



 **archeshousing**
peoplecommunitieshomes

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



Welcome to our annual report for the year to 31 March 2023.

After nine years as a Board Member at Arches, the last seven as Chair, I am sad to say that this will be my last Annual Report message before I have to step down at end of my final term. I am however pleased that we are once again able to report some really positive outcomes, despite the difficult economic conditions.

For the housing sector as a whole, 2022/23 was a year dominated by economic and political uncertainty. Like other associations, Arches has had to adapt its plans to ensure long-term viability, while at the same time striving to maintain and improve services. For our residents, and also our staff, the cost-of-living crisis has presented many challenges and I'm proud of the work that Arches has done, both through our own endeavours and increasingly working with partner organisations, to ensure our residents are able to access appropriate support when needed. In April the Board was delighted to hear some of the stories of how more tenancy support work and targeted financial and other assistance had made such a positive difference to the lives of some of our most 'at risk' residents over the past year.

The Board continues to make the health and safety of residents a top priority. In late 2022 we began a full stock condition survey, providing valuable data on which to base investment decisions and to support continuation of work to eradicate damp and mould in properties. As part of this investment, work to improve the energy efficiency of our homes is well underway, with 94% of properties now meeting the Energy

Performance Certificate level 'C' or better. I was really pleased to see our bid for funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund approved. This will enable additional improvements to 110 of our homes over the next two years, including new windows and external wall insulation.

In addition to investing in our existing homes, during the year we also delivered 25 new properties in Dinnington, Chesterfield and Waverley and secured 28 more in Staveley for delivery from 2023/24 onwards. Whilst we weren't able to secure any new development sites in Sheffield, we continue to work hard to identify opportunities in our core area and are thrilled with the results of new partnership with SACHMA, to refurbish and repurpose Breinburg Court in Pitsmoor as a community hub and 12 flats tailored to the needs of older and vulnerable members of Sheffield's black and ethnic minority community.

So, reflecting on my nine years with Arches, I want to thank everyone for their support and dedication. It has been a real privilege to be involved – I have loved the journey and am very proud of what the team has achieved. I know that we haven't always got things right, but I genuinely believe that the Board and staff are absolutely committed to doing their very best for customers – listening to and acting on feedback and learning from our mistakes. I'm sure this will continue long after I am gone and wish all connected with Arches every success for the future.

Kay Dickinson
Chair



Kay with Rita Spillings, Arches first tenant



Together with Tenants

In April, customers were surveyed on our six commitments (relationships, communication, voice and influence, accountability, quality, when things go wrong) and the results shared with our Together with Tenants resident group. An action plan was developed by the residents and published on our website.

Resident engagement

- A group of customers scrutinised satisfaction with our repairs service. The report has since been presented by the group to the Board and actions agreed
- Residents were consulted in the development of our Building Safety Strategy.
- The Neighbourhood Network is being co-created with residents and will provide a link between residents and Board members.
- Residents took part in the recruitment for the new chair of Arches Board
- In 2022/23 Arches undertook the first Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey, which will be undertaken annually.



Community support

- Jubilee funday in Dinnington, with Rotherfed Tenants Federation and also the Endeavour Young Persons group with activities for children
- Planted shrubs and flowers with the children in our neighbourhood at Wickersley.
- Attended the Abbeyfield Festival as it had its first community event since the pandemic.
- Foodbank donations – staff collected and gifted food and donations at Christmas to the Burngreave & Dinnington Foodbanks.
- Gifted dates to our customers in Darnall to celebrate the start of Ramadan in Apr 2022, and consulted on how residents felt about living in their neighbourhood. We did the same in Tinsley in March 2023.

Support to residents

We have worked hard to provide better services to help residents sustain their tenancy with us, which has become even more important with the cost of living challenges.

- 46 referrals to partner agencies who have provided financial, health and wellbeing support
- £11k of grants and additional benefits received by residents and 7 grants for essential household appliances
- Arches £20k Customers at risk budget has provided:

food, gas and electric emergency vouchers
3 families supported with carpets
5 Households supported with essential household items or furniture.

An on-going priority at Arches, and across the housing sector, is to stop tenancies failing. In 2022/23 95% of new tenancies were sustained within the first year, a demonstrable improvement from recent years.

Breinburg Court



Through a partnership with SACMHA, a community-based organisation who specialise in delivering services to people in need of assistance with their health and social care

needs, we have refurbished a block of flats.

