

## **The complaint**

Mr G and Mrs Y complain that Meridian Mortgages, an appointed representative of Mortgage Advice Bureau, withdrew its service from them.

## **What happened**

On 2 June 2023 Mr G and Mrs Y approached Meridian for mortgage advice. After carrying out a fact find, Meridian obtained a decision in principle with a mortgage lender. On the strength of that Mr G and Mrs Y reserved a property to buy and they had 42 days to exchange contracts.

Mr G and Mrs Y gave Meridian the documents it requested. But Meridian said it needed some bank statements translated into English. On 14 June 2023, Meridian said its recommendation was no longer suitable for Mr G and Mrs Y and it was unable to assist them further.

Mr G and Mrs Y complain that Meridian did not treat them fairly. They said Meridian had not explained why it abruptly stopped giving them advice. They said its actions caused them anxiety, stress and inconvenience when they only had a short time to meet the deadline to buy the property.

The investigator did not think the complaint should be upheld.

Mr G and Mrs Y did not accept what the investigator said. They made a number of points, including:

- They told Meridian that the lender it had chosen had a policy about the source of gifts that was incompatible with their circumstances. Their intention was always to switch lenders.
- They were able to obtain a mortgage through another broker. So Meridian's decision could not have been based on deficiencies in their application or supporting documents.
- Meridian's communication was not transparent or sufficient for them to understand what was happening.
- There was a discrepancy between what was originally agreed and what was delivered.

## **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.

Any business is entitled to choose who it does and does not do business with. So Meridian was entitled to pull out of the transaction – just as Mr G and Mrs Y were.

After initially obtaining a decision in principle for Mr G and Mrs Y, Meridian asked for more

information from them to support the application. Meridian said that after reviewing the information provided by Mr G and Mrs Y it did not consider its original recommendation was suitable and that it couldn't offer any further help.

Ultimately it is for the broker to decide if it is able to recommend a mortgage or not. I am satisfied that Meridian had reasonable grounds not to proceed with the application. It wasn't required to give any further explanation.

While another broker was able to offer Mr G and Mrs Y advice, that was their decision. It does not follow that Meridian did not act reasonably in assessing the information available to it.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr G and Mrs Y to accept or reject my decision before 5 June 2024.

Ken Rose  
**Ombudsman**