

Sending - Telecoms Test Assessment

1. Communication type

Response to formal customer complaint via external dispute resolution service

2. Intended recipient

Customer and external dispute resolution service

3. What are you trying to make happen?

Resolve the complaint as quickly as possible, minimise reputational damage

4. Previous message or context

My complaint is as follows.

1. Failure to cancel the old number after giving misleading advice

On 21 November 2025, after my phone was stolen while I was abroad, I contacted the provider and asked for my old mobile number to be cancelled, the SIM blocked, and a replacement SIM sent to me. Instead, the provider advised me that it would be better to take a new number because I would receive a better deal. I accepted that advice on the clear understanding that the old number would be cancelled. The provider supplied the new number, but did not cancel the old number and continued to charge me for it.

I relied on what the provider told me. I asked for a specific resolution, the provider advised me to take a different route, and then failed to complete the most important part of that resolution. The result was that I was left paying for a number I had asked the provider to cancel, without being made aware that the provider had failed to do so. In my view, that was misleading and unfair. It caused avoidable financial loss and added pressure during a period when I was already unwell.

Amount sought: £250

2. Failure to update account security and contact details during post-surgery recovery

On 8 December 2025, one week after undergoing surgery, I contacted the provider because my partner's phone had been stolen. I needed the provider to cancel the SIM and activate an eSIM so that we could remain contactable while I was recovering at home.

I was unable to pass security because of the provider's earlier failure. The provider was trying to send a verification text message to the old number I had already asked it to cancel. That number was no longer available to me and should not still have been linked to account verification.

When I could not receive the verification text, I was then asked for information from a TV box. I could not provide that because I was not a TV customer and did not have one. This meant the provider's own account records and security process blocked me from getting support at the point I needed it.

The provider's failure to remove the old number from the account carried forward into another emergency and prevented me from getting straightforward help with my partner's stolen phone.

Amount sought: £175

3. Wrongful restriction of mobile service and discovery of continued billing

On 11 April 2026, the provider restricted my mobile service following a payment issue, despite the payment having been made and then reverted. I had evidence of the reverted payment. The restriction happened while I was returning home from therapy from an unfamiliar location.

Because my phone had been restricted, I lost access to normal phone services, including navigation. A journey that should have taken around 25 minutes took just under two hours. I was also unable to contact my teenage son for several hours because his phone had been disconnected as part of the same restriction.



During the same contact, I discovered that the provider had continued charging me for the old number I had asked it to cancel on 21 November 2025. The provider had not identified or corrected that failure itself. Had I not noticed the charge and raised it during the 11 April call, I would have continued being charged for a number I had already asked the provider to cancel months earlier.

Amount sought: £225

4. Repeated complaint-handling failures, unnecessary contact and loss of confidence

After discovering on 11 April 2026 that the provider had continued charging me for the old number, I raised a formal complaint during that call. I ask the external dispute resolution service to request and review the provider's call recording from 11 April 2026, as it should confirm that the complaint was raised, that the continued billing issue was discussed, and that I was assured the matter would be looked into. I was also told that someone would contact me by phone within three to five days to discuss the complaint.

During that same call, while I was raising a complaint about being wrongly charged, having my service restricted and being unable to rely on the provider's account management, I was also offered further services. I was not being properly listened to as a complainant while trying to resolve failures caused by the provider.

I later received an email dated 14 April 2026 stating that the complaint had been closed. I was not aware that the complaint had been closed until I called the provider again on 1 June 2026 to ask for an update. During that call, I was told that the complaint had been incorrectly closed in April. I was again told that the complaint would be investigated and that I would receive a phone call by Friday. I did not receive that phone call. Instead, I received another email saying the complaint had been closed.

This caused further unnecessary time, effort and loss of confidence. Across the relevant calls, I spent around four to five hours on the phone with the provider, in addition to dealing with multiple emails and having to repeatedly explain the same linked failures. The complaint handling did not reduce the impact of the original failures. It prolonged them.

