

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508711, Scottish Borders Housing Association Ltd
Sector: housing associations
Subject: neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Miss C said that the housing association failed to take reasonable action when she reported nuisance and anti-social behaviour by her neighbour. Miss C also said that the association failed to provide reasonable responses to her complaints and other correspondence.

We upheld Miss C's complaints. We found that the association took steps in line with their procedures by making contact with Miss C and her neighbour. When Miss C further complained to the association, they noted that not enough had been done to investigate Miss C's concerns, and undertook to investigate further. However, we found no evidence of any further investigation having been carried out or of further action taken.

We found faults in respect of the handling and defining of Miss C's complaints, including recording these. We also found that some responses to Miss C lacked sufficient detail.

However, we noted that the association did in general communicate according to Miss C's preferences. The association found that they were unable to dedicate staff time to the detail of Miss C's replies to their communications. We found this to have been reasonable as the association was entitled to manage their own staff resources in providing a service.

Recommendations

We recommended that the association:

- apologise for a failure to adequately recognise and investigate complaints about the operation of a business, anti-social behaviour and sub-letting; and
- take steps to ensure staff are aware of the definitions of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints and the need to record and investigate these properly.