

Financial Services Consumer Panel

- New Financial Services Act 2012 requires the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to set up a Consumer Panel
- The Panel consists of 13 members: consumer advocates, lawyers, economists, civil servants, journalists, management consultants, communications, research and marketing experts, and people who work with social exclusion
- The Panel provides internal advice from external specialists – a safe space to develop policy

Recent Panel work in GI

- General insurance was a Consumer Panel priority for 2012/13
- Key focus was addressing the issues driving poor practices in the insurance market with the aim of promoting better consumer outcomes
- Published a report covering two areas:
 - scope of cover offered by general insurance policies and the wider sales process; and
 - post-sales and customer service

Issues identified in the GI space

- Be explicit where cover which a consumer might reasonably expect to be standard does not form part of a policy;
- show clearly in cash the price increases to auto-renewed policies and remind consumers in good time that they can shop around for a better deal;
- be clearer about the fees charged for basic policy changes and ensure charges reflect actual costs;
- ensure information is presented in a way that encourages consumers to look beyond price when comparing policies;
- be clearer about who owns comparison sites and whether or not they cover the whole of the market; and
- put customers first, reward loyalty and move away from a culture that treats consumers with suspicion.