



Welcome to our Winter Newsletter

There have been lots going on this past year including the development of 19 new homes for rent and we replaced 52 kitchens and 40 boilers with still more to complete before April 2022.

Our focus on listening to residents continues and over the summer we held our first face to face event since the pandemic in Dinnington where staff came out to listen and talk with residents, and we provided fun activities for the children. We hope to do more of this in the coming year.

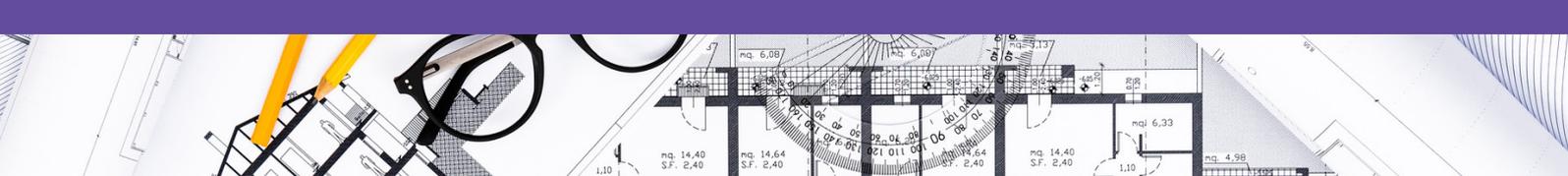
Work on our Together with Tenants commitments has continued following the open consultation in April 2021, and our resident and staff groups have met to work on the "Arches Commitments".

We continue to take steps to protect residents, staff and contractors against COVID19.

Many services have returned to pre-pandemic levels but we continue to have some issues with supplies and contractors and so thank you for your patience.

Our office also remains closed to our customers and the public at present.

We know this winter will be tough for many with rising energy and fuel costs, removal of UC £20 top up and continued impact of COVID-19 and so have provided information on how we can help as well as advice and tips on page 5 which we hope will be useful.



Development Updates



Since April 2021 Arches has delivered 19 new homes for rent; taking 3 more homes in Wickersley, followed by the completion of 6 apartments on the Waverley estate.

We were also delighted to take handover of the 10 bungalows delivered in Rotherham on our four in-house development sites. The homes, constructed by Keystone Yorkshire (Ltd), have their own solar panel system and achieved an A-rating on their energy performance.

Looking ahead to Spring next year Arches is aiming to take handover of four homes in Chesterfield, with two homes for rent and two for shared ownership. In addition, in June Arches secured the contract to deliver 23 affordably rent homes in Dinnington between 2022 and 2025, adding more homes to Arches future delivery program.

Planned Maintenance

Following the continued issues around restricted access due to the COVID 19 pandemic, we have continued to prioritise repairs and other essential services. Every effort has been made to deliver both the 2020/21 and the 2021/22 planned programmes together over a 12-month period.

Despite the continued COVID issues we have managed to complete the planned programme work for this year to date as follows: -

- Kitchen replacements 52 homes completed with 2 outstanding
- Bathroom replacements and shower installation due to start 8th November 2021
- Timber external doors replaced with composite doors 6 homes completed with more still to be done.
- Whole UPVC window replacement on 6 homes completed with more to be done.
- External painting and external wipe downs of UPVC window frames, soffits at 156 homes
- Poor performance boilers replaced with high efficient A rated ones in 40 homes.

Residents whose home are due for upgrades will have received letters to arrange access to allow surveys to be completed. If you have received a letter regarding your replacement, please contact us as soon as possible to arrange access.



New Starters



We have welcomed lots of new people into the Arches team over the last few months:

Kelicia Igbinazaka and Shannon Jones have joined our Customer Services Team

Chantelle Miller, our new Neighbourhoods Manager
Lucy Bashforth, our new Tenancy Sustainment Caseworker

Vicky Wright, who has moved from our Customer Services Team to become Resident Engagement and Communications Officer

If you would like to join the Arches team, all our current vacancies can be found on our website or LinkedIn.



Contents Insurance

Do you have contents insurance in place to cover your belongings in the event of fire, vandalism or water damage?

Contents insurance is a must for any residents – but many people don't take out their own insurance, wrongly believing that Arches provide insurance automatically.

Unfortunately, we're not able to do this – which is why we've partnered up with RSA to offer specially discounted cover to Arches customers. Find out more and download an application form online at:

www.archeshousing.org.uk/current-residents/contents-insurance/

or alternatively contact us on **0114 228 8100** and we can post one out to you.



OUR NEW PAYMENT CARD APP...
...ALLOWS YOU TO PAY ANYTIME,
ANYWHERE

Available for Apple, Android and Windows smartphones

Download for FREE from the Apple App Store, Google Play or Windows Phone Store

NB - You need to select Payment Card as your method of payment in order to use the Payment Card App.

Household Contents Insurance Application Form

Either complete and sign the application form and post it to RSA, URIS Group, Quays Point, Lakeside Boulevard, Doncaster, DN4 5PL. Or telephone 0345 6718172 and apply over the phone instead.



Winter is Here

Keeping your home warm in the winter is important to help maintain the condition of your home and for your welfare. As temperatures are dropping we have collated some **simple ways to keep your home warm whilst keeping energy costs down:**

- Use your heating when you need it, and if you have one set a timer for key times e.g. before you wake in the morning or when you return home in the evening.
- Have lined curtains, and open your curtains during the day to allow sunlight in, and keep them closed when it gets dark to keep the warm in.

- Move large or bulky furniture away from radiators to allow the hot air to spread further

- Wrap up warm- get the blankets, hot water bottles (with covers) and fluffy socks out!

- Block out the draughts (draught excluders are a great and affordable way to do this) - find out how to make your own Sausage dog draught excluder:

www.ovoenergy.com/blog/lifestyle/make-your-own-sausage-dog-draft-excluder

- Invest in a rug on cold flooring

- Try putting a shelf up- If you have adequate open wall space, placing a floating shelf above a radiator by a competent person can help stop the hot air from rising upward too quickly. (don't put anything on the shelf that could be damaged by the heat or be a fire risk).



Financial Help and Advice

Winter can be a difficult time, with cold weather, heating bills and the costly festivities, so we have pulled together a range of local support and assistant schemes aimed at providing extra help during this time. With the loss of the £20-a-week Universal Credit uplift, this Christmas may be financially difficult for some of us. If you are struggling to pay your rent, make sure you tell us, we're here to help and we may be able to help find other benefits or grants that could support you. Our aim is to make sure our residents are secure and happy in their home and our team are here to assist.

Sheffield Credit Union

The Sheffield Credit Union is a not-for-profit organisation which offers loans and savings across South Yorkshire. All Arches tenants can apply for the Credit Union services. Their staff take an in depth approach and focus on the individual customer. They also have a Christmas saver account allowing you to save up for the festive period over the year. They can be contacted on **0114 276 0787** or via the website below:

www.sheffieldcreditunion.com/saving-money/christmas-savings/



Cold Weather Payments

You may be eligible for Cold Weather payments if you are on certain benefits such as:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit. Must not be employed or self-employed to qualify and must have a child under 5 or you have a health condition or disability and have limited capability for work (with or without work-related activity)
- Support for Mortgage Interest

If you are eligible, you should automatically receive Cold weather payments, however if you aren't receiving them and think you should be, you think you should, make sure you tell the Pension Centre or Job Centre Plus. Alternatively, if you are on Universal Credit, sign in to your online account and make a note to your journal. If you do not have an online account, you can also ring the Universal Credit Helpline **0800 3285644**.

www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment/how-to-claim

Warm home Discount

You could be eligible to get £140 off your electricity bill under the Warm home scheme. To be eligible you must be...

- Getting the guarantee credit part of Pension Credit
- On a low income

Check with your supplier whether they are part of the scheme as not all suppliers are.

www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/low-income Warm Home Discount helpline **0800 731 0214**



What to do if Your Supplier Goes Bust?

In recent times, soaring gas prices have caused energy companies to collapse. But what happens if your supplier goes bust? If your energy provider goes bust, you will still receive gas and electricity. Your account will be **moved to a new supplier by energy regulator Ofgem**.

