

Decent Homes

A Personal Experience

By

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My Personal History

- 23 Years Working in Local Government in a London Borough
- Various Roles – Housing Assistant, Housing Officer, Housing Manager, Resident Liaison – Decent Homes, Assistant Project Manager, Project Manager.

Problems Encountered.

- Survey data very inaccurate:
- Data Cloned
- Structural Information unsatisfactory- one incident recommended new kitchen to be fitted in Kitchen /Diner – the whole floor was very spongy and when the floor covering lifted rotten floorboards and joists from ongoing untraced leak.
- Too many contractors – initially 8 contractors – Poor Vetting of Contractors – 3 contractors including ROK went into administration during period 2008 – 2012.
- Frequently, contractors opened too many properties leaving tenants without facilities for extended periods.

Problems (continued)

- Standards of work and hygiene:
- Failure to clean areas after removal of existing units.
- Uneven work surfaces, botched remedial work.
- Worker's food debris left under units.
- Disrespect shown to residents, language and behaviour!

Remedies

- Excellent Resident Liaison – Resident Liaison Officer must be the Tenant's friend! Should be on site daily not in office.
- Urgent response to queries or problems, today is far better than tomorrow!
- Listen to tenants.
- Double check data – never be afraid to raise concerns, this is your home. If you are unsatisfied with first response, ask for escalation to more senior officer.
- Try to understand the standards and never be afraid to ask.