

POLICY CONSULTATION RESPONSE 5

Dear Ofgem.

I am writing in response to your call for responses to the consultation on the non-domestic energy market. I live on a residential park home site so my responses relate to re-sellers of energy - in my case this is the owner of my park home site - in this sector.

I would welcome re-sellers of energy being brought within Ofgem's remit for managing complaints as at present people like me have nowhere to go off we complain to our site owner about their re-selling energy and they ignore us. This has been my own experience recently.

Our site owner has employed a subcontractor to manage metering and billing on my site and each home being charge £1.20 a day for this service, which we have to pay directly to the subcontractor, even though we have no contract personally with this company, no recourse with them and we already pay a charge for metering and billing as part of our annual charges paid to the site owner.

In addition, since the new sub-meters were installed, our electric meters have repeatedly tripped, leaving many residents without electric for hours and, on occasion, days at a time. An electrician I had come to check my sub-meter said the fuses that had been fitted on the new sub-meters were not the appropriate size and this was causing the trip but as the sub-meters are owned by the site owner, I can do nothing to fix this.

Also, I have requested the site owner provide evidence and an explanation of my charges for electric and mains gas but they have refused to provide this for over a year.

I have complained to the site owner about all these things but every letter I have sent has been ignored. Instead, I have repeatedly been threatened with remote disconnection by the site owner for being 'a troublemaker' and there is absolutely nothing I can do about this as there is no-one regulating the site owner, no ombudsman, no-one I can refer my site owner's bullying to in order to stop their behaviour and get a resolution to the issues.

I have no choice in what contract my site owner signs with an emergency or gas company and since I oh the bills not them, there is no motivation for them to get a good deal. Yet I am still classed as a residential customer so while I have the responsibilities of other residential customers, I don't have any of the same rights or routes to resolution. This puts me in a significantly worse position than other residents, which seems very unfair and leaves me open to exploitation and abuse if, as in my case, the site owner refuses to follow what little regulation is currently in place.

There needs to be better regulation of and accountability for re-sellers of energy in order to protect those who live in park homes and I hope the ofgem consultation contributes to this.

Finally, I cannot see how enhancing regulation and oversight of park home re-sellers of energy would incur any additional costs for the site owner as residents already pay a portion of their annual pitch fee/service charges to the site owner to cover things like managing energy billing, metering, complaints etc. The problem is that some site owners have for too long considered this fee to be 100% profit for them rather than to use for the

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running and management of the site. Regulating them so they have to respond to customer energy complaints or risk being referred to the ombudsman would therefore incur no additional charges for them. The ombudsman does need to have teeth to have an impact however - site owners are often very wealthy so unless there was recourse that either risked heavy fines or a challenge to their license to run the site (which is issued by the local authority), simply being able to refer them to an ombudsman would have little impact. Site owners can also pass on many charges imposed to them to residents so it would be important for any changes not to involve the site owner paying as they would simply make residents pay again, when they already pay for their energy services through their annual pitch fee/service charge.

I hope this information will be taken into consideration when revising current policy and practice.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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