

The complaint

Mr G and Mrs G complain The Co-operative Bank plc (Co-op) failed to provide a redemption statement for their mortgage in a timely manner.

What happened

Mr G and Mrs G says a redemption statement to settle their mortgage with the Co-op was requested via their solicitor on several occasions in February 2024, in order to redeem the mortgage on 1 March 2024. Mr G says despite various requests from their solicitor Co-op failed to produce the redemption statement (RS) in time, which resulted in 13 additional days of interest at the standard variable rate.

Mr G says this meant they have paid an additional amount of interest of around £350, which he feels Co-op should refund, due to its failure to respond to his solicitors' requests on time. Mr G believes that as there was a merging of administration platforms by Co-op at that time, this possibly contributed to the delays.

Co-op says it sent a RS to Mr G's and Mrs G's solicitor on 16 February 2024 by fax, 1 March 2024 by email, 8 March 2024 by fax and email and 9 March 2024 by fax and email as instructed by the solicitor acting, using the fax number and email address provided by them.

Co-op says it doesn't agree it failed to provide the RS in good time.

Mr G and Mrs G weren't happy with Co-op's response and referred the matter to this service.

The investigator looked at all the available information but didn't uphold the complaint. The investigator says the email address the solicitor used for Co-op didn't match those he'd checked on Co-op's website. The investigator says from the information he had seen, Co-op had sent RS's on numerous occasions as it had been asked, and he couldn't hold Co-op responsible for why the solicitor acting hadn't received them.

The investigator says Co-op had also confirmed the change in administration platforms hadn't caused any impact or contributed to any delays, as this had taken place in early February 2024, before the RS was sent. The investigator says he wouldn't be asking anymore of Co-op here.

Mr G and Mrs G didn't agree with the investigator's view and asked for the matter to be referred to an ombudsman for 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.

Having done so, I won't be upholding this complaint and I will explain how I have come to my decision.

I can understand it would have been frustrating and upsetting for Mr G and Mrs G to have

been told by their solicitor it had requested a RS from Co-op on several occasions, but this wasn't provided in time to redeem their mortgage. When looking at this complaint I will consider if Co-op were solely responsible for the reason why Mr G's and Mrs G's mortgage wasn't repaid in good time.

Mr G's and Mrs G's complaint centres around the fact Co-op failed to provide their solicitor with a RS in sufficient time to redeem their mortgage, despite several requests to do so and this resulted in extra interest having to be repaid which has been calculated at around £350 by Mr G. Mr G has also made the point this coincided with a change in Co-op's administration platform which he feels could have contributed to the delays here.

While I understand the points Mr G and Mrs G make here, I'm not fully persuaded by their argument. I say this because of a number of factors. Firstly, as far as the administration platform is concerned this change happened prior to the initial RS provided by Co-op in mid-February 2024. Co-op has confirmed to this service it had no impact on the matter in hand and following the change in the administration platform, the redemption department remained as before with the same staff. So, with that in mind, while Mr G and Mrs G may not agree, on balance I'm satisfied this platform change didn't contribute to any delays in Co-op sending the RS.

I have been provided with detailed back-office notes from Co-op which detail the following:

- RS was faxed to the acting solicitor on 16 February 2024.
- RS was emailed to the acting solicitor after verification with them of email address on 1 March 2024.
- RS was faxed and emailed to the acting solicitor on 8 March 2024.
- RS was faxed and emailed to the acting solicitor on 9 March 2024.

I understand Mr G and Mrs G says its solicitor has stated it never received the initial RS on 16 February 2024 or any of the subsequent RS's sent until the one sent on 9 March 2024, and Mr G and Mrs G feel physical proof of dispatch is required to prove this actually happened.

While I understand the point Mr G and Mrs G makes here, Co-op have informed this service it hasn't retained the original fax and email records, so while that may have been useful this can't be provided, and I have to look at the evidence available from both parties and decide what in all probability happened here.

What Mr G and Mrs G are asking me to accept, is that the back-office notes written and noted at the actual time of the events, aren't sufficient or are in some way unreliable.

Although I understand the frustrations here, it wouldn't be fair of me to suggest that notes made by Co-op's redemption team at the time they occurred, didn't actually happen. So, on balance and in all probability, I'm satisfied those redemption statements were sent, but for whatever reason these couldn't be located by Mr G's and Mrs G's solicitor.

The notes also indicate the RS sent on 9 March 2024 was received by the solicitor acting using the same fax and email details, so I can't hold Co-op responsible for why the solicitor says the previous RS's weren't received by them.

While Mr G and Mrs G will be disappointed with my decision, I won't be asking anymore of Co-op here.

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 G to accept or reject my decision before 24 December 2024.

Barry White
Ombudsman