

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201708134, Glasgow City Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** public health & civic government acts - nuisances / problems in/around buildings  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained that the council failed to take action to address anti-social behaviour at a derelict yard they own, which backs on to her parents' house. She complained that large groups of youths were gathering at night, playing loud music and misusing drugs and alcohol. One of the buildings had been set on fire several times, causing concern because of its proximity to her parents' property.

Mrs C's father (Mr A) had contacted the council on a number of occasions, asking them to take steps to address the problem. After several months without any satisfactory resolution Mrs C complained to the council on her father's behalf, and when she remained dissatisfied with their response she brought her complaint to SPSO.

We found that, until Mrs C complained to them, the council did very little to address the concerns raised by Mr A. They also failed to keep Mr A informed about what action they were taking. We noted that they had taken steps to secure the site, in line with their obligations as landlord, but these steps did little or nothing to prevent access. The council had now taken steps to have buildings on the site demolished and cleared, and although we considered this a positive step, we thought this could have been undertaken much sooner. We upheld Mrs C's complaints.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mrs C and Mr A for not taking action to address their concerns at an earlier stage. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance](http://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance).
- Apologise to Mrs C and her father for the shortcomings in their communication. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance](http://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance).
- Keep Mrs C updated regarding the progress of plans for demolition at the site.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Staff should be confident about handling complaints of this nature and understand the measures available to them to address such concerns.
- Where an investigation involves communication across different departments, staff should diarise ahead to check for responses to ensure that matters do not get overlooked.

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.