

## The complaint

Mr C complains that ReAssure Limited (ReAssure) made an administrative error which led to his monthly pension contributions not being deducted from March 2021. He feels that ReAssure's attempts to correct the situation since October 2024 have repeatedly failed.

## What happened

Mr C has two pension plans with ReAssure.

I understand that in March 2021, Mr C reached his normal retirement date. After this, an administrative error by ReAssure led to his pension contributions not being collected from his bank account.

In October 2024, ReAssure began taking increased payments from Mr C's bank account to make up for the missed contributions. But it didn't tell him what it was doing.

On 11 October 2024, Mr C called ReAssure as it hadn't told him why his payments had gone up from £21.33 to £85.36 each month and he hadn't requested or agreed to this. ReAssure's call notes recorded that there were three open bills dated 5 April, May and June 2021. And that it would query and escalate this further given the payment was due on 16 October 2024.

On 21 January 2025, Mr C called ReAssure to complain about his payments. Although ReAssure had said they should revert to the original payments in January 2025, he said it was still taking £85.35. Mr C said ReAssure had taken the higher payment on 16 October 2024, 5 November 2024, 5 December 2024 and 6 January 2025. ReAssure's call notes recorded that it would investigate.

Later the same day, ReAssure told Mr C what his options were. It said it'd collected increased payments to ensure the payments were up to date. ReAssure's call notes recorded that Mr C wanted it to continue to collect £85.35 each month until his payments had caught up. However, ReAssure told Mr C that it couldn't continue with the catch-up payments due to the tax implications of allocating them in a different tax year.

On 23 January 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C with options for correcting its error without negative tax implications. It offered to either refund the catch-up payments taken in error since October 2024 and resume taking contributions from February 2025 or triple his contributions to his policy ending 700 for 15 months to catch up the missed payments between March 2021 and January 2025.

On 28 January 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C to tell him that it would take his next payment on or around 11 February 2025 for £21.33. It said this was for his February 2025 payment for his policy ending 524. It said if Mr C was happy with this, it would then continue to take the same payment from 5 March 2025. The same day, ReAssure issued its final response to Mr C's complaint.

ReAssure acknowledged that Mr C had complained due to the difficulties he'd experienced with the collection of his payments. It apologised for its delayed response, noting Mr C had

first raised the issue in October 2024. It said this delay had caused him to contact it on multiple occasions to receive updates. ReAssure said it would send £250 to Mr C's bank account to apologise for the inconvenience the poor service had caused him.

On 4 February 2025, Mr C emailed ReAssure to select the second option it'd offered. He asked it to increase his monthly payments to £64.02 for 15 months so he'd catch up his missed contributions. Mr C also asked ReAssure to confirm the amount his payments would revert to once the fifteen-month period was over. He also said he had yet to receive the £250 ReAssure had offered.

ReAssure wrote to Mr C again on 13 February 2025. It said it would take the next payment from his bank account on 24 February 2025 for £21.33.

ReAssure called Mr C on 25 February 2025. Its call notes recorded that it'd received Mr C's request to process the increase it'd outlined under Option 2 in its 23 January 2025 letter. It noted that this meant that it would take a payment of £64.02 for Mr C's policy ending 700 and £21.34 for the policy ending 524. Therefore, the monthly total would be £85.35. But it said it'd only collected the £21.33 for the policy ending 524. It therefore needed to collect £64.02 for February 2025 along with the March 2025 contribution for the policy ending 700, so £128.04.

On 26 February 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C to ask him for a completed tax relief declaration form before it could action the increased payments. Mr C returned the completed tax relief declaration form. ReAssure acknowledged receipt on 5 March 2025.

Mr C made a further complaint about the difficulties he'd faced in correcting his payments.

ReAssure issued a second final response letter to Mr C on 28 February 2025. It said it was now processing the increased payments. It apologised for the difficulties Mr C had faced and for the poor service. It offered to pay a further £200 compensation into his bank account, which it said would arrive in the next few weeks.

On 7 March 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C to update him on the increased payments. It said it'd made an error in its January 2025 letter. It said that the policy ending 700 couldn't accept a regular increase of payments. It offered to increase the payments for the next 15 months through the policy ending 524 instead with effect from February 2025. The following day, Mr C confirmed he was happy to increase his monthly payments through the policy ending 524.

On 2 April 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C to say it would collect £256.05 from his bank account on or around 16 April 2025 to cover the contributions for February, March and April 2025. They also confirmed normal payments of £85.35 would resume from 5 May 2025.

On 1 May 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C to apologise for failing to collect this payment. It said it would collect £320.10 from Mr C's bank account on or around 15 May 2025 to cover the contributions for February, March, April and May 2025. It also confirmed normal payments of £85.35 would resume from 5 June 2025.

