

The tenants of the block of flats where you live, 12 Merchant Street, York, regularly complain about the state of the building. Their complaints to the landlord have remained unanswered. Your name is Thomas Dyer. You offer to act as mediator between the tenants and the landlord. To do this, you ask the residents of the building to write down their complaints. They can give them to you either by putting a letter in your letterbox, or by sliding a note under your door, or by email. You will then write a registered letter to the landlord. 8 of the 12 tenants have answered your proposal.

Here are the messages that you have received:

*As you suggested, I am putting this in your letterbox to list the problems that the tenants have to put up with every day. The list is very probably not exhaustive...*

- *Three light bulbs on the stairwell, on the ground floor and first and fourth floors, are dud.*
- *There has been a dustbin missing since the third one was damaged in a fire.*
- *A pane of glass in the front door to the building has been broken for nearly two years.*
- *The leak in the first floor flat has caused leaks in the ceiling of the entrance hall.*
- *Pieces of plaster drop down from the ceiling on to our heads as we walk through.*
- *My letterbox has been smashed and now my mail is no longer safe.*

*Thanks very much for doing all this for us.*

*Regards*

*Catherine Faber (4<sup>th</sup> floor, right)*

Dear Sir, Just a note to say that in my flat, the ceiling at the front is blistered and the paint is coming off. The damp is coming from the leaking gutter which runs down the front wall. The blind at the sitting room window is broken and could quite easily fall down on to the street below. I phoned the landlord's secretary 4 months ago, but nothing has been done to fix any of it.

Thanks for what you are doing,  
Patrick Chester, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, left

**Hi! In answer to your question, I'm putting this note under your door. I've got problems with the old woman on the first floor who insults me every time I go out with my dog. Dogs are allowed in the building. And mine never barks! So what's she on about? It's the only reason I live in this dump.**

**Kevin Pound (5<sup>th</sup> floor, left)**

*Friday 12 Oct.*

*Dear Sir,*

*Since you have decided to collect the complaints from us tenants, I would like to point out that, three or four times a day, the young man from the fifth floor goes by my door with that mangy smelly animal he calls his dog.*

*Since he has been living here, my flat has been infested with fleas and my doormat covered with dog hairs. I even suspect that this person encourages the animal to urinate against my door, since the landing is becoming smellier and smellier.*

*I would be grateful if you could intervene with the landlord, and ask him to refuse to allow pets in the building.*

*Yours faithfully.*

*Louis Burgeon (Miss)*

*1<sup>st</sup> floor, right*

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3<sup>rd</sup> floor left

12 Oct. 07

Dear neighbour,

I am most grateful for your offer to act as intermediary between the tenants and the landlord, a difficult and delicate role to play. As far as I am concerned, I would like to bring to your attention the following inconveniences:

- The radiator in my sitting room has not worked since last winter. But my heating bill has not decreased for all that.

- The handrail at the window in my bedroom has come away from the wall and threatens to fall onto the street together with the first person who leans against it! I pointed this out last May.

- There is a hole in the drainpipe on a level with my sitting room window, which is thoroughly drenched each time it rains!

As you suggested, I am putting this letter in your letterbox, and I very much hope we obtain satisfaction.

Kind regards.

Patricia Meyer (Mrs)

*12, Merchant St  
York*

*FAO: The Landlord*

*11/10/07*

*Sir,*

*The dilapidated state of our building is an insult to your tenants! When I see the great flakes of that abominable green paint peeling off the walls, on the stairwell, I always have the impression that there has been an earthquake!*

*The lack of light due to the dud light bulbs, again in the stairwell, reminds me that with my terrible eyesight I might one day become blind. And the dustbins that are always overflowing because we need one more, are sure to attract those atrocious beasts that we call rats.*

