

SPSO decision report

Case: 201605969, Ore Valley Housing Association Ltd
Sector: housing associations
Subject: neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the housing association's handling of his reports of neighbour nuisance behaviour. Mr C said that the association failed to reasonably investigate his reports of anti-social behaviour. In particular, he said that there were delays in investigating his reports and a failure to corroborate the reports he made. He also complained that the association's communication with him was unreasonable, in particular, that one of their letters lacked appropriate empathy.

The association acknowledged that they delayed in recording Mr C's reports about neighbour nuisance. We considered that they also failed to keep accurate records of the action taken and the decisions made in their investigation of these reports. The association acknowledged that there were issues with their communication with Mr C in relation to his complaints about them and a failure to escalate his concerns to a stage 2 investigation when he remained dissatisfied. We also found that the letter Mr C complained about lacked the same level of empathy that earlier correspondence to him had.

Based on the information received, and in light of the failings acknowledged by the association, we upheld both complaints.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for failing to keep appropriate records of the concerns he raised, the actions they took and the rationale for the decisions they made. Further apologise for the poor level of communication with Mr C. This apology should comply with SPSO guidelines on making an apology, available at www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Complaints about service should be recorded and escalated to a stage 2 investigation, where appropriate, in line with the Model Complaints Handling Procedure.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.