



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Andy Hulme

CEO

Hyde Housing Group

30 Park Street

London

SE1 9EQ

Our reference: MC2023/05226

8 December 2023

Dear Mr Hulme,

I write to you again following two findings of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman due to your inaction on damp and anti-social behaviour.

In the first case, you left an elderly resident with health problems in a damp and mouldy property for 18 months which left her without the use of her living room. You did not communicate with the resident throughout the process, which caused several delays. This is unacceptable.

When a resident reports an issue, it should be acted upon swiftly and effectively, especially when vulnerable people are involved. The tragic death of Awaab Ishak has shown that we must not be complacent about issues that have the potential to damage residents' health.

In the second case, you failed multiple times to handle a resident's reports of anti-social behaviour by her neighbour. You did not adequately support your resident when the noise nuisance affected her mental health. Ten months after the first report was made, you promised that you would issue the neighbour with a notice to seek possession, but there is no evidence that you did so. These failings made the problem worse, causing distress for your resident and her children.

Your failings cannot continue. 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. Landlords must become more reflective, improving their performance, and preventing residents from needing to use the services of the Housing Ombudsman in the first place.

Thank you for the letter sent to me informing me that these judgements were coming and summarising the actions that you are undertaking as a result. I expect these changes, including reviewing your priority moves policy, to improve the quality of service you deliver. You must treat all residents with respect and dignity. I hope that I will not have to write to you again.

My officials will be in touch to arrange for you to meet with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Housing to discuss your failings.

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

Yours,

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
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations