

news winter 2020

welcome

Welcome to the winter edition of the Arches newsletter.

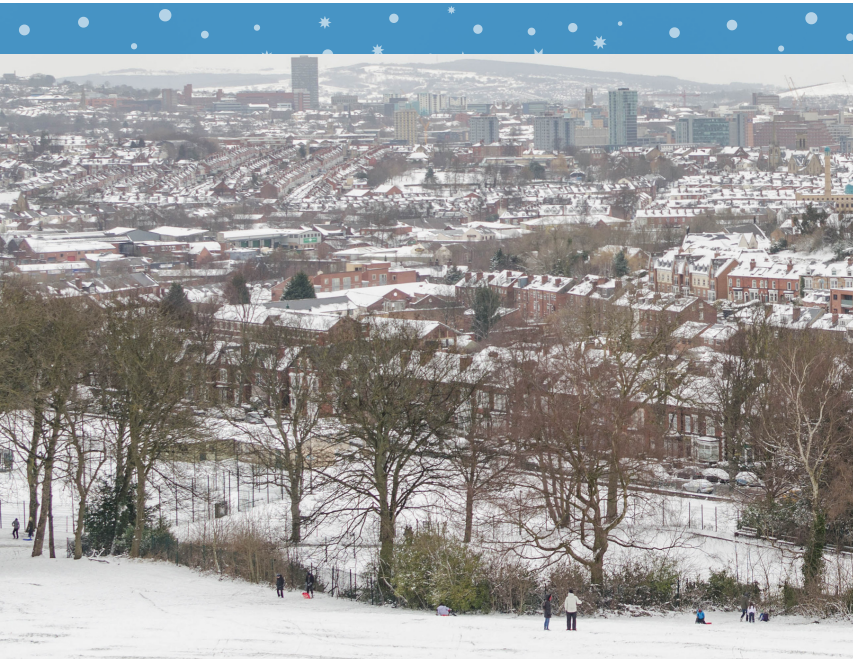
I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well as we prepare to leave 2020 behind.

There have been many challenges in the year for both you and your families as well as our staff delivering services to you. Although we have had to delay some of our planned investment projects in the year, I am very pleased that our staff and contractors have kept our vital day to day services running in this challenging time.

We're highly committed to keeping this level of service in place into 2021 and to support as many of our customers as we can, whatever 2021 may throw at us.

In the meantime, I'd like to wish you a peaceful festive season from myself and all the staff at Arches.

John Hudson
Director of Operations



seasons greetings from arches

2020 has probably been the strangest year any of us can remember, and we're all looking forward to a bit of rest and recharging over the winter break.

We're really proud of what we've achieved this year nonetheless, with Arches being re-awarded our G1/V1 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing; and our new 5-year contracts getting up and running, providing great continuous service to our customers.

We like to remind all customers that we're closing for the winter break from midday on 24 December and

will reopen on Monday 04 January 2021.

Our out of hours service will still be available to provide emergency help and support during the break.

As we come to an end of the tumultuous year that has been 2020, we want to say a big festive thank you to all of our staff and contractors who have worked their stockings off to ensure our services have been able to go ahead. This year has demanded a lot of change and flexibility and we're so proud of our teams for the way they've been able to rise to the challenge! ☺

opening times

As staffing levels have been affected by COVID-19, we have had to change our usual phone line opening hours to the following:

Monday 10am–4pm
Tuesday 10am–4pm
Wednesday 12:30pm–4pm
Thursday 10am–4pm
Friday 10am–4pm
Saturday Closed
Sunday Closed

You will be able to access our out of hours service if you call us outside these hours. Please note winter break opening times differ. ☺

your home in winter

Not only can the cold weather give us humans the chills - but the winter affects your home as well!

Head off problems before they start over the colder season by carrying out a few simple checks so ensure your home is winter-ready.

