

SPSO decision report

Case: 201607176, Argyll Community Housing Association
Sector: housing associations
Subject: repairs and maintenance
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C made a complaint against his housing association as he had ongoing problems with damp and water penetration in his property. He first raised a repair request on this matter over two years prior to bringing the case to us. He was of the view that the property needed re-roughcast and re-rendered to resolve the issues. He was not satisfied with the action taken by the association and the length of time it had taken to resolve this issue.

The association apologised for the delay, although they stated that they had completed repairs as requested, in good faith. Part of their investigation uncovered that a redundant chimney stack was the main cause of water ingress in the property. After some further repairs and inspections the association arranged for the chimney stack to be removed. They also apologised to Mr C for the delay and offered compensation, which was declined.

We investigated the case and obtained information from the association. We assessed their response to Mr C's repair requests against their repairs policy and noted that on several occasions repairs were not completed within the set timescales. We also noted that there did not seem to be any measure in place to ensure that repair targets had been met. Mr C was looking for his property to be re-roughcast and the association had said that his house was identified as a property that was due for this type of work but that it was assessed as not being high priority. Given the missed timescales for individual repairs and the overall length of time taken to resolve the problem, we upheld Mr C's complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the association:

- ensure that they adhere to the deadlines for repairs as laid out in their repairs and maintenance policy;
- ensure staff check that repairs have been completed within an appropriate timescale; and
- conduct a further survey of Mr C's property to assess the current condition of the roughcast and rendering and to determine what priority rating is currently appropriate.