

This Factsheet is about complaints about Housing Repairs. It should be read together with our general information leaflet about our service.

The Ombudsman can only consider complaints about councils and housing associations; he cannot deal with complaints about private landlords.

As a landlord, the council or housing association is legally responsible for carrying out certain repairs. The law states that the problem must first be brought to the attention of the landlord and the landlord must also have been given a reasonable opportunity to carry out the repair before you can complain to the Ombudsman.

A tenant has some maintenance responsibilities which can be found in your tenancy agreement.

Repairs which the landlord is responsible for include the following:

- the structure and outside of your home (including the roof and pipes);
- the heating system (including the boiler and hot water supply);
- the bath, shower, sink & toilet (including associated pipe-work).
- stairways or lifts you might share with others (e.g. in a block of flats)

The landlord must also check any gas boiler or appliance it has provided every year and give you a safety certificate to show that this has been done.

What the Ombudsman can do

Look at complaints that the landlord has:

- failed to carry out repairs to the home that you rent from it
- delayed dealing with your request for repair(s)
- missed appointments
- failed to sort out a repair problem that you have reported within a reasonable time.

What the Ombudsman cannot do

He cannot:

- deal with complaints about private landlords.
- force your landlord to carry out improvements (e.g. installing a new bathroom suite).
- force your landlord to carry out more extensive repairs than necessary to deal with the problem.

Issues to bear in mind

Your tenancy agreement may set out other specific things your landlord has also agreed to be responsible for.

Many landlords will give you a 'Tenant's Handbook' which will include information, such as, the timescales for carrying out a repair.

Further information

You may want to consider contacting the following organisations for advice:

Shelter Cymru which provides independent and free housing advice and support. You can contact them by phone on **0845 075 5005** or the internet at www.sheltercymru.org.uk.

Citizens Advice Cymru which provides independent and free advice and support on a range of problems (including housing). You can contact them via the internet at www.citizensadvice.org.uk (selecting the 'Wales' site page option) and entering your postcode for details on how to reach your nearest CAC advice office.

Cardiff Law Centre which provides independent and free advice and support on a range of problems (including housing) for those living and working in the City and County of Cardiff only. You can contact them by phone on **02920 498117** or via the internet at www.lawcentres.org.uk. Law Centres are not-for-profit legal practices providing free legal advice and representation to disadvantaged people. The Law Centres Federation also operates a Community Legal Advice helpline (which covers England and Wales) on **0845 345 4345** or via the internet at www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk.

The Ombudsman is independent and impartial; he cannot order public bodies to do what he recommends – but, in practice, they almost always do.

Examples of cases that the Ombudsman has looked at can be found on our website. Please see www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

If you are unsure whether the Ombudsman would be able to look into your complaint, please contact us:

- **phone** 0845 601 0987;
- **e-mail** ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk;
- **visit the website at** www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk;
- **write to:** The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