*I do not send you my compliments and I do not salute you.*

*Albert Pertwee  
4<sup>th</sup> floor left*

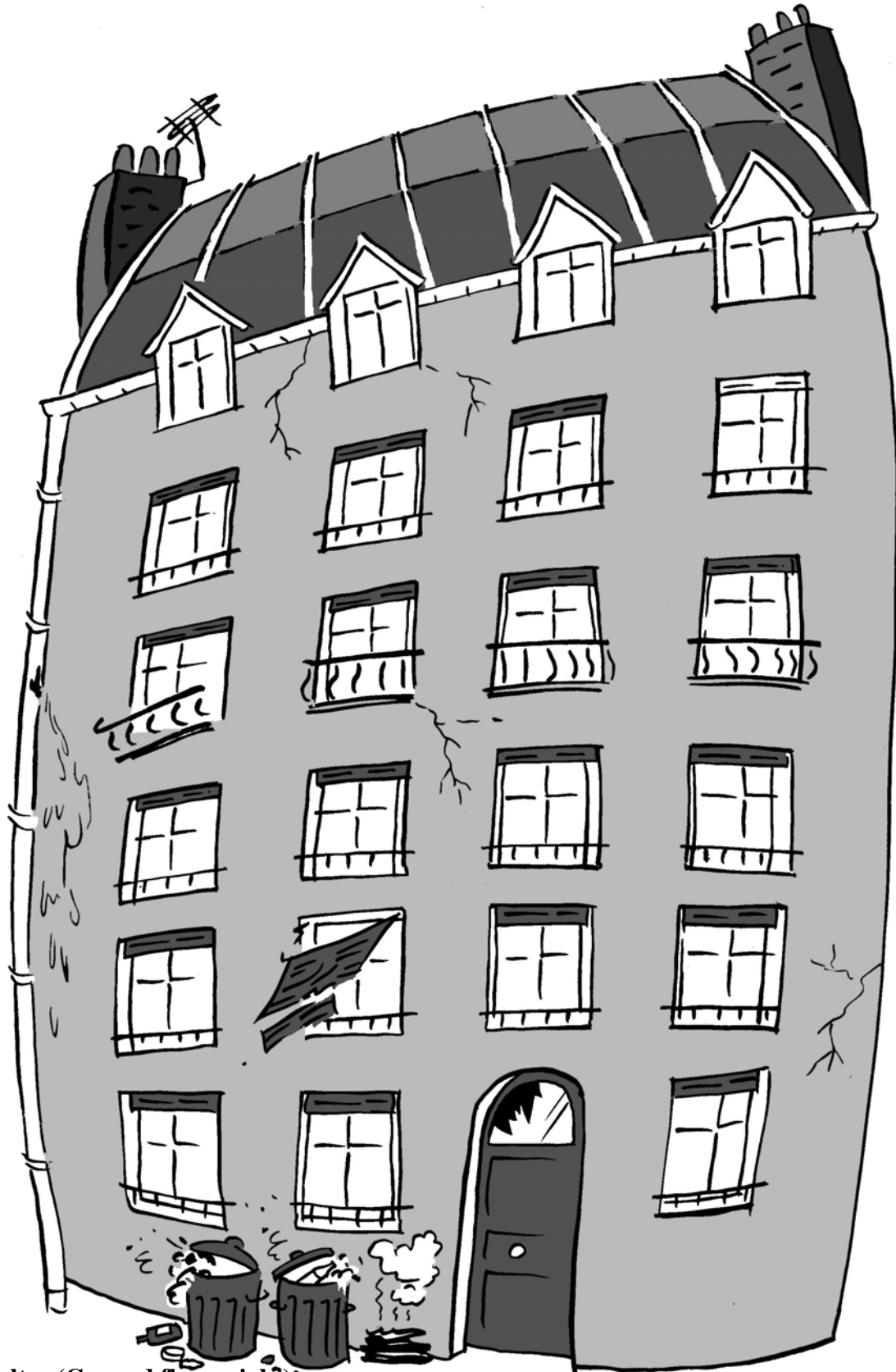
Dear Tom,

A quick email to answer your question. I am incensed at the high rent charged for a building and flats that are so badly in need of repair and so seriously under-maintained. In my flat, and in others too, the windows are so old that the ones in the sitting room do not close properly, so that icy wind comes through in winter, and my entire flat is cold. The kitchen door is warped and does not close either. My hot water tank is making very suspicious noises and my plumber says it should be replaced. So, as the rent has increased by 15% in two years, I protest, and I enclose two payslips to show that my salary has not increased by the same amount in two years!

Thanks for all you're doing. I'm sure you'll be an excellent mediator.

Anna Darling, 5<sup>th</sup> floor

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Mary Rolter (Ground floor, right)?

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**PAYSLIP**

**Euro Commerce npmo**

16, Albert Einstein Street

York

Employer ID: 1998 6186 118 24

Date: 26.09.2005

Tax period: 6.05

**Full name:** Anna Darling  
12, Merchant Street  
YORK  
**ID:** 1983 10 07 083  
**Bank:** BFL  
**Acc. no.:** 2338 1002 267 129

Month	No of hrs	Rate	Gross pay	N.I.	PAYE	Net pay	Total pay
Sept.05	160	10.00 €	1,600.00 €	42.40 €	128.00 €	1,429.60 €	<b>1 429.60 €</b>

**PAYSLIP**

**Euro Commerce npmo**

16, Albert Einstein Street

YORK

Employer ID: 1998 6186 118 24

Date: 27.09.2007

Tax period: 6.07

**Full name:** Anna Darling  
12, Merchant Street  
YORK  
**ID:** 1983 10 07 083  
**Bank:** BFL  
**Acc. no.:** 2338 1002 267 129

Month	No of hrs	Rate	Gross pay	N.I.	PAYE	Net pay	Total pay
Sept.07	160	10.40 €	1,664.00 €	44.10 €	133.12 €	1,486.78 €	<b>1 486.78 €</b>

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	<b>Suggested answers</b>	

PART 1

On reading the messages from the tenants, you realise that 2 of them did not answer your question, which was: “Make a list of the work and repairs which the landlord should undertake.”

