

SPSO decision report

Case: 201405400, Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership
Sector: housing associations
Subject: neighbour disputes and antisocial behaviour
Outcome: upheld, action taken by body to remedy, recommendations

Summary

Ms C brought a complaint to us on behalf of Mr A, who had complained to his landlord (the association) that he was experiencing verbal harassment, and racial and homophobic abuse. He said that this had happened on various occasions over several months, and that he did not feel that they had taken sufficient action.

We found that the association had taken steps to address this issue with Mr A's neighbour (who was also their tenant) on each occasion when they considered anti-social behaviour to have occurred. There were some occasions when they did not consider the behaviour could be categorised as anti-social, and we were critical that on these occasions the association did not do enough to inform Mr A why they were unable to take further action. We also noted that, while the association were limited in what action they could take against Mr A's neighbour, they did not do enough to communicate this to Mr A, and explain why. This was in line with what the association's investigation had identified, and we acknowledged that they had made changes to improve communication with tenants in such circumstances.

Mr A also complained that his complaint had not been handled in line with the association's complaints handling procedure. The association had already identified failings in this area, had apologised and had made changes to ensure it did not happen again. We agreed with this assessment.

Recommendations

We recommended that the association:

- apologise to Mr A for their lack of timely communication and the impact this had on him.