



archeshousing

SPRING 2026



INSIDE YOUR NEWSLETTER...

- A fond farewell to a beloved member of the team!
- A big welcome to our new Director of Operations!
- Development updates
- You said, We did!
- Kids corner
- AND MUCH MORE!

SPRING
2026

Welcome to Arches Housing Spring 2026 Newsletter

...and a fond farewell from Arches Chief Executive, Paul Common.

After just over 8 years as Chief Executive at Arches it is time for me to step aside and for a new staff leadership team to take the organisation forward. Here are a few reflections.

I started full time work in 1986, 40 years ago, which feels a very long time ago! Quite a lot of our staff were not even born then. On the other hand Arches was founded in 1975 and we have a number of residents who have been with us for more than 40 years as we have discovered through the year of celebrating Arches at 50.

I have worked in the housing sector for 37 years, starting in an administrative role in London for what was then the Housing Corporation, now the Regulator of Social Housing and Homes England who invest in new homes. The four of us in my team shared a computer, it wasn't linked to the internet (as it didn't exist in its current form) and I spent Friday afternoons backing up the computer on floppy disks, anyone remember them?

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with Arches. It hasn't always been easy but I have been fortunate to be surrounded by talented and committed people who care about the organisation and providing the best service for our tenants. As a small organisation we don't have the specialist staff for every area of expertise, what we do have is the ability to move quickly and be nimble to react to the challenges and opportunities that come our way be that a house fire, a flood, coronavirus pandemic or improving services and developing new properties.

In the last eight years we have gained nearly 250 new homes, our spend on maintaining our properties has increased from £1.6m to over £3.6m and customer satisfaction has increased significantly.

There is still much to do as we work to ensure our services are more focused on meeting the varying needs of our tenants and their families.

I believe Arches is in a very good place financially and operationally to deal with future demands and there is a skilled and experienced board and staff team to deliver the new Customer Commitment that will be launched in April 2026.

Finally, I have always believed that the best results come from partnerships and that housing associations and their residents are at their best when cooperating. Which takes me back to the 1980's.

Alan Kilburn, a leading light in housing back then had a phrase:

...our house but your home'.

And that expression still resonates today.

Paul Common - March 2026

**Watch for a special
introduction from the new
Chief Executive, John
Hudson, in the Summer
newsletter edition 2026!**



Development Update

Since our last newsletter we are pleased to share that Arches has entered another contract to acquire 7 homes from Harron Homes on their Low Ridding development in Mastin Moor. Since entering contracts in December we have bought two of the homes at the end of January, which are both now rented with customers settling into their new homes.

Air Source Heat Pump

These homes also mark a first for Arches, as their heating and hot water is supplied from an Air Source Heat Pump, with no gas being supplied to the homes. This is an important step for Arches and part of our commitment to deliver energy efficient homes, and reduce our climate impact. The homes are low-carbon due to changes in building regulation and planning requirements for the site. Our other sites are also progressing well, and looking ahead Arches will be acquiring more homes in Kiveton Park and Staveley this summer.

Watch this space

We continue to look for more opportunities to deliver homes across our operating region, and work with developers and local partners to provide much needed homes.



Mastin Moor new property



Air Source Heat Pump



Air Source Location



Mastin Moor new property front



Gas Service and Electricity tests - why are they so important?

Gas and electrical safety checks aren't just box-ticking exercises — they're there to keep you safe in your home.

Do you smell something?

Gas appliances like boilers, cookers and fires can become dangerous if they're not checked regularly. Faulty appliances can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions or carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is especially risky because you can't see or smell it. A yearly gas safety check makes sure everything is working properly and safely, and it also helps prevent breakdowns - especially when you need heating and hot water the most.

It is so trippy!

Electrical systems can also wear out over time. Wiring, sockets and fuse boards can become damaged or outdated, and faulty electrics are one of the main causes of house fires. An electrical safety check (often called an EICR) looks for hidden problems and anything that doesn't meet current safety standards. Fixing small issues early helps avoid bigger, more dangerous problems later.

REMEMBER -
Always ask for
identification
before letting a
tradesperson in to
your property

All checks are
carried out by
professionals to
ensure that your
home is working
correctly and safe

Loft Spaces - keep it clear!

Are you aware that storing items in your loft space has the potential to cause structural damage, increases fire risks, causes temperature and humidity fluctuations and can contribute to damp, mould and condensation issues around your home?



Many ceiling joists are designed to hold the weight of the roof and not additional weight - overloading of the joists and compromise the safety of the structure!



Storing flammable materials like paint or gas canisters is especially dangerous due to the high temperatures lofts can reach in summer



If insulation is compressed it can reduce thermal performance by over 50% which in turn increases your energy bills.



Don't forget The big three - Condensation, Damp and Mould!

