

SPSO decision report

Case: 201608622, Argyll and Bute Council
Sector: local government
Subject: policy/administration
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr and Mrs C bought a property and, upon moving in, discovered that many aspects of work and decoration in the house were either not completed or were of a poor standard. The council had issued a certificate of completion to the previous owner prior to the sale. Mr and Mrs C were unhappy as they spent a significant amount of money remedying the issues, and they said that they would not have bought the property had they known about these issues. They complained to us that the council failed to carry out appropriate inspections of the property prior to issuing a certificate of completion.

The council said that they had carried out an inspection and identified a number of actions which had to be taken before a certificate of completion could be provided for the previous owner. The owner advised the council when these actions had been taken, and the council carried out a further inspection. Following the second inspection, the council were satisfied that the works had been completed and a certificate of completion was issued.

We looked into this complaint and noted that it was not possible for us to establish the quality of the inspections or the work that had been carried out, as we had not been present at that time. After looking at the council's correspondence on this matter, we were satisfied that during their first inspection the council had listed issues which needed to be addressed, and that they had then followed up on this with a second inspection. They had gathered suitable evidence of the work having been completed from the tradesmen involved, and their actions appeared to us to have been reasonable, in line with their responsibilities under the Buildings (Scotland) Act 2003. We therefore did not uphold this complaint.