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## Six rules to apply in motoring disputes – recommended by The Motor Ombudsman

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The Motor Ombudsman highlights six golden rules for consumers when looking to resolve motoring disputes...

The Motor Ombudsman highlights six golden rules for consumers to take into account when looking to conclude a motoring-related complaint quickly and effectively.

- A direct and open dialogue with a business, a calm approach, having all the key facts to hand, and making it clear as to what you are looking for as an outcome to your dispute, are some of the key considerations.
- The Motor Ombudsman offers a full set of tips and FAQs on its website ([TheMotorOmbudsman.org](http://TheMotorOmbudsman.org)) to assist motorists before and during the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process.



London, 14 September 2020... On the day that the government's new 'rule of six' comes into force in response to COVID-19, The Motor Ombudsman is highlighting its own six golden rules for consumers when looking to resolve a motoring-related dispute with a business swiftly and effectively. A complaint may arise following a vehicle purchase, a repair, a service or after taking out a warranty agreement, and the Ombudsman dedicated to the automotive sector is therefore reinforcing some of the key steps that need to be taken before and during the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process.

#### [1. Always try to resolve the dispute directly with the business in the first instance](#)

In the event that something has gone wrong, it is important to try to conclude your issue directly with the business in the first instance, and to give them the opportunity to put things right. This will provide the best prospects of resolving your concerns before turning to an ADR body, such as The Motor Ombudsman.

#### [2. Maintain an open and continued dialogue](#)

Effective communication and keeping an open dialogue with a business that is the subject of the complaint is vital. With cars being complex mechanical machines, it is essential to make the business aware of the problem as soon as it occurs. This will often provide the quickest route for resolving your issues and finding the best route forward.

#### [3. Work together with the business to find a solution](#)

Emotions can run high, and tempers may flare in stressful and frustrating situations, especially when it's concerning a high-value item. However, it's always important to try and work with the business, so that a swift and amicable resolution can be found.

#### [4. The Motor Ombudsman can step in to help if the business is accredited](#)

If a state of deadlock has been reached, the business must issue a final response to you in writing within an eight-week period from when you first raised your complaint, and refer you to an ADR provider to try to resolve the dispute. Therefore, a garage, car dealership, warranty provider or vehicle manufacturer is obliged to signpost you to The Motor Ombudsman if they are accredited to one or more of its Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Motor Industry Codes of Practice. The Motor Ombudsman will then review your case to see if a settlement can be achieved, or if a formal decision needs to be made on the case.

#### [5. Have all supporting documentation to hand](#)

In the event that a case does need to be pursued via The Motor Ombudsman, it's important that all the relevant information in relation to the complaint, such as sales documentation, invoices or any e-mail correspondence that has been exchanged with the business, is provided. Technical evidence in the form of independent reports may also be requested. It's worth asking the business to keep any faulty parts that have been removed from your vehicle, which means that, if further investigations are required to support the cause of the problem, the parts can then be inspected by a third party.

#### [6. Make it clear and realistic in terms of the preferred outcome](#)

Always try to be clear from the outset as to what your ideal resolution would be, whether this is a refund, a repair, or a discount on replacement parts or on a vehicle purchase. This will give the business an idea of what you are looking for as an outcome and, if they do not accept your complaint or they want to settle things with you, this will guide them in making an offer. Try to also ensure that any requested remedy is proportionate, realistic and practical.

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director of The Motor Ombudsman, said: "Some consumers may not always know where to start when looking to resolve a dispute, and it can be daunting to embark on this journey for the first time. We therefore wanted to bring together some of the key considerations for motorists if they have a complaint, and to highlight an effective approach that may be adopted to solve the issue that they are encountering. The starting point, however, is always to contact the business involved and give them a chance to resolve the issue, as this ultimately gives the best chance of finalising the matter with the minimum level of stress."

For more Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) tips for consumers, visit [www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/consumers/adr-consumer-tips](http://www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/consumers/adr-consumer-tips).

For FAQs on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for consumers, visit [www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/consumers/adr-consumer-faqs](http://www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/consumers/adr-consumer-faqs).

### About The Motor Ombudsman

The Motor Ombudsman is the fully impartial Ombudsman dedicated solely to the automotive sector, and self-regulates the UK's motor industry through its comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes of Practice. Thousands of businesses, including vehicle manufacturers, warranty product providers, franchised dealers and independent garages, are accredited to one or more of the Codes, which drive even higher standards of work and service, and give consumers added protection, peace of mind and trust during the vehicle purchase and ownership experience.

For more information on The Motor Ombudsman, visit [www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org](http://www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org)

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