



## Richmond Council's Tenants' Champion

# Annual Report

April 2024 - March 2025

### Councillor Paulina Vassileva

Welcome to the Tenants' Champion annual report for 2024-2025.

The Tenants' Champion service started in 2011 and since then has acted as a local escalation route for the Borough's social housing residents, when they have failed to get complaints resolved with their housing association landlords.

I'm now in my third year of the Tenants' Champion role and have personally spoken to hundreds of residents. It's important to me to gain an individual understanding of someone's situation to try to unpick what has gone wrong. Sometimes there might be a service failure, or poor communication. Or sometimes the issue is so complex it needs a multi-agency response.

This role gives me a unique insight across housing associations about the range of issues of concern and to note where trends may be occurring.

Reflecting on my third year in the role has put the spotlight on the unfortunate reality that our housing partners haven't been immune to ongoing challenges in the wider construction industry, contractor failures and recruitment and retention shortages. I am pleased to note that our main housing partners with history and origins in the Borough, have effectively worked with my service throughout the last year to put in place new, efficient processes to maximise Tenants' Champion input with a view to minimising complaints backlogs and Housing Ombudsman referrals.

Regrettably, some of our partners with fewer properties in the Borough, have not been as successful. The focus for the Tenants' Champion



service going forward next year will be to work with those partners where things aren't working so effectively yet. I appreciate everyone's willingness to discuss problems frankly and remain optimistic for notable progress.

To be able to do my role well I need to fully listen to a resident's concern, build trust with them so they feel supported, but be clear about what might be achieved.

I also need to build good working relationships with colleagues from housing associations, the police, council teams, voluntary sector organisations and mental health staff. As I meet with colleagues and learn about policies and practices, I build up more specialist knowledge of how things work, which enables me to take a

balanced view when discussing casework.

I would like to thank all the residents who've put their trust in me to try to assist and for all the partners who make time to hear my concerns and insights and help improve things both for individual residents and policy and practice development when problems have arisen.

In supporting the Tenants' Champion role, Richmond Council has taken an innovative approach in supporting social housing residents in the Borough. As well as supporting individual residents, the service takes leadership in promoting joint working by hosting the twice yearly 'Tenants' Champion Interagency Forum', with the aim of breaking down professional barriers, sharing good practice and promoting initiatives that benefit social housing residents.

I'm also pleased to promote and support two further council initiatives that support these aims: the Community Ambassadors Project and the Social Housing Improvement Plan – more updates on this are found later in this report.



*Cllr Vassileva collaborating with the Borough's Housing Lead Cllr Millard*



*Cllr Vassileva*

## How the service works

Residents can access the Tenants' Champion service by filling out a short on-line form found on the Richmond Council website: [Tenants' Champion - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#) or they can ring the Council's contact centre on 020 8891 1411 where trained staff will log the enquiry.

Once the form has been received, I will arrange to have a personal telephone call, usually within a week, with the resident. This is vitally important as it enables me to properly listen to concerns.

## Households Helped

This year the Tenants' Champion service assisted 145 households (compared with 138 the previous year).

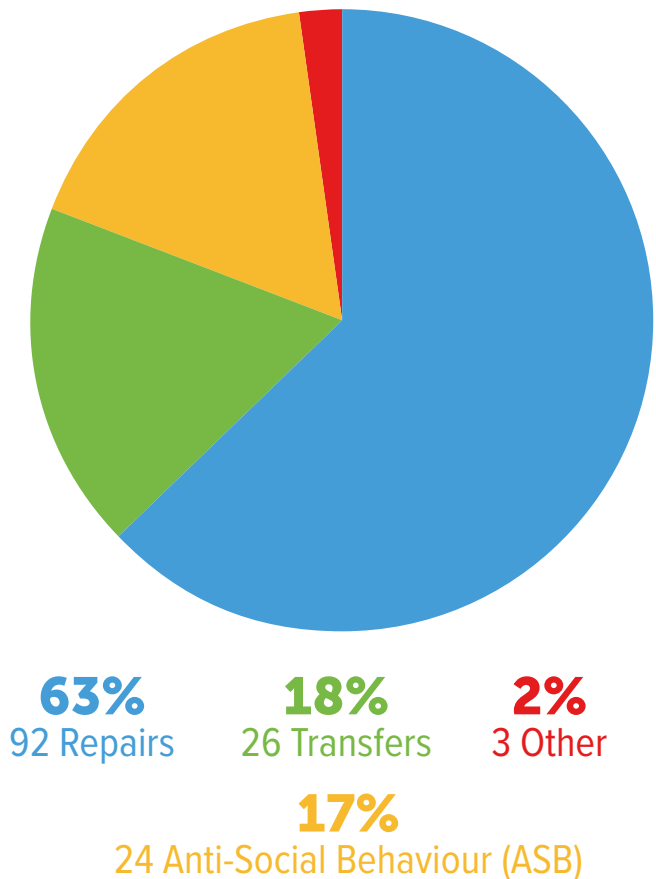
Of these, 116 were new cases (the same number as last year). The balance consisted of cases from previous years that continue to require ongoing support. 22 of the new cases were forwarded to the relevant ward councillor for help in the first instance and five new cases did not meet the criteria for help (private tenants or those living outside the borough) so were directed to advice elsewhere.

