

Our members' voice

As Which? hits its golden jubilee, we thought it only right that we should find out what some of our long-standing members had to say about us



Q Why did you first join Which?

A In 1987, I was a building surveyor in local government in charge of a multimillion pound budget for housing grants. I was aware of cowboy builders and wanted to know more about how to offer sound advice to the public and protect householders (and my budget) from fraud, overcharging and substandard work. While developing a network of impartial and authoritative contacts and sources, I read a copy of *Which?* and decided that becoming a member would be of personal as well as professional advantage. Little did I realise that I would still feel it worthwhile 20 years later.
Gerry Baker, 60, from Llanfairfechan, North Wales

Q How has Which? changed your buying habits?

A I recognise many 'reviews' as being PR-orientated compared with *Which?*'s accurate and independent tested information. *Which?* is an independent, reliable and accurate information source. It tests until the pips squeak. Hype is no substitute for properly conducted tests made by independent authorities. *Which?* has taught me to avoid bad purchases as much as it has pointed me in the direction of good ones. Even household names seldom offer quality uniformly across their product ranges. Sorting sheep from goats saves heartache and money.
Ingemar Lundegard, 79, from Sevenoaks, Kent



Gerry Baker, Ingemar Lundegard, Derek Cutler, Susan Cross, Robert Thurman and Mary Wilkinson

Q What do you think Which? does well?

A If something is value for money, from a good meal to a digital camera, *Which?* says so. Offering compliments as well as brickbats keeps a balance in what might otherwise become a very negative-sounding endeavour. I have friends who have made a 'hobby' of taking purchases back to the retailer where the goods have fallen short of expectations. A bit of research in advance would have saved a lot of shoe leather. I joined *Which?* in the early 1960s and, from the beginning, whenever a product or service or comparisons of holiday destinations needed to be made, it became a habit always to use the magazine as a starting point before doing anything else.
Derek Cutler, 75, from Wolverhampton

Q Would you recommend Which? to a friend?

A Yes. *Which?* gives good, impartial assessments of products and practical advice. We first joined when we were starting out in our first home. We wanted the best-value and most reliable products to kit it out. We used the magazine to buy our first washing machine, an Indesit, which lasted 15 years. For major purchases we always check the *Which?* Best Buys first because there is always good product testing and assessment.
Susan Cross, 49, from Bedfordshire

Q How do you think Which? has helped consumers over the past 50 years?

A The advice given in *Which?* over the past 50 years has made many people more sceptical about accepting claims at face value,

and must have helped improve overall reliability and service. The magazine is in plain English, concise and there is always something of interest. *Which?* has made me more discerning about what I buy and helped prevent what could have been expensive mistakes.

Robert Thurman, 76, from Nottingham

Q How would you like us to develop in the future?

A I would like *Which?* to cover subjects that scare other magazines off, like a product comparison of face creams for older women. You should continue to develop a more sparkly, journalistic style while keeping your authority, which is a difficult balance. When I shop, I bear in mind *Which?* Best Buys. It has also made me more aware of my rights as a consumer.
Mary Wilkinson, 67, from London