

SPSO decision report



Case: 202310193, West Dunbartonshire Council
Sector: Local Government
Subject: Mould / damp
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

C is a council tenant and lives with their family. C complained that the property they were living in suffered from significant problems with damp and mould. C believed that the conditions in the property were adversely affecting the family's health and damaging their possessions. It was acknowledged by the council that C had been raising concerns for some time.

Although the council had carried out works and surveys on C's property, damp problems remained. We found that the primary cause of damp had not been identified and the council accepted further works were required, and that the time taken to address the problem had been excessive. We found that the council could not evidence that they had considered the impact on C of their living conditions and it was not clear that the property was treated as a priority in line with the council's revised damp and mould policy. We upheld C's complaint that the issues with their property had not been dealt with reasonably.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Develop an action plan, to be shared with C, setting out clearly the steps that they intend to take to address mould and damp in C's property, and dates for updating C on implementation.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Responses to complainants and the SPSO should be thorough and complete, ideally in one response.

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.