

## SPSO decision report



**Case:** 201807051, Sanctuary (Scotland) Housing Association Ltd  
**Sector:** housing associations  
**Subject:** repairs and maintenance  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C, who was away from her property at the time of a fire on its roof terrace, complained about the action taken by the Sanctuary (Scotland) Housing Association (SH) following the fire. In particular, Mrs C complained that SH had failed to make reasonable attempts to inform her of the fire which had affected her home; and also, that they had failed to take reasonable action to mitigate the damage to her flat and possessions. Mrs C also complained that SH had unreasonably delayed making effective repairs to her home and that they had failed to reasonably manage the roof terrace.

We found that SH had made reasonable attempts to contact Mrs C when they discovered she was away from her property and we did not uphold this aspect of her complaint. We also found that SH had dealt with the matter under their emergency repairs procedure and had secured Mrs C's flat and made it safe. We did not consider that they had failed to take reasonable action to mitigate the damage to her flat and possessions, and we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

In relation to Mrs C's concerns that there were delays in making effective repairs, SH accepted that there had been a failure to deal with this matter in a timely way, and while Mrs C's home had remained in a habitable condition, they recognised the difficulties Mrs C had experienced and had made a compensation payment prior to our investigation. We upheld this aspect of the complaint. SH also accepted that they had failed to deal with Mrs C's complaint properly.

Finally, we found no evidence that SH had failed to manage the roof terrace correctly and we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mrs C for the failure to follow the complaints handling policy. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets)

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Relevant staff require to be aware of and follow SH's complaints handling policy.

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.