

The complaint

Mrs B and Mr B complain about Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited (“Lloyds”) for the way it handled their claim for damage to their home. They feel that Lloyds failed to make reasonable adjustments for them, and they want an apology and for Lloyds to change its approach.

What happened

Mrs B and Mr B have two children. Mrs B and one of the children have physical disabilities and their home is adapted to meet their needs.

They insured their home with Lloyds.

In May 2023, a leak appeared in the hallway of their house. They sought help from their home emergency insurance and experienced issues. This insurance was underwritten by a different insurer.

They claimed under their home insurance from Lloyds. Mrs B made Lloyds aware of her and her child’s disabilities during the initial contact.

Lloyds asked Mrs B to arrange her own plumber to identify the source of the water, and when Mrs B was unable to source a plumber, Lloyds instructed an agent to attend. This agent did not attend Mrs B and Mr Bs home until 9 days after the claim was submitted.

They identified that the water was coming from a neighbour’s property where a pipe had been punctured.

Lloyds began to process the claim for damage sustained to Mrs B and Mr B’s home.

I will not detail the full history of the claim, but Mrs B and Mrs B had cause to complain in May 2023, about the delays in the agent attending. Lloyds upheld this complaint and offered them £100 compensation.

Mrs B and Mr B then had cause to complain to Lloyds again in November 2023, relating to not discussing flooring options with them. Lloyds upheld this complaint and offered them £50 compensation.

In January 2024, the family moved into alternative accommodation, after it became clear that it was not practicable for them to remain at the property while work was ongoing. I believe they had been requesting this for some time.

In February 2024, Lloyds contacted the family and advised them that the alternative accommodation would be ended shortly. Mrs B complained and this decision was retracted soon afterwards, continuing their accommodation. Mrs B and Mr B complained about this communication and Lloyds offered the £250 compensation as recognition for this disruption and upset.

Work on the property repairs was slow and in April 2024, Mrs B and Mr B complained again,

after they learned that a further set of work was to be needed. This complaint was also upheld and Lloyds offered them £250 compensation.

In Autumn 2024, Mrs B and Mr B complained to Lloyds. They felt that their entire experience had been poor and badly handled, and they felt that Lloyds had failed to make reasonable adjustments for members of the family having disabilities. They had asked for alternative accommodation at an earlier point and flexibility in the use of alternative accommodation, for help with removing furniture and for a dedicated claims handler.

Lloyds responded to this complaint in November 2024, upholding the complaint. Lloyds recognised that the handling of the claim had been delayed, and communication had been poor. They acknowledged that, overall, Lloyds could have done more to support the family, especially in the knowledge of the vulnerabilities within the family. Lloyds offered Mrs B and Mr B £1150 compensation to reflect the service failings.

Mrs B and Mr B did not accept this and contacted us.

The claim slowly moved on and was ultimately concluded in February 2025, nearly 2 years after the leak occurred.

One of our investigators has looked into this matter. They noted that there was no dispute that the service provided by Lloyds was unacceptable, but they considered that the offer made by Lloyds was reasonable and in line with other awards we would make in similar circumstances.

Mrs B and Mr B did not accept that view and asked for an ombudsman decision. They indicated that they wanted Lloyds to apologise for their experience and make changes so that other people in future would not have the same experience.

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 appreciate that Mrs B and Mr B have experienced a drawn out and stressful experience with this claim. They have said that being away from home for so long, away from their adaptations and tools had affected the whole family's mental health, and it may have contributed to a physical condition suffered by one of the children. I am pleased that the claim has now been resolved, and I hope that they can settle back comfortably into their home.

I agree that the claim took an unreasonable amount of time for the work required. Water damage claims can take some months to resolve due to the need for drying before damage and repairs can be properly assessed, but this matter took too long, and Mrs B and her family were not treated appropriately.

I also agree that not enough was done to ensure continuity through the claim to take into consideration how this would affect Mrs B and her family.

Mrs B and Mr B have described that they felt this process was discriminatory through a failure to make reasonable adjustments.

Insurance claims are inherently lengthy and disruptive, and so I do not attribute the entirety of the distress suffered as being caused by Lloyds. The leak and the damage would have caused disruption even if the claim had gone completely correctly.

When Mrs B and Mr B have raised complaints, Lloyds has generally responded to those complaints promptly and has addressed issues at those times. Additionally, the claim notes show that when contact was made then agents mostly understood the impact that the work was having, and sought to remedy it.

It is when complaints were not being raised that the progress was unacceptably slow and systems did not join up to take Mrs B and Mr B's needs into consideration.

I do not consider that I have seen evidence of discrimination, but I do accept that Mrs B and Mr B experienced the lack of progress and the lack of adaptation as such.

Lloyds has acknowledged its failings in service, however, and has offered a substantive apology. It has also offered additional compensation to bring the total offered up to November 2024 to £1800.

I agree with my colleague that that sum is reasonable. This amount would reflect serious disruption to daily life and serious distress and anxiety caused by the poor service.

I appreciate that this does not feel adequate to Mrs B and Mr B given the sustained period of upset they have experienced, but I am satisfied that it is in line with other awards we would make in similar circumstances.

I therefore agree with my colleague, and I think that the offer made by Lloyds is reasonable. I direct that Lloyds pays the compensation it has offered to Mrs B and Mr B, but I do not ask it to do anything beyond that, in respect of this complaint.

My final decision

For the reasons given above, I direct that Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited pay to Mrs B and Mr B a total of £1800 (including any amounts that have been paid and accepted to date).

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs B and Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 25 October 2025.

Laura Garvin-Smith
Ombudsman