You note down the names of these 2 people.

- **Kevin Pound**  
- **Louise Burgeon**

PART 2

You also notice on rereading the messages that one tenant does complain about the inconveniences, but that he connotes everything he says. You note down his name.

- **Albert Pertwee**

PART 3

In order to constitute an accurate well-documented dossier to convince the landlord, you are going to classify the messages received according to how objective they are. You make a list of tenants to take more or less seriously according to the contents of their messages, the tone used and their complaints. Write a sentence to explain for the middle and right-hand columns.

*The classification in the different columns can vary according to the criteria and sensitivity of each learner. You could for example consider that Miss Louis Burgeon thinks the smell on her landing is the dog’s urine, whereas it is possibly a mouldy smell due to the damp or the leaks. You could therefore place her with the tenants to be taken half seriously. Similarly, Mr Albert Pertwee could also appear with the tenants to be taken seriously, even if he predicts a very dark future for himself ...*

Tenants to be taken seriously	Tenants to be taken half seriously	Tenants not to be taken seriously
<i>Catherine Faber Patrick Chester Patricia Meyer Anna Darling</i>	<i>Albert Pertwee</i> (He exaggerates everything and talks mostly of himself). <i>Mary Rolter</i> (She drew a caricature so the facts are also exaggerated).	<i>Kevin Pound Louise Burgeon</i>  (They don’t answer the question and are arguing with each other).

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PART 4

You notice that one of the tenants has not understood that you are acting as mediator between the tenants of the building and the landlord. His letter is not addressed to you. To remember this, you note down:

The name of this tenant: Albert Pertwee.

Who his letter is addressed to: the landlord.

PART 5

You have received different sorts of messages: traditional letters, short notes, email, picture. So that your dossier is more easily visible, you make a list of the different types of message with the names of the tenants who wrote them opposite.

Types of message	Names of senders
<i>Traditional letters</i>	<i>Louise Burgeon</i> <i>Albert Pertwee</i>
<i>Short note</i>	<i>Catherine Faber</i> <i>Patrick Chester</i> <i>Kevin Pound</i>
<i>Email (on the computer)</i>	<i>Anna Darling</i>
<i>Picture</i>	<i>Mary Rolter</i>

PART 6

One of the tenants has included in her message two specific documents. You are wondering whether you should use these personal documents and you note down what type of document it is, so that you do not forget it:

**Type of document: *Payslip***

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PART 7

In the end you decide to use these two special documents to enable the landlord to compare the increases. To do this, you prepare one or two explanatory sentences that you will use in the letter you are going to write to the landlord.

**As you can see from the two payslips dated September 05 and September 07, the increase is only 4%, whereas Mrs Darling's rent has increased by 15%. There is therefore a disproportion between the two increases. We ask you to justify your increases, especially as you have not undertaken the necessary repairs.**

PART 8

One of the tenants has drawn the building. The landlord, to your knowledge, has no sense of humour. He might not see the connection between his building and the picture. You are therefore going to prepare an explanation of the drawing that you will use later in the letter you will write to the landlord.

**This picture is a caricature, slightly exaggerated therefore, but... not all that much! On the front of the building, the drainpipe is leaking! It sprays the wall from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor left hand side, the balcony has come away from the wall, and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor the window blind is about to fall down into the street. The glass in the front door to the building is broken. Outside, the dustbins are always overflowing, as there has been one missing since the third one was burnt.**

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PART 9

Bearing in mind the dossier that you are bringing together for the landlord, you have made a short questionnaire so that you can find your way around it all and, when the time comes, argue your case better. Here is the questionnaire. Complete it by answering the questions.

