



# Sheltered Scheme Newsletter

## Spring 2024

For environmental reasons, we don't print a copy of this newsletter for every tenant.

Once you're finished reading, pass me along to your neighbour to enjoy!

If you'd like any news or events included in the next newsletter, please email:

**Communications  
@redkitechousing  
.org.uk**

or speak to your  
**Sheltered Specialist.**

More news can be found on our website at **redkitechousing.org.uk/news.**

Spring is finally here, and it's time for our latest Sheltered Newsletter! We've got lots of updates and stories to share with you.

This time, we're focusing on our new opening hours, success stories, community highlights, and safety advice.

### **CEO shadows tenant damp, mould and condensation visits**

At Red Kite, we're dedicated to providing the best possible services to our tenants. As part of our commitment, we've made significant improvements to our damp, mould, and condensation (DMC) process to ensure it's both thorough and efficient. In July last year, we worked closely with our tenants during a scrutiny bootcamp to guarantee that our services meet their needs and expectations.

Recently, our Group Chief Executive, [Trevor Morrow](#), joined one of our Technical Officers on a visit to two tenants facing DMC issues. Trevor was impressed by the Technical Officer's ability to diagnose each issue and provide tailored solutions to the tenants and was pleased to see the improvements we've made in practice.

[Read more...](#)

Trevor commented, "It was great to see such an important part of our work in action. The Technical Officer was kind, understanding, and flexible with each of the tenants, reassuring them that the right resolutions would be put in place. With new legal changes such as those included in Awaab's Law, it's essential that we get things right the first time when it comes to DMC – not only because we must, but because it's the right thing to do for the tenants in our homes."



**Please make sure you tell us as soon as possible if you're concerned about damp, mould or condensation in your home**, especially if you think it might be having an impact on your health or the health of members of your household.

## Investing in our community

Our team has been hard at work transforming the **Linchfield** area into a vibrant and welcoming space for the community, alongside our partners Chiltern Rangers.

Funded by our **Environmental Improvement Group** which is led by tenant volunteers, this project aims to revitalise the green space around the estate, making it a great place to live. We're proud to invest in projects like these as part of our commitment to building thriving communities.

The transformation included; installing large bespoke art panels on the walls, making animal and bug sanctuaries and digging out the planters, filling them with compost, and replanting with fruit trees and currant bushes.

You can find out what else the Environmental Improvement Group has been up to by visiting [redkitehousing.org.uk/EIG](http://redkitehousing.org.uk/EIG).



## Candida shortlisted for Women in Housing Award

It's always good to be recognised for the hard work that you do, and last week we were informed that **Candida Dutiro** - the Chair of our Resident Representative Team (RRT) has been shortlisted for a Women in Housing Award, in the 'Board/committee member of the year' category.

Candida is passionate about making people's lives better, something she truly believes in. Her dedication and commitment to RRT and the work Red Kite does is a credit to her. It is obvious that the housing sector needs volunteers like Candida to ensure the voices of people who live in social housing are elevated and not stifled, guaranteeing that tenants' interests are always at the forefront of the services we deliver.

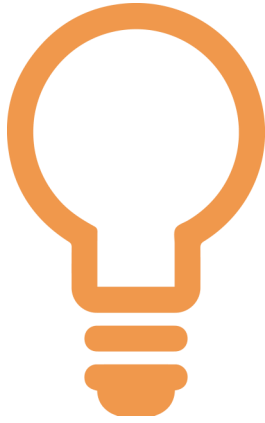


## Tenant volunteer attends conference to represent Red Kite

In March, tenant volunteer **Ajmal**, a member of our Resident Representative Team (RRT), went along to the National Housing Federation's Customer Experience and Resident Engagement conference in the heart of the City of London. This was a great chance for him to network with other housing associations and learn something new.

Ajmal said he gained a lot from the event, adding: "It's really interesting to hear how other housing associations engage with their tenants. I've got some good ideas that I'll be sharing with the rest of RRT."





