

Our Impact 2022-2023

Housing Rights

when everyone has a *home*

Brian's story



Brian and Christine had been living happily in the home that they had built, with their family. They both worked and had been paying a mortgage for almost 20 years.

But Brian was diagnosed with cancer and had to undergo gruelling treatment. He was unable to work, and they fell into arrears on the mortgage.

Brian felt he had no alternative but to return to work as soon treatment finished. He was overpaying on the mortgage to try to pay off the arrears. Despite this, the lender started repossession proceedings and the family faced losing everything.

With financial worries, on top of their health concerns, the family were under immense stress.

Our solicitors went to court on Brian's behalf, and used their specialist knowledge to argue that the lender was being unreasonable in his case. Thankfully they were able to stop the repossession action.

Brian is recovering from his illness, the family no longer face homelessness, and they are looking forward to spending time together in the home they built.

Supporting the public

During a cost of living crisis, Housing Rights continued to support people with housing problems and homelessness in 2022 - 2023

How we helped:

We secured positive outcomes for **87%** of those using our advice services

We re-established a full peer advice service in NI prisons to help support those entering and leaving custody with their housing problems

13,517

households received **advice, advocacy and representation**



We prevented homelessness for **1,398** households



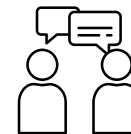
336

referrals to **Housing Mediation Service**



1,764

landlords were **provided with advice**



Helpline clients:

82%

were **better informed** to make appropriate housing choices

75%

had an improved **sense of wellbeing**

89%

reported their housing circumstances had **improved**

How we helped:



Provided advocacy and representation in

1,022
cases

Provided help on

53,605
housing and homelessness issues

69

mediation resolutions

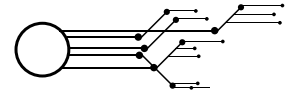
Improved housing circumstances for

91%
of casework clients

Improved housing circumstances for

100%
of our Housing Rights for Young People clients

Excelled in digital



We launched a new **website** providing advice to the public, landlords and practitioners using a best practice approach to content and design

provided digital advice to **4,687** contacts

Cyber Essentials Accreditation achieved

Supporting frontline practitioners'

With increased pressure on those frontline advisers who help people with housing problems, we supported them by providing advice, legal information and training.

We provided support to frontline practitioners' to improve housing circumstances for people in their communities across Northern Ireland



96%

practitioners' felt better equipped to provide housing advice to their clients

114 practitioners' attended our practitioners' forum

Supported agencies to deliver advice to **4,215** households

Our CHAP project supported

51

frontline agencies across NI

2,192

practitioners' supported via our helpline

1,066

practitioners' attended our training

100%

of training attendees felt they had improved their housing skills and knowledge

"I have had fabulous support from CHAP advisers. The expertise and knowledge has been extremely helpful, and the support of another practitioner to advocate for clients has in most cases had very positive outcomes." - CHAP agency

Influencing policy and legislation

Despite the lack of a functioning assembly for much of the year, we created opportunities to influence decision makers and secured changes to policy and legislation, which will positively impact people living in poor or inadequate housing.

11 policy recommendations acted upon in areas including:

- Department for Communities Intermediate Rent Policy
- Regulations to support the Private Tenancies Act 2022
- Support for Mortgage Interest

Involving experts by experience

We strengthened our work to support the involvement of experts by experience. We:

- Hosted a landmark event bringing together experts by experience, service providers, politicians and decision makers to talk about how we can involve experts by experience in decisions that affect them.
- Launched research to identify groups whose experience of poor housing is not being heard, and assess mechanisms/models by which they could be involved.

Renters' Voice!

-  Awarded funding for next phase of project
-  Launched survey to find out how the cost of living crisis has impacted private renters
-  Spoke at an event in the NI assembly on their research with private tenants

Housing Rights



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