

complaint

Mr B complains that Nationwide Building Society hasn't been able to find two old accounts. He's also unhappy with the time Nationwide has taken to deal with this. He'd like the balance plus interest on the accounts paid to him.

our initial conclusions

Our adjudicator didn't uphold the complaint. He felt Nationwide had tried to find the accounts. And its offer of £150 for the delay in doing so was fair. Mr B doesn't agree. He thinks something went wrong when the society, where he had his accounts, merged with the Nationwide.

my final decision

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

Mr B says some years ago he opened two accounts with a building society that is now part of Nationwide. He's frustrated that Nationwide can't find these accounts. Mr B hasn't got any paperwork for the accounts. Mr B has told us one of the accounts was a five year fixed interest account which matured in 2003. It seems likely to me that if this were the case he would've done something at that time. Unfortunately twelve years have now passed. And Nationwide isn't expected to keep records going back that far. I've seen copies of the relevant dormant account registers which don't show any accounts in Mr B's name. And Nationwide has given us a screen print from the Society that merged with it showing two accounts held by Mr B. This shows these were opened in 1998 but in 2003 had a zero balance. I'm satisfied that Nationwide has tried to find these accounts. So I don't think Nationwide is at fault here.

I can understand Mr B's frustration that it took Nationwide over a year to make a proper search for his accounts. Nationwide has accepted that its customer service was poor. So it has offered Mr B £150 compensation. I think this is reasonable compensation for the time it has taken to look into this matter.

My final decision is that Nationwide has made a fair offer.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mr B either to accept or reject my decision before 30 December **2015**.

Bridget Makins

ombudsman at the Financial Ombudsman Service

The ombudsman may complete this section where appropriate – adding comments or further explanations of particular relevance to the case.

ombudsman notes

what is a final decision?

- A final decision by an ombudsman is our last word on a complaint. We send the final decision at the same time to both sides – the consumer and the financial business.
- Our complaints process involves various stages. It gives both parties to the complaint the opportunity to tell us their side of the story, provide further information, and disagree with our earlier findings – before the ombudsman reviews the case and makes a final decision.
- A final decision is the end of our complaints process. This means the ombudsman will not be able to deal with any further correspondence about the merits of the complaint.

what happens next?

- A final decision only becomes legally binding on the financial business if the consumer accepts it. To do this, the consumer should sign and date the acceptance card we send with the final decision – and return it to us before the date set out in the decision.
- If the consumer accepts a final decision before the date set out in the decision we will tell the financial business – it will then have to comply promptly with any instructions set out by the ombudsman in the decision.
- If the consumer does not accept a final decision before the date set out in the decision, neither side will be legally bound by it.