



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

Our reference: MC2023/05223

Matt Partridge

CEO

Stevenage Borough Council

Daneshill House

Danestrete

Stevenage

SG1 1HN

8 December 2023

Dear Mr Partridge,

I write following a finding of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman.

This case involved your inadequate response to a vulnerable resident's complaint about a faulty door entry system. The fault meant that on numerous occasions over 18 months, the fire brigade had to help the ambulance service access the flat. You failed to rectify the fault despite the resident informing you about the issue multiple times, and you failed to understand that this left him feeling as though his life did not matter. You did not consider his disabilities under the Equality Act 2010 or act in line with your own Aids and Adaptions policy. You did not put things right or offer an apology.

Everyone should be able to live in a decent home and have their complaints taken seriously. Residents should be treated with respect and courtesy by their landlord and their health and safety should be paramount. 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. This Government expects social landlords to provide the high-quality social housing that residents deserve. You must put residents at the heart of what you do.

You have started to make changes to improve your complaint handling, including the introduction of dedicated complaint handlers. I expect you to consider what more you can do and I will be taking a personal interest in how you improve the quality of service you deliver to your residents.

I am copying this letter to Stephen McPartland MP, Mayor Myla Arceno, Councillors Richard Henry and Philip Bibby, the Select Committee for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the Housing Ombudsman.

Yours,

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

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