

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202755, Glasgow Housing Association Ltd
Sector: housing associations
Subject: repairs and maintenance
Outcome: some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C was a tenant of a housing association. There was a leak from the flat upstairs into his house. His bathroom ceiling partially collapsed and it had to be taken down and replaced. Mr C complained that the association delayed in dealing with the collapsed ceiling. He also felt that they unreasonably took down part of the collapsed ceiling without testing for asbestos in the artex coating of the ceiling. Mr C's flat had been rewired a number of years ago and he also complained that the association had left him exposed to live wires.

To investigate these complaints we asked the housing association for documentary evidence of what had happened. We reviewed this, and as we found that the association did take too long to fix the collapsed ceiling, we upheld that complaint. However, we also found that the association had apologised to Mr C and made him a financial payment, and had undertaken to give staff training to ensure that the situation would not happen again. We, therefore, made no recommendations.

We did not, however, uphold Mr C's other complaints. The association supplied us with evidence that showed that they had been aware of the existence of asbestos. They were, however, also able to demonstrate that they had undertaken the work with asbestos appropriately, and had carried out atmospheric tests before and after the work to ensure that no fibres had been released. The association also explained that the area of electrical wiring about which Mr C complained was not part of the rewiring work that they had undertaken. Once they were aware of the problem, they rectified it. They then undertook an independent electrical test of his house to reassure him, which confirmed that it was safe.