some posts at Tilanhoitajankaari 28 were equipped with both heating and charging outlets to make the parking spaces hybrid spaces for both electric and combustion engine cars.

**2** The Auroranlinna properties use “slow” charging stations with the commonly used type 2 connectors. Charging requires a personal tag.



station, in which case the person using the new charging station is given another space,” Risto Ovaskainen says about the basic principle.

“I hope and believe that the charging stations that have already been installed are authorised for use very soon and that the availability of charging stations expands so that supply and demand are more in balance,” says Ovaskainen. •



# THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE FUTURE IS PART OF US

***At Auroranlinna, we are also committed to bearing our responsibility in mitigating climate change.***

**T**he Helsinki City Strategy for 2017–2021 specifies the goal of Helsinki being carbon neutral by 2035. However, the City has set more ambitious goals by aiming to be carbon neutral five years early, by 2030.

Carbon neutral Helsinki means that the emissions generated in the area governed by the City are reduced by 80% compared to the level in 1990. Kiinteistö Oy Auroranlinna is part of the Helsinki City Group and we are involved in these efforts to reduce the carbon footprint.

Carbon neutral energy production does not increase the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and does not add to global warming. A key part of the transformation to carbon neutral energy production in Helsinki is the discontinuation of coal, which Helen Oy aims to do by 2024 at the latest.

The energy efficiency of our properties can be improved in a cost-efficient manner with the following measures, for instance:

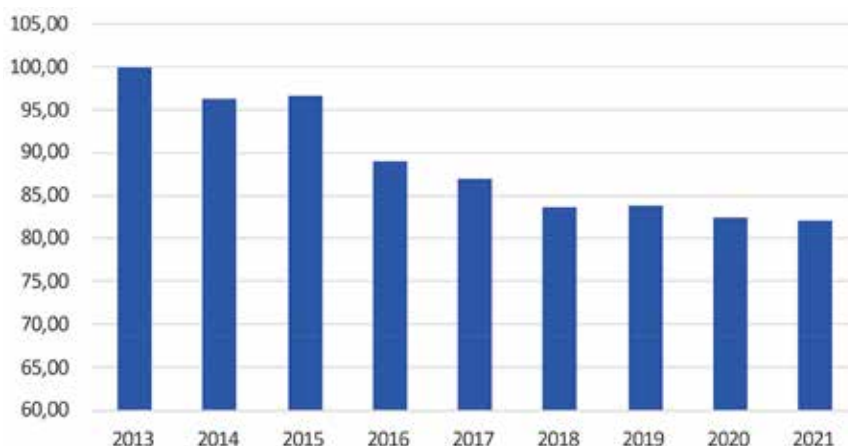
- recovery of heat from air and water
- improving the insulation of buildings
- property-specific energy production.

## **TOWARDS CARBON NEUTRALITY WITH ENERGY SAVINGS**

The basic renovations carried out by Auroranlinna in 2020–2022 (Pihkatie 6 and Kaarlenkatu 3–5) involved the installation of heat recovery systems for the ventilation systems and remotely readable apartment-specific water meters. Future basic renovations of Auroranlinna are also based on setting up heat recovery systems and apartment-specific water meters, in addition to which the plans will include the possibility of other financially viable energy conservation methods.

About 95% of Auroranlinna's properties are heated with district heating. The company has studied the condition of its properties and calculated their life-cycles in 2021. As part of this project, property-specific energy investment calculations will also be made. The calculations specify building element-specific energy conservation possibilities and payback periods, which will be used

Change in the heat consumption 2013–2021



▲ Change in the heat consumption of Auroranlinna's entire property portfolio kWh/m².

in planning the maintenance projects planned for the immediate future.

The building materials used in the renovations have long life cycles. For

temperatures, for instance.

Property maintenance personnel are responsible for the daily use of the systems with the assistance of partners

## **AURORANLINNA IS DETERMINED TO REDUCE ITS EMISSIONS**

example, vinyl is preferred instead of laminate in possible floor renovations. The materials belong to the M1 emission category and they have long-term durability, which reduces the emissions generated over the property's life cycle as well.

## **WE CARE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT**

We have updated the long-term plans for our properties based on their condition assessments and life cycle calculations by incorporating measures aimed at improving energy efficiency more clearly as part of annual repair projects.

The company is also actively involved in preparing common instructions to support basic repair projects together with other parties of the Helsinki City Group.

"In our long-term plans, we consider the environmental aspects of all our activities, which allows us to accomplish the carbon neutrality goals set by the Helsinki City Group," says Auroranlinna's Managing Director Tatu Rasia.

The automated control systems used in Auroranlinna's properties are equipped with modern configuration features. They allow the optimisation of the properties' energy consumption by monitoring their internal and outside

specialised in building automation.

"We will continue the development of property-specific configurations in order to reduce the energy consumption of properties even lower while securing ideal indoor air quality," Rasia continues.

We are involved in the Rental Housing Associations' Energy Efficiency Agreement. The goal of the agreement for the period of 2017–2025 is to reduce energy consumption by 7.5% or 10.5% by 2025 from the level of 2014. The intermediate goal for 2021 was the reduction of 4.5% from the level of 2017. •

The carbon neutrality plan is also part of the EcoCompass environmental management system, to which Kiinteistö Oy Auroranlinna has committed. The EcoCompass is a non-industry specific system that is based on the international ISO 14001 standard and built for the organisation's needs with the assistance of an expert. The environmental management system is audited by a third party and the organisation is granted an environmental certificate. More than 300 organisations already use EcoCompass. •



## Remember!

- **Fault reports** online at [auroranlinna.fi/en/](http://auroranlinna.fi/en/)

- **Fault reports 24/7 on-call service**  
+358 (0)10 286 6245

- **Door opening requests** +358 (0)10 286 6245

- **Lassila & Tikanoja's resident service point**

(Keys, parking spaces, sauna shifts, laundry room, changes to the register of occupants excluding Kirkkonummi and Suomenlinna)

Asemapäälikönkatu 12 b, FI-00520 Helsinki, Finland (entrance from Junailijankuja)

**Telephone** +358 (0)10 286 6245 (calls to the service number cost 8.4 cents/min, incl. 24% VAT)

**Email** [avaimet.pks@lassila-tikanoja.fi](mailto:avaimet.pks@lassila-tikanoja.fi)

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