Items placed in the loft will restrict the ventilation, create insulation gaps and not only builds up moisture and condensation but creates an paradise for black mould to thrive.



Damp, Mould and Condensation

Awaab's Law – What is happening 6 months on?

It has now been 6 months since Awaab's Law was enforced. You may remember that Awaab's Law was introduced following the death of Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old who died in December 2020 from a respiratory condition caused by prolonged exposure to black mould in a Rochdale Boroughwide Housing flat. The case exposed severe failings in how social landlords responded to complaints about damp, mould and condensation (DMC).

What have Arches done to step up in the fight against DMC?

Over the past six months, Arches has taken significant action to meet, and go beyond, the expectations set out in Awaab's Law.

A Dedicated DMC Team

Arches has a specialist Damp, Mould and Condensation team who act immediately when a case is reported

- In emergency cases a washdown is arranged within 24 hours of the report.
- A full property inspection is carried out within 10 working days of a report, not just in the affected room but throughout the entire home, to identify and resolve the root cause. Reports are sent to tenants within 3 days.



Increased Reporting – A Positive Sign

We've seen a significant rise in reported DMC cases. While this might seem concerning, it's actually a positive outcome! This shows that residents feel confident reporting issues and that our approach is encouraging early intervention to keep homes safe and healthy.



Use of Technology

Arches is now making use of advanced technology, including:

Drones to assess external building issues;

Thermal detection equipment to identify cold spots that contribute to damp.

This allows us to diagnose problems accurately and take quicker, more effective action.



Our main obstacle is delayed reporting or lack of access to properties once an issue has been identified. When damp or mould goes unreported, or we cannot get into the home to investigate, problems worsen. This in turn increases repair times and creates potential health risks for households - prompt reporting and access are essential in the fight against DMC.



You Said, we Did

Listening to the tenant voice is the top of our priorities. Some short examples of 'You said, We did' are provided below.



YOU SAID



WE DID



OUTCOME?



Tenant requested a second handrail to make external steps safer in rain/snow/ice

We sized up the area and had our contractors out to install a safe and secure handrail!



Planned works - Tenants fed back that they wished for more involvement with the new kitchen designs for their homes

We provide a pre-works visit and now follow up with a kitchen pack that includes floor plans, 3d drawings



During a Neighbourhood Network meeting, a tenant suggested that a letter should be issued after a rent arrears repayment plan was agreed

This was drafted by the Neighbourhood Manager and is now part of the standard process



Planned works - Tenants fed back that the wall tiling wasn't as widespread in the kitchen as it used to be

We now provide more tiling around the cooker space to ensure that the area can be kept clean



Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)

Good news on Tenant Satisfaction!



Every year, we are required to ask you what you think of our services and this year we have seen further improvement in your satisfaction with our services.

Out of the 12 measures set by the Regulator of Social Housing, our performance has improved in 9 of them – something we are really pleased to see.

Whilst overall satisfaction with our services has fallen slightly – down by 1.3% to 82.6%, we have seen large increases in your satisfaction with how we handle anti-social behaviour – up 5.6% to 77.1% and our contribution to your neighbourhood, increasing 6.6% to 82.3%. This is great to see given the focus we have dedicated to these areas, taking into account feedback from our customers and communities. We recognise there is still more we can do, and we will be working with you to improve on this further.

We have also seen increased satisfaction with our repairs service overall, the speed of repairs and feeling that your home is safe. It is clear to see from this feedback that many of you are happy with the way we keep your home maintained, the speed of our response and that attend appointments when they are arranged. We do recognise that to improve further we need to focus on making sure we keep you updated if we cannot fix a repair first time and we will continue work on this.

Last year we worked really hard to deliver improved outcomes for tenants which were identified from the last set of results.

You are telling us that you are less satisfied with the cleanliness and maintenance of our communal areas again this year, and we can see there is also a small reduction in the percentage of you that agree we treat you with fairness and respect.

We have already taken steps to identify how we can improve our customer services by joining the Institute of Customer Service and this will mean we will be asking for your views in the coming month so we can understand more about this. Please look out for this – we really want to hear your views!

We will also carry out more tenant consultation, including the involvement of our Neighbourhood Network to identify what the issues are which affect your satisfaction with communal areas specifically, so we can look to improve these.

If you want to know more or think you could help us improve our services – please contact us, we are always happy to help.

What have we done?

- Carried out a Complaints Scrutiny and an Anti Social Behaviour Scrutiny which we are currently completing the recommendations from.
- Changed the way we deliver our services to improve the way we diagnose repairs and improve our 'first time fix' rates.
- Introduced inspections following the completion of repairs, to check the quality of the work.
- Increased the amount of inspections we do of communal areas.



Neighbourhood Network

In our previous newsletter, we shared that we were looking for new members to join the Neighbourhood Network tenant team. We're pleased to announce that two new members have now joined!

