

The complaint

Mr B and Mrs B have complained about work carried out by British Gas Insurance Limited (British Gas) under a home emergency policy.

What happened

British Gas visited Mr B and Mrs B's home three times to deal with a leak from their toilet. One of the engineers used a white sealant around the base of the toilet. Mr B and Mrs B asked British Gas to remove this because it had previously been a clear sealant and it had been badly applied. Another British Gas engineer visited and used a chemical to remove the white sealant and applied a clear sealant.

Mr B and Mrs B complained to British Gas that the floor was now discoloured due to the chemical that had been applied. British Gas investigated and said the lighter colouring of part of the floor was because it was cleaner than the rest of the floor because of the chemical that had been used. It said that over time the lighter coloured floor would fade to be the same colour as the rest. However, it offered £100 as a gesture of goodwill because of the return visits by engineers and the inconvenience caused.

When Mr B and Mrs B complained to this service, our investigator didn't uphold the complaint. She said the chemical cleaner needed to be used to remove the sealant and resulted in that part of the floor being cleaner. The chemical cleaner needed to be used, so the cleaner/ lighter floor was the result of the repair works. She said British Gas didn't need to do anything further to the floor.

As Mr B and Mrs B didn't agree, the complaint was referred to me.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so, I don't uphold this complaint. I will explain why.

I've looked at the photos showing the work carried out by British Gas. One of the photos shows the floor with the toilet removed. There is a clear difference in colour between the floor that is normally visible compared to where the toilet pan came into contact with the floor. So, I think this shows, regardless of any works carried out by British Gas, that the floor had changed colour.

British Gas applied a white sealant, rather than using a clear sealant which had previously been there. So, at Mr B and Mrs B's request British Gas removed this. The floor was then lighter where the chemical was applied to remove the sealant. British Gas has said the change in colour is because that part of the floor is now cleaner due to the chemical applied, but that it will fade over time.

I've thought about this carefully and, in my view, I haven't seen anything that shows British Gas damaged the floor. I think it's more likely than not that the reason for the floor being a different colour around the toilet is that it is now cleaner because of the chemical that was applied. Although I can see there is a difference in colour, I don't think a floor being cleaner is damage. I think it's reasonable that British Gas said the floor would fade over time and paid a gesture of goodwill because of the multiple visits and the inconvenience caused to Mr B and Mrs B. As a result, I don't uphold this complaint or require British Gas to do anything further.

My final decision

For the reasons I have given, it is my final decision that this complaint is not upheld.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs B and Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 1 August 2022.

Louise O'Sullivan
Ombudsman