

SPSO decision report

Case: 201402587, Queens Cross Housing Association Ltd
Sector: housing associations
Subject: repairs and maintenance
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained that when she had taken up her tenancy, her flat had been suffering from water ingress. She said the association had been aware of this problem prior to the allocation of the property. She also complained that although it had been agreed that she should not pay rent until the problem was resolved, she had been forced to pay, with only a small reduction in rent offered by the association. Throughout her tenancy, the association had failed to return her calls and had failed to attend appointments without explanation, causing her inconvenience and unnecessary expense.

Our investigation found the association had responded reasonably to Ms C's complaint of water ingress. There was also no evidence that the association were aware of the problem prior to allocation. We also found there was no evidence of any agreement that Ms C should withhold her rent, or evidence that she had formally informed the association that this was her intention. We did find that the association, whilst acknowledging the poor communication with Ms C, had failed to demonstrate they had taken action to improve their responsiveness to residents, so we upheld Ms C's complaint about their communication.

Recommendations

We recommended that the association:

- provide evidence of the implementation of the association's communications improvement project; and
- apologise to Ms C for the failure to communicate appropriately with her.