

Domestic Consumer Energy Charter

This winter, electricity and gas suppliers in Northern Ireland have committed to providing the following extra support for domestic consumers

- 1 Electricity and gas suppliers will commit to making a financial contribution to a third-party hardship fund. Hardship funds can provide support if you are struggling to pay your bills.
- 2 If you have a prepayment meter and are on the maximum 40% debt repayment rate, electricity and gas suppliers will review your ability to pay and will offer you the opportunity to move to a 20% repayment rate. Repayment rates will not be set above 20% for consumers who are new to debt repayment plans, unless you request this.
- 3 If you are on an electricity or gas suppliers' customer care register, they will ensure that you are not moved on to a prepayment meter, unless you request it and they have made you aware of the potential advantages and disadvantages of this option.
- 4 If you are in debt to your electricity or gas supplier, your supplier will not move you onto a prepayment meter without your agreement between 1 December 2024 and 31 January 2025.
- 5 If you have been moved onto a prepayment meter to recover debt, electricity and gas suppliers will provide you with enhanced aftercare support. This will include getting in touch with you one month after installation to ensure that you are able to access and top up your meter and to confirm that your debt repayment plan is manageable.
- 6 Should you experience payment difficulties, electricity and gas suppliers will inform you of tariffs most suitable for your needs.
- 7 Electricity and gas suppliers will signpost you towards organisations who can provide additional support services.
- 8 Electricity and gas suppliers will have a specialised individual or team lead as a key contact for third sector, advice bodies, consumer bodies and Utility Regulator.

All year round your supplier will support you in the following ways

- If you are in payment arrears, electricity and gas suppliers will work with you to discuss your options, including putting in place a repayment plan based on what you can afford to pay and using a repayment method that suits your circumstances.
- Suppliers will continue to assess your ability to pay if you are in debt and, if appropriate, will look at options such as reducing debt repayment rates and/or extending debt repayment timeframes.
- Should you experience payment difficulties, electricity and gas suppliers will provide you with practical advice on energy efficiency measures that could help you reduce your energy bills.
- Electricity and gas suppliers will make you aware of the additional support available through their customer care registers and how to be added to these registers if eligible.
- Electricity and gas suppliers will not disconnect you for debt, as long as you are actively engaging with your supplier.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES



- The commitments within the Domestic Consumer Energy Charter have been made on a voluntary basis.
- All signatories below will adhere to the commitments between 1 November 2024 and 31 March 2025.



For advice and information on how you can save money on your energy bills, please visit Consumer Council for Northern Ireland's electricity, oil and gas information page [Electricity, oil and gas | Consumer Council](#)

make the call

Contact the Make the Call service to check if you are getting all the benefits, services and supports you're entitled to.

To contact Make the Call: You can phone 0800 232 1271; or Text ADVICE to 079 8440 5248 or alternatively, you can email makethecall@dfcn.gov.uk