



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

Craig Moule

CEO

Sanctuary Housing Association

Chamber Court

Castle Street

Worcestershire

WR1 3ZQ

Our reference: MC2023/05244

8 December 2023

Dear Mr Moule,

I write following two findings of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman for leaving your resident and her child living in a damp and mouldy home and your handling of her complaint. I understand both residents have since been diagnosed with asthma.

In this case, there was over a year delay in responding to the resident's concerns due to your failings in handling the complaint and service request. When requested by the Ombudsman, you were unable to provide any reports or surveys conducted on the house. You also dismissed a contractor report which meant a further four month delay in fixing the damp.

The second finding of severe maladministration related to your handling of your resident's complaint about her compensation request for items damaged by mould. You failed to provide the resident with details of how to make a claim and took 71 weeks to provide a stage one response. You also did not offer appropriate compensation for the distress and inconvenience caused.

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

I have been clear that social housing residents must be able to put their trust in their landlords to provide a decent home and deal with complaints swiftly and effectively. 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 actions you are taking to improve the service you deliver to your residents. I will be taking a personal interest in how your organisation continues to deliver its responsibilities. 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 Select Committee for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the Housing Ombudsman.

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