



CHISEL Ltd
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Tel: 020 8692 5258

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CHISEL AGM in September

The CHISEL Annual General Meeting is planned to be in September. We hope that by then social distancing guidance will allow us to have an in-person meeting safely. The date and venue have not yet been set.

We will write to all tenants in good time to give notice of the AGM, and put the information on our website.

Andrew Watson,
Company Secretary

TENANTS' NEWSLETTER

June 2020

Looking to the Future

Organisational Review Phase 1

Since the beginning of the year we have been busy looking ahead to how CHISEL could develop into a more effective organisation. To this end, the CHISEL Board commissioned a mini Organisational Review which took place at the beginning of 2020.

Campbell Tickell, a social housing consultancy with a focus on small housing associations, came and looked at our working practice to find out where we can make improvements. All Staff and most Board members were interviewed to get as full a picture as possible.

The result is a number of recommendations for our Staff, Board and Residents with a view to securing an independent future for CHISEL. Here are the broad recommendations - these are the big picture for what CHISEL is working on, while we continue delivering services, and dealing with Covid-19.

1. Identify where costs can be reduced.
2. Increase the efficiency of maintenance.
3. Consider staff roles.
4. Make clear transparent plans and programmes.

Despite Covid-19 we intend to go ahead with a further review over the summer months. This will be done internally by the Staff Team, Board and a temporary advisor – our aim is for CHISEL to operate as effectively as possible, to give us every chance of remaining as this small unique Housing Association. Part of this will consist of consulting with all residents, so your ideas can contribute to this review and how we continue into the future.

Throughout this year, the Board have kept the Regulator of Social Housing informed of our progress. We have recently heard back from them and are pleased to tell you all, that the Regulator is very satisfied with the developments at CHISEL, including the support from Campbell Tickell, our current financial plan, and how the Board has strengthened, not least because of an increase in tenant members. We can announce CHISEL has now returned to operating under normal regulatory engagement as set out in the Regulatory Standards.

Noticeboard

Contacting the office during Covid-19

CHISEL staff continue to work mainly remotely during the Covid-19 distancing period. Phone calls are being diverted to a phone held by a staff member, so we only have one line available at a time. We are grateful for your understanding!

There may also be slight delays in replying to physical letters - please contact us by email or phone if you can.

RENT

Rent enquiries should go to rents@chisel.org.uk if possible, or call the office.

REPAIRS

Please continue to report all repairs - we will do essential repairs now, and log the rest for when we are able to operate more normally again. Report by email to repairs@chisel.org.uk, or by phone to **020 8692 5258**, or use the form on our website.

More info on how CHISEL is dealing with lockdown on pages 4-5.



Is this yours?

This garment was left behind at the Residents Consultation meeting last May in Catford, it's been kept safe all year and can be returned by post ... just let Mark Allan know, by email or calling the office number.

Make sure we can contact you

During the Covid-19 period we are aiming wherever possible to send information to tenants by email and text. If you haven't had an email or a text from CHISEL recently, we may not have your up to date details.

Please email involvement@chisel.org.uk so we have your email address (don't forget to include your name and your mobile number).

If you don't use email, and you haven't received a text from our text service number recently, please call us on **020 8692 5258** to give us your current mobile phone number.

Tenants Scrutiny Committee

Do you want to influence CHISEL's policies?

The TSC is made up of tenants. It looks at CHISEL policies and performance from the tenants' perspective, and advises the Board directly on them.

Tenant Board Member Joanna van der Meer is the Co-ordinator of this important committee.

Interested? Please contact Mark Allan, involvement@chisel.org.uk

LOST PROPERTY LAST YEAR!

The '**Golden Number**' for texting CHISEL is **07491 163 425**
(texts only - no voice calls to this number)

We have to know your mobile number for you to use this service !

Membership of CHISEL is open again to tenants

We are very pleased to tell you that once again we are able to take applications from all tenants for shareholding membership of CHISEL. Membership has been open to all tenants since 10th February 2020, after a review of the Membership Policy by the Board.

According to the CHISEL Rules (the official document by which we are governed) the Board has to review eligibility for membership as outlined below and decide on each application.

