

## **complaint**

Mr E complains about the service he received from British Gas Services Limited following a claim under his home emergency policy.

## **background**

Mr E contacted British Gas late morning at the end of March 2013. He advised that his radiators were cold and there was a problem with his boiler. Mr E indicated that his wife was ill in hospital and as a result, he would be away from the property in the afternoons. An engineer was unable to attend whilst Mr E was still at the property that day.

A further appointment was arranged for the following day, but then rescheduled for the day after. An engineer attended in the afternoon but Mr E was again away from the property. As a result, another appointment was made for the next day and a repair was successfully completed.

British Gas offered £50 compensation for the upset and inconvenience caused to Mr E because of the missed appointments. Mr E was unhappy with this offer. He said he had advised British Gas on numerous occasions that he would away from the property each afternoon visiting his wife in hospital. Mr E also explained that he and his wife were both in their 70s and both were disabled.

Mr E brought his complaint to this service, and British Gas subsequently increased its offer of compensation to £125. The complaint was considered by one of our adjudicators who was of the opinion that £125 was fair and reasonable under the circumstances.

Mr E disagreed with our adjudicator and so the complaint has been passed to me to decide.

## **my findings**

I have considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

It is not in dispute that Mr E suffered avoidable upset and inconvenience due to British Gas failing to attend at a suitable time, particularly when Mr E had made his availability clear. I am satisfied that compensation is warranted; although I would note that it is not our role to punish a business, but rather to consider the impact of the business' actions on Mr E, given his personal circumstances.

Mr E was without hot water and heating for a number of days during March, his wife was in hospital and due for possible discharge at any time. Despite British Gas having been advised that Mr E would not be at home at certain times, its engineer attended when he was out at the hospital. Whilst I acknowledge the concern this will have caused Mr E, I am satisfied that £125 is fair and reasonable compensation under the circumstances.

**my final decision**

For the reasons above, it is my final decision that I endorse the offer of £125 compensation by British Gas Services Limited.

I make no further award.

Helen Moya  
**ombudsman**