



Complaints handling

At First Utility we strive to deliver a smarter energy service at a great price. We recognise, however, that we do not always get it right. In the event that you have a complaint about our service, you can trust that we will take it seriously and work towards resolving the problem as quickly as possible.

If you are a domestic consumer or a micro-business (if you believe you may be a micro-business please see our Business Terms and Conditions which are available from the “For business” tab of the home page on our website www.first-utility.com) and you wish to make a complaint we have a simple procedure you can follow, outlined below. If you are not a domestic consumer or micro-business, and you wish to make a complaint you should still call our Customer Service Team on 01926 320 700 and we will attempt to resolve your complaint.

If English is not your first language please call our Customer Service Team on 01926 320 700 who will arrange for a copy of this document to be translated into your first language. We can also arrange a Language Line service to act as an interpreter when you talk to us. Please call our Customer Service Team on 01926 320 700 to request this.

Our Complaints Handling Procedure covers:

- Supplying electricity and gas;
- Supplying and installing electricity and gas meters;
- Electricity and gas bills and paying for electricity and gas;
- Marketing electricity and gas supplies and associated services; and
- Providing information and advice on the above.

This Procedure does not cover loss of electricity and/or gas supply; if you experience problems with loss of supply you should contact your distribution company directly. Their contact number is shown on your bill as the Emergency Number or in the telephone book under electricity. If you can smell gas or are experiencing problems with loss of gas supply you should call the Gas Emergency Service on freephone 0800 111 999.

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As your electricity and/or gas supplier we are responsible for passing on compensation when the electricity distributor or gas transporter that physically transports the energy to your home fails to meet their service standards on:

- Planned interruptions to supplies; or
- Supply network faults.

For information on the standards they are required to meet please refer to our Guaranteed Standards of Service Policy, a copy of which may be obtained by either contacting our Customer Service Team on 01926 320 700 or from our website (see our policy “Guaranteed Standards of Service” within the “Our Policies” subsection of the “Help and Advice” page on our website www.first-utility.com). To claim compensation you must contact us within three months of the supply interruption. Alternatively you can contact your local electricity distributor or gas transporter directly to make your claim.

The Citizens Advice Consumer Service offers free, independent and impartial advice so that you "Know your rights" as an energy consumer. For example, you might want to get a better deal, get advice about the quality of your electricity or gas supply, or ask for help if you're struggling to pay your bills. They will also provide some limited advice to micro-businesses. You can seek advice from Citizens Advice Consumer Services at any time during our handling of your complaint, or during your time on supply with us. They can be contacted on 03454 040506 or at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy.

Making a complaint

Step 1 - complaints by domestic consumers and micro-businesses

In the event that you do wish to make a complaint, please contact our Customer Service Team at your earliest convenience. Alternatively, you can arrange for someone else to contact us on your behalf. You can contact us by:

- Emailing customer.services@first-utility.com;
- Calling 01926 320 700 - Our opening hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, and Saturday 9am to 1pm; or
- By sending a letter to First Utility Ltd, PO Box 4360, Warwick, CV34 9DB.

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Our staff will always provide you with their name and job title. If you are unhappy with the initial response you have received you may ask to speak to our Customer Contact Specialist Team.

Please quote your account number in any correspondence. This can be found on your registration letter or any of your bills.

We aim to resolve your complaint at the time of your first contact. A record will be made on your customer account of any conversations and resolution reached.

If we need to collect further information or carry out an investigation of the issues raised, we will give you a reference number for any future contact. We will also endeavour to keep in touch with you regularly so you always know what we are doing to answer your complaint.

Step 2

If you feel that your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction you may ask to speak with our Customer Contact Specialist Team. Subject to availability a team member will discuss your issue with you between the hours of 8.00am and 8.00pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours a call back will be arranged for the next working day (Monday to Friday).

Alternatively you can write or send an email to the Customer Contact Specialist Team using the contact details above. Please remember to include your account number in any correspondence - this can be found on any bill.

We will endeavour to respond to you within 10 working days with a written reply identifying any steps that we are prepared to take to resolve your complaint. This may include an explanation, apology, or details of any actions we have taken to resolve your complaint.

Where appropriate, we may also offer a goodwill gesture. This may include circumstances in which we find that you have been adversely affected by marketing or sales activities that we consider to have been inappropriate or otherwise unfair.

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If at any time you wish to find out what is happening with your complaint you should contact our Customer Contact Specialist Team on 01926 320 700.

The Customer Contact Specialist Team are a front line team who are trained to handle any expression of customer dissatisfaction and have the authority to work closely with internal departments in order to provide updates to you.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your complaint at any stage during our investigation, you can ask for a manager to conduct an internal review of our investigation. Subject to availability, a manager will endeavour to contact you as soon as possible for review.

Step 3

If you are not satisfied with the response from our Customer Contact Specialist Team and we have told you that there is nothing more that we can do to resolve your complaint, then you can request that we issue a deadlock letter. You can then escalate your complaint to the Energy Ombudsman.

The Energy Ombudsman is a free and independent service whose remit is to resolve customer complaints in an impartial way. Once a complaint has been passed to the Energy Ombudsman they will then investigate the issue. You are not bound by their ruling and can seek further advice if you feel it would be appropriate.

You can also refer your complaint to the Energy Ombudsman if your complaint has not been resolved within 8 weeks of the date that you tell us you have a complaint. However, you may be referred back to First Utility if you have not followed the Complaints Handling Procedure identified above.

The Energy Ombudsman can require us to provide an apology or explanation, a service or practical action that will benefit you or pay you compensation.

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The contact details of both Citizens Advice Consumer Service and the Energy Ombudsman are included at the end of this document.

We will co-operate with Citizens Advice Consumer Service and the Energy Ombudsman if you wish to involve them in resolving your complaint.

We will stand by any decision made by the Energy Ombudsman.

Useful contacts

First Utility Customer Service Department

Tel. 01926 320 700 First Utility Customer Services PO Box 4360 Warwick CV34 9DB
customer.services@first-utility.com

Opening hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, Saturday 9am to 1pm.

If you are hard of hearing or speech impaired and use a Textphone, call 18001 01926 320 700;

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

Tel. 03454 040506 www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy

Energy Ombudsman

Tel: 0330 440 1624 Fax: 0330 440 1625 TextPhone: 0330 440 1600 PO Box 966 Warrington WA4 9DF www.ombudsman-services.org/energy email: enquiries@os-energy.org