

## **The complaint**

Mr V complains that Bank of Scotland plc trading as Halifax failed to tell him about Co-Servicing on his accounts and failed to answer his queries or to deal adequately with his complaint.

## **What happened**

In December 2025, whilst abroad, Mr V noticed that his app was now showing all of his savings and current accounts. He was worried about access to and security for his accounts and went onto the online chat. He initially said that he wanted to remove certain accounts from open banking. It was explained to him that this was Co-Servicing (not open banking), where all his accounts with the Lloyds group were shown on his app, and he wouldn't be able to remove them. It did explain that he could choose which accounts to hide.

Mr V didn't accept that and insisted that he wanted to remove the Halifax account. The chat agent eventually explained that this could not be done but that he could raise a complaint. A complaint was raised, Mr V says without his consent. In its final response Halifax explained the difference between open banking and Co-Servicing and paid him £75 compensation for some poor service provided to him over the online chat.

On referral to the Financial Ombudsman Service, our Investigator said that Halifax had dealt with the complaint reasonably and would not be asking it to do anything further.

Mr V disagreed and the matter has been passed to me for an Ombudsman's consideration

## **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 V has raised a number of points and although I may not mention every point raised, I've considered everything he has said. Though my decision focuses on the issues at the heart of the complaint. I don't intend any discourtesy by this. It just reflects the informal nature of our Service.

Where the evidence is incomplete or contradictory, as some of it is here, I have to make my decision based on what I think is most likely to have happened. But it may be that I can't make a finding and if this is the case I shall say so. I have a duty to be impartial so I have to assess both parties' evidence fairly.

Firstly I think there was some confusion as Mr V said his query was concerning open banking, which is the system for sharing customer data with approved third parties. Customers can opt out of this. His actual complaint concerns Co-Servicing whereby all of the customer's accounts with, in this case, the Lloyds Banking Group, appear together on the app.

I've reviewed the online chat. Mr V initially said on 13 December his query concerned open banking but it was soon established that he meant Co-Servicing and a full explanation was given to him. Mr V said he didn't want to hide his Halifax but wanted to remove it. He was asked why he wanted to do this but the chat then timed out.

The next day Mr V renewed his request, but again the chat timed out and he didn't contact Halifax again until 17 April. The chat continued for an hour during which time Mr V repeatedly asked to separate his accounts and he was also asked the same question several times as to why he wanted to do this. Eventually he was told that he could hide any chosen account(s) but couldn't remove them.

I don't think Mr V had to wait three days for an answer, because he was initially told about Co-Servicing and advised how to hide the accounts. Although he wasn't satisfied with this answer, the chat the following day timed out and then there was no further contact until three days later. I bear in mind that the online chat isn't an instant messaging service and customers may have to wait to be notified when a live agent is available. Also following periods of inactivity on the customer's part, the chat will time out. I think, for the hour he spent trying to get his request dealt with, the compensation of £75 paid adequately reflects his frustration at what happened.

In respect of the Co-Servicing itself, Halifax has sent to us the text of a letter sent to all its customers in October 2025 explaining about this. As several million of these letters were sent out, I wouldn't expect it to produce a copy of the actual letter sent to Mr V. I appreciate that Mr V didn't see the information on his app until January 2026. And that he has opted out of paper communications, but even with this the bank will still send out some information by post. I don't know what happened here but, in these circumstances, I can't make a finding against Halifax that the letter in question was either sent or not sent.

I appreciate that Mr V felt anxious on seeing his accounts all appear together, but I think that an adequate explanation was given to him of what Co-Servicing is.

In respect of his complaint, Mr V did say he would be complaining, and although he didn't set out what it was, the agent did advise him that they would be escalating it to the complaints managers. And gave him a complaint reference number. He did say the next day that he wanted to raise the complaint himself. Though I note that he opted to make a complaint to this Service before he received the final response from Halifax.

I think from reviewing Mr V's complaint form that Halifax dealt with his main issues of complaint, so I won't make any further finding concerning its complaint handling.

Overall, although I note Mr V's dissatisfaction with the Co-Servicing, this is something which has been applied to all customer accounts in the Lloyds Banking Group. And I think that Halifax adequately dealt with his queries about it. I'm satisfied that it paid an appropriate amount of compensation for some poor service provided to Mr V during the online chat.

### **My final decision**

For the reasons set out above I don't uphold the complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr V to accept or reject my decision before 6 May 2026.

Ray Lawley  
**Ombudsman**

