



  
archhousing

NEWS - WINTER 2019



Merry Christmas  
Fasax Wanagsan

تالى طعت شوخ

Christmas Mubarak

Veselé Vianoce

ةدي عس ةزاجا

Wesołych Świąt

শুভ বডদিন

Christmas Mobarak

Welcome to a bumper edition of Arches News. We've got lots to tell you about what's been going on throughout the year – and next year, we'll have a new schedule of newsletters so if there's anything you'd like to see, please get in touch!





## WELCOME AND SEASON'S GREETINGS

With the introduction of the Arches Home Standard, we've seen some great improvements in the last year, in both the standard of the homes that our tenants are enjoying and the way that we are interacting with you. But these successes are only the beginning. As we continue along this journey together, we want to ensure that the next steps are taken with you and that your opinions are an essential part of our direction.

*John Hudson*  
Director of Operations



## WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

In the last edition, we established clear goals for carrying out some major works to our properties. We also took on 18 recommendations from the Customer Excellence Panel.

We've been really busy making sure we've achieved those goals – take a look on the next page at what we've been up to!

## SAY HELLO

Since the last edition, there have been a few new faces at Arches!

We're joined by...

- Jade Simmonds, our new Head of Housing Operations
- Nicola Maguire, who as Asset Investment Coordinator will be working on delivering our programme of planned works
- Charlotte Elwood, our new Repairs Coordinator (which means you will soon see a vast improvement in the way that your repairs are carried out!)
- Momin Khan, our new Finance Manager

**If you'd like to join the family at Arches, all of our current vacancies can be found on our website or on LinkedIn.**

- Emma Cairns, our new Purchase Ledger Accountant
- Emma Holland, who as Customer Engagement and Communications Officer is here to make sure your opinions are heard and valued
- Shane Charles, our new Financial Inclusion Officer, who will be providing financial advice to our tenants

We've been busy investing in your homes and making sure they're up to standard. Here's what we got up to in 2018/19.

### Kitchen



We installed 55 new kitchens.

### Bathroom



Installed 43 new bathrooms.

### Doors



Installed 355 new front doors.

### Heating



We Installed 10 new "A" rated boilers.

### Safety in your home



We serviced and carried out gas safety checks in 1,079 homes; We checked the safety of electrics carried out repairs in 275 homes; We installed smoke detectors in 89 homes; We installed carbon monoxide detectors in 117 homes.

### Outside your home



We repaired or replaced fencing to 55 homes; We painted the outside of 171 homes.

### Communal Living



We painted the internal communal areas of 4 buildings. We refurbished the communal areas at Colchester House, Crookes.

### Living Independently



We carried out minor adaptations to 3 homes last year.

### General Repairs Service



We carried out 5,281 repairs, of which 96% were completed on time.





## REPORT A REPAIR

**You may have noticed that the repairs section of our website has changed as we've just implemented a new system.**

The process is now much more intuitive and will diagnose what repairs are needed based on your answers to some simple questions.

Once the system has worked out what repair is needed, it will allocate a contractor and let you book an appointment that's convenient for you.

You'll be able to see straight away who will be coming to your home and when.

You'll need to log in on our website to use the new repair reporting system. If you're having any trouble with accessing your account, give us a call on 0114 228 8100 or pop in to our office.

We've also started sending out a few more texts about repairs. You'll now get a text to notify you when repairs have been raised or marked as complete on our system. You'll be able to reply to these texts or tap a link to answer a short survey letting us know your feedback about our service. You'll also get a text from us the day before and on the morning of a repair appointment to remind you a contractor will be coming to visit.





## DEVELOPMENT

Arches continues to live by the promises we made when we first formed in 1975 - which was to provide affordable decent homes for the rent, regeneration and renewal of communities in the Sheffield City Region. We continue to grow by developing thoroughly needed properties. You can see that we are taking our job seriously and contributing to the wider plan of building new homes.







## PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY FIRST CREDIT UNION



At Arches we put the customer at the heart of everything we do. That's why we've partnered with Community First, who are able to offer alternative options for managing your finances than a normal bank or building society. They will be available every Wednesday afternoon from 12.45pm until 3.30pm at our offices to offer independent advice to the entire community on accounts, loans and finances. You don't have to be a tenant to drop in - but Arches will pay the administration charge for any tenant who opens a Budget Account with them.

