



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

Colin Ansell
CEO
Newham Council
Newham Dockside
1000 Dockside Road
E16 2QU

Our reference: MC2023/05240

8 December 2023

Dear Mr Ansell,

I write following a finding of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman for your failure to respond adequately to your resident's damp and mould issue for over three years. In this case, the resident had no communication from you when they first complained about the damp and mould. You did not update him on how you were going to resolve this issue or inform him of next steps. When you did eventually respond and visited his property to fix an ongoing leak, you failed to resolve the damp and mould itself. Your resident had to ask you multiple times for updates, and he was forced to move into temporary accommodation two years later due to the strong smell of damp throughout his home.

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. You failed to provide the level of service your residents should expect to receive. When your residents report an issue, it should be acted upon swiftly and effectively. 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 delivers 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 Stephen Timms MP, Lyn Carol Brown MP, Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz, Councillor Danny Keeling, 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
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations