

The complaint

Mr D complains that Nationwide Building Society didn't provide him with the new 'regular saver' account he opened and that it instead paid his standing order to a different account.

What happened

Mr D explains that he'd been paying £200 a month to a previous regular saver account for 12 months. And that he opened a new one that offered an annual interest rate of 6.5 per cent. Instead of being credited as he wanted his standing order was paid to an account with an interest rate of only 2.4 per cent per annum. He says he realised after six months and wants to be compensated.

Nationwide said it hadn't made a mistake. A regular saver account can only be opened online. It had made checks and had no record of Mr D attempting to open a further account in September 2024 as he'd said. A standing order had been set up to pay £200 a month to the previous regular saver account with no end date. So, when that account matured the standing order continued and Mr D didn't give any instructions to change this. Nationwide said at the time of its final response letter that the new regular saver account Mr D had wanted was still available to open.

Our investigator didn't recommend that the complaint be upheld. She said that Mr D had opened a previous regular saver account in September 2023. This had matured in September 2024 and converted in line with the terms and conditions to a savings account with the lower rate of interest. Nationwide had issued a statement for this account on 27 September 2024 which confirmed that it had been converted and gave the interest rate.

The standing order instruction was set up by Mr D when the account was opened. And was to pay £200 into this account until further notice. Mr D hadn't changed this instruction. Nationwide had a record of Mr D being in a branch on 19 September 2024. But a regular savings account could only be opened online by Mr D. And there was no evidence to show that he'd done so.

Mr D didn't agree and wanted his complaint to be reviewed by an ombudsman. The previous account should have ended on maturity. He already had an account paying more than 2.4 per cent per annum. So, it made no sense for him to have that other account. He thought his money was going to a new regular saver account. He said that Nationwide had '*lied*' to this service and that we'd '*meekly accepted*' that.

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.

Where there is a dispute about what happened as here, I'll be making relevant findings on the basis of what I think is most likely to have happened on the balance of probabilities.

I don't have reason to doubt that Mr D intended to open a new regular saver account. I note that on 9 September 2024 he'd transferred the then balance of £2,400 from his existing regular saver account to another of his accounts. That balance had been made up of 12 standing order payments of £200. As a result on 19 September 2024, the day he visited a branch, the balance on that account was zero as interest hadn't been credited. That account would then still be showing as a regular saver account. And the next monthly standing order payment didn't go in until 26 September 2024. Our investigator has already said that a statement was issued on 27 September 2024 showing that the account had changed when it had matured on that date, gave the new lower interest rate, and showed that a further payment of £200 had been credited.

I'm satisfied from the terms and conditions that a member of branch staff couldn't have opened a new regular saver account for Mr D. That had to be done by Mr D online. And in a call with this service Mr D told us that he did this himself using a keypad device in branch. There is no record of him then opening a new regular saver account. I've seen a record of his accounts from Nationwide and the checks it's made. And Mr D doesn't have any evidence to support his testimony.

Mr D says he thought the monthly payments of £200 that continued to be debited were going to a new account. I appreciate that he questions why payments would be taken to a matured account after 12 had been made. I've seen template evidence from Nationwide showing that when a standing order is set up online there's an option given for how long this should be paid for. The option confirmed for Mr D's standing order is recorded as being until further notice. There is no record of this being changed until April 2025.

I've balanced all the evidence and everything that's been said. I'm afraid I don't find it most likely that Mr D successfully opened a new regular saver account. Any application would have to be made online by Mr D and I don't have a reasonable basis to find that there was any error by Nationwide. Or that it has concealed in some way what happened as Mr D alleged. He still had an existing regular saver account with a zero balance when he visited a branch. That matured after 12 months and there was information available about that in a statement showing that a standing order payment was still being made. I appreciate Mr D expected only 12 standing order payments to go to that account. Unfortunately, that wasn't the instruction he gave and this wasn't changed until April 2025. While he'd like Nationwide to allow only 12 such payments, that's not its process and it was a matter for him to set the instruction.

I can fully understand why Mr D expected more interest on his savings. But I'm afraid on balance I don't have a basis to find that Nationwide made a mistake or should fairly take any further action for the reasons I've given.

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 D to accept or reject my decision before 18 September 2025.

Michael Crewe
Ombudsman