### The services Community First offer includes...

- Budgeting accounts - to help manage payments, ensuring you don't miss your rent or any critical bill payments.
- Personal loans – affordable loan products with low interest rates to cover any unexpected expenses.
- Household Items Service - get brand new appliances delivered straight to your home!
- Online banking – view and manage your accounts online or via a mobile app.
- Prepaid debit card – cut down on unnecessary spending by preloading your card with the money you need.



You can find out more information at  
[www.communityfirstcu.co.uk](http://www.communityfirstcu.co.uk)  
or by calling 0303 0300 010





## WHAT IS UNIVERSAL CREDIT?



Universal Credit is a single means-tested benefit payable to people who are out of work or on a low income. It does not depend on your national insurance contributions and is not taxable. You can claim it if you're looking for work, unable to work through sickness or disability, a lone parent, caring for someone or if you're working and your wages are low.

## HOW DO I CLAIM?

You can apply for Universal Credit at [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

If you're not being able to apply online, you may be able to claim by phone instead. You can claim by phone if, for example, you can't use a computer or you have problems reading or writing.

**To start a claim by phone, call the Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644.**

## HOW IS UNIVERSAL CREDIT PAID?

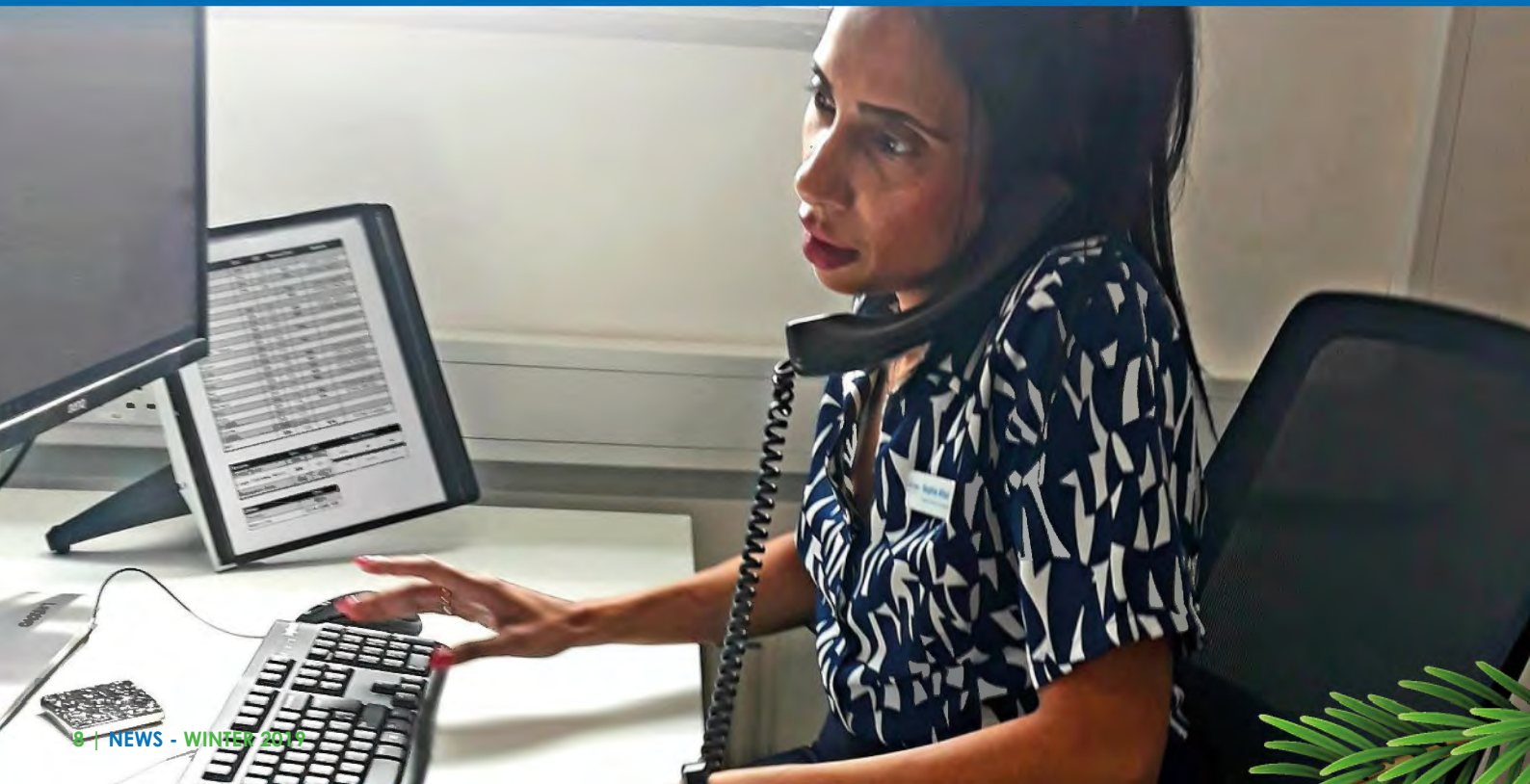
Universal Credit is paid once every calendar month in arrears. It is normally paid in to a bank, building society or Post Office card account. A single payment is made to each household. If you are eligible for housing support it will be included in your Universal Credit payment.

