

## **The complaint**

Mr A complains that National Savings and Investments (NS&I) won't reissue a £9,000 cheque that they've said was sent to him. They're now saying that he isn't owed this money, but he wants the cheque reissued.

## **What happened**

In March 2023, Mr A requested that £99 was withdrawn from his Premium bond account and sent to him via warrant (cheque), leaving £1 in his account. In early December 2024, Mr A contacted NS&I to ask for his bond holding number and a letter was sent to him on the following day advising that the balance of his premium bond account was repaid to him via a warrant (cheque) for £9,000 on 12 May 2023.

Mr A called NS&I again in mid-January 2025 explaining that he didn't receive the cheque for £9,000 and the adviser explained that they would trace this for him. Mr A called again in late January 2025 to ask if he'd won any more prizes. He was advised that he doesn't have any active bonds so he wouldn't be able to win a prize, but he disputed this based on the letter he received in December. The adviser explained that they can't see any evidence of a £9,000 cheque and registered a complaint for Mr A as he was unhappy that the cheque hadn't been reissued to him.

NS&I responded to the complaint explaining that Mr A had £100 in his account, but this was withdrawn in April 2023. They couldn't see any record of him winning prizes or of the call that Mr A had with the first adviser, so they didn't uphold the complaint. Unhappy with this, Mr A referred the complaint to our service as he was told verbally and in writing that the £9,000 cheque was issued to him, so he wants it to be repaid.

While the complaint has been with us, NS&I have been in touch to make an offer of £50 compensation as they thought it was possible that a typo had been made in the letter to Mr A and the call he had with them in mid-January should have been handled better. An Investigator reviewed the complaint and thought £50 was a fair offer. They explained that the evidence shows that the account has been empty since April 2023 and it's more likely that the letter he received contained a typo. They didn't recommend any further compensation as they thought £50 recognised the impact the errors had on him.

Mr A remained unhappy as he thought the account should still be open with a £1 balance, he felt that the £9,000 is still owed to him and NS&I are pretending that a mistake was made. As such, the complaint has been passed to me for a final 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.

The evidence provided by NS&I shows that a £99 cheque was issued to Mr A in March

2023, however Mr A quickly advised that it was issued in the incorrect name. A cheque for £100 was then issued in the correct name in April 2023 and NS&I has confirmed that this has been cashed. I've been provided with no evidence to suggest that this is incorrect, so I'm satisfied that the Premium bond account has been empty since April 2023. If Mr A didn't receive this cheque, he may wish to raise a separate complaint about this with NS&I.

I also can't see anything to suggest that prizes were won on the account and that one of these prizes was for £9,000. Mr A has provided a copy of the letter he received in December 2024, and it does confirm that £9,000 was paid to him. Based on what I've seen, I think it's more likely than not that this was a typo as this isn't consistent with the activity on his account.

NS&I has agreed that the adviser took Mr A's word for the existence of the £9,000 cheque and led him to believe that they would trace and resolve the issue during his call with them in mid-January 2025, so there's no dispute over this aspect. It's clear that after receiving the letter and having this call with NS&I, Mr A believed that he had potentially won £9,000 at some point which was due to be repaid to him.

As such, I agree with the Investigator that Mr A was provided with misleading information which has led him to expect a large payment from NS&I. I don't think Mr A is owed the £9,000, but I agree that this has led to distress and inconvenience and the £50 offered by NS&I recognises this, so I don't think they need to offer more.

I appreciate that Mr A feels strongly that NS&I are saying that an error was made instead of paying him the £9,000 but I've seen no evidence to suggest that this is the case. Our service has to put weight on evidence we receive and without something persuasive to dispute this, I'm satisfied that this is a fair and reasonable outcome.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint in part. National Savings and Investments have offered Mr A £50 compensation which I think is reasonable. So, they should pay this if Mr A decides to accept the outcome.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr A to accept or reject my decision before 2 January 2026.

Chris Lowe  
**Ombudsman**