### Quick tip!

Save energy and cut costs by turning off appliances when not in use. It's simple: if you're not watching TV, switch it off. This small change can make a big difference to your energy bills. Stay smart, save more!

## Clover leaf plugs pose electrical dangers

Experts are urging people to check their electrical devices for 'clover leaf' shaped plugs, warning that they can cause fires or electric shocks. Clover leaf plugs are smaller than standard plugs and do not meet the legal requirements for plugs sold in the UK.



*Three examples of clover leaf plugs - photos: Electrical Safety First*

Clover leaf plugs pose significant risks and should be avoided. Here's why:

- **Risk of electric shock** - The pins on these plugs are close to the edges, making it easier for users to accidentally touch them when inserting or removing the plug from a mains socket
- **Fire hazard** - The absence of any fuse inside a clover leaf plug presents a serious fire risk.

These substandard plugs have been found on various electrical products, including hair dryers, e-bike and e-scooter chargers, and hair straighteners.

Head over to [redkitechousing.org.uk/fire](https://redkitechousing.org.uk/fire) to read more about fire and electrical safety.

# My Journey with Red Kite Community Housing

by Faye Waddington



My name's Faye, I'm the owner of [Silk Art](#) and a Red Kite tenant. I'm lucky enough to have received essential funding from Red Kite Community Housing, my landlord, and I'd like to share my journey with you.

In 2017, I took part in Strive, a business start-up course organised by Enterprise CUBE CIC (funded by Red Kite). At the end of the course, they held their own version of Dragons' Den and I was fortunate enough to receive a £300 grant. I was also gifted a free stall at Red Kite's Christmas Market.

In 2019, I refreshed my skills and dived into social media learning at the Rebel Business School, a hub for aspiring entrepreneurs. This course, funded by Red Kite, was free for selected applicants. It's where I learned to grow my business and marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for me.

Art has always been my passion, and with Red Kite's support I've been able to pursue it wholeheartedly. From teaching art to adults to creating my own masterpieces, every stroke of my brush has been a step towards realising my potential.

I applied for further Red Kite Starting Blocks funding in 2022 and with this came mentoring from The Enterprise Doctor, Mark Harris. His invaluable support helped me grow in confidence and he encouraged me to invest Red Kite's funding into building a professional website. This investment was a game changer for me and opened doors to new opportunities and connections in the art world. Through my website I've been able to sell pieces and build confidence, I'm so proud of it.

With my new-found confidence and the continued guidance of my mentor Mark, I've been able to navigate the ups and downs of the art world with resilience and determination. From exhibitions in Switzerland and Miami, USA, to selling prints in Brazil, [every milestone is a testament to my perseverance and the support of Red Kite, who have always believed in me.](#)

## Our repairs service: an update for our tenants

As some of our tenants may have experienced, we've been having some significant challenges with our responsive repairs service.

