

Mr Michael Cameron
Chief Executive
Scottish Housing Regulator
Highland House
58 Waterloo Street
Glasgow
G2 7DA

24 October 2013

Dear Mr Cameron

SPSO housing complaints report 2012/13

I am pleased to enclose a report about the complaints that my office dealt with in 2012/13 about housing issues in Scotland. It follows the publication of my 2012/13 annual report in July and is one of a series of reports through which we are aiming to put key messages, information and analysis of complaints about individual sectors into the public domain.

When I look at the housing complaints we have investigated over the year, it is evident that issues with living environment can have a significant, ongoing and inescapable impact on tenants. This emphasises the importance of effective and quick remedy through the complaints process.

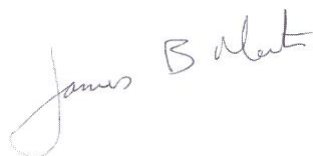
My report sets out the work we have been doing to help registered social landlords improve their processes by developing an accessible, simple model complaints handling procedure which is now operating throughout the sector. This process change must be underpinned by a culture of valuing complaints, which will, in time, lead to the continuing improvements that we would all like to see.

I welcome the significant reduction in the rate of premature complaints we received about the housing sector. The rate has fallen from 62% in 2011/12 (67% for housing associations and 58% for local authority housing) to 52% in 2012/13 (55% and 48% for the respective providers). The rate remains higher than the overall average of 40% but is a positive step.

I upheld or partly upheld 43% of the housing complaints we investigated, an increase of 5% on the previous year although lower than the overall rate of 46%. Clearly, there are areas where things can be done better, particularly in complaints handling, which accounted for a significant number of the complaints I upheld last year.

More details of the statistics discussed in my report, along with my office's full statistics for the year 21012/13, are on our website www.spsso.org.uk. I look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the quality of complaints handling and delivery of housing services in Scotland.

Yours sincerely



Jim Martin
Ombudsman