

Case: 201103628, The City of Edinburgh Council
Sector: local government
Subject: repairs and maintenance of housing stock
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that a council officer advised her that the electric central heating in the council house she was offered would be replaced with gas heating. She believes that she needs this as she suffers from asthma and other respiratory (breathing) health problems. She said that she was told that if she refused the property she would lose her gold priority points. She also said that it was only after she accepted the property that the council explained that the heating would not be replaced.

The council told us that the housing officer told her that they might be able to change the heating system and that he would contact the property services department to find out if this was possible. As the heating system in the property was only five years old, however, it was not possible to replace it. They confirmed that, as the house had been assessed as being suitable for her needs, she was informed that if she refused the property she would lose her gold priority status.

In our investigation, we considered her concerns. We confirmed that, although we could not be certain what was said by the housing officer, if she refused a property which was assessed as meeting her needs she would have lost her gold priority points. We also found that the council had reviewed information from her GP and a respiratory consultant and were satisfied that the electric heating would not have a negative impact on Mrs C's health. As Mrs C would indeed have lost her gold priority points had she not accepted this property, and as we could not establish for certain what exactly was said by the housing officer, we did not uphold her complaint.