



# STREETS AHEAD

THE MAGAZINE FOR FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING TENANTS

## WINTER SUPPORT

We know that winter can bring higher living costs, and we're here to help

## LET'S TALK SCAMS

Helping you be aware where scams are concerned

## YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

Win a chance for you and your family to visit the Panto!

## FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY FUND

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# MERRY CHRISTMAS, EVERYONE!

**Freebridge**  
COMMUNITY HOUSING

# WELCOME TO STREETS AHEAD

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Anita Jones  
Chief Executive



**As we approach the end of 2024, I want to take a moment to reflect on the past few months at Freebridge.**

Just a few weeks ago I had the privilege of attending the Independent East Board and Tenant Conference, our regional network of five community-driven housing associations. The day was attended by tenants, board members and guests and was filled with insight, inspiration, and an important reminder of the power of Housing Associations working together to improve services and strengthen our communities.

In addition to our own tenants, board members and guests attending, we were joined by those of Orwell Housing Association, Havebury Housing Partnership, Saffron Housing Trust, and Broadland Housing Group. It was not only a fantastic opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and expertise, but also a powerful reminder of the value of sharing knowledge for the benefit of the communities we serve, and highlighted the importance of exploring further opportunities for collaboration to enhance the value we provide, and ensure we deliver the best possible outcomes for our collective tenants.

You may have seen that our Freebridge Winter Support Plan is now live and sees us working even more closely with our community partners to provide vital support during the colder months.

Please take a moment to read through the details on page 04 and if you, or someone you know requires help, whether through our support fund, warm hubs, winter packs, or calls, we are here to help ensure that no one has to face the winter alone or in need.

Finally, I'd like to recognise my Freebridge colleagues, whose teamwork on fundraising efforts over the past six months has been nothing short of inspiring. From mammoth walking challenges to quizzes, bake sales, bird-box making, and a whole lot more, it has been a shining example of collaboration in action and together, they've raised funds for five fantastic local charities that are doing great work in our communities.

**So, as we head into the festive season, I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a joyful holiday, however you choose to celebrate.**

Anita





# CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR OPENING HOURS

**Our reception will be closed from lunchtime on Tuesday, 24 December 2024 and will re-open on Thursday, 2 January 2025 (8.45am).**

During this time, you will still be able to call us on **03332 404 444** for any emergency or urgent repairs that you may have.

This can include problems with serious anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, homelessness, flood or fire.

Please do also contact us if you are in need of emergency food or energy vouchers, as we will have colleagues available to help during this time.

**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from everyone at Freebridge!**

## How to use a QR code



We know many of you are tech savvy, but as we're using more and more QR codes to provide easy access to pages we think are useful for you to link to, we wanted to provide a reminder of how to use them.

Why not practice with this one? Select your camera on your

smart phone, and hover it over the QR code so you can see it on your screen - a link should pop up at the bottom - and you can just click on it and it'll open the page on your browser, simple! This one takes you to our Freebridge website ([freebridge.org.uk](https://freebridge.org.uk)).





# OUR WINTER SUPPORT FOR YOU

We know that winter can bring higher living costs, and we're here to help ensure that health, safety, housing, and well-being remain a priority for everyone.

**Our Winter Response Plan runs from 1st November to 28th February - and we'd like to share some of our key offerings of support to you:**

- **Winter energy grants:** Additional one-off grants will be available for customers residing in our least thermally efficient homes, helping to ease energy costs.
- **Housing partnerships:** We'll be working closely with local authorities to prioritise housing for homeless individuals and those in urgent need.

- **Warm hubs:** Our Community Centre (The Discovery Centre) in North Lynn will host Warm Hubs every Thursday from 10 AM to 3 PM, creating a welcoming space for the wider community, alongside our adult social sessions.

- **Outreach:** We're reaching out to residents aged over 75 who don't live in sheltered schemes with telephone calls to ensure they know about the support available.

- **Support fund:** We're providing financial assistance for energy and food vouchers, available to all customers, including those in sheltered accommodation.

**If you, or somebody you know, would benefit from accessing our Support Fund, both our Income Team and Support Team will be very happy to help.**

Our Placeshapers are putting on a number of different activities during our Warm Hubs, you can check out what is coming up by heading to page 18.

## Want to let us know about a problem in your home?

@ Email [HCM@Freebridge.org.uk](mailto:HCM@Freebridge.org.uk) or;

☎ call us on 03332 404 444

If your contact is about a repair, please do send us any photos relating to your concern as it will help the team in logging your repair on our system.



