

The complaint

Mr and Mrs A complain about information given by Admiral Insurance (Gibraltar) Limited following a claim on their buildings insurance policy.

What happened

Mr and Mrs A had a buildings insurance policy with Admiral. I was sorry to hear that Mr and Mrs A's property suffered from subsidence. A claim was raised with Admiral which was accepted and remedial work completed. Mr and Mrs A decided to sell their property. In February 2024, Mr and Mrs A asked Admiral if any prospective buyers would be able to insure the property with Admiral. Admiral advised Mr and Mrs A they would. Mr and Mrs A's prospective buyers called Admiral to confirm but were told this was incorrect. Mr and Mrs A were unhappy and raised a complaint. Admiral apologised for providing Mr and Mrs A the incorrect information and offered them £300 compensation. Mr and Mrs A were still unhappy and brought the complaint to this service.

In providing their case file, Admiral advised us the information in their final response letter was incorrect and they could insure any prospective buyers. They offered to increase the compensation by a further £250. Mr and Mrs A were still unhappy and asked our investigator to investigate the complaint fully. Our investigator thought Admiral's offer was fair in the circumstances. So, didn't think they needed to increase the compensation. Mr and Mrs A appealed. They didn't think the offer reflected their financial losses as a result of the incorrect information being given. As no agreement could be reached, the 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.

At the outset I acknowledge that I've summarised their complaint in far less detail than Mr and Mrs A have, and in my own words. I'm not going to respond to every single point made. No discourtesy is intended by this. Instead, I've focussed on what I think are the key issues here. The rules that govern the Financial Ombudsman Service allow me to do this as it's an informal dispute resolution service. If there's something I've not mentioned, it isn't because I've overlooked it. I'm satisfied I don't need to comment on every individual point to be able to reach an outcome in line with my statutory remit.

It's not in dispute that Admiral have provided incorrect information on two separate occasions. First, to the prospective buyers and again in their final response letter to Mr and Mrs A. So, in this decision I'll be focusing on whether Admiral's offer is fair in the circumstances.

Mr and Mrs A in response to our investigator's view have said as a result of the incorrect information, they had to drop their asking price and pay for a structural report of the property. Whilst they don't expect Admiral to cover the drop in their asking price, they've said the report was only needed as the specialist insurers the perspective buyers contacted for a

quote, would only offer to cover them with a structural report.

I've thought carefully about the circumstances of this complaint, whilst it will come as a disappointment to Mr and Mrs A, I agree with our investigator's outcome.

Whilst I appreciate it must have been stressful for Mr and Mrs A going through the sales process, I'm not persuaded the cost of the structural survey was as a result of solely the incorrect information being given. Whilst I accept a specialist subsidence insurer would want a structural report, when a property has recently suffered from subsidence, any prospective buyer will be concerned with the condition of the property and will want reassurance. Likewise, so would the mortgage company providing finance on the property. Whilst I appreciate Mr and Mrs A wanted to sell the property, I'm not seen anything to suggest they had to pay for the report or there would have been any consequences of not paying for it.

So, overall, whilst I accept the incorrect information has caused Mr and Mrs A trouble and upset, I'm not persuaded it's fair for Admiral to cover the cost of the structural report. I think Mr and Mrs A have been caused considerable distress, upset and worry which has taken a lot of extra effort to sort out over several months. In line with our website guidelines, I think the £550 compensation already offered by Admiral is fair and reasonable.

Putting things right

To put things right, Admiral should do the following:

- Write an apology to Mr and Mrs A for giving them incorrect information
- Pay Mr and Mrs A £550 compensation for the trouble and upset caused

My final decision

For the reasons I've explained above, I uphold this complaint and direct Admiral Insurance (Gibraltar) Limited to put things right by doing as I've said above, if they haven't already done so.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr A and Mrs A to accept or reject my decision before 5 November 2025.

Anthony Mullins
Ombudsman