Of the new cases there were:

- 92 Repairs (63%)
- 26 Transfers (18%)
- 24 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) (17%)
- 3 (2%) Other

**Total 145**

(NB some cases have more than one issue)



## Working with Housing Associations and other partners

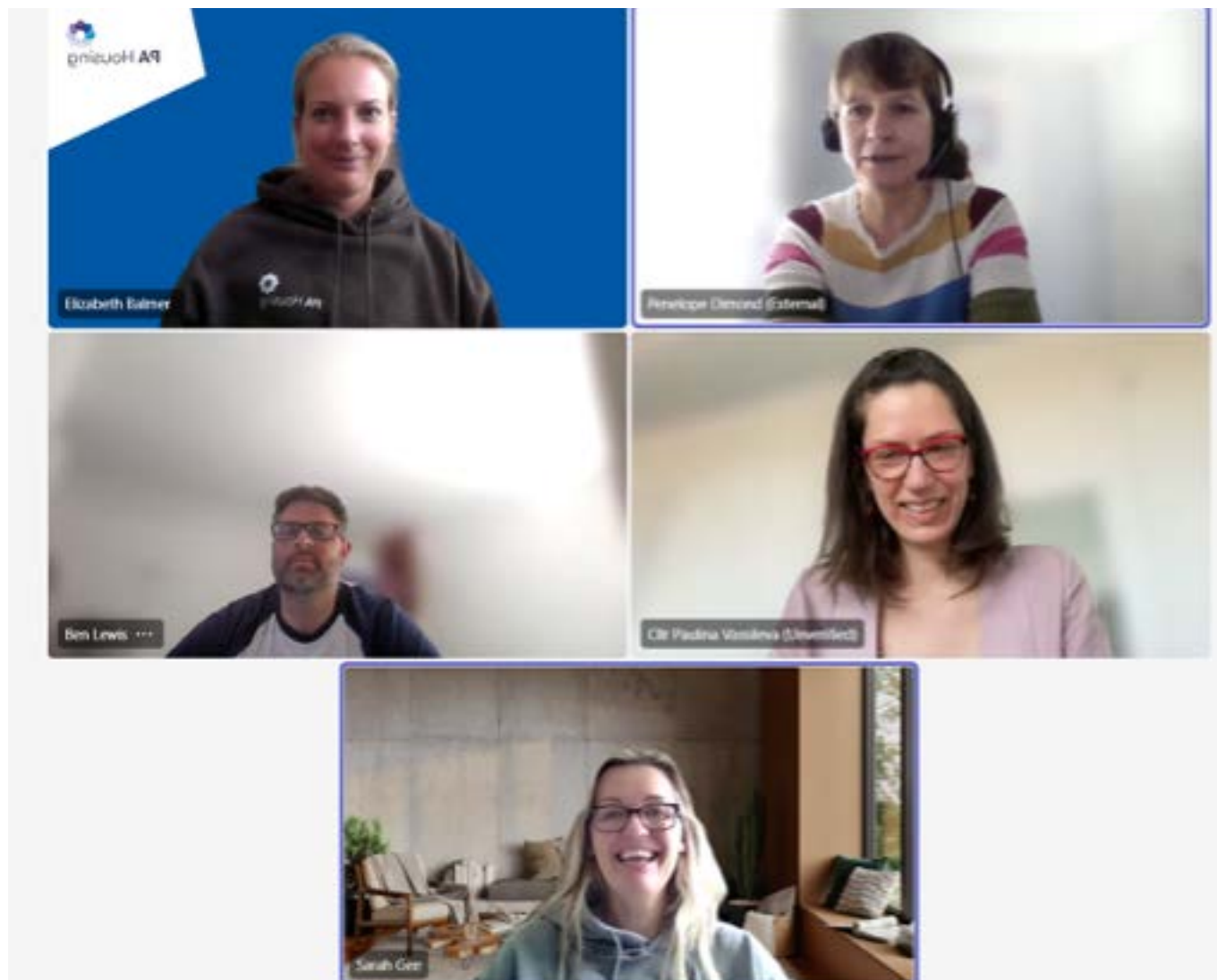
Residents from ten different housing associations approached the Service for help this year. These included Richmond Housing Partnership, PA Housing, L&Q, MTVH, Notting Hill Genesis, A2Dominion, Sovereign Network Group, Guinness Partnership, Oriane Care and Karibu Community Homes.