# HELPING YOU WITH OUR SUPPORT FUND

**We know that winter can be a challenging time for many.**

If you find yourself struggling with the cost of living, please be aware that we are here to help you.

**Did you know that we have a Support Fund that you may be able to access if you need financial support?**

**If you feel like you are struggling financially and need support, please do call us on 0333 240 4444 (option 3) and speak to our Income Team.**



 SCAN ME

More support can be found on our website, scan the QR or head to:  
[freebridge.org.uk/freebridge-customer/welfare-and-support/winter-support](https://freebridge.org.uk/freebridge-customer/welfare-and-support/winter-support)

**If you need additional help please do contact our Tenancy Support Team at [tenancysupport@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:tenancysupport@freebridge.org.uk)**

or call us on **03332 404 444**, hold the line and then ask to speak to our Tenancy Support Team.



Our new Chair, Bob Walder



**Freebridge**  
COMMUNITY HOUSING

## A WARM WELCOME FROM OUR NEW CHAIR

*Our new Board Chair, Bob Walder, talks about his first few months in post.*

**Firstly, I would like to extend my gratitude for the wonderfully warm welcome I have received since joining Freebridge. Although I am still only a couple of months into my role as Chair of the Board, I have already been delighted to begin meeting residents and members of the community, as well as getting to know my fellow board members and Freebridge colleagues better.**

What has struck me most during my time here is the strong sense of connection and community across west Norfolk. It's clear that the people here take great pride in their neighbourhoods and genuinely care for one another. This spirit of unity is something I hold in high regard, and it's at the very core of what

we value at Freebridge. It is this deep sense of community that reinforces why tenant engagement is fundamental to everything we do.

As we look ahead to 2025, I am eager to continue working alongside you and our teams to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, and their needs are met. This engagement is not just about surveys or formal meetings - it's about building on our relationships and further fostering two-way communication. I've pleased to say that I've already started meeting with tenants and residents and attending community events with colleagues to listen to a wide range of perspectives. It's this feedback that will guide our

future priorities and help us better serve you.

I'm looking forward to the opportunities to meet more of you in person and to hear your ideas on how we can continue to improve our services.

Together, we can ensure that Freebridge remains responsive to the needs of all our residents and that the strong sense of community that makes west Norfolk such a special place only grows stronger.

**Thank you once again for the warm welcome I've received. I'm truly looking forward to what we can achieve together in the years ahead.**



# INTRODUCING THE FREEBRIDGE ACADEMY!



**Freebridge has recently introduced a new role within its People Team: the Learning Resource Facilitator. This role is designed to create learning opportunities for colleagues and tenants, support development, and provide the resources needed to help with career and development discussions.**

Dan shared: "I'm really excited to have the chance to support Freebridge, its colleagues, and tenants by facilitating a variety of free training opportunities and resources. It's a fantastic time to be part of Freebridge, and I'm looking forward to discussing with you what training opportunities you would like to see in the future."

"As someone who started as a trainee at Freebridge, I've experienced firsthand the impact that the right support and opportunities can have. I'm eager to help others benefit from the same."

## What is the Freebridge Academy?

This is where the magic happens. We're talking about developing incredible meaningful opportunities within our local community driven by the skills and development training that you want to see.

The hope is that Freebridge Academy will be available to all of our customers, and the aim is that every customer will be able to find something in the programme which can benefit them.

## We want to hear from you

We would like to hear what training opportunities you would like to see available through The Academy. Some of those being considered at the moment are;

- Interview Skills
- Helping to build a great CV
- Work Experience

**Have your say by heading to our page over on myFreebridge and filling in a short survey. We'll keep the page updated with future opportunities, so make sure you sign up to the platform and 'follow this project' on the page, so that you get kept up-to-date on the latest.**

There will also be opportunities for our Customer Voice Panel and Service Champions to have their say throughout the year.

Take our survey here:  
[freebridgecommunityhousing.  
uk/engagementhq.com/the-  
academy](https://freebridgecommunityhousing.uk/engagementhq.com/the-academy) Or, scan the QR code:





# DID YOU KNOW THAT WE OFFER APPRENTICESHIPS AT FREEBRIDGE?

In recent months, Louie, our new Apprentice Carpenter, has begun his stint with us. Louie, who is 16, will be studying at the College of West Anglia (CWA) on Mondays and then will work his apprenticeship with us on Tuesday - Friday each week.



During his time with Freebridge, Louie will also be working with mentors within our operative base throughout what will be a two-year placement.

Our Operations Manager Steve Manning is pleased that we're able to play our part in this apprenticeship and feels it shows what our relationship with CWA, through The

Academy (see page 07), can deliver for both Freebridge and young people in west Norfolk.