1. What are the complaints concerning the individual flats?

*Mrs Faber's letterbox (4<sup>th</sup> floor right) has been smashed and her mail is no longer safe.*

*The radiator in Mrs Meyer's sitting room (3<sup>rd</sup> floor left) has not worked since last winter. The handrail of her bedroom window is coming away from the wall and threatens to fall down on to the street (with the person leaning against it!). Already notified last May. The hole in the drainpipe splashes her sitting room window each time it rains heavily.*

*Mrs Darling's sitting room window (5<sup>th</sup> floor) no longer shuts. Her kitchen door is warped and does not close. Her hot water tank makes a terrible noise and her plumber says it needs replacing.*

*In Mr Patrick Chester's flat (1<sup>st</sup> floor left) the ceiling at the front is blistered and paint is peeling off. The damp comes from the drainpipe, which is leaking and runs down the front wall of the building. The blind at his sitting room window is broken and could easily fall on to the street. He phoned the landlord's secretary 4 months ago, but nothing has been done about it.*

2. What are the complaints about the areas common to all the tenants (hall, dustbin area, stairwell, façade, etc.)?

*Three light bulbs on the stairs, on the ground floor, and on the first and fourth floors are dud.*

*There is a dustbin missing, since the other one was damaged in a fire.*

*A windowpane in the front door to the building has been broken for two years.*

*The leak in the first-floor tenant's flat has caused a large leak in the ceiling of the entrance hall.*

*Pieces of plaster fall down on us when we walk through.*

*There is a hole in the drainpipe on a level with the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.*

*Green paint is peeling off the walls, on the stairwell.*

3. What are the complaints about the problems between tenants?

*The complaint concerns Mr Pound's dog who is accused of urinating against the door of the first floor flat (by Mrs Burgeon, tenant on first floor), of spreading fleas in this lady's flat and covering her doormat with dog hairs.*

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PART 10

Using the messages received and the elements you have noted down to make up your dossier, you are now going to make a rough draft of a letter to send to your landlord, listing the work and repairs that need doing in the building and in the flats. You will not take into account the problems between tenants.

*A simple rough draft is requested, as the aim is not to write a letter in full, but to pass on information. The learner can also have written out a letter in full, with the sender's address, the addressee, the date, and the correct opening and closing formulae.*

*I have offered my services as a mediator to receive and pass on to you the complaints sent in by the tenants of your building, 12 Merchant Street, York. I have received several messages of complaint that I enclose in this dossier.*

*The conclusion is that the following work and repairs will have to be undertaken as soon as possible, both organised and paid for by you:*

**In the areas common to all tenants:**

- Change three light bulbs on the stairs (on the ground floor, and on the first and fourth floors).
- Obtain a new dustbin to replace the one that burnt.
- Replace one windowpane in the front door (broken for the last two years).
- Have the drainpipe fixed, leaking on a level with the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.
- Have the hall ceiling repaired, damaged from leak on first floor caused by water leaking in from outside (pieces of plaster fall down).
- Have walls on stairwell repainted, as paint is peeling off.

**In the individual flats:**

- Have Mrs Faber's letterbox repaired (4<sup>th</sup> floor, right).
- Have the radiator repaired or replaced in Mrs Meyer's sitting room (3<sup>rd</sup> floor left), and also the handrail of the bedroom window, which has come away from the wall and could easily fall into the street and cause a serious accident (already notified in May).
- Have the ceiling redone in Mr Chester's flat (1<sup>st</sup> floor left) damaged by the leaking drainpipe (already notified 4 months ago).
- Have the windows repaired in Mrs Darling's sitting room (5<sup>th</sup> floor) as they do not close properly, and also her kitchen door, which is warped and does not close either. The hot water tank also needs replacing.

*The tenants are also complaining that their rents have gone up by 15% in two years, whereas the salaries have only gone up by 4%, as you can see in Mrs Darling's payslips enclosed in this dossier.*

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PART 11

You have sent your letter to the landlord together with all the documents to back it up. You sent the dossier on October 14 by registered delivery so that the landlord cannot say that he did not receive it. You have received confirmation that it was delivered, which means that the landlord received your letter in person.

After a month, you have still not heard from him... Again you sent the dossier, which you photocopied beforehand, to the landlord (by registered delivery).

Another month has gone by, and still no news. You telephone a friend of your aunt's. She is a lawyer and you ask her for some advice. She tells you to send her a summary of the situation.

You are going to write a summary of the situation, in not more than half a page.

*I have volunteered to act as mediator between the tenants in our building, 12 Merchant Street, York, and the landlord of the same building. I received their complaints in writing, for the individual flats and the common areas.*

*I have written a letter to the landlord, indicating very precisely what work and repairs need doing from the information the tenants have given me. I enclosed their letters in my dossier. I sent the dossier to the landlord by recorded delivery dated 14 October 07. I received the acknowledgement of receipt proving that the landlord actually received my letter.*

*As I had received no reply from him after one month, I sent the same dossier again (having photocopied it entirely), again by recorded delivery, on 19 November 07.*

*Today is 4 January 08 and I have as yet heard nothing, despite the fact that I have received the acknowledgement of receipt of my second letter, just as I did for the first. What would you advise us to do to obtain satisfaction?*

**END OF THE SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT**