

Question Set A

For victims of alleged pension and investment scams

Please note all of these points before answering:

- If you have any questions please contact Andy Agathangelou, Chair of the APPG's Secretariat, at [Email](#)
- Only reply to this question set if it applies to you.
- This Call for Evidence is being handled by the APPG's [Secretariat](#) and support staff, who will collate the evidence and provide it to [the APPG's members](#).
- Respondents' information will only be shared as necessary to enable the successful completion of the exercise and it will not be shared beyond the scope of this Call for Evidence.
- Please note that we ask respondents to only give evidence that they are free to provide. It is entirely the responsibility of the respondent to ensure they take into account any agreement(s) they may have entered into.
- Respondents may choose to skip answering any of the questions if they wish.
- It is for each respondent to decide whether their name and/or their responses are put into the public domain.

The process to follow

- Select the question set that relates to you. You may respond to more than one question set if you have different experiences of contact with the FCA.
- Download it, as a Word document, and save it on your computer.
- Provide your answers after each question.
- Please leave blank any questions that don't apply to you or that you do not wish to answer.
- Save the completed document on your computer.
- Please email it to Andy Agathangelou, **by 5pm on Monday 15th November**, at [Email](#)

Other important points to note

- This exercise is about gathering evidence on what people think about the FCA; it is not about providing any assistance, guidance or advice on any case a respondent may have against the FCA, or any other entity.
- Respondents are asked to only provide answers to the questions given.
- Respondents are asked to not provide any supplementary evidence or documentation.

Question Set A

For victims of alleged pension and investment scams

Your Details

Name:

Karl Newman

Company/Business (if applicable):

Address including postcode:

REDACTED

Email address:

REDACTED

Mobile telephone number:

REDACTED

Permissions

- Do you give permission that your name is put into the public domain?
 - Please enter Yes or No. ...**Yes**.....
- Do you give permission that your response is put into the public domain?
 - Please enter Yes or No. ...**Yes**..... (With Email address, phone number and postal address redacted).

Questions

1. Please tell us about yourself and outline, just briefly to begin with, how you came to interact with the Financial Conduct Authority?

I am retired. With the proceeds of my flat sale in London I invested in Basset and Gold. I checked with FCA that it was regulated and did all the checks for FSCS compensation and that the bond I was investing in was asset backed and secure. I did these checks over the telephone, on the Internet and by reading promotional literature which Gallium Funds Solutions AR for B&G approved.

2. What did you invest in; and when; and what went wrong?

I invested in a Basset and Gold Monthly Income Bond which was sold and marketed to me as a fully secured bond. In November 2019 I received an email telling me that B&G was dropping the FCA regulated part of the business. So I asked for my capital back as did not feel comfortable. The company wrote to me and promised me my money back in Jan 2020 and said it would be 90 business days. In April 2020 the firm went into administration they lied and deceived me and never paid me my capital back.

3. If you're happy to mention it, how much money did you invest, and how much of that money do you have left?

I invested 120k it was all the money I had put aside for my pension I do not have any of that money left.

4. What was supposed to happen, and what actually happened, as far as you know?

My money was supposed to be invested in small companies, property and businesses and stocks and shares. Instead all bondholders money was invested in Uncle Buck payday lender we were never told about this.

5. Have you ever witnessed any actions or conduct that, in your reasonable belief, breached any law, regulatory code or applicable or relevant policy? If so, please explain which law, code or policy you believe was breached.

I believe Basset and Gold was a scam it was corrupt there was lies deceit and misleading information bondholders were lied to and robbed of their life savings with written promises of high interest rates and cast iron security.

6. What, if anything, do you believe the FCA could have done that may have prevented you from allegedly being scammed in the first place?

I believe they should have regulated Gallium Fund Solutions properly as they were FCA regulated and scrupulously checked what they were doing as A. R. for Basset and Gold. When I rang FCA initially before I invested I asked whether or not B&G was FCA regulated and I was told yes and all of the promotional material said the same. What they did not tell me is that Basset and Gold had many different arms of the business and that the bond I was investing in was not directly regulated by FCA but through FCA AR Gallium Fund Solutions. Only Basset and Gold Finance was fully regulated but they did not tell me this nor make it clear. If I would have known this I never would have invested.

7. What interaction have you had with the FCA about what happened?

I put my application in for compensation to FSCS on 7 April 2020. They made me wait until November 2020 then rejected my claim.

