



Chi Onwurah
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

MPAM Reference: MPAM/0159343/21

15 July 2021

Dear Chi

Thank you for your letter of 25 June 2021 with enclosures expressing your concerns about conditions at Mears housing in Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Home Office expects the highest standards from our accommodation providers, who are expected to conduct regular checks across the asylum estate.

Mears have advised that, after an electrical inspection of the property in question, it was concluded that a rewire should take place. The Housing Manager for the property attended to discuss the works needed with all service users, giving timeframes and the requirements, explaining the length of time it would take for the full rewire and the reinstatement of ceilings, floorings etc thereafter. Mears confirmed that the three service users were happy to remain in the property whilst works were undertaken.

All works were carried out following risk assessments. This level of work can sometimes create some mess, however the property was cleared and made safe each evening. The electrical supervisor and their team all confirmed ongoing contact with the service users whilst work was undertaken and all were happy to vacate rooms as and when required. In general residents were positive about the improvements being made.

Additionally, Newcastle Environmental Health Officer attended the property on the week beginning 21 June 2021 and confirmed back to Mears that they were happy with the works.

Asylum seekers can raise specific issues or concerns about their accommodation through the 24/7 Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) service operated via Migrant Help. We encourage service users to raise complaints via Migrant Help in the first instance if they are unhappy with their accommodation.

The Home Office and our providers receive feedback on complaints raised through our regular dialogue with Migrant Help, which enables attention to be focussed on any areas of concern.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Philp', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Chris Philp MP
Minister for Immigration Compliance and Justice