

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201100410, River Clyde Homes  
**Sector:** housing associations  
**Subject:** complaints handling  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained that the housing association delayed in carrying out repairs to her property. She was unhappy about various issues, but her main concern was the noise that she could hear from another flat. The association had previously given general advice on noise reduction, and fitted insulation between the flats, but this did not resolve the problem to Ms C's satisfaction. They then arranged for a sound test to be carried out and reported to them. In line with the report's recommendations, they agreed that they would carry out more work. However, this was before they checked whether a building warrant would be necessary. When it turned out that a warrant was in fact needed, the cost of the proposed work drastically increased and the association told Ms C that they could no longer go ahead with it.

Although we could not question the decision not to proceed with the work, as the association had provided Ms C with a reasonable explanation of that decision, we upheld her complaints. The problems had been ongoing for some time and we took the view that the association should have been aware that a warrant might be necessary and should have checked this before telling Ms C that the work would proceed. They had also not kept Ms C updated as matters progressed, and there was confusion about whether her concerns were treated as complaints or enquiries.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the association:

- apologise to Ms C for the delay and confusion in their handling of the matter;
- review their process so that staff are proactive in confirming the need for building warrants with the council; and
- confirm that the outstanding repairs have been addressed and explore alternative sound proofing options between the flats.