



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

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Dear Ian,

I write to you again following 2 findings of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman due to your poor handling of damp and mould.

In the first case, you left a resident in damp and mouldy conditions and with a pest infestation for 18 months. After your resident reported a leak, you failed to fix it despite a contractor deeming the resident's home unfit to live in. When you finally did respond, it was far too late and you failed to keep the resident updated. You also took at least 18 months to deal with the mice in the home, despite being told by the contractor the residents were "living in bad conditions".

In the second case, you left a vulnerable resident with water coming into their bedroom for 13 months. After they reported the water coming through their light fitting and causing the plaster to crumble due to the amount of damp, you kept delaying the repair which meant more extensive work was required. This impacted your vulnerable resident's physical health as they had to climb an additional flight of stairs to sleep in a smaller bed.

Your inaction left your vulnerable residents in damp and mouldy conditions. This is unacceptable. You failed to provide the level of service your residents should expect to receive. When your residents report an issue, especially when vulnerable people are involved, it should be acted upon swiftly and effectively. The tragic death of Awaab Ishak has shown that we must not be complacent about issues that have the potential to damage residents' health.

The Social Housing Regulation Act is bringing in a tough new regulatory regime to support this Government's commitment to driving up standards and holding landlords accountable for providing social housing residents with decent homes. I expect the changes you have made, including the creation of a damp and mould team, to improve the quality of service you deliver. You must treat all residents with respect and dignity, and I will be taking a personal interest in the changes you make to do this.

I am copying this letter to the Housing Ombudsman and to the Select Committee for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Yours ever,

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

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