

Charley Clark
Ofgem
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Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU

11/08/2025

Dear Charley,

Data Best Practice as a Code Obligation

This letter is sent in submission to Ofgem's consultation on Data Best Practice (DBP) as a Code Obligation.

Consumer Scotland is the statutory body for consumers in Scotland. Established by the Consumer Scotland Act 2020,¹ our Purpose is to improve outcomes for current and future consumers. We are independent of the Scottish Government and accountable to the Scottish Parliament. Our core funding is provided by the Scottish Government, but we also receive funding for research and advocacy activity in the electricity, gas, post, and water sectors via industry levies which are derived from consumers' bills.

Our responsibilities relate to consumer advocacy. In our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan,² we have identified three cross-cutting consumer challenges, which guide our work during this period. They are:

- affordability;
- climate change mitigation and adaption; *and*
- consumers in vulnerable circumstances.

Consumer Scotland welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to this consultation. Our letter is purposely high level and focuses on how the code operators could ensure that consumers benefit from the open approach to data proposed by the guidance.

¹ [Consumer Scotland Act 2020](#)

² Consumer Scotland (2023) [Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027](#)

We agree with Ofgem's proposal to expand the DBP guidance into the codes, and to allow six months for code modifications to be raised to give effect to this change. The code bodies currently hold data which could be of significant value to consumers - if data assets are presumed open, other organisations that are currently supporting consumers in the transition to net zero could use that data to improve consumer outcomes.

Given that the data and its management is ultimately paid for by consumers through their energy bills, the value of this data should be unlocked through the open data approach proposed, and we would hope that the code bodies consider prioritising data access for consumer advice and advocacy bodies.

To illustrate some of the benefits of embedding the presumed open data principles - this change could allow for home energy efficiency consumer advice bodies, such as Home Energy Scotland, Nest or the Energy Savings Trust, to access data on whether the Wide Area Network (WAN) is available to that specific homeowner. Those organisations having that information would mean they are able to better inform consumers of possible energy efficiency tariffs, services or schemes they could access if those consumers had a smart meter. The consumer may then take up a smart meter if they haven't already, be better informed about what energy demand changes they could make and potentially save money from any changes they put in place – making sure that consumer benefits more from the transition to net zero smoother than would otherwise have been the case.

Given the critical role consumers adopting low carbon technologies at home will be to achieving net zero, addressing this and other barriers to data could ensure that policy-making across the sector is joined-up better, and ultimately improve consumer outcomes in the sector.

In those instances where there is a strong case for the data to not be open, some information could be redacted, but overall "presumed open" should remain a core principle. We would welcome Ofgem setting out a process for which the code bodies may ask for an exemption to presumed open and an appeals process for how any organisation may ask for a review of proposed exemptions.

If you require any further information regarding any of the queries set out in this letter, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely

Diarmuid Cowan
Energy Policy Manager