Prepare your outside space

Secure your rubbish bins or store them somewhere safe to make sure any windy spells don't see them off down the street! Replacement bins from the council can cost over £30 each, so this is an important step to make sure you keep your money in your pocket where it belongs - as well as protecting your and your neighbours' cars and property.

Clearing gutters and securing sheds are also important steps to prepare your home for winter, as well as covering garden furniture and protecting any cold-vulnerable plants.

Keep your pipes from freezing

Frozen pipes can be a major problem in winter, as when water freezes it expands

potentially damaging pipes and causing leaks. Make sure you're turning your heating on in cold weather to limit the risk of pipes bursting.

Also, make sure you know where your water stopcock is - if your pipes do freeze, turning off the water at the mains will help avoid damage from flooding.

Bleed radiators

Radiators need 'bleeding' when they have trapped air circulating in them, reducing the radiator's efficiency. You'll know if a radiator needs bleeding because when your heating is on the radiator will be cold at the top and hot at the bottom. A guide to bleeding radiators is available on our website.

Insure your belongings

Winter storms can cause lots of issues such as fire, flooding, or damage to property. Make sure you've taken out adequate contents insurance to look after your belongings if they are damaged as a result of a storm - or anything else! ☺

warm home discount scheme

You could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2020 to 2021 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

The discount is a one-off payment made to your supplier against your bill between September and March.

You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter. Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you're eligible, for example a voucher you can use to top up your meter.

There are two ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- you get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit
- you're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme

How you apply for the discount depends on how you qualify for it.

Find out more about how to apply at www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme. ☺



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.

welcoming new staff



We've welcomed lots of new faces this year! Join us in a big rousing Arches welcome to...

- Leah Montia, our new Head of Housing Operations
- Amelia Norton, our new Head of Development
- Alicia Hancock-Edwards, who has moved over from our Corporate Services team to become Customer Services Manager
- John Brookes, who has joined our Customer Services team permanently as Customer Services and

- Compliance Advisor
- Missy Haverkamp, our new Surveyor
- Matt Andrew, our new Data Services Manager
- Richard Barber, who has rejoined us as Data Services Officer following the successful completion of his degree (congratulations!)
- Nazmeen Ali, our new Management Accountant

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

a big congratulations to our income team

We'd like to say a huge congratulations to our income management team who have been key in ensuring Arches has been able to continue to operate over the last few months.

With the coronavirus outbreak threatening the incomes of our residents, the team have worked really hard to make sure our customer have been able to get any support they

are entitled to in order to pay rent and manage their households.

Their hard work in ensuring our income has been instrumental in making sure that Arches has been able to operate at full capacity during the various stages of the COVID-19 response. This means we haven't had to cut any services or staff. We also have been available to provide necessary

extra support to our most at-risk customers, in the form of food parcels, domestic abuse support and referrals on to other services.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to our Income Maximisation Officers, Harnek and Arafat, and our Financial Inclusion Caseworker, Shane, for their compassionate and dedicated work during this difficult and uncertain time.🔗



contents insurance

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

Contents insurance is a must for any resident - but many people don't take out their own insurance, wrongly believing that Arches provides 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 bit.ly/archesinsurance.🔗

our new developments

2020 has been a brilliant year for developments at Arches as we work hard to meet our commitment to provide secure affordable houses to the communities of the Sheffield City Region, with 40 new homes delivered since the start of 2020!

We've now handed over four more properties on the Wickersley development in Rotherham and two rented homes in Catcliffe - meaning six families have moved into their brand new homes just in time for Christmas.

Going forward into the new

year, we've now begun construction of our in-house development of 10 bungalows for over-55s across four sites in Rotherham. We're really excited to watch these new bungalows spring up to deliver much-needed housing for older people.

We're also planning on taking on more properties in Waverley and continuing to look for even more developments in the new year, with the projects headed up by our brand new Head of Development, Amelia! ☺



planned maintenance

Since the start of the pandemic, we've had to prioritise providing repairs and other essential services. This has unfortunately impacted the planned works programme, which means some works that were due to be completed this year have been delayed. We thank you for your patience and understanding in these difficult times!