Mr C wrote to ReAssure on 27 May 2025 to raise a further complaint. He said ReAssure had failed to collect the payments it said it would collect in its 2 April 2025 and 1 May 2025 letters. Instead, the only amount it'd collected in 2025 was £21.33 on 24 February. Mr C said the situation was causing him anxiety. He asked ReAssure to confirm how it was going to put things right.

ReAssure wrote to Mr C on 2 June 2025 to say it would collect £405.46 from his bank account on or around 15 June 2025 to cover the contributions for February, March, April,

May and June 2025. It also said normal payments of £85.35 would resume from 5 July 2025.

Mr C wrote to ReAssure again on 6 June 2025 to chase a response to his 27 May 2025 letter.

Unhappy, Mr C brought his complaint to this service. He said that since October 2024, ReAssure had failed to collect the correct payment from his bank account despite its promises. He told this service that ReAssure had still not collected the payment it said it would take in its 2 June 2025 letter.

After the complaint had been brought to this service, ReAssure offered Mr C a further £200 compensation – so a total compensation of £700 - for the distress and inconvenience caused by the delays from its March 2025 response to the present time.

ReAssure also said it had re-established the direct debit and would apply Mr C's backdated payments at the correct date. It therefore felt there'd be no financial implications for him.

Mr C didn't accept ReAssure's offer. He wanted to know if there'd be any tax implications for him. And whether the errors had led to a negative impact on his pension.

On 16 July 2025, ReAssure wrote to Mr C to say it would collect £576.12 from his bank account on or around 5 August 2025 to cover the contributions for February, March, April, May, June, July and August 2025. It said normal payments of £85.35 would resume from 5 September 2025. Mr C confirmed to this service that ReAssure did collect this payment.

Mr C rejected ReAssure's offer.

Our investigator then asked ReAssure for further information. It provided a partial response as follows:

- *Can you please provide an update on the direct debit being reinstated and payments being made? Having spoken with Mr C since the proactive settlement offer, the direct debit has not been reinstated, and he has only made one contribution of £21.33 in 2025.*

While ReAssure said that its system stated that this had been completed, I'm not persuaded that ReAssure has provided evidence to back this up.

- *Please provide evidence of the exact figures of the direct debit that has now been set up; the date the 15-month period will now end; and the lower amount it will refer to. Information provided to Mr C confirming these figures is now out of date and he deserves to know the updated details.*

ReAssure simply provided a further copy of its 16 July 2025 letter to Mr C.

The following questions remain unanswered:

- *Can you please provide a full explanation as to why the proposed overpayments don't have the same tax implications as the original solution?*
- *Please can you elaborate on why you feel any investment loss was due to an error on both parts?*
- *Please provide much more detail and evidence about this statement from your previous email: "To my understanding the tax rebates on the higher premiums are*

*meant to mitigate those that would have been in place which is why we are only collecting the higher amount for 15 months for £85.35".*

On 25 September 2025, ReAssure told this service it was still working on our investigator's information request. But it has yet to provide any further information.

Our investigator felt that the complaint should be upheld. He recommended that ReAssure took the following steps to put things right:

- *Calculate the notional value on 5 May 2026 – the end of the 15-month catch-up period - of Mr C's pension policy ending 700 as though the agreed regular contributions had been collected from his bank account each month since March 2021 and had been applied to his policy on the date they should've been.*
- *Compare this notional value with the current value of Mr C's pension policy [ending 700] and, if there is a loss, pay the difference to Mr C.*
- *Pay Mr C any outstanding balance from the £700 offered to compensate for the inconvenience caused.*

Mr C agreed with our investigator. ReAssure didn't agree with our investigator. It made the following points:

- *It still wanted to confirm with its billing team which options were available to Mr C. It said it needed to check what it could offer and if what it'd previously offered would be possible. It said it needed clarification from Mr C about how he wanted to proceed.*
- *ReAssure said that when both policies had reached Mr C's normal retirement date in 2021, it'd issued letters to ask if he wanted to continue making payments. It said it had received a response for the policy ending 524, which it said was reinstated and that it had continued collecting payments for. But it said it had no response for the policy ending 700. Our investigator asked ReAssure for evidence of Mr C not responding, but none was provided.*
- *It said that it could only backdate the payments on the policy if Mr C confirmed his tax allowance in each individual year. It said once Mr C had confirmed this it could move past the suspense issue and then confirm the correct values for the policy to date and complete the collection issues as needed.*
- *ReAssure didn't think it should be asked to look into a future-dated loss assessment.*

Our investigator said that ReAssure should ask Mr C for the tax information it needed. But he still felt the calculation should be completed at a future date. He said that once the payments were caught up, Mr C could be in a worse position than he would've been if his contributions hadn't stopped.