## WHAT IF I'M IN RENT ARREARS?

If you're in arrears with your rent, your landlord can request housing payments and deductions for rent arrears to be made directly to your rent account.

In order to pay your rent to your landlord it's usually cheaper and more convenient to make payments by direct debit.

**Please contact our Rent Team on 0114 228 8100 to discuss your options.**







## Fancy being in with the chance of winning £100 - in exchange for just a few minutes of your time?

**We want to know what you think Arches should be doing to ensure we deliver a great service.**

**Just like any good relationship, the key is communication – and we want to know what's important to you.**

**In return, anyone who participates will be entered into our £100 prize draw!**

We've been out and about across Sheffield and Rotherham to catch up with our customers – and we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who braved the rain and visited us under our Arches gazebo!

If you haven't had a chance to get take part yet, don't worry – simply visit [bit.ly/archesbigconversation](http://bit.ly/archesbigconversation) or email [involvement@archeshousing.org.uk](mailto:involvement@archeshousing.org.uk) and let us know what you think by 31 December!

We'll be using all the feedback you give us to shape our services around you and drive improvements – so it's really important to make sure your voice is heard now!



### SHARING IS CARING!

Are you following us on social media? Check out what we're sharing on Facebook and Twitter and join in the conversation!

 /archeshousing

 @archeshousing



## WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

- Preventing harm to vulnerable people's health and development
- Protecting vulnerable people from abuse and maltreatment
- Support and representation for those greatest in need
- Taking action to enable all children, young people and adults to have the best possible outcomes

## OUR SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR SAFETY

We will always help you to live in a safe environment. Our safeguarding policy and procedures are in place to ensure that everyone we come in to contact with can be protected from harm. If you have any concerns at all, just give us a call.

**If you think a person is in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police.**

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

- NSPCC | 0808 800 5000 | text 88858
- CEOP - Report Online Child Abuse
- Action on Elder Abuse helpline | 080 8808 8141
- National domestic abuse helpline | 0808 2000 247
- Modern Slavery helpline | 0800 0121 700



**The office will be closed for the Christmas period from 12 noon on 24 December and will reopen at 9am on 02 January. During this time, the out of hours service will only cover emergencies.**

*Season's Greetings from everyone at Arches!*

## CHARGEABLE REPAIRS

While we deal with big repairs and emergencies, part of being an Arches tenant means keeping your home in good repair. This means that tenants are liable for certain repairs, and any repairs that are carried out by our contractors unnecessarily will be charged. Avoid getting charged fees for repairs by carrying out these sorts of repairs yourself:



Lock Changes



Blocked Drains



Lightbulb Replacement



For more detailed information about what repairs tenants are liable for, check out your contract or give us a ring on 0114 228 8100.

 **archeshousing**  
peoplecommunitieshomes

**If you would like to discuss anything in this newsletter, or would like to contact us about anything else, you can do so on:**

Tel: 0114 228 8100  
Arches Housing Limited,  
122 Burngreave Road, Burngreave,  
Sheffield S3 9DE



/archeshousing



@archeshousing



[www.archeshousing.org.uk](http://www.archeshousing.org.uk)



# Start the New Year off right

We know that this time of year can be expensive and stressful. That's why we're here to help with any financial worries you may have - so you can start the New Year with as little stress as possible.

If you're having any financial difficulties, such as with your utilities or rent, contact us on 0114 228 8100 to have a chat about how we can support you.



# Christmas opening times

The office will close for the festive period at 12 noon on 24 December.

We will reopen at 9am on 02 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.

Remember, you can 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!*