Steve said: "From our perspective, we're hoping Louie will see a full variety of works while at Freebridge to help take him from the level he's at now to becoming a competent tradesperson during the duration of his apprenticeship. We've got a very strong plan for Louie and we're confident that he'll get the support he needs here.

"I think that this shows that our relationship with the College of West Anglia is strong and that, when we identify needs in our workforce, we can use The Academy to start bringing apprentices like Louie through.

"We want young people to come in and flourish with us and develop themselves - while also improving the service we offer to our customers."

**Know somebody who would benefit from an apprenticeship at Freebridge? Email [communications@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:communications@freebridge.org.uk) and we'll see if we can help.**



# LET'S TALK SCAMS

**Did you know that, during the pandemic, the number of people of who fell victim to scams rose - an increase we are still seeing today.**

**It's with that in mind that a partnership between Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk Trading Services was formed to get out into the community and not only talk to the victims, but also to speak to others in a bid to educate them on scamming.**

We heard all about these 'scam talks' and felt it would be great to introduce them at our sheltered schemes.

So far, they've been hosted at Sutton Lea, Windsor Park and Neville Court - with plans for them to take place at our 14 others schemes.

So, if you get word that a scam talk is taking place in your scheme, be sure to attend!

And don't just take our word for it, here are a few pieces of feedback we've had from tenants who have attended:

- "It was very interesting and I'm very aware now."
- "It was really good and I enjoyed it."
- "Very informative and we now have the safe 159 number, very beneficial."

**If you live on one of our schemes and would like to know more, please do contact your scheme manager for further information.**

## ACCESS TO YOUR HOME

**Ensuring that you are safe in your home is hugely important to us at Freebridge.**

When it comes to you giving us access to your homes, it is vitally important that you allow us to carry out key inspections.

At this time of the year, that is especially the case when it comes to appointments concerning your alarm and heating checks.

Of course, we understand that you all lead busy lives and that you can't agree to every appointment that is offered to you.

So, it's important that you let us know when an appointment doesn't work for you so we can reschedule - and make sure your home is safe at the earliest opportunity.

**So, if you can't be there, please let us know and we'll be sure to come another time!**



**WE CALLED WHILE YOU WERE OUT...**  
PLEASE CONTACT US USING THE DETAILS ON THE BACK OF THIS CARD



Freebr  
COMMUNITY HOUSING



# FREEBRIDGE GIVES £40K TO LOCAL CHARITIES & GROUPS THROUGH COMMUNITY FUND

We're proud to reveal that we have increased our Community Fund to a record £40,000 this year.



## Norfolk Community Foundation and Service Champions help identify ten great causes.

The Community Fund, which has always been available to support community and voluntary activities that meet the needs of the community, will support a number of great causes in 2024.

Following a session with Norfolk Community Foundation and Freebridge's Customer Voice and Service Champion members, we are delighted to be able to donate to ten great local groups and charities in west Norfolk.

The remit for this fund is to support groups and organisations who promote health and wellbeing, tackle disadvantage, support local solutions, promote community

cohesion, develop sustainable and supportive communities, and improve the environment.

The following groups and charities have been chosen for support this year:

- Age UK - £3,000
- AEA - £3,000
- Docking Playing Fields - £2,360
- Great Massingham Area Community Car Scheme - £3,000
- Hanseatic Union - £5,000
- North Lynn Methodist Church - £3,640
- Pandora Project - £5,000
- Swan Youth Project - £5,000
- The Gateway Church - £5,000
- The Wild Hub - £5,000

North Lynn Methodist Church's

Rev Jon Price said: "We're thrilled that this has been made available and ensures that this community asset can be maximised."

A Freebridge Customer Voice Panel member said: "I enjoyed the whole process of the fund decisions session. Being able to support these projects, which help to rebuild lives and support fresh starts right at the heart of our community, is empowering and altruistically rewarding.

"It was so good in particular to see the Swan Youth Project and the Pandora Project receive this funding, especially when there have been so many cuts going on in addition to the ongoing impact of Covid still causing strain.

"I think this is a fantastic gesture from Freebridge."

# FLY-TIPPING IN WEST NORFOLK

**We wanted to take a moment to talk to you about fly-tipping.**

Fly-tipping is illegally dumped rubbish – which also includes household waste that has been presented incorrectly.

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) will investigate cases of fly-tipping, which includes dumped:

- household rubbish
- garden waste
- mattresses
- construction materials
- electrical items

It's important that you take the above on board, as there will be financial and legal penalties for anybody found guilty of fly-tipping.

We recently saw one of our tenants attended court and plead guilty to fly-tipping.

