



**citizens  
advice**

**Richmond**

# Campaigning Update Feb.2025

CitizensAdviceRichmond.org  
Freephone: 080 82 78 78 73

**We helped 740 local people with 2307 advice issues in January. The three areas with the most clients requesting help were Benefits and Tax Credits (306,) Housing (149) and Charitable Support and Food Banks (142.) Benefits queries, including Tax and Universal Credit issues, totalled the greatest number of issues raised (832,) others with high numbers of queries were Housing (386,) Debt (237,) and Charitable Support and Food Banks (212.)**

## Social Housing Maintenance and Repair in Richmond-Upon-Thames

A current priority for Citizens Advice Richmond’s Campaign and Strategy team is the standard of repairs to social housing in the borough and the time it takes for these to be carried out properly for tenants.

Citizens Advice Richmond contributed to the report issued in September last year by the charity RUILS which campaigns for those with disabilities living independently. (<https://www.ruils.co.uk/article/decaying-homes-for-gotten-lives-report/>)

Among its recommendations, the report called for the Housing Associations to improve their performance on housing repair and work with the voluntary sector via quarterly meetings.

In January Citizens Advice Richmond has been working to establish regular drop-in sessions at CAR offices with a member of the local housing association RHP. This would mean RHP can deal directly with the number of cases CAR is handling concerning housing disrepair.

The importance of improving social housing conditions in the borough is highlighted by the fact that the RUILS housing report noted;

**In 2023/24 58% of complaints raised to the Richmond Tenant’s Champion were about repairs.**

**The Housing Ombudsman reports that Richmond upon Thames has the highest maladministration rate in London at 87.2%.**



## R&C Focus on Housing Disrepair



### Case Study; Three years with mouldy, collapsing bathroom.

A CAR client has been caught in a web of inaction and lack of communication and concern shown by local housing provider, RHP.

CAR's client, who needs a mobility scooter, has spent more than three years with a mould-ridden bathroom. Despite CAR's involvement since August 2024 the bathroom has yet to be repaired. Why has this repair not yet been carried out? RHP has known about the case and has sent different contractors to assess the situation and quote, but has not greenlit any work.

RHP initially stated that Richmond Council's Occupational Therapists needed to first provide details of the changes that would be required to the bathroom due to the client's ill health. However, it remains the responsibility of RHP to provide their tenant with a safe bathroom. For months RHP has failed to find a suitable contractor or keep their tenant informed of what is happening.

Meanwhile, besides dealing with on-going health issues, the client has been left distressed not only by the lack of suitable bathing facilities and an unsafe floor but also by the uncertainty of who will carry out any work and when. After exhausting the RHP complaints process the case has been escalated to the Housing Ombudsman, Richmond Tenant's Champion and local MP.

**Since 2021**, when the initial flood damage occurred, the client has been trying to get bathroom repaired.

**August 2024;** client contacts CAR. Client was told by OT team in May he should not use the bath and it might take 12 months for any council OT visit to assess the situation.

**August 2024;** RHP contractor inspects property. States cannot repair bathroom until adaptations were made for the client's disability

**September 2024 until January 2025;** continual contact by CAR and client to RHP and its contractors to get work carried out on bathroom. Situation still not resolved.

#### **About Citizens Advice Richmond**

Citizens Advice Richmond gives free, impartial and confidential advice to anyone who lives, works or studies in Richmond borough, or cares for someone who lives in the borough. As well as providing advice, we aim to spot emerging problems affecting local people and to set out new ideas to improve policy and delivery for all.

**Feedback:** We welcome feedback and suggestions – [click here](#).

**Free advice:** Please call us on Freephone 080 82 78 78 73 or fill in the [form here](#).

**Benefit calculator:** Find out what benefits you can [claim here](#).

**Partner organisation referrals:** Refer clients to us [via this form](#).