

The complaint

Mrs S complains that PROPEL HOLDINGS (UK) LIMITED trading as Quidmarket (Quidmarket) lent to her when she could not afford it.

What happened

Here is a table showing brief details of the lending Quidmarket approved for Mrs S.

Loan	Approved	Amount	Terms (rounded)	Repaid
1	20 December 2022	£600	£265 a month for 3 months	28 February 2023 – on time
2	1 March 2023	£850	£280 a month for 6 months	2 October 2023 (late)
Almost two year gap in the lending				
3	5 September 2025	£1,500	£479 a month for 6 months	1 December 2025

The total charge for credit was £1,373 (rounded) for Loan 3 which Quidmarket has explained was reduced: *'Breathing Space respite reduced your interest payable by £1,000.92 on loan three, which you repaid in full earlier than scheduled.'* That Breathing Space dates were 8 October 2025 until 7 December 2025.

After Mrs S had received the final response letter for her complaint from Quidmarket in January 2026, and then had referred it to us, one of our investigators reviewed it all and did not think that Quidmarket had done anything wrong. Mrs S disagreed and essentially her main submission is:

I was already under financial pressure and that further, more thorough checks were required. Simply relying on the information I declared was not sufficient in these circumstances.

The unresolved complaint was passed to me to decide.

I am conscious that Mrs S will recognise that I have been presented with two of her complaints and I have reviewed them at the same time. The loans taken with this lender and the other lender on the other complaint intermingle to an extent. This Loan 3 approved by Quidmarket pre-dates the other lender's Loan 3 (issued 30 September 2025).

I raise this at the beginning as Mrs S will be receiving these two decisions from me at the same time.

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.

Quidmarket needed to make sure that it didn't lend irresponsibly. In practice, what this means is that it needed to carry out proportionate checks to be able to understand whether any lending was sustainable for Mrs S before providing it.

Our website sets out what we typically think about when deciding whether a lender's checks were proportionate. And I've used this approach to help me decide her complaint.

Generally, we think it's reasonable for a lender's checks to be less thorough – in terms of how much information it gathers and what it does to verify that information – in the early stages of a lending relationship. But we might think it needed to do more if, for example, a borrower's income was low, the amount lent was high, or the information the lender had – such as a significantly impaired credit history – suggesting the lender needed to know more about a prospective borrower's ability to repay.

The lending gap

Mrs S has disagreed with the explanation she has received about our approach to large gaps in lending. We consider that a gap of this sort of length would lead to a lender acting reasonably to approach the new application for a loan as if that person was a new customer: meaning that it was acting reasonably to rely on the information Mrs S gave to Quidmarket when approaching it for credit.

Often in current lending circumstances, lenders such as Quidmarket do more checks in any event no matter at what stage the loan is in a lending relationship. Quidmarket is one of those lenders.

Income

For each loan, Quidmarket has sent to us clear Income and Expenditure (I&E) calculations. One column shows what Mrs S declared to it and the other shows what it did to check those figures, whether it altered them, and if so, usually adds a note as to why.

For Loans 1 and 2 Mrs S had declared £2,600 a month after tax and having carried out its checks, it did not alter those figures. Mrs S has said in another complaint I have reviewed that her base salary was about this – and Mrs S has not challenged this figure for income at Loans 1 and 2 and so I say no more about income.

For Loan 3, Mrs S had declared an income of £3,600 a month after tax and Quidmarket has not altered that figure after carrying out its checks. And I have used the financial evidence to check for myself what it was that Mrs S was bringing in as a net salary each month around the time of Loan 3 and the figure was about right. Her work email provided to Quidmarket helps me to identify her employer and so the credits in from that employer's reference show me she was receiving about that. Plus, she received child benefit each week.

Loan 1

Mrs S applied for £600 which was a relatively modest sum and she was a new customer. I have given my view in relation to the declared income for Loan 1 earlier in this decision.

Mrs S said she was a homeowner (sole adult in the home), was spending £250 a month on utility bills, £350 a month on food and travel and £80 a month received as benefits which likely was the child benefit payments. Mrs S had put £0 for rent/mortgage but Quidmarket used its own data and research to increase that to £400 a month which I consider was fair and reasonable. It would have identified the usual rent for the address she had given to them. It had made a note '*no mortgage on CRA – taken as rent*'. 'CRA' refers to Credit Reference Agency.

Again, factoring in the explanation Mrs S has given to us which is that the mortgage was in her ex-husband's name and she paid money towards it to keep the family home for the child, then it's understandable that Quidmarket discovered no mortgage in her name on the credit check it carried out. And so, it used the £400 a month as a rent figure. I consider that fair.

For credit commitments, Mrs S declared £600 a month and Quidmarket increased that to £832 which, having reviewed the search results for Mrs S' credit history then that seemed about right. All this left Mrs S with a disposable income of £818 a month and so the loan looked affordable.