Unfortunately, however this means that you cannot choose with energy supplier you will be transferred to. Citizens advice have suggested making a note or taking a photo of your meter whilst waiting for a new supplier. You do not need to cancel any direct debits and any credit on your account will be transferred to your new supplier (this may take several weeks). Currently, better energy rate offers aren't available, that's why taking the steps outlined above about how to keep your home warm are especially important this year.



Christmas opening times

The office will close for the Christmas period at 12 noon on Friday 24th December.

We will reopen at 9am on Tuesday 4th January.

During this time, you will still be able to access the emergency out of hours service, but usual repairs services will be suspended for the holiday period.

You will also still be able to report non-urgent repairs, pay your rent, check your details and more through the Arches Portal via our website.

*Season's Greetings
from everyone at
Arches!*

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Some of us may be alone at Christmas or may be struggling with the festive period.

Looking after our mental health and wellbeing takes priority and so we have included some useful resources for anyone to access for support or someone to talk to:

www.thecalmzone.net/ - or call 0800 5858 this service is available 5pm- Midnight 365 days a year.

Mind - 0114 312 2209 - support for people isolating, have any queries or concerns.

Samaritans – from a mobile 116 123, (24/7) or via email: jo@samaritans.org (24hours response).

Our Tenant Wellbeing & support service is also available This is a free confidential support service for our residents.

Life & Progress

archeshousing

Tenant Wellbeing & Support Service

Free, confidential support, in any language, whenever you need it.

Freephone 0330 094 8845

www.tsws-assist.co.uk

Username: arches

Password: tenantsupport

We understand there can be a lot of pressure to spend money at Christmas, but we believe that special moments can be enjoyed in an affordable way to suit all budgets. Below are some low cost activities suggested by staff which can be done alone, or with family and friends.



Make your own Christmas cards or write a letter to Santa.

Want some Christmas card templates? Get in touch



Advent calendar window display

Scissors, paper, ready! Low cost fun way to brighten up your home



Christmas movie night.

Best watched with a hot chocolate



Create a wall Christmas tree out of tinsel!

Watch the tutorial online https://youtu.be/inScfu_5MOA



Christmas market visit – feeling festive



Christmas treasure hunt

Hide sweets, stickers around the house. For clue ideas check out <https://freddiesmummyuk.com/treasure-hunt-clues/>



Christmas light spotting

Go for a walk in your neighbourhood and look at all the decorations



Christmas colouring

Follow the link for some free templates <https://cf.ltkcdn.net/christmas/files/1948-Printable-Nativity-Scenes-2.pdf>



Christmas Games night!

Christmas charades anyone?



Ready, set, BAKE!

Fun filled evening of baking treats...a lovely gift idea for friends and family for Christmas



Paper Snowflake crafts

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!



Little act of kindness

Give a Christmas card to a neighbour, donate to a local food drive, write a letter to a loved one. Let's look after each other this Christmas

Moisture and Damp in Your Home



As temperatures are lower and rain is more frequent creating the perfect conditions for damp to form or spread. Arches are taking a proactive approach to tackling damp and mould. Over the year we have been completing a programme of damp inspections. Our team have been out and inspected over 150 homes to date.

If you feel that you have damp or mould in your home, please contact us and we can arrange for a surveyor to attend your home and conduct an inspection.

- Please call 01142288100
- If you have access to the customer portal via our website you can report there, if you do not have access and wish to, please contact 01142288100 and that can be set up for you.
- You can talk to one our Customer Service Team via Livechat that is on our website.
- You can email us on info@archeshousing.org.uk please include your address in the subject line

Ways To Limit The Amount Of Moisture In Your Home

- Dry clothes - either outside, or in a room with the window open.
- Always run the extractor fan or open a window whilst cooking or showering.
- Wipe down windows and windowsills where condensation builds up regularly.
- Try opening some windows for 15 minutes per day to ventilate your home.
- Try setting timers for heating to come on different times throughout the day.



Below are some tips for areas prone to mould (please contact us if any scenarios are present in your home so that we can arrange an inspection):

- Pull large furniture away from external walls, including beds, where it is prone to mould growing. Where possible position furniture against internal walls.
- Don't overfill cupboards or shelves where mould tends to grow.
- Wipe down small patches of mould before they begin to spread.
- spot black dots of mould, wipe it with a mild bleach solution or anti-fungal spray - they can be bought in most supermarkets.