To build relationships, I meet with senior staff of the housing associations with the most properties in the Borough at least once a year, with other adhoc meetings happening when needed. These are RHP, PA Housing, MTVH and L&Q. The purpose is to enable staff and service updates to take place, review specific cases and to pick up on more general issues of concern.

This year, I've been having short weekly meetings with RHP, which has been hugely helpful in focusing in on the detail of complaints and making progress in resolving issues. I've also had monthly meetings with PA Housing

with staff representing housing management, ASB and repairs.

The Tenants' Champion service is always happy to work with other partners to provide better outcomes for residents. I continue to have beneficial liaison with advocates from Citizens Advice, RUILS and Richmond Aid. The service has also liaised with the two MP's offices covering the Borough (Twickenham and Richmond Park). The Tenants' Champion service tries not to 'double up' on cases at the same time as the MP as we find it duplicates resources and slows down responses.



*Cllr Vassileva meeting with senior PA Housing staff at a monthly online meeting*

'We have worked in close partnership with the Tenants' Champion service since its inception and continue to fully support its vital role within the borough. This collaborative approach has proven instrumental in delivering positive outcomes for some of our most vulnerable residents.

The strength of the Tenants' Champion service lies in its deep understanding of residents' individual and collective needs, and its ability to take a preventative, outcomes-focused approach to tenancy management. By intervening early and adopting a holistic view of the resident's circumstances, the service helps to prevent issues from escalating unnecessarily, reducing the need for more intensive or formal interventions.

This person-centred approach ensures that underlying, systemic issues are identified and

addressed, rather than just managing the immediate symptoms of tenancy problems. At the same time, the service maintains a focus on tailored, individual support that respects each tenant's unique challenges and strengths. This dual focus enables effective case management, promotes tenant stability, and ultimately leads to more sustainable outcomes for both residents and housing providers such as RHP.

We view the Tenants' Champion service as an essential partner in our wider commitment to building communities, reducing tenancy breakdown, and improving overall wellbeing for our residents. Our ongoing collaboration reflects a shared commitment to early intervention, partnership working, and continuous improvement in service delivery.'

**Robert Dobbs, Head of Operations, RHP**

## Tenants' Champion Casework themes this year

### 1) Management of Complaints

In dealing with complaints, we know the Housing Associations work in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code: [Complaint Handling Code 2024 | Housing Ombudsman Service](#). They have published complaints policies which involve a stage 1 and stage 2 process, where residents can expect written responses to their concerns.

As a Tenants' Champion service, we encourage residents to use these processes as a first step to getting things sorted out. It's important for housing associations to recognise why people are complaining, spot themes or work out how to put things right.

Our service is really designed to step in if things aren't resolved after the Stage 2 response. However, sometimes residents are unaware of the complaints process or think that because they have been in contact with the housing association for an extended time, they have already made a complaint. There may also be additional vulnerabilities at play that the housing association is unaware of. Because we talk to people personally, we can find out what's going on and either guide them to use the complaints policies or give additional support as required.

When we do take on a case, very often things have been going wrong for quite some time, and we try and unpick what that is. It may have been service failure, or a breakdown in communication, or perhaps it is very complex with multiple variables at play that necessitate joint working across agencies. As a Tenants' Champion service, we've built up considerable expertise since 2011 in dealing with complaints and can provide a local independent third-party scrutiny or help to find resolutions and to try to avoid further complaint escalation to the Housing Ombudsman service.