This person received a six-month conditional discharge and a fine in excess of £250.

So please, don't fly-tip! If you see somebody doing so, gather as much evidence as you can and report it via the BCKLWN website, where there is also a lot more information to be found on fly-tipping:

[west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/312/fly-tipping\\_illegal\\_dumping](http://west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/312/fly-tipping_illegal_dumping)

Or you can find the page easily by scanning the QR code



## DON'T FORGET!

**You now need to book to bring waste to the recycling centre. You can book up to one week before your visit. Please note you do not need to book to visit, buy from, or donate to a reuse shop.**

**You can do this by visiting the Norfolk County Council website.**



**Norfolk County Council**



## SMOKING DURING APPOINTMENTS

**One of the key parts of our relationship with you as tenants is when our Operatives visit your homes to make repairs or carry out inspections.**

It's absolutely key to us that Freebridge colleagues treat you with respect and both work and behave appropriately while they are inside your home.

This is, however, a two-way street and we'd ask that you afford Freebridge workers the same courtesy when they arrive at your home to carry out a job.

We'd like to remind you that, if you smoke, you should please refrain from doing so inside your home before and while a Freebridge colleague is there.

At Freebridge, we have a duty not to expose our workers to hazards, and must therefore take appropriate steps to prevent or minimise any risks.

With that in mind, when one of our colleagues is working in your home, they may be exposed to second-hand smoke.

To deal with this risk we ask you not to smoke during or at least one hour before any visit, and to allow the worker to ventilate the rooms they are working in by opening windows (should they need to).

**We thank you for your assistance in this area.**



# CUSTOMER VOICE UPDATE

As the golden leaves begin to fall and a crisp chill fills the air, there's a fresh energy in the Service Champion Forum and Customer Voice Panel.

**Our new panel members have now settled in after a couple of meetings, and they've brought with them new perspectives that have given our discussions a refreshing boost. We always look forward to welcoming new members, as their insights spark vibrant conversations that lead to real change.**

Since our last update in the previous edition of Streets Ahead, the Customer Voice Panel has been hard at work, reviewing new policies.

Their feedback has been so valuable that the consultation has been extended to the Service Champions, ensuring even more voices are heard before these policies are finalised.

The Service Champions have really sharpened their scrutiny

skills, particularly around anonymised Stage 2 complaints. They're now making well-informed recommendations to the Freebridge team, helping improve how issues are handled.

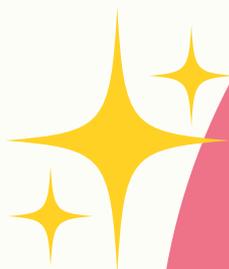
Both groups have also held Freebridge to account on performance, especially around empty properties. Their persistent questions have kept the focus on getting homes back on the market for those who need them most.

In the spirit of community, the Customer Voice Panel supported Freebridge with the funding decision-making process and decided how the money should be spent, with the help of the Norfolk Community Foundation. To ensure these funds benefit the community, the Service

Champions joined the judging panel, making sure the chosen projects align with tenant needs (read more on page 10).

Looking ahead, we hope to wrap up our scrutiny work next quarter.

Keep an eye out for the next edition, where we'll have more updates on our ongoing efforts. It's an exciting season for change, and we're eager to see what the future holds!



**Bex**  
Freebridge's  
Customer  
Voice Lead

## SOME WORDS FROM SERVICE CHAMPION PANEL MEMBER, MAG

**After retiring from a career in local government housing, I became a Freebridge tenant in a rural village and noticed differences between rural and urban housing, especially around repairs and communication.**

Conversations with my retired neighbours revealed shared concerns. While initially impressed with the service, I saw that tackling issues like communal areas and gardens was more effective through a collective approach rather than individual reports.

I came across the Service Champions Forum on the myFreebridge site and decided to join. For two years, I've been part of this group, which consists of 12 tenants

from diverse backgrounds, all bringing valuable perspectives to our monthly meetings.

We discuss Freebridge's performance, scrutinise complaints, and suggest improvements.

Access to regular data also allows us to ask meaningful questions, hold Freebridge to account, and make recommendations.

One of our key focuses has been understanding the repairs process and assessing quality control and communication touchpoints. We've also scrutinised anonymised complaints to improve how Freebridge handles customer issues.

Recently, we also played a key role in helping Freebridge

decide where to allocate £40k of Community Fund money (more on page 10) to help support local projects that benefit tenants, demonstrating our commitment to making a positive impact.

Being a Service Champion has been a rewarding experience. Our group has a real opportunity to influence change, and I'm optimistic about our future plans.

