

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201303391, South Ayrshire Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** repairs and maintenance  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained that the council failed to service his electric central heating system regularly or to a sufficient standard. He also was of the view that they were not qualified to carry out this work. In addition, he complained that the council did not respond adequately to his complaints of dampness in his home.

When responding to his complaint, the council confirmed that his heating system was serviced annually, although they said that from a safety point of view this was not required by law. They acknowledged that there had been problems in the recording of one of the services carried out but this was corrected shortly afterwards. They explained that their officers were suitably qualified. In terms of the dampness, they inspected the property on a number of occasions and no dampness was found in the walls. In their view the problem resulted from condensation caused by a lack of heating, the storage of materials in bedrooms and poor ventilation. They carried out works to try and alleviate this and provided Mr C with advice on how to reduce the risk of condensation. As this did not resolve the problem, they agreed to re-render the exterior walls, as Mr C had requested.

We found that, although there had been problems with the council's original heating contractors, Mr C's heating system was serviced annually from the start of his tenancy. We noted that the council had supervised the work of their officers to ensure that they were servicing heating systems correctly and we saw details of their qualifications. In addition, we noted that the council had responded to Mr C's complaints of dampness in line with their housing management policy, had carried out inspections and had taken steps to reduce the risk of condensation. Although we cannot say whether these steps will ultimately resolve the problem, as the council responded in line with their policies, and as Mr C's heating system was serviced annually by appropriately qualified officers, we did not uphold his complaints.