

The complaint

Ms S complains that Nationwide Building Society did not allow her to add funds to her new savings bond.

What happened

Ms S says she visited a branch of Nationwide on 28 September 2023 to open a one-year bond and was told it would be opened in a few days. She says she received a letter dated 3 October 2023 which explained she had a 14-day funding window. However, Ms S says that, when she tried to transfer additional money into the account on 16 October 2023, she was told the funding window was closed. Nationwide offered Ms S £50 for the anxiety caused by the misleading letter and explained the account had been opened on 30 September 2023. Ms S says that she's lost £110 in interest and adds that the service she received when she complained was very poor.

Nationwide says the new bond had been opened on 30 September 2023 and funded with money from a matured account on 3 October 2023. It says the payment was backdated to 30 September for the interest calculations but agreed that the letter Ms S received was misleading. Nationwide paid her £50 for this and for the worry about where the additional money had gone. It also paid Ms S £50 as an apology for the poor customer service she received.

Our investigator did not recommend the complaint should be upheld. He said the letter dated 3 October 2023 was a closing statement for the previous bond and was satisfied the new bond was opened on 30 September 2023. Therefore, he found that Ms S's attempt to transfer money into the account on 16 October 2023 was outside the funding window and Nationwide didn't need to do anything further.

Ms S responded to say, in summary, that her complaint was based on the misleading communications from Nationwide and that it was reasonable to believe her bond was opened on 3 October 2023. She adds that the new bond's terms and conditions say the bond will not be opened until it is funded with at least £1.

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 will start by saying that I'm satisfied it was reasonable for Ms S to believe her bond was opened on 3 October 2023:

- I agree that the bond closure letter was misleading in that it did not include the date the bond was opened, only the date the bond was funded with the transferred monies.
- In addition, I accept what Ms S says about the wording of the new bond's terms and conditions saying, *"You can open the account with a minimum of £1"*.

As Ms S had no money in her account until 3 October 2023, it follows that I think it was reasonable for Ms S to believe she had 14 days from that date in which to add new funds to the account.

I now need to consider what, if anything, Ms S would have done differently if Nationwide had made it clear the bond had been opened on 30 September 2023. Based on everything I've seen I'm persuaded that Ms S would have transferred the £2,000 into the new bond within the 14-day funding window. However, I can't agree that Ms S has a financial detriment of £110 as a result of not being able to transfer the money.

I acknowledge that Ms S wanted to invest an additional £2,000 at 5.5% interest for the year and that her calculation is based on the interest she has lost over that year. But this service would expect a consumer to mitigate potential losses such as this and so, even if no other bond accounts offered as much as 5.5%, Ms S's actual loss would have been significantly less than £110.

As such, I consider Nationwide's payment of £50 for the misleading information to be fair and reasonable and to more than offset any financial loss Ms S might have incurred.

Finally, I note that Nationwide has also paid Ms S £50 for the poor customer service she received following her complaint. I don't consider it needs to do anything further in that respect.

My final decision

My decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms S to accept or reject my decision before 4 November 2024.

Amanda Williams
Ombudsman