

The complaint

Mr C and Miss R's complaint relates to their mortgage with Nationwide Building Society. They are unhappy that they were not able to attach a new interest rate product to their mortgage to start when the old one ended and had to pay interest at standard variable rate for a month.

What happened

Mr C and Miss R's existing interest rate product was due to end on 31 May 2025. Nationwide reminded them of this in the annual statement that it sent them in January 2025.

In February 2025 Nationwide then sent both Mr C and Miss R text messages reminding them that their product was ending soon and that they should consider their options. It directed Mr C and Miss R to its online system where they could look into what options were available to them. Mr C has said he received the text message, but that one was not sent to Miss R.

On 10 May 2025 Nationwide sent Mr C and Miss R a letter confirming that from 1 June 2025 their interest rate would change to its standard variable rate (SVR). It set out what the interest rate was and how much the new payment would be.

Two days later another letter was sent to Mr C and Miss R by Nationwide. This one again reminded them that their fixed rate would end on 31 May 2025. It went on to say *'If you don't have a new mortgage deal in place by then, you'll move onto our Standard Variable Rate, which means that you could pay more. Take a look at our mortgage deals and apply before 25 May 2025 to switch for next month.'* They were then told to look at Nationwide's online system for the options that were available to them and told they could pick a new product online if they were happy to choose for themselves.

Mr C and Miss R called Nationwide just after the cut-off date to arrange a new product. This was done, but they were told that as they had missed the deadline, it could not be attached to their mortgage for June. They expressed their unhappiness that the cut-off date was not documented on the online system, which Nationwide took as an expression of dissatisfaction and dealt with as a complaint. Nationwide considered the complaint, but it didn't uphold it.

Mr C and Miss R asked us to look into their complaint. They told us that they had not received either of the letters in May 2025 and when they looked at the online system, it didn't highlight that there was a cut-off date for their application to allow the new product to start when the old product ended. In addition, Mr C and Miss R highlighted that neither the text messages nor the website gave the deadline for applications. They also explained to us that they had logged on to look at the rates available to them at the beginning of May 2025, however, they delayed booking a new product as they knew interest rates were dropping and wanted to give as long as possible for that to happen.

One of our Investigators considered the complaint, but she didn't recommend that it be upheld. Mr C and Miss R didn't accept the Investigator's conclusions and asked that the complaint be referred to an Ombudsman. They said that their complaint was not about a

general lack of communication from Nationwide about the issue, but that its website shows misleading information, as it does not detail that there is a cut-off date.

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.

Mr C and Miss R have highlighted that the online system doesn't document the cut-off date for applications to be made to ensure that any new product starts on the first of the following month. They are correct that is the situation and it might be useful for that the cut-off date to be included on this system. However, while Mr C and Miss R's focus is on just that one piece of information in isolation, when considering a complaint, I need to look at the entire picture.

Nationwide provided Mr C and Miss R with several reminders about when their product was due to end, and it told them about the cut-off date for any application they decided to make when that date was approaching. The letter was clear that they needed to apply for a new product before 25 May 2025 for it to be applied for June 2025.

I note that Mr C and Miss R have said that they didn't receive the letter telling them about the cut-off date. I have examined the letter, and it was correctly addressed. While some post does go astray, the majority that is correctly addressed is delivered to the appropriate address. So if the letter did go astray, rather than being received and Mr C and Miss R not realising its importance, I can't find Nationwide responsible for that.

In order to uphold a complaint, I have to be persuaded that a financial business did something wrong. In this case, I am not persuaded that Nationwide did. It reminded Mr C and Miss R months in advance that their interest rate product was ending and they could apply for a new one. It then reminded them again close to the end of the term and told them when they had to make their application by for the new product to attached to the mortgage when the existing one ended.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mr C and Miss R to accept or reject my decision before 18 March 2026.

Derry Baxter
Ombudsman