

Liz Chester  
Ofgem  
9 Millbank  
London SW1P 3GE

22 March 2010

Dear Liz,

**Review of protection for vulnerable customers from disconnection**

Age Concern and Help the Aged are pleased to respond to your consultation on proposals following your review of current arrangements energy companies have to try to prevent vulnerable customers from being disconnected. We have no disagreement with the proposals in the document. However we particularly wanted to warmly welcome the proposal on page 21 of the document:- 'to include a requirement that, where a licensee has disconnected a vulnerable customer's premises at a time of year other than winter, the licensee should reconnect the relevant premises before winter'. We have been arguing for some years that the licence condition that older households should not be disconnected during winter months should be extended to cover the whole year. This is precisely because it remains possible that an older household could be disconnected during the summer months but not reconnected for the winter months. This is exactly what happened in the Bates case where Mr and Mrs Bates were found dead in their home in winter from cold related illness because they had been cut off during the summer. We therefore strongly support this licence change proposal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gretel Jones". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gretel" and the last name "Jones" written in a single continuous line.

Gretel Jones  
Consumer Markets Policy Adviser