As agreement couldn't be reached, the complaint came to me for a review.

I issued my first provisional decision on 27 November 2025. It said:

*I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.*

*Having done so, I intend to uphold the complaint. I agree with our investigator that ReAssure Limited needs to take further steps to put things right. But I also consider that it needs to*

*provide additional information to Mr C so that he can be sure that the steps it plans to take will put him back into the position he should now be in. I'll explain the reasons for my decision.*

*There's no dispute about the fact that ReAssure has made errors. When Mr C reached his normal retirement date in 2021, his contributions stopped. ReAssure then failed to reinstate them despite Mr C's request to continue contributing. It also began deducting additional contributions in 2024 without his consent.*

*As our investigator noted, when Mr C noticed the additional contributions ReAssure had taken from his bank account, ReAssure made further errors when trying to put things right. It's still not clear from the evidence provided that ReAssure knows what it needs to do to ensure Mr C is put back to the position he should now be in. I say this because it told this service that it could only backdate the payments on the policy if Mr C confirmed his tax allowance in each individual year.*

*To ensure that Mr C is put back into the position he should be in but for its errors, ReAssure needs to work with Mr C on a payment schedule through which he is able to catch-up on the missed payments into the policy ending 700 without negative tax implications.*

*While I can see that ReAssure did make a proposal to make up for the shortfall by collecting increased payments from Mr C for 15 months before returning to normal payments in May 2026, I've not been provided with enough evidence that this proposal remains in place.*

*I say this because ReAssure told this service that it still wanted to confirm with its billing team which options were available to Mr C. And that it needed to check what it could offer and whether what it'd previously offered would be possible. ReAssure also said it needed clarification from Mr C about how he wanted to proceed.*

*I therefore intend to require ReAssure to work with Mr C on a payment schedule which has no negative tax implications for him. Once it has done this, it will be in a position to confirm the increased payments he will need to make and for how long he will need to make them.*

*ReAssure told this service that it would apply Mr C's backdated payments at the correct date. And that this would mean there'd be no need for a financial loss assessment.*

*I agree with our investigator that, unless ReAssure can evidence that it has backdated each catch-up contribution to the date it should've been paid and invested, there's the potential for Mr C to have suffered a financial loss. I say this because the value of his pension at the future date the final catch-up payment is made would be different from the value of his pension had there been no delayed payments, unless ReAssure correctly backdates each catch-up payment to the date they should've been received.*

*I acknowledge that ReAssure doesn't feel this service should ask it to look into a future-dated loss assessment. While I agree with ReAssure that if the catch-up payments are correctly back-dated there will be no need for a loss calculation, it will need to provide Mr C with clear evidence to demonstrate this to his satisfaction.*

*Once ReAssure has calculated the increased payments required and the period over which they need to be paid, I intend to require it to demonstrate in writing to Mr C – in a clear and not misleading way – how the payment schedule will ensure he will be back in the position he should've been in once the final catch-up payment has been made. This should include the date the payment schedule will end and the monthly payment that ReAssure will then take after the final catch-up payment has been made.*

*If ReAssure is unable to provide such a clear demonstration to Mr C, I will instead require it to carry out a loss assessment at the date the final catch-up payment is made. This assessment would need to compare the actual value of Mr C's policy ending 700 at the date of the final catch-up payment with the notional value at that date, which would be calculated on the basis that each monthly contribution had been paid and invested when it should've been.*

*I went on to consider ReAssure's point that Mr C was partially responsible for the issue at the heart of this complaint. The evidence shows that ReAssure didn't mention this point until after our investigator had issued his view. And when our investigator asked ReAssure for evidence of Mr C not responding, none was provided. I'm therefore not able to consider this point further.*

*I finally considered if the compensation ReAssure has offered Mr C is reasonable under the circumstances of this complaint.*

#### *Distress and Inconvenience*

*I agree with our investigator, and for the same reasons, that the total compensation ReAssure has offered Mr C is reasonable. I say this because the evidence clearly shows that ReAssure's errors have caused Mr C considerable inconvenience and anxiety about his pension for a sustained period.*

*The evidence is unclear about how much of the £700 compensation ReAssure has offered Mr C has been paid. As such, I intend to require it to pay any outstanding compensation offered but unpaid to Mr C.*

#### **Response to my provisional decision**

*ReAssure said that while it accepted my provisional decision, it wanted to resolve the situation in a way that would be more favourable to Mr C. And to lessen the burden going forward. It said it didn't dispute the previous errors.*

