



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

*Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities*

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities**

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Ian McDermott
Chief Executive
Peabody
45 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7JB

Via email only

16 August 2023

Dear Ian,

Further finding of severe maladministration by Catalyst Housing

I write again following a further two findings of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman. I previously wrote to you on 18 November 2022 when you were CEO of Catalyst Housing.

In this case, which involved two issues, the resident had additional needs and their concerns were not taken seriously enough. You failed to demonstrate that you had considered your obligations to her including under the Equality Act 2010. Your record keeping was also poor.

The resident, who had mobility issues, reported a problem with damp and mould in her home and a damaged driveway which caused significant distress to her and her son. It took you six months from the first report of the issue to inspect the property. When you did, evidence suggests that you did not do this thoroughly. The resident complained every fortnight with little action from you to remedy the situation. She and her son were left living in a mouldy property for 19 months.

You have once again failed your residents. Everyone, particularly those who are vulnerable, should be able to expect to live in a decent, damp-free home and to have repairs carried out within a reasonable timeframe. This case comes after previous severe maladministration findings and publication of a special report by the Ombudsman, in which he urged you to make 'significant improvements' ahead of Catalyst's merger with Peabody and included recommendations on themes including complaints handling.

I expect you to implement changes as soon as possible and I will continue to take a personal interest in whether these changes make a tangible difference to your residents.

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

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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