

First Utility

Listening To Your Concerns

Our Complaints Handling Procedure

December 2018

At First Utility we work hard to maintain a very high standard of service for you. Unfortunately, we don't always get everything quite right. If you're unhappy with our services for any reason then we'd really like to understand why, so we can put things right as quickly and effectively as possible.

The energy industry is known for being far from reliable and has been criticised in recent years for not giving customers what they want. At First Utility we pride ourselves on being different. We aim to be reliable and straightforward, working hard to resolve your complaint as fast as we can. We know that reliability is something that you expect and deserve and it is therefore one of our key focal points in everything we do.



We want to help you spend less on what you need, and more on what you want. This also applies to the time you might spend working with us to resolve any issues. This is why we've created a process that allows you to easily raise your concerns and have them dealt with swiftly.

To ensure you understand how we manage the process we have detailed below the way we work, so you'll know at all times what we're doing and how we're moving forward.

Andy Eadle

Director of Customer Service

andy@first-utility.com

If you're not a domestic consumer or microbusiness, and you wish to make a complaint you should still call our Customer First Team on 01926 320 700 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6:30pm, and Saturday 9am to 4pm) and we will attempt to resolve your complaint.

If English isn't your first language please call our Customer First Team on 01926 320 700 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6:30pm, and Saturday 9am to 4pm) 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.

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 doesn't 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.

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](#). 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 microbusinesses. 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.

Step 1

Making a complaint

Complaints by domestic consumers and microbusinesses;

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

- Calling 01926 320 700 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm, and Saturday 9am to 4pm);
- Our online assistant, [Ask First](#) is available 24/7;
- Complete a webform online [here](#);

or

- By sending a letter to First Utility Ltd, PO Box 6363, Coventry CV3 9LR.

Alternatively you can contact us via [Resolver](#). Resolver are a free service, offering an independent way in which you can raise and track your complaint with us. We work closely with Resolver to ensure we are able to fix any issues in a fast effective manner.

Complaints handling

Our staff will always provide you with their name and job title. We aim to resolve the complaint at the time of the first contact where appropriate and possible. A record will be made on your account of any conversations and resolution reached. All complaints raised will be acknowledged in a timely manner.

If we need to collect further information or make some investigations into the issues raised we will arrange any further contact. We will also endeavour to keep in touch regularly at agreed times to ensure you are informed as to the progress of the complaint.

Step 2

If you feel that your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, you may ask to speak with our Resolution Centre or request a review by a Team Manager. Subject to availability a team member will discuss the issue with you between the hours 8am to 7pm Monday to Friday.

Alternatively, you can write or send an email to the Resolution Centre using customer.service@first-utility.com requesting your complaint is escalated to Resolution Centre. Please remember to include your account number in any correspondence, this can be found on any bill.

We endeavour to respond to you within 10 working days identifying necessary steps that we believe are required to take to resolve the complaint. This may include an explanation, apology, details of any actions we have taken to resolve the complaint and, if appropriate, we may offer a goodwill gesture.

The Resolution Centre are trained to handle any expression of customer dissatisfaction and complex cases, and work closely with internal departments in order to provide you with a full and fair resolution.

Keeping in touch

Once your complaint is being managed by a member of our team we will aim to set contact dates and times with you to ensure you are always kept informed of the progress of your complaint, we aim to go no longer than 10 working days between contacts unless you agree otherwise with your complaint handler.

Step 3

Escalating your complaint

If you are not satisfied with the response from our Resolution Centre team you can contact our Director of Customer Service, Andy Eadle, directly on andy@first-utility.com. Andy and his team will respond to your complaint within 5 working days.

or

You may contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS) or the Extra Help unit (EHU) for independent, impartial and free advice. If you are a domestic customer you can contact CACS/EHU at any point of the complaints process.

If we have told you that there is nothing more that we can do to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction we will issue a deadlock letter. You can then escalate this complaint to Ombudsman Services:Energy.

Ombudsman Services:Energy is a free and independent service whose remit is to resolve customer complaints in an impartial way. Once a complaint has been passed to Ombudsman Services:Energy 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 Ombudsman Services:Energy if the complaint has not been resolved within 8 weeks of the start date of the complaint. However, you can be referred back to First Utility if you have not followed the Complaints Handling Procedure identified above.

Ombudsman Services:Energy can require First Utility to provide an apology or explanation, a service or practical action that will benefit you and/or pay you compensation.

The contact details of Citizens Advice Consumer Service, EHU and Ombudsman Services:Energy are included at the end of this document.

We will cooperate with Citizens Advice Consumer Service, EHU or the Energy Ombudsman if you wish to involve them in resolving the complaint. We will stand by any decision made by

Ombudsman Services:Energy and every decision made is binding on us.

Useful contacts

First Utility Customer First Department

Phone 01926 320 700

TextPhone 18001 01926 320 700

Address First Utility Customer First, PO Box 6363, Coventry CV3 9LR

Email customer.service@first-utility.com

Opening hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 6:30pm, Saturday 9am to 4pm.

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

Phone 03454 040506

Website www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy

Webform https://forms.adviceguide.org.uk/complaint_energy.aspx

Energy Ombudsman

Phone 0330 440 1624

Fax 0330 440 1625

TextPhone 0330 440 1600

Address PO Box 966 Warrington WA4 9DF

Website <https://www.ombudsman-services.org/sectors/energy>

Email enquiries@osenergy.org