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If you plan to go away in winter, stop your water pipes getting frozen.

**Either:**

leave your central heating on very low (eg a frost setting)

**Or**

turn your water off at the stop cock and run the taps for a bit to empty out the remaining water in the pipes, so it doesn't freeze.

**TIP:** Stopcocks are often under the sink or in the front hall cupboard.

**Merry Xmas!**  
**to all our residents**



## New contact number for repairs from 2nd January

From **2nd January 2018**, the CHISEL office will be handling all repairs in our directly managed properties. LFSA will no longer be providing the repair service on CHISEL's behalf.

### During December



use the current number to report repairs, including emergency repairs over Christmas and New Year: 020 8692 9294.

### From 2nd January

tenants managed directly by CHISEL should report repairs to the CHISEL office main number: 020 8692 5258.

Tenants living in properties managed by **LFSA and Three Boroughs** should continue to contact them about repairs.

Reporting by email or the website is the same as before:

- ⇒ email **repairs@chisel.org.uk**
- ⇒ use the Report A Repair form on the home page at **chisel.org.uk**
- ⇒ use the repair form in your **MyTenancy** account

If emailing about a repair, it helps if you can send us a photo of the problem.



## Right To Buy delayed

The Right To Buy scheme for housing association tenants will now be piloted in the Midlands, for two years from July 2018. No national scheme is likely to be in place till 2020 at the earliest.

Given the problems of funding discounts and the current political uncertainty, many commentators are describing the Right To Buy as a 'zombie scheme' that may never fully come to life.



Image: Inside Housing

# Stock Condition surveys

CHISEL is checking the condition of our properties, to plan for their long term maintenance needs. We look ahead for at least a 30 year time period.



## Self-build

Over the last year most tenants in our 71 self-build properties have met **Neil Beddell**, who has been surveying that part of our stock.

The results from the survey show that CHISEL faces a major challenge, especially in managing renewal of the roofs on many of the self-build schemes.

Over the next six months CHISEL will be meeting with residents in self-build properties to discuss the survey findings, on a scheme by scheme basis.

## Agency managed properties

Now Neil is surveying CHISEL's agency managed properties - 63 houses or flats which are managed by LFSA and Three Boroughs. Neil is getting in touch with the residents in these homes to arrange access.

When the surveys are complete, CHISEL will have a clear idea of the maintenance needs of all of our properties, to plan for them over the next decades.



## Did you know?

You need to ask CHISEL before carrying out improvements or modifications to your house. This includes installing solar panels, and changing kitchen or bathroom layouts - anything to do with the fabric of the building.

We need to make sure that your plans will not damage the property or make it unsafe. If you do something without our permission, you might have to pay the costs of sorting it out.

**Avoid problems - by talking to the CHISEL office before you make any changes**

## Some good news (not fake...)

The November 2017 Budget included some very welcome announcements about Universal Credit - known as UC for short.

The Chancellor announced key changes to people's entitlement to Universal Credit, the advance payments system, and a slowdown in the roll-out of Universal Credit Full Service.



Pensioners (including couples that include just one pensioner) are covered by Pension Credit rather than Universal Credit.

From February 2018, the Government will remove the seven-day waiting period so that entitlement to Universal Credit starts on the first day of application. From April 2018 those already on Housing Benefit will continue to receive their HB award for the first two weeks of their Universal Credit claim.

It will still take 5 or more weeks before the first Universal Credit payment comes through. From January 2018, those who need it, and who have an underlying entitlement to Universal Credit, will be able to access up to a month's worth of Universal Credit within five days via an advance. The period of recovery will be extended from six months to twelve months for all types of advance payment. Advances will continue to be interest free. It will be possible to apply for an advance online.

New claimants in December will be able to receive an advance of 50% of their monthly entitlement at the beginning of their claim and a second advance to take it up to 100% in the New Year, before their first payment date.

### Slower rollout

To support these changes, the Government will roll out Universal Credit more gradually between February 2018 and April 2018, and roll-out to all job centres will be complete in December 2018.

Full Service rollout dates are by Job Centre.

