

The complaint

Mrs W, who is represented by her husband, complains Leeds Building Society didn't let her know about her maturity options in sufficient time because it doesn't take into account how long letters now take to arrive.

What happened

Mrs W had an ISA with Leeds Building Society that was due to mature on 1 April 2025.

Mrs W says Leeds Building Society sent her a letter dated 14 March 2025 about her ISA's maturity options but this didn't arrive until 26 March 2025. She says that this didn't give her enough time to consider her options and to transfer her ISA elsewhere before it matured. Mrs W complained to Leeds Building Society saying it should take into account how long letters now take to arrive and that she'd made a loss because it doesn't.

Leeds Building Society looked into Mrs W's complaint and said that its approach was to start sending maturity letters around the middle of each month. It said that other customers had received their letters on 18 March 2025 the month Mrs W's ISA matured so the delay appeared to be down to the postal service. Leeds Building Society didn't, therefore, agree that it had done anything wrong.

Mrs W was unhappy with Leeds Building Society's response and so referred her complaint to our service.

One of our investigators looked into Mrs W's complaint but didn't recommend it be upheld. Mrs W wasn't happy with our investigator's recommendation and asked for her complaint to be referred to an ombudsman for a decision. Her complaint was, as a result, passed to me.

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 can see that Mrs W transferred the full balance in her ISA to another provider after it matured and that this transfer was completed by 17 April 2025. I can also see that Leeds Building Society wrote to Mrs W two days before to say that it had received a transfer request. In other words, it looks like it took Mrs W a couple of weeks to arrange a transfer. She's told us that she had to wait for forms to be sent by her new provider.

I accept Leeds Building Society's evidence that customers started receiving their maturity letters over a week before Mrs W did. I also accept that the delay must have, therefore, been down to the postal service.

I agree with Mrs W that Leeds Building Society ought to factor into its planning how long letters typically take to be delivered, but by sending maturity letters out mid-month I think it already does. It's unfortunate that the letter Mrs W received was very delayed. I do, however, agree with our investigator that it wouldn't be fair to hold Leeds Building Society liable for that.

I've taken one other factor into account – in fairness to both sides – namely that this was a two-year fixed ISA so Mrs W would or should have been aware that it was soon going to mature. I'm satisfied that Leeds Building Society's rates are well published and can be obtained over the phone too. The same goes for other providers. So, I do think Mrs W – probably with the help of her husband as I'm aware she has hearing problems – could have done some research in advance of her ISA maturing. That doesn't mean I don't have any sympathy for her. I do. I say that because it's clear her ISA earned less than it could have done for a couple of weeks, so she is out of pocket.

My final decision

My final decision is that I'm not upholding this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs W to accept or reject my decision before 28 August 2025.

Nicolas Atkinson
Ombudsman