

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201201979, Scottish Water  
**Sector:** Scottish Government and devolved administration  
**Subject:** sewer flooding - external  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C had experienced a recurring problem of raw sewage being discharged into his back garden during heavy rainfall. Scottish Water had investigated and carried out some repairs, but this had not resolved the problem. Mr C believed that this was happening because the sewer was not able to cope with sudden heavy rainfall, and said that it should be replaced. Scottish Water told Mr C that they did not have the funding to do this. He considered this unacceptable, and believed that they should seek additional funding if this was what was needed to resolve the problem.

When we investigated the complaint, Scottish Water confirmed that a problem could occur during heavy rainfall, but said that they were tied by issues of funding and prioritising (internal flooding in a property has a higher priority than external flooding, and has to be addressed first) but they had, as far as they were able, taken action to address the problem. We noted that the indications were that they were trying to find a solution. On this basis and given the evidence that the problem was one of funding, rather than coming about as a result of maladministration or service failure, there was no further action that we could take.