We're planning to restart the programme mid-January 2021. Tenants whose homes are due for upgrades will be contacted as soon as possible in the new year.

In the meantime, we've still been ticking a few properties off the list! Over the last few months, we've managed to complete...

- Bathroom replacements and shower installations in nine properties
- Six doors replaced with composite doors
- External decorating in 146 properties
- Carbon monoxide detectors installed in 113 properties
- High efficiency 'A' rated boilers installed in 27 properties ☺

eu settlement scheme

**EU CITIZENS
LIVING IN THE UK
PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS
BY APPLYING TO THE EU
SETTLEMENT SCHEME**



If you are an EU citizen, resident in the UK by 31 December 2020, make sure you and your family members (including non-EU citizens) apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Even if you have lived in the UK for many years or you have a permanent residence document, you still need to apply in order to continue to

live, work and study in the UK beyond 30 June 2021.

The online application checks your identity and UK residence, and asks you to declare any criminal convictions.

The deadline for applications is 30 June 2021. You can find out more and apply at gov.uk/eusettlementscheme. ☺

Christmas opening times

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

We will reopen at 9am on Monday 04 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!*

christmas bin collections

Make sure you check if your usual bin collection days will change over the festive period so you don't miss a collection. You can check Sheffield bin collections at veolia.co.uk and Rotherham collections at rotherham.gov.uk.

Fly tipping can often be a problem around Christmastime, with all the extra waste meaning the average adult Brit fills two bin bags of rubbish on Christmas Day! So, make sure you're disposing of your rubbish responsibly to avoid the negative results of fly tipping - annoyed neighbours, the attraction of rats and other pests, or even financial penalties of up to £50,000 from your local council. ☹️

support over the festive period

Holidays can often be difficult times, with funds having to stretch even further than usual - and this year has been more difficult than most for many people.

We're able to refer any customer living in the Burngreave and Spital Hill area directly to the Burngreave food bank. For other food banks, you will need to get in touch with Citizens Advice to receive a voucher for your local food bank. Find your local food bank at sheffieldfoodbank.org.uk or rotherham.foodbank.org.uk.

Whatever you need, we're committed to making sure you get the help or support you require. If we can't provide it ourselves, we'll make sure we put you in touch with someone who can.

Contact our Customer Services team for any support you need - whether that's a referral, some advice, or just a chat, we're here to help.

Helpful resources

- NSPCC | 0808 800 5000 | text 88858
- Action on Elder Abuse helpline | 080 8808 8141
- National domestic abuse helpline | 0808 2000 247
- Modern slavery helpline | 0800 0121 700
- Sheffield Rethink mental health helpline | 0808 801 0440
- Samaritans | 0114 276 7277 or 116 123 | email jo@samaritans.org ☹️

tribute to community leader

We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Mr Muhammad Iqbal MBE, a community leader in Burngreave and former board member of Arches.

Mr Iqbal was already very active in the local community when he joined our board, as chair of the Burngreave New Deal Community Partnership Board and Vice Chair of the Burngreave New Deal for Communities, attracting millions in funding to the area.

Sally Steade, Head of Asset Operations at Arches, said, "his commitment to improving the lives and homes of people in Burngreave was inspirational.

"He had a talent for seeing opportunities and not giving up when obstacles were put in his way."

Mr Iqbal passed away in October 2020. He is survived by his wife of more than sixty years, Gulzar Begum, his children (Azra, Shahid, Fakhira and Nadeem), his thirteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren. ☹️



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

Tel: 0114 228 8100

Email: involvement@archeshousing.org.uk
Arches Housing Limited, 122 Burngreave Road, Burngreave, Sheffield S3 9DE

 /archeshousing  @archeshousing



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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.

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