

The complaint

Mr and Mrs R were unhappy with how their escape of water claim was managed by Advantage Insurance Company Limited (“AI”) under their home insurance policy.

What happened

Mr and Mrs R made a claim in February 2024, when a small leak from their downstairs toilet caused the sub-floor to swell which subsequently caused the floor tiles to crack.

AI appointed a surveyor to review and validate the claim, which led to a contractor being appointed to dry out the property following the leak. It was around six months (September 2024) when AI’s appointed contractor tried to repair the floor, and the toilet was out of action during this time, and the condition of the room was rough. Mr and Mrs R didn’t think AI had followed the correct approach in repairing the damage, which led to the new floor been uneven. Mr and Mrs R pointed out several faults in the tiling.

Mr and Mrs R complained, and a new contractor came out. This resulted in March 2025, in a new floor being fitted and the tiling re-done. In April 2025, Mr and Mrs R were still waiting for the final decorating to be completed.

AI acknowledged it had caused delays to the claim, and thought its communication could’ve been better, so it offered Mr and Mrs R £500 compensation.

Our investigator decided to uphold the complaint. She thought the issues were acknowledged similarly by both parties but didn’t think the compensation offered was reasonable in the circumstances, so she increased it by £200. Mr and Mrs R disagreed with the outcome, so the case has been referred to an ombudsman.

My provisional decision

I made a provisional decision on this on 17 December 2025. I said:

I wrote to both parties on 25 November 2025. I said:

“I’ve reviewed the complaint, and I think the facts of the case are clear and acknowledged by both parties.

Given this and to speed up the process [up], I’d like to try and resolve this informally and quickly.

I’m in agreement with the direction of our investigator’s view, but I can see Mr and Mrs R are disappointed with the total level of compensation (£700).

Whilst Mr and Mrs R’s complaint wasn’t specifically about the cash offer made, they felt cornered somewhat to use AI’s contractors as the amount offered wouldn’t have covered the works (AI’s supplier rates versus market rates). Therefore, they were particularly disappointed with the repair process, especially given Mr R’s knowledge of the industry and his ability to identify errors that occurred.

In particular, Mr and Mrs R said “The delays were not only from the decorators, but all contractors at some point also failed to turn up or were several hours late from the time that had been advised to us and in some cases turned up only to leave a short time later stating they were not equipped to carry out the work. This all caused me to take time off work unnecessarily.

AI have paid £400 in compensation for delays [and £100 for poor communication]. [AI’ contractor’s] own timeline stated it would take 2 weeks from start to finish and in reality it took 14 months to complete, the majority of that time we did not have the use of our downstairs toilet and were left with bare dry adhesive on plywood as a floor in the hallway, as a consequence we were unable to have family or friends round.

Less than £1 per day is a pitifully low amount to be offered. Even after I made the first application to you it still took a further 2 months to have the work completed. Regarding the 11 days that I missed [from work], some of those days are when contractors have failed to turn up, the remaining days are from when I have had to be present when contractors are carrying out substandard work that has had to be redone. Why should I be penalised for time taken off work due to work having to be redone because of poor workmanship. Bearing in mind this whole job should have taken no more than 2 weeks, which equates to 10 working days and not 14 months”.

Our service doesn’t compensate specifically for “days off work”, rather it takes a holistic view to compensation on the level of distress and inconvenience suffered (above the normal level that would be expected for any claim). I’m of the view, that the level of compensation should be increased a little, to reflect the disruption to daily life over a sustained period. I think a total of £1,000 is more reasonable (£500 more than was offered and £300 more than the investigator’s view). If I issue a decision, based on the evidence I have, it’s likely this would be my conclusion.

Can I ask both parties, with the aim of speeding up this process, whether you’d accept a total compensation level of £1,000 (£500 more than was offered). If you do, the complaint will be closed as resolved informally with this outcome, if not, I would issue a formally written decision (but with a similar outcome). Please can you respond promptly, in the hope we can move this complaint forward quickly”.

AI said “after reviewing your offer, I would be inclined to accept this and resolve informally”.

Mr and Mrs R didn’t respond to my question, after I had chased it up with them. I haven’t received any new information, so my view of this complaint remains the same.

To move this forward, I will continue with the formal process so this complaint can be resolved. I will issue a provisional decision to give both parties one last opportunity to respond.

For the reasons I set out above, I intend to uphold this complaint. I intend that AI pay Mr and Mrs R £500 additional compensation (so £1,000 in total) for the distress and inconvenience experienced under this claim.

Responses to my provisional decision

Neither party responded to my provisional 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.

Given neither party has provided any new information, I see no reason to change my provisional decision.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint. I require Advantage Insurance Company Limited pay Mr and Mrs R :

- £500 additional compensation (£1,000 in total) – for distress and inconvenience.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr R and Mrs R to accept or reject my decision before 30 January 2026.

Pete Averill
Ombudsman