There are now 12 homes specifically tailored to the needs of older and vulnerable members of Sheffield's Black and Ethnic Minority community along with 4 properties to provide community-based health and social care services. The extensive programme of refurbishment has made the development fit for purpose for the future.

Asset health and safety

Health and Safety of residents is a priority, and we continue following our policies and procedures to ensure that all homes are safe.

Asset Management Performance	Performance		Target
Properties with a Valid Gas Safety Certificate	100%	✓	100%
Properties with Valid Electrical Safety Certificate	100%	✓	100%
Properties with a Valid Fire Risk Assessment	100%	✓	100%
Properties with a Valid Water Hygiene Assessment	100%	✓	100%
Properties with a Valid Asbestos Management Survey	100%	✓	100%
% of Homes that Meet the Arches Home Standard	99.75%	✓	100%
% of Day to Day Repairs Completed on Time	91.01%	✓	90%

We continue to work with our residents and contractor partners to provide quality repairs at a suitable time. There are sometimes still difficulties with availability and cost of materials that can impact how soon we can complete repairs but last year did see an improvement in performance for this area.

Arches Home Standard

Maintaining the Arches Home Standard continues as a top priority. In April 2018, fewer than 40% of properties met the Standard. Now over 99% of our homes do and by the end of March 2024 we aim to be 100%.

The £1.3m programme in 2022/23 included:

19	Bathrooms
8	Kitchens
140	Boilers
62	Windows - whole house and partial
16	Fully refurbished flats
88	*Other works



* Other works included heating systems, external doors, rebuilding boundary walls, roofing and energy efficiencies. We also fully refurbished two older properties.

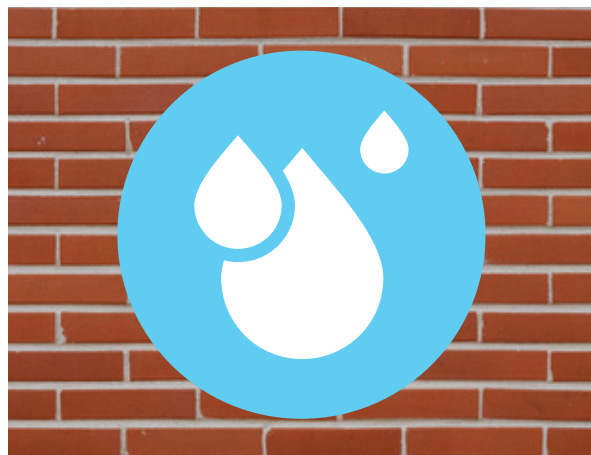
Damp, Mould and Condensation

Damp, Mould and Condensation is not a new factor for housing associations, however its profile and the expectations surrounding the treatment of tenants and the defect itself has increased.

In April 2021, Arches began to pursue a strategy of proactively identifying properties at increased risk of damp and mould and taking action to remediate the causes identified in a person-centred way. At the same time Arches also made available significant additional budget provision to deal with the issues identified.

We were all shocked by the tragic news that a two-year-old, Awaab Ishak, died because of prolonged exposure to damp and mould in his home. We have included the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight report key factors and best practice in our approach to working towards dealing and treating effectively with the causes of damp and mould.

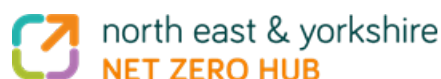
In December 2022 we started a stock condition survey of all our properties over 5 years old. The information collected from these surveys will feed in and help shape our investment and business planning for future years. In addition, we used this opportunity to look, check and identify any homes where there were any signs of damp and mould to be followed up by a programme of inspections to ensure works are undertaken to resolve the source of the problem.



Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

We were delighted to receive confirmation in early 2023 that we have been successful in our bid, through a consortia of similar housing organisations in Yorkshire and NE England, for funding from the governments Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. Arches are matching the grant available from government which will bring improvement works to 110 of our homes.

Component	Properties
External Wall Insulation	30
Solar Panels	30
Windows	50
Total	110



Energy Efficiency Works

Improving the energy efficiency of our homes and keeping heating costs down for existing tenants is our priority as we implement our approach to decarbonisation. Around 50% of our home improvement budget was spent on measures like new windows and doors and more efficient boilers. Next year the percentage of the budget committed to energy efficiency works is higher as part of our commitment to bringing all our properties to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) level C by 2026, ahead of the governments target of 2030. 94% of our properties are already at EPC C, although we acknowledge that there is still plenty more to do.