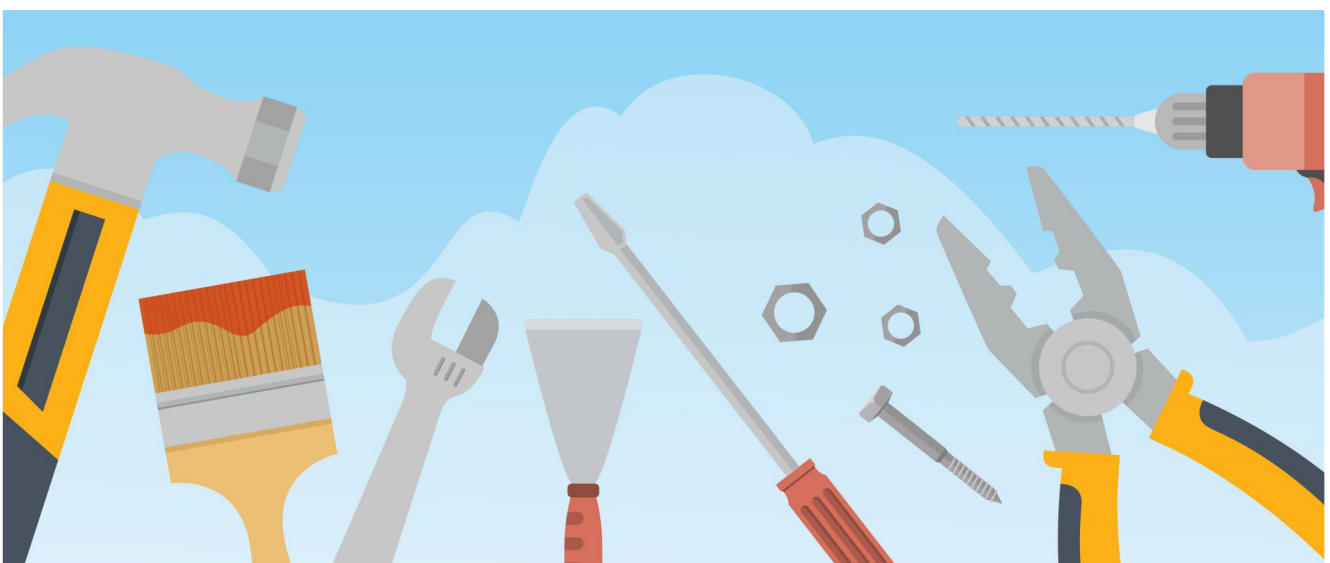
Our main contractor has acknowledged that the service they provide has not been meeting the standards that our tenants have set for this contract. They have recently had to contend with some major challenges: the difficulties they are experiencing - along with many other responsive repair companies operating in the housing sector - in recruiting and retaining staff; sickness absences running at a higher level than usual; and large volumes of jobs being logged – a total of 8,280 in the four months from September to January.

In line with our tenant-led values, we are both fully committed to improving the responsive repairs service. Two months ago, we met with our contractor to put in place an action plan designed to deliver the improvements required. This will take time to achieve; however our tenants can be confident that we're doing everything that is needed to improve things as quickly as possible.

**Mark Haines**, Red Kite's Director of Property, said:

"We acknowledge that our responsive repair service has fallen short of the high standards we aspire to provide for our tenants. We understand the frustration and inconvenience caused by delays, cancellations, and substandard work. We are sharing this with you as we believe transparency is key to building trust.

"We are working closely with our contractor to drive improved performance, and we remain committed to providing timely, efficient, and high-quality repairs for every tenant. We appreciate your patience and we encourage you to continue sharing your feedback as this is vital to our efforts to improve the service for everyone."



[Read more...](#)

Since the action plan was agreed there have been signs of progress:

- In the last two months six new tradespeople have joined the contractor's team, bringing the total number of operatives on the contract to 30.
- The number of 'work in progress' orders has decreased by 53% - on average each week they are completing 100 orders more than they are receiving.
- Over 10% of all orders are now being completed on the same day they are raised.

This has been reflected in the results of satisfaction surveys, which have shown an 86% satisfaction rate from 242 responses over the last 30 days, rising to 90% from 55 responses in the last seven days.

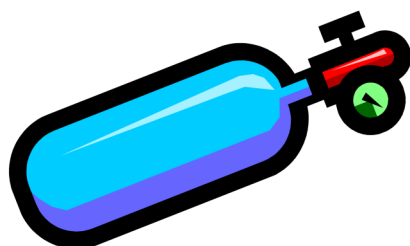
We'll continue to keep our tenants updated on service delivery, and we want to thank them for their patience as we continue to work with our contractor to develop the service together.

### Oxygen Cylinders:

As part of our commitment to keeping your homes safe and secure, we need to know if any of our tenants are currently using or storing oxygen cylinders within your home.

If you are and you've not told us before, could you please send us a quick email at [compliance@redkitehousing.org.uk](mailto:compliance@redkitehousing.org.uk) or speak to your **Sheltered Specialist** next time you see them so they can note down the information for us.

