

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201200078, Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership  
**Sector:** housing associations  
**Subject:** complaints handling  
**Outcome:** upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C, who is a councillor, wrote to the housing partnership on behalf of a tenant (Mr A) who was unhappy with their handling of his complaint about the way he was treated by a staff member. Mr C complained that he was given inaccurate information about the partnership's complaints procedure and had wrongly been told that there were no further stages through which to pursue his complaint.

Our investigation found that the partnership had not handled Mr C's complaint in line with their complaints policy. The policy says that service users have a right to complain about the behaviour of staff members if they consider the behaviour to be unacceptable. The policy also sets out the three stages of the complaints process, which end in referral to our office.

During our investigation, the chief executive of the partnership wrote and apologised to Mr C. She explained that she had decided that his complaint would not be handled under their complaints policy, and acknowledged that he should have been told that. She also agreed that the complaint should have been handled in line with the complaints policy, in which case he would have been able to come to us if he remained dissatisfied with the partnership's final response. She apologised for these failings. We, therefore, upheld the complaint but did not make any recommendations because of the action that the partnership had already taken.