

Dispute Resolution Ombudsman has jurisdiction to investigate unresolved disputes between consumers and businesses that are registered with a TrustMark Scheme Provider.

## What are the benefits of our service?

- We are independent from both parties and will investigate your complaint fairly
- It's free for consumers to use
- We'll provide clear outcomes, that the Registered Business is legally bound to comply with
- It's quick and simple, meaning you avoid a potential lengthy and costly court process

## When can we help?

It is important that you confirm you have exhausted their internal complaint's process by giving the Registered Business and the Scheme Provider an opportunity to fully investigate and respond to your complaint.

The Ombudsman will accept your complaint if;

- You have been provided with a final response from the Registered Business or Scheme Provider, and/or;
- It has been 12 weeks since your first complaint to the Registered Business, it has been escalated to the Scheme Provider and you are still not satisfied with the response you have had to date (you may be asked to evidence this);
- Your complaint is within 12 months of making your initial complaint to the Registered Business;
- You have been through a Scheme Provider's ADR Scheme (if applicable) and a formal decision has not been accepted by you.

If you bring your complaint to us and you have not been through a Scheme Provider, we will refer you back to TrustMark who will signpost you to the relevant Scheme Provider. The Scheme Provider then has 30 days to attempt to resolve the dispute with you. If you remain dissatisfied, you can then bring your claim back to the Ombudsman.

## What type of complaints can we help with?

The Ombudsman can look into a complaint about:

- The work you have had carried out by a Registered Business
- An installation of goods or the workmanship
- The service you have received

## What complaints can't we help with?

The Ombudsman cannot help if:

- Your complaint is with a business that is not currently registered with TrustMark
- Your complaint is against a business/tradesperson who has entered administration, liquidation or who has ceased trading
- Your complaint is not made as a private individual
- Your complaint is being, or has been, dealt with by a Court or another tribunal/Ombudsman scheme, or have previously accepted a resolution via a Scheme Provider's ADR service in full and final settlement or previously entered a binding ADR process, such as arbitration
- You refer your complaint to the Ombudsman more than 12 months after you receive the businesses final response letter

## What is the process?

To investigate your dispute, we will:

- Ask you to complete an application form providing your version of events (you may be required to provide evidence to support your case)
- We will ask the Registered Business to respond (again, asking them to provide their evidence)
- An Ombudsman will assess the documents, and begin a process of conciliation between you and the Registered Business
- Where an agreement cannot be reached or where the Ombudsman has been unable to make a decision based upon the evidence provided, a case may proceed to adjudication

## How will we make a decision and what are the possible outcomes?

Each case is decided upon the evidence available, considering the relevant legal position and what appears to be fair and reasonable in the circumstances.

Whilst the Registered Business is bound by our decision, you as the consumer are not and remain free to pursue your dispute elsewhere should you disagree with the outcome.

As an Ombudsman we have more flexibility than the courts to identify remedies to resolve a dispute.

These remedies include:

- Remedial works
- We can also ask the business to provide an explanation, apology or a gesture of goodwill where appropriate

## How to raise your complaint

The fastest way to raise your complaint is via the secure online portal on our website, [www.disputeresolutionombudsman.org](http://www.disputeresolutionombudsman.org).

Should you prefer you can download a copy of our application form or contact our office who will happily post a paper form to you.

## About us

We are independent, not for profit organisation.

We provide alternative dispute resolution (ADR) helping businesses and their customers resolve disputes without the need of the courts.

Established in 1992 we are approved by The Chartered Trading Standards Institute. Our work is also overseen by an independent Standards Board.

## Contact us

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**Dispute Resolution**  
Ombudsman

# Quick Start Guide

Inspiring consumer confidence  
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## TrustMark

[www.disputeresolutionombudsman.org](http://www.disputeresolutionombudsman.org)

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