

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201204216, Dunedin Canmore Housing Ltd  
**Sector:** housing associations  
**Subject:** repairs and maintenance  
**Outcome:** some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained about the time it took for the housing association to carry out repair work to address damp and drainage problems affecting her home. Ms C felt that the housing association had ignored the concerns she had raised both individually and collectively, and was unhappy with the way in which the complaint was handled. Ms C raised the matter with a parliamentary minister because she was dissatisfied at having to constantly phone and write letters in order to gain the housing association's attention.

The association explained that the problems identified were significant and a timescale for completion of the work was difficult to provide because more investigative work was required, but they accepted that they could have communicated better with Ms C. They also acknowledged the information she had provided and offered her an ex-gratia (voluntary) payment as an apology. In addition, they introduced a new customer care centre to improve communications.

It did take around nine months for the damp and drainage problems to be addressed, but the association provided evidence that during that time they were actively working to address extensive problems that affected the whole building. We agreed that the circumstances were exceptional, and that their actions were reasonable.

We found that the association's responses became more informative as work progressed, but on occasion it seemed that Ms C had to ask for information rather than this being proactively given and we upheld her complaint about communication. We concluded, however, that their response to the complaint and offer of redress were reasonable.