Amount sought: £150

Relevant evidence and complaint-handling context available to the provider:

- 21 November 2025: Our internal records show that the customer contacted us about changing the mobile number. Our adviser arranged a new eSIM/new number and a call-back to cancel the old number after seven days.
- 25 November 2025: Our internal records show further contact about unexpected device/return messages and temporary blocklisting of services. The block was later removed following enhanced security checks.
- 8 December 2025: Our records state that the old number should already have been cancelled and that the contact information on the account had not been updated.
- 8 December 2025: The customer made five customer-service calls to us that morning, totalling just over 46 minutes.
- Our account/security records show that the old number remained linked to enhanced security despite the earlier cancellation request.
- A manual payment of £42.78 was made on 28 March 2026 and later reverted. We had access to the payment and account history.
- By 11 April 2026, our account records showed that the old mobile number was still being billed. We later offered to refund £52.07 in charges incurred since November 2025.
- 14 April 2026: We emailed the customer stating that the complaint had been closed and that no further action would be taken if we did not hear from the customer within 28 days.
- 1 June 2026: The customer contacted us again because the complaint had not been resolved. The matter was escalated internally for review.
- Our internal records show that the escalation was rejected as invalid and the case was closed, with the note that the matter should be handled through our normal business process.



- A further closure email was then sent to the customer.
- Our later evidence records show that the old number had not been cancelled as expected, contact details had not been updated, and a further £43.40 credit was applied for billing after cancellation.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINT RESPONSES

Date sent: 14 April 2026

Hello [Name Redacted], Thanks for contacting us recently. Just to let you know we've closed your complaint [Complaint Number Redacted]. Please keep this for your records and if you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact us. If you require further information on Telecoms complaint handling procedures this can be found on Telecom.com. Telecom is a member of the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CISAS) who can be contacted by post: CISAS, 100 St Paul's Churchyard, London, EC4M 8BU. By phone: 02075 203 827 or by email: cisas@cedr.com. If we don't hear from you within 28 days of this email, we'll assume everything is resolved and take no further action.

Thanks, Your Telecoms Team

Date sent: 4 June 2026

Hello [Name Redacted], Thanks for contacting us recently. Just to let you know we've closed your complaint [Complaint Number Redacted]. Please keep this for your records and if you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact us. If you require further information on Telecom complaint handling procedures this can be found on Telecom.com. Telecom is a member of the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CISAS) who can be contacted by post: CISAS, 100 St Paul's Churchyard, London, EC4M 8BU. By phone: 02075 203 827 or by email: cisas@cedr.com. If we don't hear from you within 28 days of this email, we'll assume everything is resolved and take no further action.

Thanks, Your Telecoms Team.

5. Communication to assess

The customer initially contacted the provider on 21 November 2025 to request a change of mobile number due to nuisance calls. The call recording confirms there was no mention of a stolen device abroad, and the adviser arranged for a new eSIM and advised the original number would be cancelled after seven days. Subsequent contacts on 25 November resulted in incorrect advice regarding account messages and the temporary blocklisting of the customer's services, although this was later removed following enhanced security checks.

On 8 December 2025, the customer reported that their partner's device had been stolen and advised that the original number had not been cancelled as expected and their contact details had not been updated, both of which were subsequently addressed.

The next contact was on 11 April 2026 when the customer disputed a service restriction for non-payment; however, records show the previous Direct Debit had been cancelled in January 2026 and no direct payments had been received, with account charges being covered by a previous settlement credit applied in January. During this contact, the customer again claimed they had reported a stolen device abroad in November 2025.

Without a full investigation, the adviser accepted the customer's claims and offered a refund and passed the customer to retentions to apply offers on the SIM cards. Following further escalation to the provider's Customer Priority Team, additional credits of £43.40 and £15 goodwill were offered and rejected.

The matter subsequently escalated to an external dispute resolution service, where the customer sought £800 compensation. A review concluded that the agreed credits had been applied, the SIM had eventually been cancelled, and a total compensation offer of £100 was fair and reasonable, with the provider maintaining that the original complaint had been settled and closed in line with the customer's agreement.