If anyone is interested in joining, I encourage them to get involved and have their voice heard.

Mag



myfreebridge

If you haven't already, make sure you sign up to myFreebridge, our online platform for us to share information with you, and for you to voice your opinions!



Register by scanning here, or heading to the myFreebridge site: [freebridgecommunityhousing.uk.engagementhq.com](https://freebridgecommunityhousing.uk.engagementhq.com)



# WE'RE IN A 53-WEEK YEAR!

**A reminder, as we head towards 2025, that the financial year 2024/25 is one of those rare years in that has 53 weeks instead of 52.**

What that means for all Freebridge customers is that this year (from April, 2024) will have 49 rent charging weeks instead of the usual 48, with four rent-free weeks as usual.

If you pay monthly, you can calculate how much you should be paying by multiplying your weekly rent by 49 and then dividing that by 12. So, for example, if your rent is £95 week it's:  $£95 \times 49 \div 12 = £387.92$  (we'll do this for you automatically if you pay by direct debit).

If you receive Housing Benefit you don't need to do anything, as the 49 rent-charging weeks will be paid.

If you receive Universal Credit, you should be aware that this is currently calculated on a 52-week basis. Your rent is charged weekly, but Universal Credit is assessed and paid monthly.

**Want support with budgeting or other money advice? Email our Tenancy Support team at [TenancySupport@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:TenancySupport@freebridge.org.uk) and they'll be happy to help.**

## CONSENT TO ACT

**If you ever need to contact us on behalf of a family or friend who is a Freebridge tenant, please do make sure that you have consent to act on their behalf.**

It's natural that this kind of situation can occur – and we appreciate that this can happen at times of distress or concern for you.

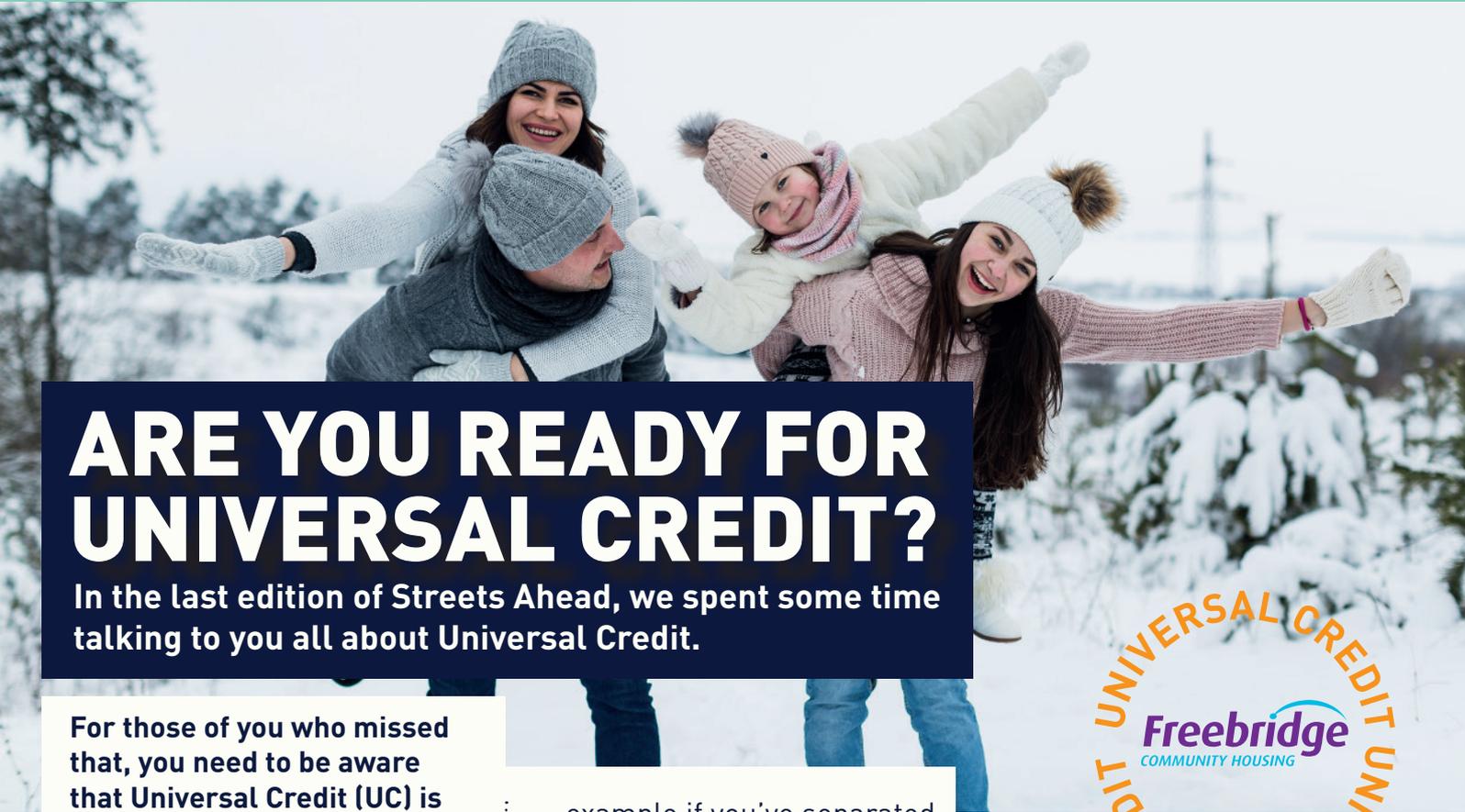
However, it's important to understand that the Freebridge team are only able to discuss things with the person who is named on the tenancy agreement.

