

# Northamptonshire Rural Life

The residents' newsletter for  
**Northamptonshire Rural  
Housing Association**

**SPRING 2015**

[www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)



Northamptonshire  
**Rural Housing**  
Association



**Universal  
Credit roll-out  
underway**  
- see inside for details

## *Nearest and dearest*

**Cherry Hills and her partner, Liam are enjoying a new start in a new home with their two-year-old daughter, Lily Rose.**

A year ago, their world was turned upside down when Liam had a stroke aged just 30. They applied for a new property in Poacher's Close, Walgrave, close to Liam's mum, and we adapted it to suit Liam's needs, with a wet room and stairlift.

"It's enabling us to live as a family, with the support we need close by," says Cherry.

• [Read the full story at www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)

# Universal Credit

It's been talked about for a long time but now it's happening – **Universal Credit is being rolled-out nationally for single people making new claims.**

*So, what does this mean to you?*

All single households have already received a letter and information leaflet from us explaining more.

Universal Credit is a new benefit for people who are on a low income or are out of work. It will help to ensure that people are better off in work than on benefits. This single benefit will replace Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Based Employment Support Allowance, Working Tax Credits, Child Tax Credits, Income Support and Housing Benefit.

*When can I claim?*

Universal Credit is only currently available for new single claimants. If you lose your job, go straight to the Job Centre to make a claim as payments cannot be back-dated. You also need to let us know by calling

**0300 123 4009.**

*How can I apply?*

You must apply online, but your local Job Centre Plus will help you to do this or call **0345 600 0723** for help.

*How will Universal Credit be paid?*

It will be paid monthly in arrears from the date you submit your claim, straight into your bank account. It will take up to 6 weeks to receive your first payment.



**FOR YOUR  
BENEFIT**

The roll-out has begun!

## How do I pay my rent?

When you receive Universal Credit, it will be your responsibility to make sure your rent is paid in advance in line with your tenancy agreement. The easiest way to do this is to set up a direct debit from your bank account.

## What if my circumstances change?

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit and your circumstances change or your rent increases you must tell your local Job Centre Plus.

**Don't be afraid to ask for help. For advice and support, call the national Universal Credit helpline on**

**0345 600 0723**

**visit our website or speak to your housing officer.**



# NEW NUMBER

Want to speak to us? Call

**0300 123 4009**

You can now call one number for all your queries – and it's cheap! If you're calling from a landline, it's just the standard call cost, and if you're using a mobile, it can be included in your free minutes.

*Give us a call!*



## Ditch the damp

Find out how you can prevent damp and condensation in your home by visiting [www.northamptonshireha.org.uk/living-in-your-home/the-property/damp-and-condensation/](http://www.northamptonshireha.org.uk/living-in-your-home/the-property/damp-and-condensation/)

There's some useful advice and top tips, plus an information leaflet to download.



## Service standard

We offer different ways for you to pay your rent and issue a rent statement each quarter.

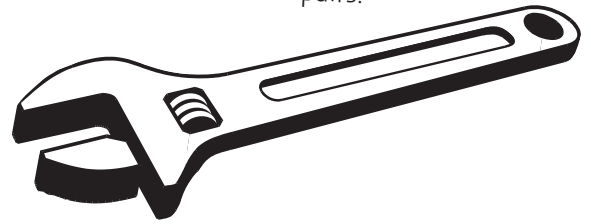
## Repairs reminder

If you need a repair doing, please report it straightaway by calling

**0300 123 4009**

**Don't wait until you have a whole list of jobs to be done!**

This does not apply to shared owners, who are responsible for their own repairs.



[www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)

## Share **your** views

What do you think about our new website? What can we do to make it even better?

Please visit [www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk/website-survey/](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk/website-survey/) and answer our quick online survey. All your feedback will be used to improve the site for residents.

## It just gets **better**

**Our planned maintenance programme will see us improving your homes further over the next 12 months.**

During 2015/16 windows will be replaced at 23 properties, making homes more energy efficient. 21 homes will have new kitchens fitted and tenants will be able to choose from a selection of styles and colours of units, worktops and flooring, plus a limited choice of sinks and taps. New doors will be fitted at 109 homes.

This does not apply to shared owners.

## Need a translation?

If you need a copy of Rural Life newsletter in another language we will happily provide a translation for you. All you have to do is call the office on **0300 123 4009** with your request.



is published by Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association, Whitwick Business Centre, Stenson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4JP.

**Tel:** 0300 123 4009. **Fax:** 01530 278086.

**E-mail:** [enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)

Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association Limited is registered as a Community Benefit Society with charitable status 26636R.



Northamptonshire  
**Rural Housing**  
Association

## Small rise

To try to keep rents as affordable as possible for residents, we've only increased them by 2.2% from 6th April. You will have already received your formal rent increase letter, but don't forget you will need to alter the amount you pay if you use a standing order or swipe card.

Please remember you need to pay in advance to keep your account in credit.

If you are a shared owner your increase will be linked to the Retail Price Index as detailed in your lease agreement.

