

Tenant Newsletter

Welcome to the January edition of your tenant quarterly newsletter where you can read up to date information that might be useful for your tenancy and home.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

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A huge thank you to all tenants that completed the Tenant Satisfaction Survey. I am pleased to announce the following three winners randomly selected by Acuity Research and Practice who carried out the survey on behalf of the Trust...



All winners will shortly receive their vouchers from Acuity. We will shortly be publishing the results of the survey on our website.

Universal Credit

As the migration to Universal Credit continues we have provided some information to help you navigate this change to your benefit payments.

What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a payment to help with your living costs, it is paid monthly combines payments into one amount which is paid into your bank account.

Universal Credit is replacing the following six legacy benefits and/or tax credits:

- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Working Tax Credit

If you receive any of these benefits or tax credits, you do not need to do anything unless:

- your circumstances change (for example for home)
- you get a letter called a 'Migration Notice' from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) telling you that you must claim Universal Credit from a certain date
 it is important you do not ignore it.

Housing Benefit to Universal Credit Migration

Universal Credit will replace Housing Benefit. You can only make a new claim for Housing Benefit if you have reached state pension age or are in supported, sheltered, or temporary accommodation.

Universal Credit is paid to the claimant (you) in arrears. It takes at least 5 weeks for the claimant to get any money when they first claim. After the first payment, the claimant should get their UC (Universal Credit) on the same day each month.

How do I make an application for Universal Credit?

If you are already on Housing Benefit and there is a change to your circumstances, you may be able to remain on Housing Benefit.

Claimants can claim Universal Credit online or via the dedicated UC Migration Notice helpline for free on <u>0800 169 0328</u>.

You can also visit your local Jobcentre. Claimants who require more time to claim can also call Department for Work & Pensions directly for free on <u>0800 169 0328</u>.

When you log in to the UC portal, you'll see a 'to-do list' with different questions you need to answer. You'll need to answer them all before you can submit your claim.

How will this affect my rent payments?

Instead of getting a separate housing benefit payment which is often paid directly to the landlord (Papworth Trust) your rent (housing element) will usually be paid directly to you as part of your monthly Universal Credit payment.

Therefore, an alternative payment method will need to be made either by Direct Debit or Standing Order to ensure your rent is covered. Please contact a member of the Housing Team to support you to do this (you can sometimes ask Universal Credit to make payments for your housing element direct to your landlord, this is called an Alternative Payment Arrangement).

Further information can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit

and

https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/applying-foruniversal-credit/#:~:text=In%20your%20account%2C%20you%27II,Universal%20Credit%20 you%20should%20get.

Alternatively, you can contact the Housing Team for support and guidance on **0330 678 0008 (Option 2)** or <u>housing@papworthtrust.org.uk</u>

Repairs Phoneline

Here is the performance of our repairs and maintenance phoneline **October - December** 2024



Average number of calls per month (excluding out of hours)



(last quarter 394)



Average waiting time for your call to be answered



(last quarter 71 seconds)

We will be using this information to plan how we use our staff to ensure your calls are answered quickly.



We have provided information on **Fire Safety.** It contains practical information for managing risk of fire in your home.

Please do read this information carefully and if you require any further information please contact us by:

- emailing: repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk or
- calling 0330 678 0008, option 1.

In our last newsletter were sent information on **Asbestos** and **Condensation and Mould**. We hope you found this informative and useful. Please remember you can access this at any time on our website: <u>https://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/housing/tenants-policies/</u>

If you do not have internet access or require documents in a different format, please contact us on **0330 678 0008**, **option 2**.

Handyperson services in Cambridgeshire



Age UK operates a Handyperson Service supporting disabled and older people in their own homes to live independently and safely for longer. It also completes minor DIY tasks, the jobs you maybe did in the past but feel unsafe to do so now. The Handyperson Service supports people living in Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire, Huntingdon and Fenland.

