

## **The complaint**

Miss P complains about how British Gas Services Limited (British Gas) invoiced her for a callout under her home emergency cover.

## **What happened**

Miss P has a home emergency cover with British Gas. She called British Gas out to fix some lights in her home and Miss P paid £60 for this callout under the terms of her cover.

Two further visits were then needed to fix ongoing issues with the lights.

The first of these visits wasn't charged, and Miss P says she was told by British Gas's engineer that she wouldn't be charged for the second of these additional visits due to it being an ongoing issue with the lights.

British Gas then charged Miss P an additional £60 for the second additional visit. This was due to the reason for the visit being incorrectly recorded on British Gas's system.

Miss P didn't pay the additional £60 so British Gas sent her four letters to ask for payment, with the fourth letter saying that her debt could be passed to a debt recovery company.

Miss P wasn't happy about being charged the extra £60 and she complained to British Gas about it, and for her distress. She asked that her cover would be stopped at the end of the policy year.

British Gas apologised for its mistake in charging her the extra £60. It cancelled the invoice and paid £50 goodwill to Miss P.

Miss P remained unhappy so she brought her complaint to this service. She asks for compensation for her distress she says was caused by British Gas sending her letters asking for payment. She also asks that her home emergency cover ends at the end of the policy year.

Our investigator looked into Miss P's complaint and didn't uphold it. She thought the £50 goodwill payment made by British Gas was in line with what this service would expect in similar situations. She also said she found that British Gas's system had made an error, meaning that her policy had mistakenly renewed, but British Gas had corrected that error when Miss P told it.

British Gas agreed with the view and confirmed Miss P's cover would stop at the end of the policy year. Miss P didn't agree with it, so her complaint has been passed to me to make a final decision.

## **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.

I can see from the notes I have that British Gas made some mistakes handing Miss P's callouts, including telling her that she wouldn't be charged for the final visit.

When British Gas then invoiced Miss P for the cost of that visit, it's my understanding that this caused her confusion and distress. British Gas then contacted Miss P asking for payment and it did this about every two weeks by letter. I can see from the file that Miss P was engaged with a different division of British Gas during this time.

Miss P then escalated her complaint within British Gas around the same time the fourth letter was sent. It seems to me that Miss P found the wording of this letter, which mentions passing her debt to a debt recovery company, particularly threatening. But I can see British Gas told her that this letter would have been automatically sent because it hadn't received payment of the £60. It also confirmed that the debt had been cancelled.

It seems to me that British Gas corrected its errors quickly when Miss P told it. It has cancelled the incorrect invoice, it has agreed to stop the policy at renewal in line with Miss P's wishes, and it's paid £50 for her distress.

I understand that Miss P has found the situation particularly stressful, but the amount of goodwill paid to her (£50) is in line with what this service would recommend in similar situations, and I'm not persuaded to ask British Gas to pay more.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons set out above, my final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss P to accept or reject my decision before 18 October 2022.

Richard Sowden  
**Ombudsman**