For CHISEL areas, the current expected rollout dates are:

|                  |                                    |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 29 November 2017 | Brighton BN2                       |
| 17 Jan 2018      | Brighton BN1                       |
| April 2018       | Lewisham, Marks Tey (Essex)        |
| May 2018         | Bromley, Beckenham, Penge, Downham |
| June 2018        | Greenwich, Thamesmead              |

Croydon is already on the Full Service.

Information by postcode from:

[ucpostcode.entitledto.co.uk/ucdate](http://ucpostcode.entitledto.co.uk/ucdate)

More information on Universal Credit

[www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

### Live Service vs Full Service

Most areas where CHISEL tenants live are currently on the **Live Service**, where only new claims by single unemployed people go onto UC.

By the end of 2018 the whole of England will move to the **Full Service**, where all new claims AND any changes of circumstances will require a claim for UC.

Existing benefit claims will be migrated over to UC by 2022.

### Did you know?

Claims can now only be made to cover a period one month back - so don't delay in making them !

# Board & Operational Scrutiny Committee

## CHISEL's Board

CHISEL's Board was elected at the AGM on 21 September 2017. There are currently eight individual members - David Eatwell (Chair), John Clark (Treasurer), Sandra Blake, Fiona Jamieson, Joseph Leach, Dave Shiress, Leo Stevens, and Des Waters - and two tenant board members - Adrian Adams and Peter Coker. For more information on the board members, see

[www.chisel.org.uk/staff/board-members/](http://www.chisel.org.uk/staff/board-members/)

There are spaces for two more tenant board members - if you are interested, please contact Pauline Goodfellow at the CHISEL office, or by email to [director@chisel.org.uk](mailto:director@chisel.org.uk)

## Operational Scrutiny Committee

Chisel's Board has one committee, the Operational Scrutiny Committee (OSC), appointed by the Board. There are 6 members, all tenants: Adrian Adams, Rupert Hughes, Jo van der Meer, Louise Owen, Vic Sievey, and Peter Webb. Adrian is OSC Co-ordinator and a tenant member of CHISEL's Board.

Tenants Gordon Pike and Brian Dalton recently left OSC due to pressure of other commitments - thanks to them for their 3 years of service on it, since OSC's formation. Tenant board member Peter Coker also decided that he was unable to participate in OSC - Peter remains on the Board.

## Christmas Opening Hours

CHISEL's office will close on Thursday 21 December at 5:00 pm. It will be open with a skeleton staff on Wed-Thur, 27-28 December, and reopen fully on Tuesday 2 January 2018 at 9.00 am. For repairs till 1st January and emergency repairs over the holidays, call 020 8692 9294

All repairs from 2nd January onwards, contact CHISEL direct on 020 8692 5258

## CHISEL Opening Hours and Contacts

CHISEL office is normally open **Monday to Thursday 9-5pm** (closed on Fridays)

**Phone number:** 020 8692 5258

**Non-urgent repairs** by phone, by email to [repairs@chisel.org.uk](mailto:repairs@chisel.org.uk), or use the website form.

## WHO'S WHO IN CHISEL:

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Managing Director:       | Pauline Goodfellow (3 days pw: various)         | <a href="mailto:director@chisel.org.uk">director@chisel.org.uk</a>             |
| Operations Manager       | Dezrine Biko (4 days pw, Monday-Thursday)       | <a href="mailto:operations@chisel.org.uk">operations@chisel.org.uk</a>         |
| Rents Officer            | Flos Marriott (2 days pw: Tuesday & Thursday)   | <a href="mailto:rents@chisel.org.uk">rents@chisel.org.uk</a>                   |
| Co-ops & Tenants Officer | Mark Allan (2 days pw: Monday & Thursday)       | <a href="mailto:involvement@chisel.org.uk">involvement@chisel.org.uk</a>       |
| Finance Manager          | Nigel Spice (2 days pw: Monday & Thursday)      | <a href="mailto:financemanager@chisel.org.uk">financemanager@chisel.org.uk</a> |
| Finance Officer          | Shuk-Ling Hou (2 days pw: Wednesday & Thursday) | <a href="mailto:financeofficer@chisel.org.uk">financeofficer@chisel.org.uk</a> |