

## **The complaint**

Miss K complains that Lantern Debt Recovery Services Limited trading as Lantern (Lantern) haven't done enough to remedy the fact her data was accessed in an IT security incident they experienced.

## **What happened**

Lantern experienced an IT security incident in April 2025. The incident saw a number of Lantern's customer's personal data accessed by a third party. Miss K was one of the affected customers.

When Lantern identified the incident they contacted the relevant bodies, such as the police and the Information Commissioner's office (ICO) and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and began an internal investigation.

The investigation was initially to place a fix to stop the access to their system and then an in-depth look at what data was accessed and how many of their customers were affected. In November 2025 when their investigation was finished and they had all the information they needed; they contacted the affected customers – including Miss K.

Lantern explained what had happened - that some of Miss K's personal data may have been impacted, and what this meant. They went on to say how they had reacted to the incident and told Miss K they had arranged a complimentary twelve month subscription to a fraud monitoring and protection service so that she would be able to monitor her credit report with options for alerts when changes happen and access to other benefits that could assist her if her information was used to try to obtain credit.

Miss K was unhappy with this remedy and so complained to Lantern, she felt compensation was due because of the worry the incident had caused her. She specifically raised concerns about how Lantern had retained and processed her data, and the delay in reporting the breach to her. Lantern didn't uphold her complaint, they explained they had a legitimate reason for processing her data and also gave her a more in-depth explanation about the incident and about the benefits of the subscription service they were offering to her and how it could help her.

Miss K remained unhappy and so brought her complaint to this service. Our investigator thought the remedy Lantern had offered was fair and so didn't uphold Miss K's complaint. Miss K disagreed and so the matter has been passed to me to decide.

## **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 realise that I've summarised this complaint in less detail than the parties and I've done so using my own words. I've concentrated on what I consider to be the key issues. The rules that govern this service allow me to do so. This isn't intended as a discourtesy to either

party, but merely to reflect my informal role in deciding what a fair and reasonable outcome is. This also means I don't think it's necessary to get an answer, or provide my own answer, to every question raised unless it's relevant to the crux of the complaint.

There is no dispute here about what has happened and so my role here is decide if the offer made by Lantern to provide Miss K with a free monitoring service for twelve months is fair or if they need to do more.

In deciding this I'm assessing if Lantern have done all they can to put Miss K back in the position she would have been in but for the incident. I can't make an award for something that could happen in the future because at this stage that would be hypothetical and I can only consider what has actually happened.

Miss K is concerned that Lantern retained her personal information for longer than they should have and didn't process or protect it well enough. This isn't something I can make a finding on as that is the role of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). However, I can explain when an account closes businesses don't remove all evidence of its existence and the information relating to it for a set time – know as a retention period. This is because they may have to deal with matters that arise post closure. As Miss K did have an account with Lantern, they would have had a legitimate reason to hold and process her personal data and as it was only closed within that last few years, it seems to me that it would be reasonable for them to still have Miss K's information on their systems.

I don't doubt being informed about the incident will have caused Miss K a level of concern. So, I've gone on to think about how Lantern's proposed remedy addresses that concern.

Lantern have said they've identified the incident was a ransomware attack aimed at disrupting their business rather than targeting individual's data. They have also confirmed there is no evidence that Miss K's data or that of any of their customer's had been misused, sold, posted online or leaked. I think this supports what they were saying about Lantern being the target rather than the information itself being taken to be used in an unlawful way, although I accept this can't be ruled out completely.

To mitigate this, the monitoring service Lantern have provided to help Miss K to protect herself in the future is very comprehensive. Lantern have explained it includes a feature that scans online sources looking for the data and that Miss K would be alerted if her data was found online; and if that happened a specialist team would support her and advise her of the most effective ways to stay protected.

Monetary awards aren't always the most appropriate solution and in this case, I'm satisfied the remedy Lantern have put in place will do more to protect Miss K from harm and worry than a monetary award could. That's not to say that Miss K wasn't right to be concerned by the incident it just means I think the remedy Lantern has put in place goes as close as possible to putting her back in the position she would have been in but for the incident. It follows I won't be asking them to do anything more here to put things right for Miss K.

I realise that this isn't the outcome Miss K was hoping for and that she may be disappointed by it. But my decision ends what we – in trying to resolve her dispute with Lantern – can do for her.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons set out above, my final decision is that I do not uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss K to accept

or reject my decision before 20 January 2026.

Amber Mortimer  
**Ombudsman**