If you aren't storing any currently but this changes in the future, please let us know in the same way.



### Quick tip!

Switch to direct debit for a hassle-free way to pay your rent. It's automatic, so you'll never miss a payment, and it keeps your finances in check. Enjoy the convenience and peace of mind knowing everything's taken care of.



## Booking a guest room

We have a number of guest rooms available in our sheltered schemes so that our sheltered tenants can book them for their friends and family to come and stay in.

Booking couldn't be easier - either call us on [01494 476100](tel:01494476100), speak to your [Sheltered Specialist](#) or email [shelteredservices@redkitehousing.org.uk](mailto:shelteredservices@redkitehousing.org.uk).

We can advise on availability and take your booking. A minimum of 48 hours' notice is required.

Guest room	Location	Bathroom Facilities	Nightly charge
Archdale	Wycombe town centre, HP11 2JR	Full en suite	£19.05
Barrowcroft	High Wycombe, HP11 1RH	Communal	£12.70
Brooke Furmston Place	Marlow, SL7 1GN	Full en suite	£19.05
Gatensbury Place	Princes Risborough, HP27 0DS	En suite - WB/WC	£15.88
Gweneth Court	Marlow, SL7 3XD	Full en suite	£19.05
Mayorfield House	Marlow, SL7 2PU	Full en suite	£19.05
Nancy Hall Court	High Wycombe, HP12 4NZ	Full en suite	£19.05
Nickson Court	High Wycombe, HP15 7UF	En suite - WB/WC	£15.88
Orchard House	Bourne End, SL7 5JU	Communal	£12.70
Woollerton Court	Princes Risborough, HP27 9HB	Full en suite	£19.05

For more information about our guest rooms head over to [redkitehousing.org.uk/guestrooms](https://redkitehousing.org.uk/guestrooms).



## Our new opening hours from June

Before you turn over to start playing our game of guess who on the next page, we have one more important update to make you all aware of...

Starting from Monday 3rd June our contact centre and our offices will be open all day on Wednesdays; previously we closed until 1pm.

Our opening hours on Fridays will also be changing: our contact centre will be open from 8.45am – 1pm, calls after 1pm will be handled by our out-of-hours service. Our offices will not be open to visitors on Fridays.

So, to confirm, our contact centre opening hours will be:

- Monday – Thursday: 8.45am-5.15pm
- Friday: 8.45am-1pm

Tenants will still be able to call our main number - [01494 476100](tel:01494476100) - to report any urgent issues that may arise on Friday afternoons. Our repairs contractor will also continue to carry out scheduled and emergency repairs as usual.

We'll be piloting these new hours for 12 months and evaluating their impact on our tenants, our staff, and the service we provide. If this pilot proves successful, our Board will consider a permanent move to this way of working in 2025.

Our aims are to better meet the needs and preferences of our tenants, to make us a more attractive employer, and to help us as we invest in our staff to deliver improved services.

Before making these changes, we worked with our Resident Representative Team - a group of tenants who work with us and help to shape decisions. We also sought the views of our member tenants, and sent a survey via text to all those tenants whose number we have. The results of this consultation were supportive of the changes.

### Our new contact centre opening hours - from Monday 3rd June

**Monday - Thursday:** 8.45am - 5.15pm

**Friday:** 8.45am - 1pm





# Game time

## Can you guess who I am?

**Clue 1:** I was born in the 16th century in a quaint English town known for its half-timbered houses.

**Clue 2:** My plays are performed more than any other playwright's and have been translated into every major living language.

**Clue 3:** I wrote both comedies and tragedies, and my work includes 39 plays, 154 sonnets, and two long narrative poems.

**Clue 4:** Some of my most famous plays include a tale of star-crossed lovers and a prince haunted by a ghost.

**Clue 5:** I am often referred to as the Bard of Avon.

**Turn me upside down for the answer...**

William Shakespeare