

The complaint

Mr and Mrs B complain Utility Warehouse Limited (“UWL”) has provided them with misinformation about how much they can expect to pay for their home emergency policy.

As Mrs B is leading on this complaint, I’ve referred to her throughout my decision.

What happened

The circumstances of this complaint are well known to both parties. And as the Investigator detailed what happened in their view, I won’t reiterate events here. Instead, I will focus on the reasons for my 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.

Mrs B has had home emergency insurance administered by UWL for some years. UWL told her the policy would always be £18 a month. Later, when the cost increased in 2024, UWL said it had made a mistake. To put things right it apologised, applied a credit to Mrs B’s account to keep the cost at £18 a month for a time and paid £60 compensation (also added as a credit to her account).

In 2025 the policy renewed, with a further increase in cost to £39 a month. Mrs B says this goes against UWL’s promise and she wants UWL to ensure she will only ever be charged £18 a month. UWL has declined her request on the basis it made a mistake and it can’t keep the cost to £18 a month indefinitely.

I sympathise with Mrs B. She was told she’d only pay £18 a month, and that’s what she expected. I can therefore understand her disappointment and frustration to discover she’s being asked to pay more. But I don’t find I can fairly and reasonably require UWL to do as she asks for the following key reasons:

- UWL made a mistake when it told her the cost would always be £18 a month. In other words, it misinformed Mrs B. The remedy for misinformation is to place the customer in the position they would have been in but for the misinformation, not the position they would have been in if the misinformation had been correct.
- But for the misinformation, Mrs B would be paying the market rate for the insurance cover she’s received, the same as everyone else. And like for everyone else, the cost of the cover can change at renewal to reflect changes in the underlying costs of the insurance and to take into account changes in circumstances, such as claims.
- So, but for the misinformation, Mrs B would have been paying more for the insurance cover she’s received since 2024, as she wouldn’t have received an initial discount, and later a credit to her account. She’s therefore better off because of UWL’s mistake overall.

The misinformation has caused Mrs B a level of disappointment, frustration and inconvenience. It's appropriate for this impact to be recognised. But I find the initial discount, the account credit, UWL's apology and the £60 compensation, to be fair and reasonable in the circumstances

My final decision

My final decision is I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr B and Mrs B to accept or reject my decision before 10 March 2026.

Nicola Beakhust
Ombudsman