Loan 2

Mrs S was applying for a little more - £850. The figures Mrs S provided to Quidmarket were much the same. The checks and alterations Quidmarket did were much the same as for Loan 1 including the rent figure.

For Mrs S' credit commitment costs, she had declared £650, which had been increased by Quidmarket to £1,022. The resulting disposable income was £578 and so Loan 2 looked affordable.

Credit commitment research for Loans 1 and 2

I've reviewed these searches and there's no record of any adverse data apart from one entry on a utility bill several months before which was corrected quickly and for a small sum. I'd not consider this to have been a concern.

There were no markers of arrears, poor repayment, insolvency, judgement debts or defaulted accounts. Mrs S had a number of accounts but multiple and successfully managed credit accounts do not on their own indicate financial difficulties. And so, there was no record of anything to indicate a financial concern and the I&E revealing satisfactory amounts of disposable income leads me to conclude that Quidmarket carried out proportionate checks and did not lend irresponsibly. I do not uphold the complaint about Loans 1 and 2.

Loan 3

Almost two years later Mrs S applied to Quidmarket for Loan 3. This was for £1,500 and would have been treated as a first loan in this second lending chain.

I have reviewed the I&E document supplied to us by Quidmarket. Mrs S declared £3,600 for income after tax and Quidmarket kept it at that figure. Earlier in this decision, I have provided my view on the income figures supplied by Mrs S.

Quidmarket had been informed that Mrs S was a homeowner and the only adult in the household. She spent £500 a month on food and travel and £300 a month on utilities. Quidmarket did not alter these figures. Mrs S had put £0 for rent or mortgage and this time Quidmarket had not altered the figure.

In relation to the credit commitments and the monthly costs to her, Mrs S had said she spent £700 a month which Quidmarket, following its own research, increased to £1,252. So, these figures added up to £2,052.

If Quidmarket had asked her about her housing costs Mrs S would have likely explained that she was paying towards a mortgage in another person's name. I've used the financial information Mrs S provided to us and tried to find that financial contribution. I can find a regular payment to a person with her surname and who was on the electoral roll at the property in the past of £457. These seemed regular – 1 August 2025 and 1 September 2025. So even if Quidmarket had added in the £457 a month – with the £2,052 – then that would have been £2,509. And still Mrs S would have had over £1,000 left each month.

Quidmarket had noted that she had two defaulted accounts (two credit cards) within two years plus an account had been marked delinquent within the previous 12 months.

Usually when a credit card is defaulted the provider marks the credit limit as £0. As a balance remains then it reads as if Mrs S was over her credit limit for her credit cards. But this would not have related to current overspending – but to the defaulted accounts. I say this to explain one of the points she has raised with us.

The two defaulted accounts related to February 2024, were with debt collection agencies and the balances were reducing with regular repayments from Mrs S. These facts would have suggested good post-default management and were around 18 months before Mrs S was approaching Quidmarket for Loan 3. And so overall I'd consider it reasonable of Quidmarket not to be too concerned about them – and treat them as historic debts under management.

The account marked as being delinquent was current. Mrs S was in an arrangement to repay a bank loan taken in 2018 and had been for a couple of years. Originally it had been costing Mrs S £395 a month and the regular repayments in the arrangement she had with the lender were around £378 a month and the balance was reducing.

So, although having such adverse data on her record would not have been ideal, the first point is that Quidmarket lends in a market where adverse data is not unusual (two of which were historic defaults). And the second point is that these three accounts were being managed by Mrs S. So, overall, I'd not necessarily consider that these on their own would have led Quidmarket to think that it ought to have refused the loan application.

Even if Quidmarket had asked about and been informed of Mrs S' housing costs, still she would have had over £1,000 left with which to repay Loan 3. I recognise that £479 a month for six months were high repayments but that is the nature of this type of loan offered by Quidmarket. Mrs S would have been aware of these repayment levels when signing up to it.

Overall, I consider that Quidmarket carried out proportionate checks. And although Mrs S says that Quidmarket ought to have known more than it did, or ought to have found out more than Mrs S had told it, this is not what the regulatory framework expects of a lender.

I've also considered whether Quidmarket acted unfairly or unreasonably in any other way and whether the relationship might have been unfair under Section 140A of the Consumer Credit Act 1974. However, for the reasons I've already given, I don't think it lent irresponsibly to Mrs S or otherwise treated her unfairly in relation to this matter. I haven't seen anything to suggest that Section 140A would, given the facts of this complaint, lead to a different outcome here.

I do not uphold the complaint.

My final decision

My final decision is that I do not uphold the complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs S to accept or reject my decision before 21 May 2026.

Rachael Williams
Ombudsman