If you need to gain consent to act on behalf of a family member or friend, please do contact us and ask to be sent a third-party representation (consent to act) form. This can also be done verbally if both parties are present.

This consent to act will remain in place until you let us know of a change in circumstances.

**Please know that you may cancel this consent at any time by contacting us on 03332 404 444 or emailing us at [DataProtectionOfficer@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@freebridge.org.uk).**





# ARE YOU READY FOR UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

In the last edition of Streets Ahead, we spent some time talking to you all about Universal Credit.

For those of you who missed that, you need to be aware that **Universal Credit (UC)** is replacing six benefits called 'legacy benefits'.

They are:

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

Indeed, under the current timetable, all CTC and WTC claims will end by March 2025 and all other legacy benefits will end by March 2026.

If you claim one of these legacy benefits, you'll have to move onto Universal Credit when:

- You receive a Migration Notice from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) - or;
- Your circumstances change in certain ways - for

example if you've separated from or moved in with a partner or moved to a different council area.

## How will I know when I need to claim UC?

If you've had a letter from DWP telling you to claim UC, what you must do really does depend on what's in the letter.

- If the letter gives a deadline for you to claim UC, it's a Migration Notice. The deadline date to apply by will be three months after the date the notice was sent. You will need to claim UC by the deadline on the letter, or you can ask them to extend it. If you don't, all of your current benefits will stop.
- If your letter doesn't have a deadline, you don't have to claim UC just yet - even if the letter says you'll have to claim it in future. Applying too early means you won't be entitled to any Transitional Protection - and you could be worse off.

## What if my circumstances change?

If your work, home or family circumstances change and you haven't had a Migration Notice, you may need to claim UC to maximise your household income. Some changes will end your current benefit claim - so claiming UC might be the only way to replace them.

## What if I haven't had a Migration Notice or had a change of circumstances?

You can still move to UC - but it's important to check if you'll be better off before you do. If you have a choice between staying on your old benefits and claiming Universal Credit, please talk to an adviser.

- Check your entitlement by visiting [entitledto.co.uk](https://entitledto.co.uk) or you can always contact our Income Team on 0333 240 4444 (option 3).





# YOUR CLAIM, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

## Managing your UC claim

**Did you know that, when you claim Universal Credit (UC), it is part of your claimant commitment that you keep in contact with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)?**

It is YOU who are responsible for informing the DWP when any changes happen to your circumstances.

If you have an online claim you should check your journal at least once a week so you don't miss any messages from the DWP or your Work Coach.

If you have a telephone claim, meanwhile, ensure you respond to text messages from the DWP and/or your Work Coach to prevent your claim being either suspended or cancelled.

## Logging into your online UC Account

Each time you log in you will need your username and password you set up when you first made your claim.

You'll need to answer one of the security questions you set up on your account.

You might be asked to set up an extra security feature called two factor authentication. If you agree to this, you'll be sent a one-time passcode to your phone which you will then need to enter to access your account.

## Check your online account

Whenever you complete something on your to-do list, you'll be able to find it under the section called 'journal'. This is so you have a record of what you've done.

## You can also use your journal to:

- contact the DWP and your work coach
- add and upload evidence such as information on your health or childcare costs

It's worth noting if you do not complete a to-do list or fail to provide the requested documents to support your

claim, your UC claim could get cancelled.

## Did you know you can also use your Universal Credit account to:

- apply for an advance on your first payment
- see your statement
- report a change in circumstances
- add a note to your journal
- see your to-do list
- see when your next payment will be
- see your Claimant Commitment





If you have any queries or if your payment is incorrect, call the UC Service Centre or if you need help with this call Freebridge's Income Team on 0333 240 4444 (option 3).

