

Insights

CMA USES NEW CONSUMER POWERS TO FINE FIRMS £6 MILLION

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On October 14 2026, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (the **CMA**) announced that it had concluded three further consumer protection investigations under the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 (**DMCCA**) with the following companies:

- **Appliances Direct:** Appliances Direct was fined £1.2 million for misleading customers and ordered to refund customers approximately £432,000 in relation to pre-ticked checkboxes and time limited offers. Under UK consumer protection law, businesses must get customers' express agreement before charging them for optional extras. Pre-ticked boxes and other forms of automatic opt-in are not allowed. In breach of the rules, Appliances Direct automatically opted customers into one or two additional services when purchasing new appliances. Appliances Direct also used pop-up countdown banners on some product pages which claimed that discounts of £10 to £25 were available for a limited time, but the CMA found that the same discount codes appeared repeatedly over many days. Under the DMCCA, it is an automatically unfair practice to mislead consumers by falsely stating that a product will only be available for a limited time (or only available on particular terms for a limited time) in order to elicit an immediate decision and deprive them of sufficient opportunity or time to make an informed choice.
- **Gold's Gym:** Gold's Gym was fined £45,000 and ordered to refund customers around £9,000 for failing to include the joining fee in the total price shown to consumers for their annual and direct debit memberships or showing the total price in a way that was unclear and unlikely to be seen. The DMCCA provides that businesses must show customers the total price, including any mandatory fees, clearly and from the outset.
- A **homeware supplier** was fined £4.8 million for false time-limited offers; products were advertised on its website through 'Daily Deals' and 24-hour 'Flash Deals', alongside messages such as 'Here Today, Gone Tomorrow' and countdown timers, implying that customers needed to act quickly to get the best deal. However, the CMA's investigation found that many products remained available at the same price or lower after the stated deadline. This was the first case under the DMCCA where the CMA has not ordered consumer redress. This may be due

to the fact that it is more challenging to quantify consumer harm in certain types of cases, such as those solely related to false time-limited offers. The full decision, once published, may give further insights into why consumer redress was not imposed in this case.

All three companies settled with the CMA and received a 40% reduction in their respective fines. The CMA has now settled 7 of the 8 original pricing practice investigations launched in November 2025.

The CMA continues to demonstrate that it will act swiftly and decisively using its new consumer powers when it identifies consumer harm. These powers include the power to issue turnover-based fines of up to 10% of global turnover and the power to impose additional remedies such as consumer redress.

These cases are a reminder of how crucial it is for businesses to review compliance practices and, in particular, to ensure that the online customer journey complies with all aspects of consumer protection law.

Read our previous article discussing the [new UK consumer protection regime](#).

BCLP's consumer team advises on all aspects of consumer protection law, including responding to CMA enforcement activity. Please contact our consumer team (details below) or your usual BCLP contact if you would like to discuss any aspect of this article or your business' compliance with consumer protection law more generally.

Related capabilities

- Consumer Fraud

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