Priority 4

More high-quality homes for rent and sale

New Homes completed in 2022/23

In 2022/23 we took handover of 25 homes for rent. These homes form part of our ambitious growth plans, as we continue to deliver against our Growth Strategy.



Wentworth Way, Dinnington

August 2022: Eight x 2-bed homes, located on two cul-de-sacs on this brand new estate being built by Taylor Wimpey.

Wheeldon Mill, Chesterfield

September 2022: Two x 2-bed homes, and two x 3-bed homes, located on the Heritage Green estate built by Harron Homes.

Phase 4 Waverley, Rotherham

September 2022: Three x 2-bed homes, and one 3-bed house, handed over from Taylor Wimpey.

November 2022: Six x 2-bed houses, handed over in the second phase for this development.

March 2022: Three x 2-bed homes, these homes marked the final three homes to be handed over on this part of the Waverley Estate – built by Taylor Wimpey and called Fusion.

We ended the year with 1,316 homes owned and managed. We anticipate the handover of 18 homes in 2023/24 and are continuing to look ahead and seek further opportunities to build within our operating area.

Shared ownership

Our current pipeline contains eleven new shared ownership homes in Staveley, Chesterfield, which should be available from summer 2025 onwards.

South Yorkshire Housing Partnership

Arches is part of the South Yorkshire Housing Partnership.



The group supports the housing priorities of the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authorities and the four local authorities it covers. We see this group as a crucial part of our future plans for Growth and Housing within South Yorkshire, and an opportunity for wider collaboration.

Arches continues to seek new opportunities, if you have any opportunities for Arches please get in touch with us on **0114 228 8100** or **info@archeshousing.org.uk**



Caretaking service - new ways to serve residents

In response to feedback from residents, we have developed this new service to improve the quality of the communal areas Arches manage such as shared gardens and shared internal communal areas.

The caretaker service has already received positive feedback from customers, and we are thrilled to hear that it is making a real difference in daily lives with reduced litter, enhanced grounds maintenance and minor communal repairs.



Governance review

In 2022 we asked an independent specialist to undertake a review of our governance arrangements. He concluded 'Arches is a well-governed organisation, with a skilled, committed and engaged board.'

'There are no major governance challenges at the moment...' We have followed up on the suggested improvements.

Stakeholder perception survey

Last year we commissioned a survey of stakeholder partners, such as local authorities, contractors, consultants etc. to understand their views of issues such as whether we live our values, how we conduct relationship and how well we communicate. The feedback was 'resoundingly positive' and also highlighted opportunities for how we could improve our visibility both locally and within the housing world and how we can better manage the way we communicate and our relationships with partners.



A few highlights of our 2023/24 delivery plan are:

- Review and revise the Arches Home Standard
- Evaluate satisfaction and the effectiveness of the new caretaking service
- Implement findings of our Repairs and Maintenance review
- Launch Arches Neighbourhood Network
- Continue proactive damp programme of surveying properties for damp, mould and condensation and undertake remediation works
- Pursue ECO and other funding opportunities for energy efficiency and decarbonisation works to properties
- Deliver planned improvements to IT system
- Review the effectiveness of the Agile@Arches agile working approach
- Develop and launch a new and improved Arches web site

Arches Annual report finance

Statement of Comprehensive Income	2022/23 £'m	2021/22 £'m
Turnover	6.9	6.9
Surplus	0.5	0.8
Statement of Financial Position	2022/23 £'m	2021/22 £'m
Fixed Assets	64.0	62.8
Net Current Assets	(0.5)	(0.3)
Long term Creditors	47.4	46.8
Reserves	16.1	15.7
Accommodation (properties)	2022/23	2021/22
Total owned and managed	1,316	1,300

VfM Finance Metrics	2021/22 Housemark peer group	2021/22 Arches Actual	2022/23 Arches Actual
Reinvestment %	6.12%	5.06%	5.29%
New social housing units %	1.18%	1.62%	1.90%
Gearing %	42.30%	37.05%	37.98%
Headline social housing cost p/u	£3,868	£3,428	£3,730
Operating Margin (overall)	20.44%	22.54%	19.92%
Arches Metrics			
Customer Satisfaction*	80.95%	85.71%	80.00%
Rent as Value for Money	81.80%	88.16%	88.24%

We have maintained a steady financial position in 2022/23 despite the turbulent economic environment. Income has continued to grow with the addition of 25 new properties. Expenditure on repairs and reinvesting in our properties, a priority through the Arches Home Standard, totalled £2.37m in 2022/23 and is budgeted to be £2.43m in 2023/24.