## CONTACTING UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Universal Credit helpline (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

☎ Telephone: 0800 328 5644

☎ Textphone: 0800 328 1344

Relay UK (if you can't hear or speak on the phone, you can type what you want to say): 18001 then 0800 328 5644

All calls are free from mobiles and landlines. Alternatively, visit your local Job Centre.



### Reporting a change in circumstances

If you have an online claim, you must report any changes online by using the 'Report a Change' option on the journal.

You need to report any changes to your circumstances, so you keep getting the right amount of UC each month. Changes in your circumstances can affect how much you're paid for your whole assessment period.

It is important to report any changes as they happen. By delaying reporting when something changes it could mean that you receive more UC than you are entitled to – or not enough!

#### Changes you need to report include:

- anyone moving in or out of the property
- finding or finishing a job
- having a child
- starting to care for a child or disabled person
- your child stopping or restarting education or

training, if they're 16 to 19

- changing your mobile number or email address
- moving to a new address
- going outside Great Britain for any length of time- this includes any holidays abroad
- changing your bank details
- your rent going up or down
- changes to your health condition
- becoming too ill to work or meet your work coach
- changes to your earnings (only if you're self-employed)
- changes to your savings, investments or how much money you have
- changes to your immigration status, if you're not a British citizen.

**If you have a telephone claim you still need to update any of these changes by calling the service centre or visiting the job centre in person.**



# WARM HUBS AT DISCOVERY CENTRE DECEMBER 2024 - JANUARY 2025

## Warm Hubs (Every Thursday 10am - 12noon)

- 05 Dec      Soup morning - games available, arts & crafts and a film
- 12 Dec      Seasonal Christmas crafts & coat swap event
- 19 Dec      Community Christmas bingo
- 02 Jan      Book club launch
- 09 Jan      Knit & Natter
- 16 Jan      Coffee & cake with partner agencies
- 23 Jan      Seated yoga - in partnership with Tesco Community Champion
- 30 Jan      Book club & bingo

*Free hot drinks and biscuits available at sessions*



## COME TOGETHER FOR A COMMUNITY DINNER

Every Tuesday between 4pm - 6pm  
from Tuesday 7th January to Tuesday 25th February  
Come and enjoy a warm meal - contact Placeshapers for more information and to book:

[placeshapers@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:placeshapers@freebridge.org.uk) or call 01553 667777



For additional information please head to our Facebook page at [facebook.com/discoverycentrekingslynn](https://facebook.com/discoverycentrekingslynn) or scan here!



Discovery Centre, Columbia Way, King's Lynn PE30 2LA

For more things going on in the local area, make sure you check out the What's On page on myFreebridge!



**Discovery Centre**  
A PLACESHAPING COMMUNITY CENTRE

# YOUR CHANCE TO WIN THIS CHRISTMAS!



How would you like the chance to win tickets to see a sparkly family Pantomime this Christmas at the Alive King's Lynn Corn Exchange?

Well, you're in luck! We're giving a family of four a chance to win tickets to see Cinderella at the Alive Corn Exchange for a date between Tuesday 31 December 2024 and Sunday 5 January, 2025.

## How to enter!

For your chance to win a family ticket (for four people) to see Cinderella (to use between 31st December 2024 - 5th January 2025) head to myFreebridge, (or, you can scan the QR code below) and leave your contact details. Alive Corn Exchange will then get in touch with the winner in the week leading up to Christmas to book your preferred performance!

Enter here!



**Competition closes on Wednesday 18th December 2024!**



# OUR CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

**We've had a busy few months when it comes to developing a number of sites!**

Our Development Team have been out and about to celebrate the excellent work being done, including at The Willows in Downham Market – where we have five homes ready to launch.

Likewise, our team were also over at Isle Road in Outwell to check on the significant progress there!

We're also pleased to be able to reveal that our homes on the Salter's Road development in King's Lynn all either have tenants in already, or are scheduled to do so by mid-December.

Our new homes on Farrow Court at Hillington Square are also on-course to be occupied before Christmas, too.

We've also begun preliminary works on our project on Main Road in Clenchwarton, which a few of you have contacted us about already.

We'll have more on that development a little further in the future!

**If you ever have any questions about any of our developments, please do email [development@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:development@freebridge.org.uk) and we'll come back to you.**

We've also had progress on our builds at our development in Watlington



*The Willows, Downham Market*



# OPT IN TO RECEIVE A DIGITAL COPY OF STREETS AHEAD

**Streets Ahead is sent to you every few months as you are a customer of Freebridge Community Housing.**

We send the magazine to all of our customers to tell you about the services we provide and the work we're doing as a registered provider of social housing.

