

Legal expenses insurance: Research with the LSB's Public Panel

46 members of the public
in England and Wales,
from diverse backgrounds

1 week online
forum discussion

– There are key barriers that prevent wider take up of legal expenses insurance (LEI)

 **Perceptions of insurance industry**
All insurance is seen as a 'necessary evil'. There is a lack of trust and a feeling that the industry sells add-ons just to make more profit and would not pay in the event of a claim.

"I guess I'm always very wary of small print and loopholes these days and it is a concern that you could pay for something in good faith but then not be covered."

 **Assumed narrow coverage**
General assumption that legal cover would only relate to the insurance it is bought with (e.g. home related disputes if bought with home insurance).

"The main issues I expect LEI to cover [bought with home insurance] are neighbour disputes, action taken against me from a building perspective."

 **Lack of awareness**
Many consumers had little or no idea of what a policy offers; how it works; or under what circumstances it might be useful.

 **Perceived cost**
Many assume the cost of LEI to be higher than it really is (£25-£30). Generally people expected it to cost in the region of £50 per annum and some expected more than £150 per annum.

 **Being sold as an 'add on'**
The process of buying insurance is not enjoyable and consumers describe being disengaged. Many simply automatically reject all 'add ons' with little consideration.

 **Perception that risks of needing legal support are low**
If they had not needed a lawyer before, participants felt they were unlikely to need one in future.

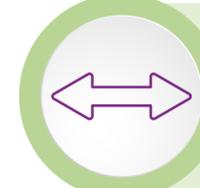
"In most of the insurance offers I've seen where LEI is an add-on there's virtually no detailed information provided. It's become something of a skip over tick."

"I also feel, when would I need it? It's so unlikely, it seems daft to be paying every year for it."

+ With extra information, some key aspects of LEI were appealing

 **Peace of mind**
The panel appreciated that LEI would help in accessing legal support, as well as the costs of legal services being met.

"It gives peace of mind and added protection. It's good to know that you have access to legal help without paying £100+ per hour for the privilege."

 **Breadth of the offer**
The range of disputes covered by LEI was appealing, once the fact it wasn't limited to the main insurance purchase was explained.

"Most insurers that provide legal expenses cover offer 24-hour legal advice helplines. This can prove extremely useful if you want point of law clarified so you can approach an individual or organisation from an informed points of view, possibly even helping to prevent full legal action from being necessary."

 **Low cost**
For many the average cost of LEI was surprisingly low and made it far more appealing than it had been before.