

# Arthur Simms Homes

## A pre-war business revived and flourishing



After surviving the economic depression of both World Wars, Arthur Simms Homes closed down in the 1960s, after making quite a mark on St Albans' building environment. However, this was obviously not the end for the business, Jon Bareham BSc, the grandson of the Company founder, the late Arthur Earnest Simms, took on the business and revived it in the 1990s. Now a flourishing Company, Arthur Simms Homes is once again making a mark on its home of St Albans and now further a field. Now in the hands of the family's third and fourth generation, Arthur Simms Homes is a family concern to be proud of. Nearly 100 years old, the business started as Arthur Earnest Simms' carpentry and joinery company, happening to settle in St Albans due to available work on the then new St Saviour's Church. After the First World War, Simms saw an opportunity and bought a terrace of half completed houses, this was the beginning of the Company's life as a property developer with many new homes in St Albans beginning to show the Arthur Simms Homes mark. Despite his success, Simms was known as an honest man as well as a craftsman and earned a great reputation for the business; a philosophy continued today by his successors. His son, Arthur Charles Simms, joined the business in the 1930s and later his daughter, Eileen Bareham, became part of the Company in the 1950s.

After the Second World War, business boomed due to the growth of house building and Council related work. The business expanded and started to take a variety of projects including retail blocks, a small church and landscaping. By the 1960s the second generation of the family were due to retire and with Jon Bareham still studying, the business closed. Thankfully, after a four-decade break of trade, Arthur Simms Homes is now better than ever. Bareham, having gained various professional experiences independently, re-established Arthur Simms Homes in 1994 starting with the refurbishment of family properties his grandfather had built as early as 1919. Now the business specialises in a variety of construction work, including impressive barn conversions and hotel extensions, as well as housing schemes. Recent work includes an array of housing developments. The Company recently converted a village hall into two modern two-bedroom houses in Shillington, Hertfordshire as well as two other housing projects in the town. 2005 has seen the start of three housing projects for the Company, two in St Albans and the other in Stevenage, which consist of four- and two-bedroom detached and semi-detached homes. Arthur Simms Homes still maintains the great reputation established all those years ago by the late Arthur

Earnest Simms, but the new generation's influence has allowed the once small Company to grow and expand into the 21st century. Next year the Company once again expands its range of experience when it will start work on a block of 13 apartments.

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