



Our Complaints Report

2020-2021

The continuing principles that guide our Customer Service are simple: we're honest and open in all our communications; where we make a mistake, we say so and learn from it; where a customer makes a mistake, we also say so; and above all, we aim to treat people the way we like to be treated ourselves.

We know that it's not possible to get everything right all the time – mistakes happen, it's what you do about them that matter more. Complaints are the feedback that detail any breakdowns in service we make, we analyse them, act on them and learn from them. This is our 13th annual complaints report, in line with the reporting requirements set by Ofgem*, our regulator.

Our results this year

We received 5330 complaints between October 2020 and September 2021, which averages 36.84 complaints per 1,000 customers. Whilst this is an improvement on the previous year we always look to do better and ensure we use all dissatisfaction as an opportunity for learning and improvement (it's important to note that last year's complaints per 1,000 customers was in fact 48.26, not 11, we've used an incorrect figure for the year end 2020 report).

What we're doing

[The Vulnerability Commitment](#) was launched by Energy UK in December 2020 and we're proud to be one of the founding signatories. We pledge to support our customers facing vulnerable circumstances in any way we can.

We're continuing to focus on better training for our people across all areas of the business to resolve queries raised, as quickly as possible.



What we've already done

2021 has continued to present everyone with very different challenges. The migration to our new billing system created several challenges throughout the year. As a result, we've improved how we handle customer meter readings from the online account.

We've also improved access to our automated payment line, with around 6000 customers a month now using the service every month – which in turn reduces the number of contacts to our contact centre and helps reduce our call waiting times.

We've worked hard on improving the switch experience for our new customers and have seen 98% of switches completed within 14 days for the latest quarter, ending September 2021.

We have also introduced a range of new validation features into the Ecotricity App and Online Account to ensure customers are billed accurately each month. We've also improved functionality to provide customers with a clearer view of their energy account, such as bills, reads, payments and usage.

What's next

Despite the challenges we've faced, we've continued to make headway in 2021 with our technology and new processes. We continue to evolve and improve our onboarding journey for customers who switch to us. We want to do the simple things right, ensuring bills are accurate, our service is great, and our mission continues to make Britain greener. We're excited about what all this means for our customer service in the years ahead – and expect it to bring our complaint levels back down to the levels we've been famous for in the past.

We're being more flexible about working hours and location in our recruitment practices for our contact centre agents, and we're offering improved training and on-the-job support, so these key workers are confident across more areas of our business – allowing more first contact resolution to improve our customer service, this means requests are dealt with more quickly – helping to reduce our call handling times.

We're working hard to improve billing accuracy, by obtaining regular readings, via our customers directly or from agent visits. We'll then ensure those readings will be used to avoid estimated bills. Where a provided reading fails our process, it will be reviewed and rectified so that normal billing continues without delay - thereby avoiding catch-up billing or debt accrual which comes from under-estimation.

All customers with faulty Smart meter installations are prioritised for an engineer visit – or offered a self-service fix. We do not



current support the new generation of SMETS 2 smart meters in pre-payment mode, but this will be addressed with PayPoint by the end of 2021.

Our Commercial teams remain committed to the sustainable growth and support of our customer base, and the ongoing migration of accounts into a new billing system will enable further automation of our processes, leading to an enhanced service and reducing contact and complaint numbers as a result.

We've also taken the decision to pause our previous New Connections activity, to enable a full and complete review of the process, aimed at ensuring that we have the right support for our customers in what can be a complex, and confusing market.

If you'd like to read more about our complaints procedure or read our complaints code of practice, you can find this information on our website, or if you'd like a print copy, please call us on **0345 555 7 100**.

* The Consumers , Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 required the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) to set new handling regulations that are binding upon regulated energy providers. The regulations came into force on 1st October 2008 and all regulated providers were required to make any necessary changes to their complaints handling at that time. Ofgem defined a complaint for this purpose (a reportable complaint) as being an expression of dissatisfaction that has not been resolved by the end of the working day following the day of receipt. A full copy of these regulations can be obtained via www.legislation.gov.uk or from The Stationery Office Limited, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3g the day of receipt.

