

SPSO decision report

Case: 201100230, Argyll Community Housing Association
Sector: housing associations
Subject: repairs and maintenance of housing stock (incl dampness and infestations)
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C raised a number of issues about the housing association's handling of his complaint about dampness in his property. In particular, Mr C complained that the housing association had been aware of the problem before they let the property, and that there had been delays in carrying out repairs.

During our investigation we found that before letting the property the association were aware that there was a small area of dampness in a cupboard. They had initially believed this to be a minor issue and had taken action to try to address it. It turned out that the problem in fact related to the whole building, but there was no evidence that the association had been aware of this before letting the property. Once this was known about, as a minority owner within the building the housing association had taken action to try to obtain agreement from the other owners to allow works to be carried out. However, we were concerned at the length of time Mr C had lived with the problem.

The association accepted that he had suffered inconvenience and had offered compensation for this and for the delay in carrying out a repair. We were also concerned that there was no written record of the accompanied viewing that Mr C had of the property before it was let to him. This would have detailed what issues, if any, had been brought to Mr C's attention.

Recommendations

We recommended that the association:

- give further consideration to Mr C's request for housing points should his property show further signs of internal dampness, because of the apparent uncertainty about the completion of the external repairs; and
- retain a note of the accompanied viewing of the property, where a void inspection is not being carried out.