



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

Gary Orr
Chief Executive
Abri Housing Association
Collins House
Bishopstoke Road
Eastleigh
SO50 6AD

Our reference: MC2023/05221

8 December 2023

Dear Mr Orr,

I write following two findings of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman.

In one case, you left one of your residents with faulty windows for almost five years, with the resident waiting up to a year to hear from you on multiple occasions. They were left with a cold property in the winter and issues with insects during the summer. I am disappointed to learn that these issues became so severe that she was forced to leave the property.

In the second case, you failed to deal with a complaint about damp and mould from a vulnerable resident with a heart condition and who is registered blind. You carried out the same ineffective repairs year after year, and failed to address the root causes, leaving your vulnerable resident living in poor conditions for far too long.

When your residents report an issue, and especially when vulnerable people are involved, it must be acted upon swiftly and effectively. The tragic death of Awaab Ishak has shown that we must not be complacent about issues that risk residents' health. Social housing residents must be able to put their trust in their landlords to provide a decent home and deal with complaints effectively.

To this end, 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 understand you have addressed all the orders and recommendations made by the Ombudsman, including overhauling your approach, processes and policies regarding damp and mould. I expect the changes to make a significant difference to 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 Matt Rodda MP, Rt Hon Sir Alok Sharma MP, Councillor Jason Brock, Councillor Rob White, 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