

## **complaint**

Ms C complains that British Gas Services Limited (BG) damaged her ceiling when carrying out repairs under her Home Care cover.

## **background**

Ms C called BG to replace a socket. She said after two visits the job wasn't done properly and she's been left with two holes in her ceiling and it needed re-plastering and painting. Ms C said she told BG she didn't want the same electrician, but BG sent the same person.

Ms C said she complained to BG in February but despite reminders she is still to receive a response. She said she would like compensation for the delays and inconvenience she's been caused, including having to take time off work for appointments.

BG said Ms C's pull cord was replaced during the first visit using existing ceiling holes, with no cosmetic impact although the ceiling was old and the plaster was weakening. BG said the plaster deteriorated and a second visit was necessary. It sent in a recording of Ms C's call and she hadn't said she didn't want the same electrician.

BG's terms state 'we will fill in holes to leave a level surface - but we won't replace or restore the original surface or coverings'. BG said Ms C declined to have the holes in her ceiling filled. BG offered £50 compensation for the second appointment, which Ms C declined.

The investigator said Ms C's photos showed poor workmanship. He said the electrician offered to fill the ceiling holes but Ms C declined. He said Ms C was inconvenienced and BG had communicated poorly - she didn't receive call backs or a response to her complaint. The investigator recommended BG pay her £200 compensation for the trouble and upset caused.

BG disagreed saying its offer was fair, and £200 seemed excessive and not in line with our service's previous decisions. BG requested an ombudsman review the complaint.

## **my findings**

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

I've looked carefully at BG's handling and decisions on Ms C's claim to see if it has treated her fairly. Ms C's photos and video show her ceiling after the first and second visits from the electrician. I can see the electrician's point about the age of the plaster, but the condition of the ceiling meant it was understandable that Ms C needed more work to be carried out.

It's clear to me that Ms C was inconvenienced by the condition her ceiling was left in over Christmas, and having to arrange and be present for a second visit in the New Year. I don't think she asked BG for a different electrician and so BG did nothing wrong in this regard. But BG hasn't carried out the work to an acceptable standard and hasn't followed its complaint process, and this caused Ms C more frustration.

I think the impact of the poor service from BG caused Ms C inconvenience and frustration and I think that £200 compensation is a fair and reasonable reflection of this. This is in line with our service's approach to awards in similar circumstances.

**my final decision**

For the reasons I have given it is my final decision is that the complaint is upheld. I require British Gas Services Limited to pay Ms C £200 compensation for the impact its poor service had upon her.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms C to accept or reject my decision before 24 August 2018.

Andrew Fraser  
**ombudsman**