Further information can be found here:

https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bp-assets/globalassets/cambridgeshire--peterborough-/ original-blocks/cambridgeshire-handyperson-service.pdf

To find out if there is a handyperson in your area, please visit the Age UK website: <u>www.ageuk.org.uk</u> or call the Age UK Advice Line on **0800 678 1602**.

Aaron Services change to Sureserve



An important update regarding Aaron Services, a trusted partner in providing heating and hot water services to our tenants. Starting from Monday, 6 January 2025, Aaron Services will rebrand and operate under the new name **Sureserve Compliance Central Limited.**

What does this change mean for you?

• **Same quality service:** The rebrand will not affect the services provided. The experienced team you know and trust will continue to work with you.

• **Transition period:** During this time, you may notice a mix of old and new branding. Some staff will still wear Aaron Services uniforms and use Aaron Services vans, while others will begin transitioning to the new Sureserve Compliance Central branding.

If you have any questions about this update, please contact the Repairs and Maintenance Team. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation during this transition.



repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk



0330 678 0008 option 1



We recognise that there remains a continuing struggle with the rising cost of living. We are here to help and if you need advice about paying your rent or if you are worried about your finances then please contact us. You can do this by:

- calling your Housing Officer on 0330 678 0008, option 2
- emailing <u>housing@papworthtrust.org.uk</u>

Please do contact us if you are experiencing any problems with paying your rent or other household bills. We can arrange to speak to you in a way and at a time that suits you.

Household Energy Support	Join your energy provider's Priority Services
https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/get-help-if-you- cannot-afford-your-energy-bills	Register. By doing this you will get a range of extra help when you need it.
As of 1 October, the cost of the energy price cap has increased by 10%	Contact your supplier straight away if you are worried about paying your energy bills. Ofgem's rules mean they must work with you to agree a payment plan you can afford.
	Contact one of the organisations below who can provide you with advice and guidance.

Household Support Fund You may be able to get some help with essential costs from your local council. Food Bank The Trussell Trust provide foodbanks across the region.	Check with your local council to find out what funding is available in your area: <u>https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council</u> Check where your nearest foodbank is here: <u>https://www.trussell.org.uk/emergen-</u>
Your Housing Officer can support you to get a foodbank voucher.	<u>cy-food</u> Contact your Housing Officer for a voucher.
Citizens Advice https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt- and-money/cost-of-living/get-help-with- the-cost-of-living/ A network of independent charities offering confidential advice online, over the telephone and in person for free.	Cost of living support information can be found on the website. National phone line 0800 144 8848 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday Calls are free Find your local Citizens Advice: <u>https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-</u> <u>us/contact-us/contact-us/</u>
Scope https://www.scope.org.uk/helpline The helpline advisors can answer questions and talk you through a wide range of top- ics connected with disability, including: Benefits Finance Social care Work Equipment and assistive technology Housing and home adaptions	Telephone helpline 0808 800 3333 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm Saturday Email helpline <u>helpline@scope.org.uk</u> Textphone dial 18001 then 0808 800 3333 Calls are free from UK landlines and mobiles
Age UK https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information- advice/money-legal/cost-of-living/ Free, confidential advice line for older people, families, friends, carers and professionals.	Telephone helpline 0800 678 1602 Lines open 8am to 7pm 365 days a year Calls are free

Join our new tenant sounding board!



The Sounding Board will give you the opportunity to give us feedback when it suits you. Whether you have a lot of time or a little, we will offer different ways for you to tell us what you think and have your voice heard.

Through the Sounding Board you will be able to take part in focus groups, complete surveys or questionnaire, give us feedback on draft information leaflets or use voting polls to give us your feedback and ideas.

The number of activities may change during the year, but we will keep in touch with you to let you know when these take place.