The Neighbourhood Network plays an important role in representing tenants and helping shape how Arches Housing operates. Tenant members regularly come together to discuss a range of topics, including repair challenges, strengthening the tenant voice, and taking part in workshops designed to ensure tenants are involved in the inner workings of the organisation.

We have many ways in which you can take part, depending on the free time you have available.

Opportunities to Get Involved

Neighbourhood Network

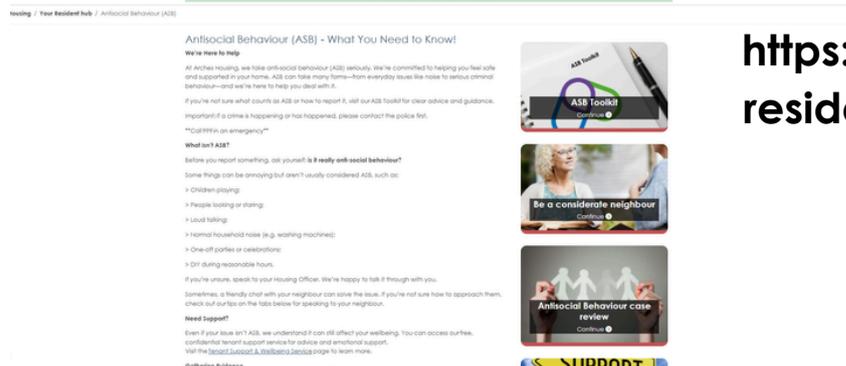
- Meets 4–5 times per year at the office
- A warm meal at each meeting
- Great community feel
- £25 Amazon voucher for every meeting

Scrutiny Member

- Flexible activities e.g., reviewing documents from home, visit properties/sites, and taking part in “mystery shopper” activities
- £25 Amazon voucher for each activity

If you're interested in joining or would like to find out more, please contact Kirsty Waller on consultation@archeshousing.org.uk;

Did you know that following feedback from our Antisocial Behaviour Scrutiny, we have significantly updated the Antisocial Behaviour page on our website?



Please visit

<https://www.archeshousing.org.uk/resident-hub/antisocial-behaviour-asb> to explore!



Institute of Customer Service - Customer survey

Have you received yours?

Arches Housing is collaborating with the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) and has issued a survey to tenants, via text and/or email.

This survey is designed to gather feedback directly from you, our tenants, and helps us better understand where our services, including communication and repairs are going well or where they aren't.

If you want more information regarding this survey, please contact Kirsty Waller on consultation@archeshousing.org.uk



The Institute of
Customer Service

“
**Customer Survey –
your chance to win
£100 in Amazon
vouchers!**
”

Please scan the QR code here, if you haven't already completed the survey. Please note that it is one entry per tenant.



Neighbourhood Walkabouts

Every week, our Housing Officers and Assistant Housing Officers take a walk through the neighborhoods where Arches Housing properties are located. They keep an eye out for various issues, such as:

- Fly tipping
- Overgrown areas
- Noticeable issues with property exteriors

When repairs or concerns are identified, officers report them back to the office where appropriate actions are taken to restore the areas to the expected standards.

If you wish to join our officers on these walks, please review our Facebook page or log on to our planned visits via our website:

<https://www.archeshousing.org.uk/resident-hub/managing-our-estates-communal-areas/estate-walkabouts/>



Arches Housing / Your Resident hub / Managing our Estates & Communal Areas / Estate walkabouts



“From Mr Kipling to Arches – it’s been quite a journey ”

We decided it was time to sit down with Paul Common, our Chief Executive ahead of his pending retirement, to understand more about the journey he’s been on with Arches, what he’ll miss the most and what he will remember fondly after eight years at the helm.

Paul comments “Believe it or not, my first ever job was driving a van full of Mr Kipling cakes around the seaside camps in Norfolk – I was a very popular man, who wouldn’t be with a van full of cake!”

Paul joined Arches in 2018 at a time of change and hit the ground running. He initially had three primary focuses – re-establishing the organisation’s G1 grading with the regulator, improving the repairs and maintenance service for customers and realigning the investment in new developments – no small task in anyone’s book!

“From my first day it was clear that Arches is an organisation firmly rooted in its communities. I think the organisation had just lost its focus slightly and seemed to be more concerned about bricks and mortar ahead of the people living in their homes. Once we had realigned that balance, the organisation went from strength to strength – so much so we achieved our regrading with the regulator within just 12 months”.

From talking to Paul it’s obvious that he’s enjoyed his time with Arches massively and although he’s looking forward to his retirement (so is his wife), he will miss the daily contact with colleagues and customers the most.

