

The complaint

Mr G complains that Nationwide Building Society didn't send him confirmation of his new product details for his cash ISA.

What happened

Mr G had an existing cash ISA with Nationwide. And when it matured he gave instructions that this be transferred to a new fixed rate product. He is unhappy that Nationwide didn't provide all the details about that transfer in writing to him. And that he would need to go online or to a branch to make sure his instructions had been carried out correctly.

Nationwide said it hadn't made a mistake. Mr G's existing ISA had been closed and a new one opened as this now needed a six-digit sorting code. The details about the transfer to the new product were given in the closure statement. And it said it no longer offered ISA certificates but a statement for the account would be available online in a month or details could be accessed in branch. It also said it provided a phone number with its letter for queries. It didn't agree that it withheld information from Mr G.

Our investigator didn't recommend that the complaint be upheld. He said that we aren't the regulator and don't have a role in setting processes. Here he didn't see that Nationwide had made a mistake. He understood that Mr G would find visiting a branch less convenient due to his age and health. He said Mr G would have known what the balance and interest rate for the new product were from his posted maturity instructions. Although he could see why it may be helpful for all this information to be included in the letter to Mr G he couldn't say Nationwide was obliged to provide this

Mr G didn't agree and wanted his complaint to be reviewed. He had also contacted the Financial Conduct Authority. He said that in relation to his new account, the amount invested, type of account and interest rate weren't confirmed in the letter from Nationwide. He couldn't tell if Nationwide had made a mistake, and the responsibility was on him to find out. He wanted Nationwide to be forced to show this information. Mr G added that in his case he didn't say that his age and health were relevant but emphasised that these could be factors for other customers.

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.

Through our investigator I asked Nationwide to explain further the notes of its calls with Mr G and details about its process. I appreciate Mr G has strong feelings about what happened and wanted to receive all the information in writing about his fixed rate ISA product.

I've looked closely at the letter Nationwide sent Mr G about his ISA dated 24 July 2024 following his instructions about maturity. That said that the balance of his maturing account

had been transferred to a fixed rate ISA and gave the sort code and account number. It gave the balance but not the new interest rate or term. There was a telephone number provided in case of query, but I know Mr G chose to write to Nationwide about this. I've also noted that the terms and conditions of the account say that it is managed either in branch or online. In the maturity instructions Mr G completed it seems there was only one new fixed term product choice available to him.

Nationwide called Mr G about his letter and discussed the account with him and then he passed the phone to his wife. There was no recording of this call made. Nationwide noted it had offered to send him the confirmation he asked for. But also, it noted that his wife said that there was now enough information. Mr G has also submitted a copy of a first statement of his account dated 24 August 2024. That did include the interest rate and term for the new ISA product. It was stamped as having been provided in a branch on 28 October 2024.

I'm satisfied that Nationwide has changed its processes generally. On its website for example it states that it doesn't now provide either a welcome letter or a certificate for a reinvested ISA. It says that it will send a closure letter and that a statement will be available online or in branch after a month for the new account. I don't see it's made a mistake in applying its processes here.

The issue for Mr G is whether it ought to have sent him this information and whether its processes were unfair for him. As referred to above there was a telephone number for him to call provided. When he made a written request for the information explaining he didn't want to go to a branch and didn't use online banking Nationwide responded to him. I think Mr G's preference would be for it to just have sent him the information, but I don't think it was unreasonable for it to call in response to what it took as an expression of dissatisfaction.

This service isn't the regulator and doesn't have a role in reviewing or changing processes generally. I've assessed the specifics of Mr G's complaint and for the reasons I've given I don't consider Nationwide has made a mistake or acted unreasonably in his case. I can appreciate that he will be very disappointed with my conclusion.

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 Mr G to accept or reject my decision before 16 June 2025.

Michael Crewe
Ombudsman