If you no longer want to receive a paper copy of Streets Ahead delivered



to you, and want to receive a digital copy instead, just let us know, and we will arrange for you to be removed from our current mailing list.

To opt-out of receiving a paper copy, you can fill in our digital form by scanning the QR code below, or you can email your name and address to [communications@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:communications@freebridge.org.uk)



Scan me to opt in to receive a digital version of Streets Ahead!

# COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS AT FREEBRIDGE

At Freebridge, it's massively important to us that we offer you the best possible customer service.

## Housing Ombudsman Service

We can help if you have a problem complaining to your landlord.

**Contact us:**

**by telephone on:**  
0300 111 3000

**by email:** [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**via our website:** [housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**or by post at:** Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET



Please note that this is an updated address to send by post!

**We do, however, understand that there will always be times when you're unhappy with a situation at your home or within your community.**

Of course, you'll want us to be aware of this and it is your right to contact us and let us know how you feel we can improve the service we are offering to you.

We do very much encourage you to get in touch with us if you have an issue and will always be very happy to hear from you.

We'd also love to hear from you if you'd like to praise our service. Likewise, if members of the Freebridge team have gone above and beyond to help you, we'd also like to know.

We are always analysing our performance - and your feedback is a key part of that. So, your complaints, comments and compliments are important as they allow us to better shape the service we offer to you.

At Freebridge, we are committed to providing excellent customer service, which means we must always look at ourselves and how you feel we are performing.

Your feedback, be it positive or negative, really helps us and is always passed on to leaders and managers within the Freebridge team, which helps us improve the way we operate.

**You can contact us by emailing [feedback@freebridge.org.uk](mailto:feedback@freebridge.org.uk).**

April 2024

07

compliments received

32

complaints received

Reasons for complaints

20	property condition
3	estate management
21	other

May 2024

06

compliments received

42

complaints received

Reasons for complaints

23	property condition
07	estate management
30	other

June 2024

03

compliments received

43

complaints received

Reasons for complaints

26	property condition
05	estate management
24	other

# OUR PERFORMANCE

FOR QUARTER ONE (APRIL - JUNE 2024)

Complaints received **117**

Our monthly average is 39



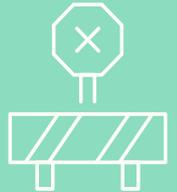
Repairs completed **5,586**

That's an average of 1,862 repairs per month



Gained no access **200**

No access was given for appointments at 200 properties



New homes **0**

We didn't complete any new builds during this time, starting completions from July onwards



Time taken to complete routine repairs **48 Days**

Our target is 28 days



Some complaints are added to more than one category, so they may not add up to the total number of complaints for that month!



# HOW TO CONTACT US

## VISIT or WRITE TO US at:

Juniper House, Austin Street,  
King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 1DZ

We're open between:

8.45am - 5.15pm (Monday-Thursday)

8.45am - 4.45pm (Friday)

and closed on Saturdays, Sundays and  
Bank Holidays.

**TELEPHONE:** 03332 404 444

We've been made aware that some mobile  
phone providers now charge for calling numbers  
beginning with 0333, if your provider is one of  
these you can also contact us on 0800 1691694 -  
which is free from all numbers.

Out of office hours our main number diverts to  
our 24 hour emergency service.

**WEBSITE:** [freebridge.org.uk](http://freebridge.org.uk)

**FACEBOOK:** [facebook.com/freebridge](https://facebook.com/freebridge)

**X:** @freebridge



## TREATING EVERYONE FAIRLY

Freebridge treat everyone fairly. We promote equality of opportunity and value the differences between our customers and everyone who works for Freebridge Community Housing. All our employees, contractors and consultants must treat colleagues and customers with politeness, tolerance, and respect, regardless of their age, colour, disability, ethnicity, sex or gender identity, marital status, nationality or national origin, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities or any other unjustifiable reasons.

**We will not tolerate unfair discriminatory behaviour of any kind and we encourage the reporting of any such behaviour. We will act upon all complaints appropriately.**

The views expressed in this publication are those of contributors, and not necessarily those of Freebridge Community Housing. This entire publication is under copyright, and is not to be duplicated or reproduced in any way without permission.

## IF YOU NEED ANY HELP TO UNDERSTAND THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE GET IN TOUCH

This magazine is wrapped in 100% compostable film. Mailing film certified as biodegradable and compostable to the European standard EN13442.

