

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202109, Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership
Sector: housing associations
Subject: neighbour disputes and antisocial behaviour
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the way the housing partnership handled complaints about antisocial behaviour. Mrs C complained on numerous occasions about the behaviour of her upstairs neighbours. The partnership investigated all the complaints that were reported directly to them, based on their antisocial behaviour policy. They twice took action against Mrs C's neighbour, and monitored the situation over a prolonged period. During this time Mrs C made further complaints about antisocial behaviour, but the partnership did not think there was enough evidence to take further action.

Our investigation reviewed the evidence from the partnership, and found that there were occasions when staff could have investigated reported antisocial behaviour more promptly, when it was not reported directly to them. There were also occasions when there was some evidence of antisocial behaviour of a minor nature that was not addressed. In particular, we found that the partnership lacked an antisocial behaviour procedure for staff dealing with ongoing issues such as those reported by Mrs C. They also failed to provide Mrs C with enough information about what they had done about some of her complaints, and did not explain sufficiently what other action she could take.

Recommendations

We recommended that the partnership:

- develop a clear procedure to assist staff in handling persistent antisocial behaviour and for addressing situations where information is not corroborated, and share this procedure with SPSO; and
- apologise to Mrs C for the failings identified in this complaint.