We continue to compare well to our peers in terms of providing value for money, keeping our 'core' administration costs low and maximising spend on our housing stock.

More details on our finances and Value for Money performance, including details of Board and governance arrangements, and risk management and assurance can be found in our Annual Report and Financial Statements at www.archeshousing.org.uk/about/publications/annual-accounts



Operational Performance

Arches Annual report - Operational performance

	Target	Performance	
Customer satisfaction with overall services provided by Arches*	86%	80%	
Number of customers that have been involved with us in the year and helped shape services for residents	200 Residents	233 Residents	
Property turnover	8.5%	7.3%	
Average number of days homes are empty	13 Days	16.2 Days	
The amount of rent collected that was due	99.3%	100.3%	
Rent arrears – Current and former tenants	4.2%	3.12%	

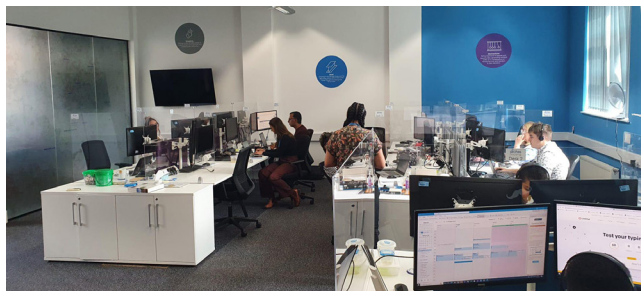
*During 2022/2023, we implemented the Regulator of Social Housing's draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures a year early using the prescribed methodology. This has seen our overall customer satisfaction reduce to 80% (satisfaction was 87% at September 2022 using the previous methodology), we know this has also impacted on our peers performance in this area.

Complaints

This year we have seen an increase of 20% in the volume of formal complaints received, whilst the escalation rate (complaints progressing to stage 2 or further) has reduced.

Year	Stage 1	Stage 2	Escalation rate
2021 - 22	30	7	23%
2022 - 23	36	1	3%

An annual review of complaints is included on the Arches website at <https://www.archeshousing.org.uk/> including details of how we are learning from complaints to meet the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to recognising and respecting the diverse needs of our customers, staff and Board members so that the services we provide, and our workplaces, are fair and inclusive to all.



	Women	BAME*
Our Customers (Tenants)	65%	54%
Our Board	36%	36%
Our Senior Management Team	36%	18%
All Our Staff	45%	23%

*People from a black or Asian minority background

Actions we took and things we learnt:

- We found out from our first Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey that tenants who describe their ethnicity as White, Asian or Black have the highest levels of satisfaction with our services. Tenants who describe themselves as of mixed heritage have the lowest satisfaction.
- We need to know our tenants better to improve our services and be more consistent, so we are undertaking a 12 month programme of talking to residents to update our information on households.
- To get the best diverse staff team, we advertise vacancies widely including specialist websites and engage support to attract a wide range of high calibre applicants.
- We undertake annual EDI training supported by the Housing Diversity Network, of which we are a member.
- The Board has agreed its intended diversity composition to ensure an appropriate balance of diversity of thought and professional experience. Recruitment in 2022/23 prioritised recruitment of members whose age and experience better reflects that of our tenants. Additionally, a group of residents were engaged in the recruitment of our new Board Chair.



The Board of Management:

Kay Dickinson (Chair)
Ian Falconer (Deputy Chair)
Ajman Ali
Lisa Bradley
Andrea Brough
Iain Campbell (Retired 12 September 2022)
Terry Gallagher
Brian Hamlin
Mahara Haque (Co-opted 12 September 2022)
Mohammed Jamil
Andrew Liles
Alan Long (Co-opted 18 July 2022, Appointed 12 September 2022)
Joice Rennie (Retired 12 September 2022)

Chief Executive:

Paul Common

Company Secretary:

John Hudson




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 Translate
يترجم Tłumaczyć
ترجمه Turjun
অনুবাদ অনুবাদ করা Preložiti

- Regulator of Social Housing Registered No. LH0884
- Register of Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies No. 21451R (Exempt Charity)
- Member of the National Housing Federation, PlaceShapers and BMENational

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