In addition to the Tenants' Champion service, one of the things the Borough benefits from is from some excellent voluntary organisations. For social housing residents who may benefit from some personal advocacy or support, agencies such as RUILS, Richmond Aid and Citizens Advice do some excellent work. As a Tenants' Champion service, we want to support this work around housing issues.

We were very disappointed to note the Housing Ombudsman insight report published in July 2024 on data and cases relating to London, which highlighted that the London Borough of Richmond had the highest percentage of maladministration cases in London at 87.2% [Insight report - Issue 17](#)

So, this year, we've really tried to highlight the importance of good complaints policies and have encouraged housing associations to be aware of and use the extra resources provided by the Tenants' Champion service and voluntary organisations.

Although housing associations have a stage 1 and 2 complaint process, the way they organise complaints and monitor follow-through actions is variable. They must decide how complaints are tracked and who takes responsibility for seeing through actions and communicating with residents. This can be especially challenging where there are multiple issues to be fixed, or third-party contractors are involved. We've talked to housing associations about this and they've shared some of their working practices, detailing how they were trying to make improvements. This has involved changing IT systems to track complaints better, setting up multi-disciplinary meetings for triaging complex complaints, introducing dedicated case handlers or specialist complaints teams and having different levels of staff scrutinising complaints. Where the Tenants' Champion service, or other advocates have been involved, we've encouraged housing associations to engage and communicate properly with us about the details of complaints so they can fully use our insights and help.

The following is a case study of a complex complaint, which escalated because repairs weren't dealt with properly. It highlights how the input of the Tenants' Champion service and the personal advocate supplied by RUILS helped the housing association manage a rapidly escalating situation, to get things back on track so the complaint could be resolved.

**Case study:** 'Resident X, had complained to their housing association about repairs to their property that hadn't been done since they'd moved in. They therefore contacted the Tenants' Champion. Resident X disclosed vulnerabilities, health issues and some erratic

behaviour. Because of the potential complexity of the situation the Tenants' Champion initiated a professionals meeting which included health staff, community safety colleagues, housing association staff and RUILS (who Resident X had been signposted to initially by the Tenants' Champion thinking they'd benefit from a personal advocate). This highlighted a high level of risk and a subsequent CMARAC referral was made. Residents X felt let down by various agencies, particularly their housing association, and thought their repairs concerns were being ignored. Their behaviour escalated further causing damage to the property and ASB / threats to the neighbour. The housing association started legal action against their tenancy. RUILS worked hard to develop a trusting relationship with Resident X. They also started to have regular meetings with the repairs staff, to help communicate and schedule repairs appointments with Resident X. Because of the risk, police presence also needed to be arranged at appointments. The Tenants' Champion, who sits on the CMARAC and meets with housing association staff made sure all partners and resident X received the necessary communication to progress things. Repairs are ongoing, and the resident's behaviour has stabilised so tenancy action has been halted.'

## 2 Repairs

For another year complaints about repairs have dominated. Some housing associations have still reported difficulty in recruitment and retention of operatives and sourcing materials which have contributed to continuing complaints. There is also the issue of how to manage and monitor third party contractors and how to make them aware when residents need reasonable adjustments. Some housing associations have brought their external repairs contracts back in-house while others have developed new procedures for dealing with damp and mould.

As a Tenants' Champion I've been pleased to see some partners improving their practices on repairs complaints management putting dedicated resource to the issues. As a result, I've noticed some of the longstanding repairs cases coming to resolution.

The Tenants' Champion service has also been pleased to continue to support a project undertaken by a partnership of Richmond Borough Voluntary organisations, who collected feedback from 101 social

housing tenants living in the Borough. This highlighted the experience of disabled residents and those experiencing intersectional exclusion, who seemed to face even greater barriers to getting their repairs completed and their voices heard.

The report is called 'Decaying Homes, Forgotten lives: A Call for Urgent Action in Richmond's Social Housing Disrepairs Crisis' and can be accessed here: [Decaying Homes, Forgotten Lives Report - Ruils Independent Living : Ruils Independent Living](#)

The Tenants' Champion service attended the presentation of this report in September and was pleased to note that housing associations were now meeting quarterly with voluntary sector partners to make progress on repairs cases.

A case study example of where an advocate can really help a housing association, resolve things for vulnerable residents is as follows:

**Case study:** 'Resident Y was at a stage 1 complaint, but because their access needs weren't being met they couldn't read letters and so actions hadn't progressed. RUILS was able to broker a meeting at their offices where they attended to support the resident and the landlord was invited. At this meeting the right information was provided, and an operative was able to attend the property a week later at a time when the RUILS caseworker could also be there to support the resident.'