Arches Service Standards

These are the standards that we created based on feedback from residents following the “Big Conversation”. They were launched in July 2021 and go above and beyond what’s required of us by the regulator. These standards are what our customers can hold us to - and how we judge ourselves.



SERVICE STANDARDS

Home for life



You will have a home for life for as long as the terms in the tenancy agreement are met.

We will do all we can to help you stay in your home.

We reinvest all income into improving homes, delivering services and building new homes.

Home maintenance



We will aim to have 90% of routine repairs fixed first time. Where we can't, we will tell you what the next steps are.

A surveyor or operative will visit you within 10 working days of reporting a repair.

We'll aim to keep all appointments and can offer some evening and weekend slots to suit your needs.

We will provide you with a three-year plan of how we intend to invest in your home.

Customer service



We will resolve 75% of queries at the first point of contact. If we can't, we will aim to do so within 24 hours.

You can choose how you get in touch with us, including face to face, via phone, or online.

If you can't get to us, we'll come to you within 5 working days.

You will always have the opportunity to speak to someone if you're dissatisfied.

Having your say



We will offer different ways to have your say on changes to services that affect you and your home. We will make sure this is accessible to all, including outside working hours.

We will use your feedback, including complaints, to shape and improve services and we will always tell you what happened as a result of what you've said.

We will survey at least 50% of our tenants annually through an independent third party to tell us how we're doing.

We will keep you up to date on important changes via our newsletter and on our website.

Our neighbourhoods



We will work in partnership with other organisations to improve our neighbourhoods.

All communal areas will be visited every month and you will have the opportunity to come along. We'll aim to resolve any issues identified by our next visit.

All of our open spaces will be maintained no less than once per month during summer.

We will meet with you to discuss reports of antisocial behaviour within 5 working days.

Advice and support



If you need wellbeing support you can come to us. Where we can't provide it, we will help you find someone who can.

Our office is a safe place for you to come for advice if you need it.

We will always treat you with compassion and empathy.

Recognising diversity



We will recognise your needs and adapt our services to meet them. For example, we will offer translation services, chaperoned appointments, and home visits.

We will always be respectful of cultural differences.

Your feedback will always be listened to without prejudice.

We will always use clear and plain language.

Endeavour Community Ambassadors Programme



Arches are proud sponsors of the Endeavour Community Ambassadors Programme for the 2nd year running. Endeavour have 2 projects running this year, in Burngreave Ward (Sheffield City) and in Dinnington area (Rotherham).

We are recruiting Arches residents (between the ages of 11-25) who are interested in making a difference in their community whilst having fun, and meeting new people.



Are you passionate about making a positive difference in your local community?
Are you looking for a fun and exciting personal development opportunity?
Become an Endeavour Community Ambassador to gain new skills, meet new people and work towards a better future for your community.

Volunteering experience | Accredited training opportunities | Certificates of achievement | Outdoor Activities



Who Can Apply

Young people aged 11-25 living in Brungreave area or Dinnington

Passionate about volunteering and making a positive difference in your community

Looking to develop your skills and knowledge

Willing to support a 12-month youth-led social action programme via short weekly sessions



To register your interest please contact us on **0114 228 8100** (or email Vicky.Wright@archeshousing.org.uk) alternatively you can contact Endeavour direct on **07841211513** (or email fleur.hunter@endeavour.org.uk).

If you would like to see what our Ambassadors did last year, please check out the following webpage www.endeavour.org.uk/community-ambassadors-project/

If you or your client require this document in an alternative format, including Large Print, Easy Read or translation services, please email involvement@archeshousing.org.uk or call 0114 228 8100.

Arabic | عربي

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۔

Punjabi | ਪੰਜਾਬੀ

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਦੁਬਾਰਾ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0114 228 8100 ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ.

Polish | Polski

Jeśli potrzebujesz ten dokument w języku polskim, zadzwoń pod numer 0114 228 8100.

Somali

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

French | Français

Si vous avez besoin de traduction en français, téléphoner 0114 228 8100 s'il vous plaît.

Slovak | Slovenský

Ak potrebujete preklad tohto dokumentu do slovenčiny, zavolajte na číslo 0114 228 8100.