The next Board meeting that can consider applications is on 29th June 2020. If you want your application to be considered at this meeting, please

- request an application form from us by noon on 18th June
- return it completed by noon on 25th June.

Your request for an application form should be sent to our Company Secretary, Andrew Watson, either

by email: secretary@chisel.org.uk, or

by post: CHISEL, 188a Brockley Rd, SE4 2RL.

We will send you an application form and instructions.

There will be at least one further opportunity to apply for membership before the CHISEL AGM.

Reasons you would not be able to become a member:

- if you are not a current tenant of CHISEL
- if you have been an employee of CHISEL in the last twelve months;
- if you have a business relationship with CHISEL;
- if your membership would lead to an unacceptable conflict of interest with CHISEL;
- if you are in breach of your tenancy agreement.

If you're in any doubt about your status, please check with Co-ops and Tenants Officer, Mark Allan by phone or to involvement@chisel.org.uk, or email to secretary@chisel.org.uk

We look forward to receiving your applications!

Shareholders' legal responsibilities

You must agree:

- to act at all times in the interests of the Association
- to be bound by the obligations set out in the Association's rules
- to attend and vote at the AGM – and make sure to send apologies if you can't attend – otherwise your membership could expire
- to have CHISEL's aims and interests in mind and to promote these in the local community.



Further review of shareholding membership

Other categories of membership are still closed. This is under review. Other people will be able to apply to become 'independent' members in future, but the Board are still considering the fairest way to organise this.

If you have views about this matter, and how best to ensure that membership is equally spread across CHISEL and the wider community, please send your feedback to the Board members involved in this review, c/o the Company Secretary, or by email to secretary@chisel.org.uk.

Coronavirus - Covid-19

CHISEL are taking the situation extremely seriously. Your health and safety is our main priority and we are dedicated to managing the situation in line with government advice around Coronavirus. We understand that these are extremely worrying times and we are working hard to minimise the impact on the services you receive from us.

We are following government guidance to limit the spread of coronavirus and **staff are normally working remotely**, away from our offices. Our **contractors are also continuing working to guidance** and keeping communication open with us.

How to contact CHISEL

We are asking residents to contact us on the phone (**020 8692 5258**), by email, or through our website, rather than coming into our offices, wherever possible. **Our calls are being forwarded to a mobile phone held by a staff member, so you may find the number engaged - if so, please wait a few minutes and call back.** We appreciate your patience and understanding at this current time.

Safety

If CHISEL's employees or its contractors visit your home, they will wear protective clothing and take extra precautions for both your safety and theirs. CHISEL and its contractors will not send anyone who is sick or has been confirmed to have the Coronavirus/Covid-19.

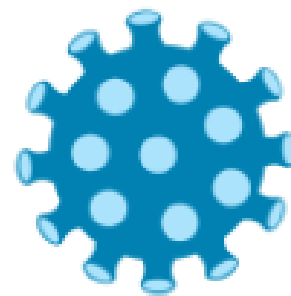
Residents managed by other organisations

Some CHISEL tenants are managed by other organisations: Three Boroughs HC in London, Dryad HC in Brighton, Colne Housing in Essex.

If you are one of these tenants, most services you receive are provided by your managing agent, who are making their own arrangements for the services they provide to you.

Repairs

We are assessing repairs on a case by case basis – however **essential repairs and visits to our most vulnerable customers continue to be our priority.**



Emergency Repairs are classed as anything causing immediate risk to health, safety and security of our residents or causing immediate damage to a property's structure, fixtures and/or fittings.

We will log all other repairs that are reported - these will be carried out as and when possible under government guidance.

This does mean that some of our planned repairs and investment work may be postponed until further notice. We will keep you updated on this, and thank you for your patience.

We continue to carry out all health and safety related works such as: fire risk assessments and remedial works that arise from these assessments; gas safety checks; water hygiene assessments; communal electrical checks.

Paying Rent

We are aware that measures to combat the Coronavirus/Covid-19 are creating financial pressures for many people; **if you have any concerns regarding your payment of rent and/or service charge, please contact us.**

We cannot accept rent in cash – to learn about other ways you can pay rent, see our web page on [How Do I Pay Rent](#) or call us. There is also now the ALLPAY app for paying rent on mobile devices.

Sources of Advice and Support

If you don't know where to turn and you need help CHISEL has a comprehensive list of places and organisations who you can get expert help and advice from.

Please contact the office for this information - all staff can point you in the direction of help and advice.

If you know of any resident who may be vulnerable with no access to the internet or no mobile phone, please ask them to call the CHISEL office on **0208 692 5258**, or let us know yourself.

Advice on finances and housing:

Turn2Us – a national charity providing advice <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Evelyn190 Centre which serves South-East London <https://www.evelyn190centre.org.uk/>

What should residents do?

If you've been told to self-isolate and we are due to visit your home, it is critical you let us know beforehand.

This is vital for the safety of our staff and contractors, and your neighbours.

If any CHISEL tenant feels at risk or knows of others that need help, please contact CHISEL. We can put you in touch with various advice services.

Please do work with us to keep our communities and surroundings clean, and limit any bulk waste. As ever we need to ensure all fire exits are clear. Please ensure that you wipe down door handles and all hard surfaces on a regular basis.

Food Banks: for tenants who want to make use of them, or contribute

Lewisham

<https://lewisham.foodbank.org.uk/>

The main centre and warehouse is located at: Hope Centre, Malham Road, Forest Hill London SE23 1AN

Phone: 03330 150378

Hope Centre is no longer open for clients to collect food. During Covid-19 food parcels will be delivered. They accept donations to Hope Centre 9-5, Mon-Fri

Greenwich

<https://greenwich.foodbank.org.uk/>

https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200329/coronavirus/2209/community_hub

Phone: 0800 470 4831

Email: covid19support@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Bromley

<https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/>

Phone: 0203 920 8696



Croydon

<https://croydon.foodbank.org.uk/>

Phone: 020 8686 5664 or 07453 969687

Email: croydonfoodbank@mail.com

Brighton: <http://www.bhcm.org.uk/teams/brighton-food-bank>

Phone: 01273 695330

Board Bulletin

Now that we have more tenants on the Board helping to steer CHISEL through these difficult times, we are striving to make the organisation more transparent to Residents.

We will post a summary of key items discussed and any actions decided at the meeting on the CHISEL website, and include it in any Newsletter being produced.

Since the last newsletter there have been two full Board meetings, in February and April 2020:

Board meeting 10th February:

- agreed the draft Seven Year Strategic Plan for maintenance
- re-opened shareholding membership to tenants
- agreed to publish the Staff/Board/ Residents Code of Conduct on the website - see [Information for Tenants](#) > [Policies and Publications](#)

Board Meeting 20th April:

- agreed to meet by videoconference while under lockdown
- agreed the budget for the next financial year (2020-21). The budget will be reviewed later this year when the impact of Covid-19 is clearer.
- created a new Human Resources Committee.



From left: Angela Bryan, Iris Garrelfs, Carolyn Wilson, Jo van der Meer, Louise Owen, Joe Leach

A new Human Resources Committee has been set up, to assist the Board in evaluating staff and Board skills and experience, with regard to the needs of the organisation. This committee will benefit from the specialist knowledge of our new Board co-optees.

Two new Board members were co-opted at the April Board. Both are experienced housing managers who will bring their professional knowledge to the Board. They bring the Board up to 9: 4 tenant members, 3 independents and 2 independent co-optees.



Michaela Clare has an extensive background in housing associations and local authorities.

Marie Kapszewicz has previously worked at CHISEL, covering housing management during staff changes.



Board member **Andrew Watson** is now the Company Secretary, a role previously held by Pauline Goodfellow as the Managing Director.

Co-opted members participate in Board meetings but are not Board Members. They have to stand down before the AGM. Board Members have to be elected at the AGM of CHISEL by the shareholding members.

Resident Meetings and Minutes

Consultation update

As promised, CHISEL is consulting with residents about the challenges facing us.

The first phase of the consultation is with residents in our 71 self build properties to enable progress on the issues specific to self-build. Decision on the proposal put forward in May 2019 to phase out the Self-builder rent discount was postponed in Aug 2019, in order to have meaningful consultation with the self-build residents.

Consultation with all CHISEL tenants will follow once this first phase is completed.