I then made a complaint to Gallium Fund Solutions A. R for B&G they made me wait until end Jan 2021 and redirected me back to FSCS.

I then appealed to FSCS and they made me wait a further 5 weeks before rejecting my claim.

Now the FOS has my complaint and they have had it for 10 months with no end in sight.

I have also made a complaint to FCA which has been deferred.

8. How well or badly do you think the FCA have performed in your case?

The FCA have performed disgustingly in my case. To think I was sold a product from an FCA regulated Firm the FCA have not regulated nor checked at all. They have done a negligent job.

9. What do you believe the FCA could have done better once they were aware that there was a problem?

They should have been scrupulously regulating and checking B&G and their promotional literature. They should have done what they did with LCF and removed the bonds from the market as they were minibonds and very dangerous. Minibonds are banned and they should have been removed.

10. What would you say about the FCA's effectiveness and timeliness in taking action to protect consumers?

Appalling. The FCA, FOS and FSCS have no timeliness and they make people wait considerable lengths of time using excuses such as Covid 19 or depleting staff levels. This is not our problem it's their problem. There is no protection they are totally negligent.

11. How helpful has the FCA been to you and others affected in securing redress from the alleged guilty parties, and in prosecuting or banning them so they can't do it again?

They have not been helpful at all. There are around 200 bondholders awaiting outcomes from FOS and FCA has not banned Gallium Fund Solutions it seems they and FOS are taking their side giving them more and more time in extensions on cases. In 12 months out of 200 complaints about B&G FOS has only allocated 12 complaints to investigators. 3 of those investigators found in bondholders favour but they seem to be giving and helping Gallium with unlimited extensions and time frames. It seems as though they are not on the consumers side.

12. What are your thoughts on whether the FCA lacks the powers that it needs; or conversely, that it doesn't make good use of the powers it already has?

The FCA needs a full overhaul they need to regulate properly and with vigour and fine and prosecute fraud and corrupt firms who step out of line.

13. In general terms, how would you describe what it's been like dealing with the FCA?

It has been absolutely terrible and It sickens me to think that the watchdog is not doing its job properly to protect consumers

14. What is your perception of the culture of the FCA, and what do you think about it?

There should be more transparency and a willingness to help. When you phone them they cannot give you any information it's like talking to dummies

15. What do you think about the possibility of conflict of interest issues at the FCA?

Yes definitely. I have another complaint with FCA about Charles Randall and Christopher Woolard Directors at FCA ignoring my warning signals about Blackmore Bonds. I definitely think there are conflicts of interest as they tend to side with their FCA firms and not consumers

16. Have you ever complained officially about the FCA; if so to whom? What happened, and how do you feel about what happened? What feedback, if any, have you had about your complaint? How helpful was the feedback? How long has it taken for your complaint to be processed?

Yes I complained to FCA about Basset and Gold roughly 9 months ago. I have had to chase up and now my complaint has been deferred until a further notice.

I also complained about Charles Randall and Christopher Woolard ignoring my warning emails about Blackmore Bonds again no final response as of yet and it 10 months ago.

They do not handle complaints properly

17. Overall, what have been the consequences to you (and if relevant to your family) as a result of what happened?

I am suffering from stress and anxiety it was nearly all my savings I invested in B&G for my future. I am not able to work due to mental health problems and am not receiving any benefits

18. If you could change three things about the FCA, what would they be?

Regulate properly and with force

Vet all firms properly before giving fca approval

More courteous friendly and knowledgeable and helpful staff to help consumers on telephone

19. What positives are there about the FCA that you would like to comment on?

None I can think of

20. Do you believe there should be spot checks by the FCA on regulated and/or unregulated entities, perhaps similar to the spot-checks by VAT inspectors

Yes I've said before fca firms need regulating properly and should be vetted and checked scrupulously

21. The FCA is undertaking a Transformation Project. Do you have any comments to make about that?

To take note of what consumers are saying take into consideration Gloster Report and what all whistle blowers have raised. Learn from complaints and history listen and act and for God's sake regulate firms scrupulously to avoid corruption and fraud

22. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

There are roughly 290 bondholders on FB group we have all been scammed. The administrators for B&G are covering up for directors and staff there has been collusion it needs investigating. There is 37 million of bondholders money missing and the

administrators are not contacting SFO as their fees will be frozen if investigations commence. This is corruption and fraud on a huge scale on lines of LCF and it needs to be exposed and dealt with by relevant authorities.

~~ END ~~

Thank you