

5 April 2018

**Housing**  
Ombudsman Service  
Exchange Tower  
Harbour Exchange Square  
London, E14 9GE  
Tel: 0300 111 3000  
info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk  
www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Dear

**Complaint: 201704319 - Havering Council**

I write further to the above complaint in relation to Havering Council (the Council)  
Please find my decision in respect of the complaint below.

**Complaint**

You complain about the Council's response to your reports about mould in your home.

**The outcome of the complaint to the landlord**

The Council issued its final complaint response to you on 21 June 2017 in which it outlined its responses to your reports about mould. It explained that it had completed two inspections of your property and that it considered the cause of the mould to be condensation rather than any structural damp.

It further explained that it had installed a '*positive pressure unit*' to help regulate air flow through your property and also offered to treat and remove any existing mould.

It also said that you had refused this offer as you wanted an Environmental Health officer to inspect the property and the mould that was present.

The Council further explained that your complaint was not upheld as it considered that you were '*resisting*' the '*corrective measures*' it had proposed.

**Intervention**

On 12 December 2017, you explained to me that the outcomes you were seeking from your complaint were:

- To be moved as a result of the mould in your home;
- An independent inspection to be carried out to determine if the mould was only as a result of condensation.

I explained that this Service did not have powers to order landlords to move or transfer residents but that I would contact the Council regarding a possible independent inspection of the mould in your home.

The Council subsequently agreed to engage in further local resolution of your complaint and also agreed to arrange a further inspection to be carried out jointly with an Environmental Health ('EH') officer and a surveyor who had not previously been to your home. You agreed to this suggestion.

The joint inspection happened on 14 February 2018, following which the EH officer made a number of recommendations for the removal of the mould and the prevention of future mould build up. This included redecorating with mould inhibiting paint, re-instating internal doors and overhauling existing air extracts.

The Council subsequently agreed to carry out most of the recommended works, which were completed by the end of February 2018 and post-inspected in early March 2018.

We spoke on 28 March 2018 when you explained that you were happy with the works that had been completed but had concerns about what would happen should the mould still return.

I explained that should this happen, it would likely be considered a new complaint and that it was not possible for this Service to leave your complaint open in case any mould returned.

In terms of the complaint you brought to this Service and the outcomes you explained to me you were seeking, you agreed that the landlord's actions in carrying out a further joint inspection and completing the recommended remedial works were sufficient for you to consider your complaint to be resolved.

## **Determination**

Paragraph 32(b) of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme states that -

*'At any time the Ombudsman may suspend or stop her investigation of a complaint if the member makes redress to the complainant which, in the Ombudsman's opinion, resolves the complaint satisfactorily.'*

In this case I am satisfied that Havering Council has made redress to you (as outlined above) which resolves your complaint satisfactorily, following our intervention.

If this determination does not reflect your understanding of the terms of the settlement agreement, you may seek a review. If this is the case, please let us know immediately and by 27 April 2018 at the latest.