Two meetings with self-build residents have been held so far, attended by a total of 28 residents. The second meeting agreed to set up a **working party** of residents and staff to do detailed work on how to manage the long term maintenance needs of the self-built houses in the most cost-effective way.

CHISEL has employed independent consultant Jane Eyles to facilitate the consultation, and support the residents groups. Jane is assisting the self-build residents in getting independent legal advice from a specialist housing legal firm, in relation to the self-build tenancies.

Self-build Working Party

If you are a resident in one of the self-build houses and would like to join the Working Party of residents and staff, please contact Mark Allan at involvement@chisel.org.uk, or call the CHISEL office on **020 8692 5258**.

The Working Party has been delayed by the Covid-19 situation, and is now preparing to meet using video conferencing.

Resident meetings

Notes from discussions at Resident Meetings held by CHISEL two or three times a year are available on request. Please contact Mark Allan, CHISEL's Involvement Officer, if you would like copies of discussion notes from Resident Meetings held on 18 May 2019 or 27 September 2019.

This year, due to Covid-19, we are looking at alternative ways to hold Resident Meetings and plan to hold the AGM in September.

Current Board minutes

Summaries of the minutes from the start of the new Board elected at the AGM on 27 September 2019, which now includes 4 tenants, will be available on request.

Historic minutes of the Board

The minutes of Housing Associations are recorded and published in various formats. The minutes of CHISEL Board prior to September 2019 are long, with member's names and confidential issues that need to be removed.

We intend that the minutes of Board meetings prior to September 2019 be summarised and made available on request, however there has been much other Board work that has had to take priority. Preparing historic minutes will eventually be undertaken, and as soon as they have been prepared later this year or early next year, they will be made available. Please bear with us whilst we complete this work.

Staff News

Since September 2019, while our Managing Director was on long term sick leave, our Operations Manager and Finance Manager have been working together as a team, leading CHISEL's office and day-to-day business.

Pauline Goodfellow, CHISEL's Managing Director, left CHISEL at the end of March. Pauline wishes to thank everyone for the support she received in her role over the years and takes with her some fond memories of CHISEL. We thank Pauline for her work and commitment to CHISEL over the last 6 years and wish her well for the future.

Whilst we look at the future of our small independent Housing Association via the Phase 2 Review, the Staff will continue to deliver your housing management services. See below for who's who in CHISEL staff. More information about staff roles is available on CHISEL's website.

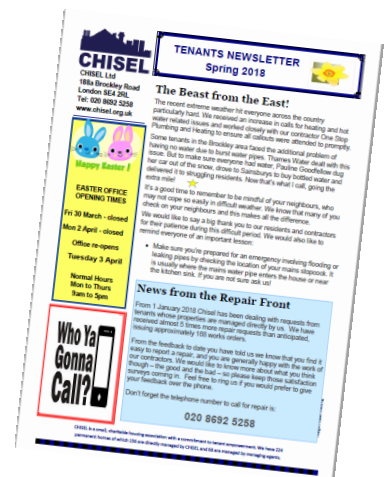
The newsletter: we need your help!

The CHISEL newsletter is called the tenants' newsletter - not just because it is for tenants' information, but also because tenants and other residents contribute to it.

We need your input:

- ◆ suggestions of items to include
- ◆ feedback on content and format
- ◆ written contributions - is there something you would like to write about?
- ◆ photos of our homes and communities

Interested to work with a group of tenants to make the newsletter better? Email Mark at involvement@chisel.org.uk



CHISEL Staff

Operations Manager

Carmen Clarke

operations@chisel.org.uk

(4 days pw, Monday-Thursday)



Finance Manager

Nigel Spice

financemanager@chisel.org.uk

(2 days pw: Monday & Thursday)



Housing Officer (Repairs)

Andrew Logan

repairs@chisel.org.uk

(4 days pw, Monday-Thursday)



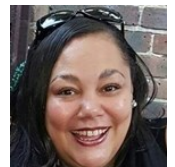
Finance & Income Officer

Shirley Skyers

rents@chisel.org.uk

financeofficer@chisel.org.uk

(4 days pw: Monday-Thursday)



Co-ops & Tenants Officer

Mark Allan

Involvement@chisel.org.uk

(2 days pw: Monday & Thursday)



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