He adds “Arches has a really strong staff team who all work together to achieve the best outcomes for the customer. We have a ‘robustness’ now in the team, our culture has never been so good, it’s what makes Arches such a special place to work. Some of my fondest memories involve colleagues and customers, which I will cherish. I know Arches will be in good hands with John taking over the reins. I’m very lucky to have been able to choose my own time to retire and I feel very blessed to have been able to say I’ve been part of the Arches journey.

“Long may Arches remain independent and continue to work hard for its customers across South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire.”



Welcome to Arches, Kat!

We're delighted to welcome Kat Allott-Stevens to the team - a highly experienced housing professional who brings over 20 years of sector expertise to her new role. Throughout her career, Kat has been recognised for her dedication, passion, and commitment to delivering excellent services through strong leadership and collaborative working.

Kat holds a BA (Hons) in Housing Studies from Sheffield Hallam University and is also a Level 7 qualified coach, reflecting her commitment to developing both people and services. Alongside her professional achievements, she currently serves as Vice Chair of the Chartered Institute of Housing Regional Group, demonstrating her ongoing contribution to the wider housing profession.

In her previous role at Berneslai Homes, Kat oversaw a broad and vital portfolio of services including Neighbourhoods and ASB, Income and Leasehold, Independent Living, and Tenancy Sustainability. She also led on safeguarding across the organisation.

Kat brings with her a wealth of skills, including leadership and strategic planning, performance management, partnership working, bid writing, and risk management.

"We're thrilled to have Kat on board and look forward to the positive impact she will undoubtedly make!"

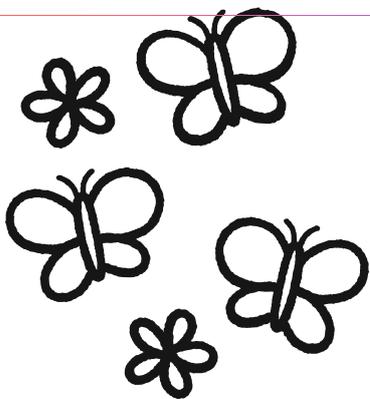


Kat Allott-Stevens - Director

 archeshousing

KIDS CORNER

Q: What did the big flower say to the little one?



*** You're really growing, bud!**

Colour me in!

If you require this document in an alternative format, including Large Print, Easy Read or translation services, please email consultation@archeshousing.org.uk or call 0114 228

8100.

Arabic | عربى

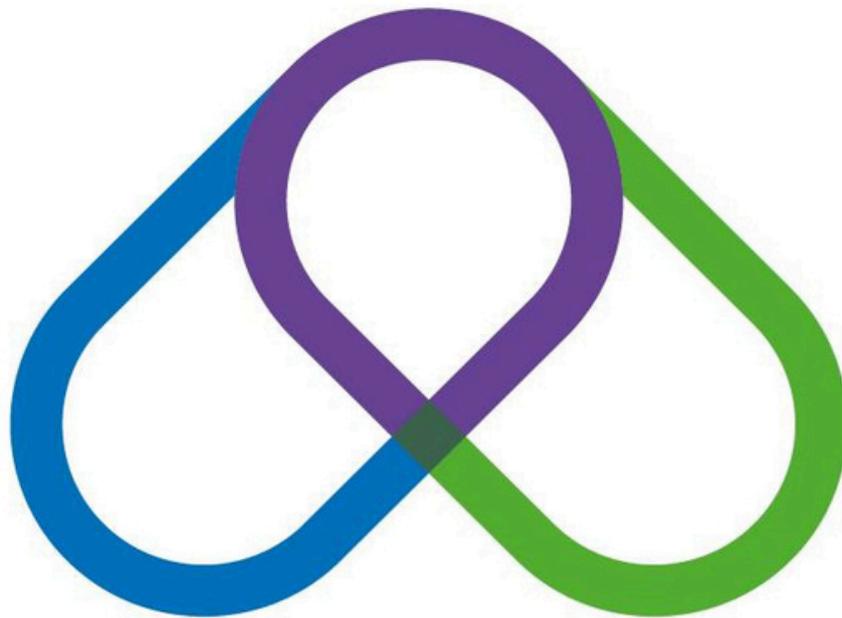
إذا طلبت هذه الوثيقة باللغة العربية ، فيرجى الاتصال بالرقم **0114 228 8100**.

Urdu | اردو

اگر آپ کو اردو میں یہ دستاویز درکار ہے تو براہ کرم **0114 228 8100** پر فون کریں۔

Somali

Hadaad u baahato dukumintiga af soomaali ah fadlan wac 0114 228 .8100



Arches Housing
122 Burngreave Road
Sheffield S3 9DE
Tel: 0114 2288100
info@archeshousing.org.uk



<https://www.facebook.com/archeshousing>



<https://bsky.app/profile/archeshousing.bsky.social>