This year a handful of residents have contacted me after starting a legal disrepair case. Unfortunately, once such a process starts, this is usually dealt with in specialised legal teams within the housing association concerned, who liaise directly with the resident's legal advisor working to a specific legal process. This makes it difficult for me to intervene.

Some residents who have entered this process have told me that they wish they hadn't done so, and now did not know how to get out of arrangements without financial penalties. This concerns me and reinforces the need for better repairs services and transparent, easy to use, complaints processes for residents, so that they do not have to use this legal route.

'The Tenants' Champion service remains an incredibly helpful and effective escalation route for Social Housing tenants dealing with housing disrepairs. Ruils have continued to work closely with the service, especially on complex and long term cases that prove very challenging to resolve. This partnership has enabled us to build better relations with housing providers and increase their knowledge of the barriers faced by disabled people, as well as, offering insight and learning into possible resolutions.'

**Emily John, Lead Caseworker, Ruils**

### 3 Transfers

The Tenants' Champion service is always concerned to hear from people who desperately want or need to move properties within the social housing sector. It is important to be clear with those who contact the service that I cannot bypass the systems that are in place. They are designed to be fair to everyone. However, I do spend some time checking that people are on the right transfer lists and have registered with the home swapping websites. I also check that any relevant medical information has been correctly assessed

There continues to be a shortage of supply of social housing in the Borough and the Council faces many challenges in helping people on the Housing Register, (2,880 on the waiting list as of 31st March 2025), with fewer than 350 vacancies a year, with half of these being bedsits or 1-bedroom properties.

For those that are homeless and eligible, the Council may offer temporary accommodation while they wait for permanent accommodation to become available. Richmond Council very rarely uses bed and breakfasts, most temporary accommodation is provided in one of their two hostels or private accommodation. - due to lack of supply, this is sometimes situated outside Richmond Borough. This issue was discussed at the Tenants' Champion Interagency Forum in March, as there was concern that the quality of accommodation could vary and residents were often living in it for considerable time. (Average wait 14 months). To tackle this, the Council has become a Registered Provider of Social Housing again in order to directly deliver good quality temporary accommodation within the borough.

The Council has already purchased 47 homes to help house families in need and has put aside a further £13 million to acquire up to another 50 homes across the next two years. The Council has also now stepped up it's physical inspections of every property being rented for temporary accommodation, to make sure they meet their quality standards.

There are multiple challenges in delivering additional affordable housing in Richmond Borough including high land values, scarcity of available land and protected green space. However, the Council is committed to increasing the availability of genuinely affordable housing through various means. We are developing affordable housing on council-owned land, working with private developers to ensure that new developments incorporate affordable homes, acquiring private properties for use as temporary accommodation to provide urgent support, encouraging down-sizing, with the most generous incentive scheme in London and ensuring new homes are accessible and inclusive for residents with a range of needs. During the financial year 2024/25, a total of 29 new affordable homes were completed within the Borough: 24 sheltered accommodation homes were completed at Somerville House and 5 almshouses delivered at St Mary's Grove on a former garage site. It was anticipated that a further 37 homes would also have completed during this period, across Richmond Royal Hospital, Potterill Court, and Willow Road. However, a range of unforeseen challenges, including issues involving third parties and statutory undertakings, have led to delays on site. Consequently, the completion dates have been revised throughout the duration of the programme, with practical completion now anticipated within the next few months. Subject to ongoing proactive engagement with housing associations and the private sector to support sustainable levels of development, alongside effective resident consultation and adherence to planning requirements, up to 500 affordable homes could be delivered within the next five years.

## 4 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The Tenants' Champion continues to be contacted by residents who are suffering from ASB.

The Tenants' Champion service takes part in the monthly Community Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (CMARAC). This forum is facilitated by the Council's Community Safety team and deals with complex, often high-risk cases where information is shared between agencies (such as housing associations, police, NHS mental health, adult social care etc) to safeguard victims and witnesses and prevent further victimisation. As I attend this forum, I can listen to the discussion and represent issues of concern. Often in complex cases, because the discussions are confidential, residents that might have been affected by the ASB but are not party to this information worry that nothing is being done. Whilst I cannot repeat confidential information, being part of this process often enables me to reassure residents or local ward councillors that I am scrutinising the process as an impartial third party and can confirm that action is taken behind the scenes to help resolve issues.