If you are interested in joining the Sounding Board or would like more information, contact us by email at <u>tenantengagement@papworthtrust.org.uk</u> or by calling:

0330 678 0008 option 2

If you have any other ideas or suggestions for ways in which you think we can interact and engage with tenants in a more effective way, please let us know.



Our Scrutiny Panel is a group of tenants who work with us to carry out reviews of the housing service. Panel members act as critical friends, giving us a customer perspective on our policies, procedures and working practices. There are currently 5 tenant Scrutiny Panel members, 3 of which joined in 2023.

The panel have an annual programme of work which includes quarterly meetings, conducting deep dive scrutiny reviews, providing activity reports to the Board of Trustees and providing feedback on other service specific areas on an ad hoc basis.

The Scrutiny Panel recommended the creation of a logo to clearly identify areas where tenants have played a role in shaping and approving services. After reviewing several design options, the Panel has selected a logo that will be used moving forward. When you see the Tenant Approved logo, it signifies the inclusion of tenants' voices, ideas, and priorities.



You can find the minutes of the quarterly Scrutiny Panel meetings on our website here: <u>https://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/Scrutiny%20Panel/scrutiny-meeting-minutes/</u>

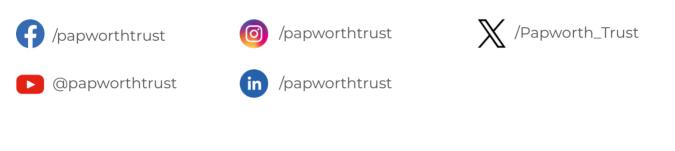
You can find the action plans for completed deep dive Scrutiny reviews here: <u>https://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/Scrutiny%20Panel/scrutiny-reviews/</u>

If you would like to find out more about the Scrutiny Panel or are interested in joining contact Tracey Croucher at <u>tenantengagement@papworthtrust.org.uk</u> or by calling: **0330 678 0008 option 2**.



Did you know you can follow Papworth Trust on social media? We use Facebook and X to keep our customers updated with the latest information.

Follow us here:







Please find your quarterly rent statement for the period **30 September to 29 December 2024** enclosed.

A reminder that you can find our video on how to read your rent statement that was created for tenants by tenants on our website here:

https://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/housing/

We have also provided the frequently asked questions on the next page to assist you in reading and understanding your statement.

How do I read my rent statement?

Your rent statement shows your weekly rental charge and any payments that have been made on your account between the two dates:

second column - details of the payment or charge, e.g. the payment type and for any Housing Benefit/direct Universal Credit any period that the payment covers. fifth column - the balance, a credit will have 'pre' after the amount, an arrears will have an 'arr' after the amount.

third column - if it is a payment the amount will be shown here

fourth column - if it is a charge the amount will be shown here

fifth column - the balance, a credit will have 'pre' after the amount, an arrears will have an 'arr' after the amount.

Question:

Do I have to do anything?

Answer:

No, the statement is for your records only. If any further action is required on your account you will be contacted by a member of the housing team. If you do have any queries please either contact the housing team by email at <u>housing@papworthtrust.org.uk</u> or by telephone on **0330 678 0008 (option 2)**.

Question:

Why does the final balance of my statement show an arrear?

Answer:

This may be due to when you pay your rent. Under the terms of your tenancy agreement you are responsible for ensuring that your rent is paid in advance so that there is never an arrear on your account. A member of the housing team will contact you, in due course, if any further action is required on your account.

Question:

My account is showing a credit, can I have a refund?

Answer:

There may be a credit on the account depending on when you pay your rent. You are required to pay your rent in advance so you are not automatically entitled to a refund even if there is a credit showing on your account. If you are due a refund you will be contacted by a member of the housing team.

Papworth Trust is consciously considering our impact on the environment, we will be making an active effort to reduce the amount of paper we use. If we hold a email address for you we will send you future newsletters by email, If you would prefer to receive a hard copy, or require any other adjustments, please let us know at: tenantengagement@papworthtrust.org.uk

