

SPSO decision report

Case: 201103142, Hebridean Housing Partnership Ltd
Sector: housing associations
Subject: repairs and maintenance of housing stock (incl dampness and infestations)
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C suffers from a chronic, degenerative back condition and had since 2009 been in contact with housing partnership about draughts in his home, water coming in around his front door and the replacement of his solid fuel heating system. He provided evidence from his occupational therapist and GP that he was unable to cope with his heating system and the cold, draughty conditions in his home. The partnership attended Mr C's property on a number of occasions to carry out repairs to the windows and doors. Mr C considered, however, that the repairs carried out were inadequate and temporary. He said that the partnership should have replaced his windows to resolve the problem.

The partnership told Mr C that they had a programme of replacement windows and heating systems for all of their stock and that his home was on their list for renewal. However, they advised that they would not be able to do either piece of work until after 2015. During the course of his correspondence with the partnership, Mr C had also asked them to resolve a number of issues for him, including making a number of minor disability adjustments to his home, providing flooring and giving him an immediate transfer and moving costs. The partnership carried out a number of adaptations at the request of his occupational therapist, and placed him on their transfer register with medium priority. However, they refused to immediately transfer him, pay for his moving costs or pay for floor coverings.

We upheld Mr C's complaint about the heating system as our investigation found that the partnership's funding arrangements allowed them to consider replacing the system as a disability adaptation, but that they had failed to consider this. We did not uphold his other complaints as we found that the partnership had taken appropriate steps in relation to repairs to the property and in response to Mr C's needs. We did not consider that it was reasonable for the partnership to carry out the further changes that Mr C had requested.

Recommendations

We recommended that the partnership:

- review the current practice for dealing with requests for heating replacement under aids and adaptations funding, to ensure that such requests are dealt with taking into account relevant funding guidance; and
- consider Mr C's request for a replacement heating system as an aids and adaptations referral taking into account the relevant funding guidance.