Community Safety Team and Police representatives attend my Tenants' Champion interagency forum. It's always useful for partners to be updated on powers available and how to seek multi-agency support on these issues, which is rarely straightforward

The following is an example of a case that was escalated to the CMARAC partly because of the volume of contact received by multiple agencies and perceived level of risk and how the Tenants' Champion service helped calm things down, helping to reduce the strain on all services.

**Case study:** Resident Z was living in a housing association block of flats and was very scared of another resident who they thought over the period of several years was deliberately targeting them with ASB and criminal behaviour. Resident Z had contacted multiple agencies, several times a week for a sustained period about these concerns drawing in (at different times) housing associations, Council, police, hospital consultants and support staff, many advocates and local councillors. However, the reports were rarely backed up with any evidence and had led to counter complaints

from the accused resident. The Tenants' Champion service was instrumental in setting up a professionals meeting to ascertain the facts of the situation from multiple viewpoints and to check what could be offered by way of support. It is often the case, when a resident is feeling vulnerable that they use a 'scattergun' approach to a range of people and agencies. This is not always helpful in complex situations. By taking time to understand the issues and what each agency had done and could do, the Tenants' Champion service was also able to meet with Resident Z to set some boundaries about how they reported issues and to who, and to provide reassurance to them about the most effective way of expressing their concerns so they could be supported in the right way.

'We really appreciate the work Cllr Vassileva has done in supporting our residents and working with us at PA Housing. These meetings have proven to be highly valuable and by working together enabled us to achieve better outcomes for residents. They've provided a way of not only supporting residents on a case-by-case basis but also to identify recurring themes and feedback trends. This insight has been key in informing service improvement for example, helping shape and strengthen our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy.

Additionally, the meetings have helped deepen our partnerships, particularly with organisations like RUILS, where we are now exploring further opportunities for joint working to improve resident support and engagement.'

**Elizabeth Balmer, Head of Neighbourhoods, PA Housing**





*Cllr Vassileva with colleagues at the Tenants' Champion Interagency Forum in March 2025*

## Tenants' Champion Interagency Forum

The Tenants' Champion service works to encourage good joint working practices with partners by hosting the twice-yearly Tenants' Champion Interagency Forum. This year, the October meeting took place on-line over a TEAMS meeting, and the March one was held in person at the Council offices..

The main discussions points resulting from cases led by the Tenants' Champion this year was around complaints – making sure housing associations were aware of and were using the resource of the Tenants' Champion service and other advocates effectively and putting a spotlight on what could be done better in resolving complaints by sharing good practice.

These meetings also give an opportunity for agencies including the Council's community safety team, adult social services, housing associations, police, fire brigade, NHS mental health services and voluntary sector organisations to discuss issues and discuss themes that have emerged where a joint approach can make a big difference. Regular agenda slots give an opportunity for each agency to update on any

significant policy or staffing changes. This helps everyone keep up to date.

We had useful updates from the Council's community safety team, sharing details about a new bi-monthly group called the ASB Cross Borough Strategic Delivery Group – which partners were invited to to learn more about how ASB can be tackled, tools and powers available and best practice.

It's good to link with the Mental Health teams and the regular update from the South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust is always welcome. Knowing how things work and listening to experts on mental health issues and processes is hugely helpful for partners who often come across mental health issues in their work. Previous development of the Mental Health

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and Housing and Hospital Discharge protocols was a significant piece of work designed for the trust and housing organisations to work together more effectively. This forum gives an opportunity to check how things are going, and to consider when updates need to be made. Likewise, the Council's mental health social care team, are responsible for care act assessments and organising supported housing and floating support, something that is often critical in maintaining tenancies. Understanding access routes and how this works is important in joint working.

'Richmond upon Thames is an important borough for MTVH and our residents. With much focus on improving the quality of social housing and our services for our residents, we have welcomed the opportunity to work with the Tenants' Champion service, particularly regarding the resolution of resident concerns and complaints. Cllr Vassilleva's insight on their experiences through the role of the service has been impactful in understanding where we can make the most positive changes.