*ReAssure felt that backfilling Mr C's premiums would cause potential issues later on. It therefore said it was willing to write off the premiums – that is, cover the cost of the missing premiums to the date of any final decision - as this would eliminate any concerns with getting the policy back to the correct position. It said this would mean that Mr C simply needed to pay the premiums himself from the date of any final decision. ReAssure said this would eliminate the need to set up a payment schedule.*

*ReAssure also said that if Mr C had any tax issues once the premiums had been corrected it would then look to sort those out for him, subject to the provision of evidence.*

*Mr C still wanted ReAssure to complete a future-dated loss assessment once the 15-month catch up period was completed in May 2026. He didn't accept its new offer. He said this was because he had lost all faith in it being able to correct its errors. He also felt its integrity was questionable, given the many previous opportunities it'd had to resolve his complaint.*

*Mr C asked me to instruct ReAssure to send copies of all future correspondence to him to this service so that we could review it and provide our opinion on it. He also wanted me to ensure I gave ReAssure clear timelines that it had to adhere to.*

*I issued my second provisional decision on 16 February 2026. It said:*

*I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and*

*reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.*

*Having done so, I'm satisfied that ReAssure's updated offer has been made in good faith and that it is a better offer than the one I outlined in my first provisional decision. I'll explain why.*

*Based on the evidence I've been presented with, I completely understand why Mr C has lost faith in ReAssure's ability to correct its errors. I can also see why he has questioned its integrity. However, I'm satisfied that ReAssure has accepted its previous errors. And that it is committed to ensuring Mr C is put back into the position he should've been in but for those errors.*

*ReAssure said that the redress I'd outlined in my provisional decision could cause potential issues later on. It has therefore made an improved offer to Mr C which means the issues can be resolved much sooner.*

*ReAssure has offered to cover the cost of the premiums that will need to be paid to ensure that Mr C is put back into the position he would've been in but for its errors. It has also offered to sort out any tax issues Mr C may experience as a direct result of its errors.*

*Therefore, while I acknowledge that Mr C's preference is for ReAssure to complete the future-dated loss assessment I previously outlined, I'm satisfied that ReAssure's alternative offer will more quickly put things right. And that it means Mr C will receive a greater amount of redress. This is because he won't have to cover the cost of any premiums which weren't paid due to ReAssure's errors.*

*I can see that Mr C would like me to instruct ReAssure to send copies of all future correspondence to him to this service so that I can review it. While this isn't a service I can offer, Mr C can bring a further complaint to ReAssure if it doesn't complete the redress as outlined.*

*I also acknowledge that Mr C wants me to give ReAssure clear timelines that it must adhere to. While I don't have the power to tell ReAssure when it must complete its redress calculations, this service does expect it to complete them quickly. Again, if Mr C has any new concerns about how ReAssure organises the redress, he can make a new complaint to it.*

### **Putting things right**

*I intend to uphold the complaint. I intend to require ReAssure to take the following further steps to put things right:*

- *Pay into Mr C's pension the amount required to cover the cost of his remaining missing premiums up to the date of any final decision. Ensure that these are effectively paid in to Mr C's pension at the date they should have been paid to ensure there is no financial loss.*
- *ReAssure must assist Mr C in sorting out any tax issues he faces as a direct result of its errors. It must also cover any costs of resolving those tax issues. Mr C will need to provide it with satisfactory evidence of any such additional costs.*
- *ReAssure must pay Mr C any outstanding balance from the £700 compensation it offered him for the distress and inconvenience caused.*
- *ReAssure must provide Mr C with clear information about the missing premiums it calculates it must pay and how it has ensured the backdating is correct. This is to*

*ensure that the steps it plans to take will put him back into the position he should now be in.*

### **Response to my second provisional decision**

Mr C said he had no further information to provide or comment to make.

ReAssure said it was happy to accept my second 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.

As no new points have been raised, I remain of the view expressed in my second provisional decision.

### **Putting things right**

I uphold the complaint. I require ReAssure to take the following further steps to put things right:

- Pay into Mr C's pension the amount required to cover the cost of his remaining missing premiums up to the date of my final decision. Ensure that these are effectively paid in to Mr C's pension at the date they should have been paid to ensure there is no financial loss.
- ReAssure must assist Mr C in sorting out any tax issues he faces as a direct result of its errors. It must also cover any costs of resolving those tax issues. Mr C will need to provide it with satisfactory evidence of any such additional costs.
- ReAssure must pay Mr C any outstanding balance from the £700 compensation it offered him for the distress and inconvenience caused.
- ReAssure must provide Mr C with clear information about the missing premiums it calculates it must pay and how it has ensured the backdating is correct. This is to ensure that the steps it plans to take will put him back into the position he should now be in.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons above, I uphold the complaint. ReAssure Limited must take the steps detailed in "Putting things right" above.

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

Jo Occleshaw  
**Ombudsman**