

**Unipol Code Tribunal - Leeds**  
**Report of the Unipol Codes Tribunal**  
**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Hancock & Bentley (formerly iForHomes)**

**In attendance:**

Tribunal Members – Mr John Martin (Chair), Mr Steve Kettlewell (Landlord Vice Chair) and Ms Emily Tabern (Student Vice Chair), representatives from Hancock and Bentley.

In attendance: Matt Allison (Accreditation Officer), Victoria Peckitt (Complaints Officer), Victoria Tolmie-Loverseed (Assistant Chief Executive – Standards).

**Report from the Tribunal**

The Tribunal met to consider the membership of Hancock & Bentley, who were suspended from the Code by the Leeds/Bradford Audit Panel on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022. The Audit Panel found that the agent had failed to provide updates regarding outstanding works/certificates following Unipol verification inspections. Additionally, the member had failed to planned inspections on a number of occasions, as well as a specially planned training session that had been organised for Hancock and Bentley to attend.

A Fast Track Tribunal was called, to allow the agent an opportunity to provide mitigation, to review the Audit Panel's recommendation and to consider any conditions regarding future membership of the Unipol Code.

Representatives from Hancock and Bentley attended the Tribunal to discuss their suspension by the Audit Panel. They accepted that their suspension had been justified, and explained to the Tribunal internal issues in the organisation that had led to this. Subsequent to this, a number of improvements had been made to internal processes and resources and they were now confident in their ability to comply with the Code going forward.

The Chair of the Tribunal thanked Hancock and Bentley for their frankness in admitting the problems and welcomed the changes that had been brought in resolve these.

**Other Matters that the Tribunal Took into Account**

The Tribunal noted that lforHomes (the previous company name of Hancock and Bentley) had been suspended in 2014 for non-compliance with the Code based on disrepair and other issues in a property.

**Decision**

The Tribunal considered the failure of Hancock and Bentley to demonstrate their compliance with the Code following inspections, and the manage the basic requirements of membership was evidence of a breach of the Code. Based on this the Tribunal took the decision to suspend Hancock & Bentley from the Code for a period of 6 months.

**Follow-up Actions**

Following the suspension, should Hancock and Bentley wish to reapply for membership they would first need to meet the following conditions:

- At least 50% of properties are confirmed to be compliant with the Unipol Code by inspection, with any required action points completed before they could be re-admitted.

The outcome of this Tribunal will be posted on the Unipol website and will remain in the public domain for a period of three years.