Additionally, through the biannual Tenants' Champions Inter Agency Forum, we will continue to develop stronger partnerships with not only the service itself, but also with other social housing providers, local stakeholders, and voluntary agencies to better understand the concerns of Richmond social housing residents, share learning and good practice on issues affecting them.' **Maxine Gordon, Director of Housing, MTVH**

## How we (Richmond) work in partnership to improve resident services

This report is about the Tenants' Champion service, but we are pleased to work alongside other Richmond Council initiatives to support our social housing residents. The three initiatives serve to complement one another and in all cases it's essential that the Council works closely with housing associations and other stakeholders





*Cllr Vassileva with senior RHP staff at the SHIP launch*



*Cllr Vassileva with a senior MTVH Manager at the SHIP launch*

## Social Housing Improvement Plan (SHIP)

Although the provision of new social housing is a central priority for the Council, it is also hugely important to ensure providers drive investment for residents living in existing social housing.

The Council's Social Housing Improvement Plan (SHIP) was launched at a breakfast meeting in Mortlake Hall in November 2024 and was well supported by the main housing associations and residents. Housing Associations will now be reporting to the Adult Social Services, Health and Housing services committee in turn, once a year on the following points and RUILS and the Community Ambassadors are also invited to these meetings.

- Putting the resident voice at the heart of decision making
- An improved repairs experience
- Investing in sustainable homes
- Tackling defects and disrepair
- Investing in safe and strong communities

For more details please see the following link: [Social Housing Improvement Plan - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)



## The Community Ambassador Project (CAP)

The CAP is a capacity building project set up in 2022 to recruit and train social housing residents across Richmond as Community Ambassadors, in collaboration with the four main housing associations in the borough. The aim is to support them to improve their local area and have more influence in decision making.

This is the link for more information about the Community Ambassadors: [www.richmond.gov.uk/community\\_ambassadors](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/community_ambassadors)

There are now 16 Community Ambassadors across all four of the main housing associations, 14 estate inspections have taken place, and 120 repairs raised. Issues have included new lighting to reduce anti-social behaviour, better refuse and recycling facilities, reducing fly tipping and improving the look of green spaces. The Community Ambassadors have been able to join the housing committee and have spoken directly to senior managers. They've also met each other and swapped notes with residents from different providers. The support, training and experience they are getting has also been useful in improving self-development. One Community Ambassador has spoken at a resident engagement conference, and another is going through the recruitment process for a Board role.

'We genuinely value the help and support that the Tenants Champion provides. The collaborative work that she has given our residents and to L&Q helps us to give a better service to our residents and highlights problems before they escalate.

A very helpful area in the past year has been the Tenants Champion Interagency Forum, where all the local housing providers get together with other agencies to discuss best practice and the collaborative working with each other, whom we would not usually get to see, has proved extremely helpful for the management of cases and the support of our residents. Particularly useful this year has also been the new Community Ambassadors service, which we are very happy to support and work alongside. A few of our residents have signed up for this and it is hoped that the Community Ambassadors service will grow and benefit all social housing residents in Richmond.'

**Judy Waine, Neighbourhood Lead Officer, L&Q**

## Aims for the year ahead:

- 1 Continue to offer a Tenants' Champion service for Richmond Borough's housing association tenants and leaseholders
- 2 To host the twice yearly 'Tenants' Champion Interagency Forum'. This will include making sure the multi-agency Mental Health and Housing Joint Working and Hospital Discharge Protocols are working and kept up to date. This may also involve helping to facilitate any training of interest to partners
- 3 To continue to analyse themes, trends and volumes in casework to see how housing associations' management practices are affecting residents and to promote good practice in key areas.
- 4 Maintain a focus on effective joint working to ensure that services are co-operating well, particularly with unresolved cases involving anti-social behaviour.
- 5 Progress work to champion best practice in how housing associations engage with residents and work with them to ensure standards in Richmond Borough lead the way.
- 6 To continue to support related housing initiatives such as the Social Housing Improvement Plan and the Community Ambassadors Project by sharing information and progress with multiagency partners and in this annual report.

## Thanks from Residents:

"Thank you for your guidance and good wishes for us. I'm grateful for your diligence and support during this time, as you have prevented us from feeling completely hopeless and allowed us to rely on your help. Thank you for all your genuine efforts, support, and empathy.

