

Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023-24



The year 2023-24 marked the start of substantial organisational change at CHISEL, with a new management and staff team being in post from January 2024.

Prior to this, the organisation had struggled in recruiting staff to carry out essential work and record keeping was not maintained to the recommended standard.

That said, CHISEL's performance on complaints was dramatically improved on the preceding year 2022-23 where the results can be found on the Housing Ombudsman's website, [here](#).

In 2023-24 CHISEL received

Stage 1 Complaints 7

of which:

- Repairs – condition of property 5
- Repairs- Standard of work 1*
- Rent Collection 1

Stage 2 Complaints 1

- Repairs and failure to respond to Stage 1 complaint 1*

Ombudsman Determinations 2

- Repairs Determination - Service Failure 1
- Response time – Determination - Service Failure 1

The cases marked () above flags to all categories above. A resident made a stage 1 complaint about the standard that work had been delivered to her home by the previous contractor. The Stage 1 was ignored by CHISEL and the resident contacted the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman asked CHISEL to Issue a Stage 2 reply.*

- The Ombudsman asked us to pay £600 in Compensation.
- The Ombudsman made no determinations or served penalties around management of complaints service.
- There were no other Stage 2 complaints and no refused cases in 2023-24

In addition, and in line with the Ombudsman's code, CHISEL keeps data about service requests.

Service Requests 3

- Estate Services - 1
- Repairs – 2

Resident Survey Data

CHISEL carried out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey in March 2024 to establish a baseline to determine performance across the following year. Within that survey residents were asked if they had any *incidents of damp and mould in their homes or any other complaints*.

- Tenancy data - 1
- Health and Safety 1
- Damp and Mould 19 (although CHISEL was already aware and working on 10 of those cases)

Learning from Complaints – Key themes

| Learning and Resident Impact | Action |
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| <p>Although the main area for Complaints and Service failures was our repairs service, it split into two clear areas</p> <p>1. Maintenance of stock over longer term, residents feeling stock was ‘neglected’ and with little investment, and low expectations of this happening.</p> <p>Evident in language reported back from TSM survey as well</p> | <p>Full stock condition survey commissioned for early 2024-25</p> <p>Hi-Viz jackets bought for all contractors to wear when working at CHISEL homes</p> <p>Repairs service to remain in house and resourced to be able to spend time with residents in person</p> <p>Surveyor recruited to staff team to provide continuity and residents advocate</p> |
| <p>2. Quality of workmanship when contractors attend – lack of post inspection, lack of survey prior to mutual exchange</p> | <p>Resourcing to allow post inspection repairs</p> <p>Complete review of all contractors used completed by June 2024</p> |
| <p>3. Residents spoke in their complaints of it being hard to contact CHISEL</p> | <p>Phone system overhauled</p> <p>Staff names and details on website</p> <p>Monthly newsletter for all residents</p> |
| <p>4. Lack of prioritisation and tone for complaints</p> <p>Reading through Ombudsman casework there was a less than enthusiastic reception for complaints as a service improvement tool and the tone to residents was abrupt and stigmatising and defensive</p> | <p>Full engagement with Ombudsman’s code and prioritisation and regular review of complaints.</p> <p>Engaging tone adopted.</p> <p>All complaints spoken with prior to complaint being issued</p> |

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| <p>5. Poor record keeping</p> <p>For Complaints it took some time for the incoming management team to assess current complaints workload, and reach out to the Ombudsman for those cases</p> | <p>Logs kept as per Ombudsman's recommendations</p> |
| <p>6. Timeliness of response</p> | <p>This is now measured by KPI reporting to quarterly board meetings.</p> |

Board Oversight

From January 2024, the CHISEL Board regularly reviews a KPI dashboard which includes key response times, volumes and type of complaints to CHISEL.

Board Member Michaela Clare has been engaged to be Board Member Responsible for Complaints and will regularly review a selection of all levels of complaints and provide feedback, commenting on language, effectiveness and clarity.

As MRFC I can confirm that I have read this and that the board have had full oversight of these complaints as you have reported these to us.

I know as I also contact Chisel that our telephone service and communications generally are much improved. The monthly newsletter is really appreciated by our tenants, tenant board members have reported to board that neighbours have commented on this.

The Chair of the CHISEL Board discusses complaints performance and strategy with the CEO

This report has been circulated to the Board during their summer break. Any responses will be added as a different document.