

complaint

Mrs P complains damage was caused to her meter box, by British Gas Service Limited (British Gas).

background

Mrs P's insurance policy includes cover for annual services to her boiler. On 9 February 2017 a British Gas engineer attended her property and completed an annual service on the boiler.

Mrs P noticed damage to the locking mechanism of her meter box on 7 March 2017. She complained to British Gas on in March 2017, unfortunately British Gas closed this complaint incorrectly. The complaint was raised again by Mrs P in May 2017. Mrs P explained that she believed the engineer who carried out the annual service damaged the meter box.

British Gas investigated the matter and said the mechanism was most likely worn due to wear and tear, and that it would not cover the cost to repair or replace it.

Mrs P was unhappy with British Gas' response and brought her complaint to this service for consideration. Our adjudicator didn't uphold the complaint. They considered it unlikely the damage would have been caused by the engineer, as they wouldn't use the meter box during a boiler service. Nor was there was sufficient evidence to satisfy them that any damage was caused by the engineer.

Mrs P disagreed and said British Gas was required to check the gas pressure during an annual service, so would have used the meter. The case has therefore been referred to me.

my findings

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

During an annual service of the boiler, British Gas would check to see if the boiler was operating safely and efficiently. When doing this a number of checks would be carried out, including the gas pressure. The gas pressure of the boiler differs from the gas reading taken from a meter box. One indicates the pressure at the boiler, the other is gas usage. It is not necessary for a service to check the meter, although I accept that an engineer might check the pressure at both the boiler and the meter on occasions.

British Gas has said it would not have a need to check the gas meter box during a boiler annual service. Taking into account, the gas meter box is located outside of the property and is separate to the boiler; I cannot say with any certainty that the engineer would have attended to the gas meter during the annual service. Nor is there any other proof that the engineer accessed the box or, if they did, damaged it.

I don't think it would be fair to ask British Gas to cover the cost of the damage to the meter box, as I cannot reasonably conclude that it was responsible for the damage.

my final decision

I make no award against British Gas Service Limited.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs P to accept or reject my decision before 3 April 2018.

Christopher Tilson
ombudsman