May God grant you the strength to continue your sincere and responsible service." (FK)

"Firstly I would like to thank you for following up this matter. I really appreciate your help and your efforts. Finally that issue has been sorted out now. It took three years to fix this repair" (LL)

"I would like to say a sincere thank you for all your help and assistance in this matter which has gone on for nearly four years. I know we would not have reached this stage without your intervention for which I am truly grateful." (PC)

"I'd like to thank you personally very very much for all of your help and support I truly don't think this would of been possible without all of your help." (JB)

"I am very grateful to you all for your time and efforts in dealing with this very stressful and complex case of \*\*\*\*\* antisocial behaviour, I really appreciate it. It is indeed very comforting to know the support system is still available to me should I require it again in the future. Thank you for doing a wonderful job with creating a peaceful, safe environment for myself and the tenants to live in our homes." (FG)

## Appendix 1: Examples of Resident Engagement in the Borough

Previously the Tenants' Champion Annual report has shared details on metrics detailed in the 'Leading the Way in Resident Engagement report first published in 2020. These will now be picked up with the SHIP reporting. However, the following are just a few examples of how housing associations aim to include the resident voice in the heart of decision making:



*Residents and staff at the Fulmer Close reflection garden*

### PA housing gave an example of local engagement as follows:

The allotment space at Fulmer Close had run down and was no longer used by residents. Despite its potential, it lacked investment and purpose. PA Housing collaborated with local residents and Resident Champions to understand their aspirations for the space. Through this engagement, the idea of a Reflection Garden emerged—a quiet, green space for relaxation and community connection. Partnering with the Contracts and Partnerships team, PA Housing secured support from a contractor who completed the transformation as part of their social value commitment. The result is a beautiful, well-used Reflection Garden that has become a valued space for residents. This

project demonstrates the power of listening to residents, leveraging partnerships, and delivering visible improvements that make a meaningful difference to the local community.

PA Housing also have a disability and vulnerability working group which provided feedback and helped develop their new vulnerable resident and reasonable adjustment policy. The group are keen to undertake a mystery shopping activity across various teams to gain insight on how residents with disabilities and/or vulnerabilities might access PA Housing services and where to prioritise areas for improvements. The group are going to test a new version of the 'My PA' app, to identify if this needs improvement from a disability and vulnerability perspective.

**RHP talked about their Community Engagement team and the work they've done over the last year to engage residents and build connections with voluntary sector partners:**

This team holds regular community hub and drop in events across local neighbourhoods so residents can speak to someone face-to-face. Residents can ask questions and share feedback on all RHP services. These events support those residents who are not digitally active and who would otherwise find it difficult to engage. The team is there to listen and turn residents' voice into action, by working together to get results that matter. As most queries are repairs, welfare or housing related, colleagues from these teams now attend sessions to help resolve queries.

The team have established several successful collaborations with partners and other agencies, including Richmond Furniture Scheme, RUILS, the Hygiene Bank, Hanworth Food Larder, Community SuDS/Bluescapes, local ward councillors, Grace Advocacy and Citizens Advice.

The engagement team have hosted several events with local partners, including pop-ups at Glebe Gardens and Ham Close, a Community Clear Up Day at West Sheen Vale, a Summer Party and Digital Inclusion session at Redknapp House retirement scheme and Retrofit Engagement sessions in Barnes.

They've also built a presence elsewhere in the community by volunteering at the Vineyard Community charity and taking part in RHP's Winter Warmer campaign, calling and visiting customers and delivering hampers.

Several community planting events have also taken place across Richmond



*RHP's pop up event at Glebe Gardens*

borough, improving the look of the communal areas, flower beds and green spaces. Some of the areas benefitting include The Willoughbys, Carpenters Court, Mill House, Somerville House, Beaufort Court, Queenwood Ave and White Hart Lane.

In December 2024, the team opened the recently refurbished Community Hub at Butts Farm. This provides a warm safe space for RHP customers to meet and find out what is going on in the local area and to meet the Community Engagement team at events.

## Appendix 2: Richmond upon Thames Private Registered Provider Stock 2024 .

Housing Associations	General Needs - self contained units	Supported Housing / housing for older people units	Total:
A2 Dominion	99	27	126
Anchor Hanover	0	39	39
Guinness Partnership	146	28	174
Karibu Community Homes	27	0	27
L&Q	496	109	605
Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing	348	25	373
Notting Hill Genesis	79	0	79
PA Housing	1421	305	1726
Places for People	145	0	145
Richmond Housing Partnership	5898	390	6288
Shepherds Bush Housing group	5	5	10
Sovereign Network Homes	107	0	107
The Sons of the Divine Providence	21	16	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>8792</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>9736</b>