

Gas and Electricity Connections – Frequently asked Questions

This document answers the following questions:

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10. [I need the new connection completed quickly. Can I dispute the quotation after the work has been completed?](#)

If having read this document your question remains unanswered we recommend that in the first instance you contact your local network operator.

[Click here to find out who your local Electricity network operator is.](#)

[Click here to find out who your local gas network operator is.](#)

1. How do I obtain a new gas or electricity connection?

General guidance on how to obtain a gas or electricity connection can be found [here](#)¹.

2. How do I arrange a service alteration to my existing gas or electricity connection?

You should contact your local gas or electricity network operator to arrange your service alteration, the network operator's connection charging methodology should contain the relevant contact details. Links to network operator's connection charging methodologies can be found [here](#).

When you contact your network operator they will provide you with an application form to complete for your service alteration. Once they have reviewed your application they should provide you with a quotation as they would if you were applying for a new connection.

3. What information do I need to provide to obtain a quotation for a new gas or electricity connection / service alteration to my existing gas or electricity connection?

Each gas and electricity network operator publishes a connection charging methodology on their website. This connection charging methodology details how they will manage your connection / service alteration request from receipt of request to the completion of

¹ <http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Consumers/CI/ncamm/Pages/ncamm.aspx>

works. It also sets out the information the distributor may require from you and at what stage of the process they might request it.

Links to network operator's connection charging methodologies can be found [here](#).

4. How do network operators calculate their connection / service alteration charges?

The connection / service alteration charges set by network operators must be cost reflective and calculated in accordance with their [connection charging methodology](#). Although the connection charging methodology does not include standard charges it will act as a general guide to explaining the components of your connection / service alteration charge.

Gas network operators do set out some standard connection / service alteration charges in a statement of charges document. These statements can be found [here](#).

5. What help is available if I don't understand my quotation?

If you wish to obtain further detail about the costs included in your quotation you should contact the network operator directly and request a detailed breakdown of the costs. If you request a breakdown and feel that the breakdown provided is not adequate to enable you to understand your quotation, you should raise a complaint with the network operator (see question 9).

6. Can I get another company to carry out some of the required work?

Yes. With the introduction of competition in connections, customers have the option to have some of the connection work, referred to as contestable work, carried out by a third party connection provider. Other work, referred to as non-contestable work, can only be carried out by the network operator or its appointed agent.

Contestable works do not have to be carried out by your network operator but some, the electrical works, must be carried out by a qualified third party connection provider listed on the Lloyds Register (see below). Other non-electrical contestable works, referred to as civils, can, with the approval of the network operator, be undertaken by the customer or the customer's contractor. Some examples of contestable work include:

- Planning, design and selection of materials required for the connections in accordance with the DNO's published specifications.
- Obtaining consents and wayleaves that may be required.
- The procurement and provision of materials that may be required for connection.
- Carrying out the trenching and other on-site works, including the cable route(s) between the development and the point of connection to the distribution network.
- The reinstatement works (both temporary and permanent) for the site site, including the cable routes.
- Building of sub-stations, installation of cables, switch gear required for the development which will be connected and energised by the DNO.
- Reinforcement and diversionary works that are fully funded by the Customer.

The following non-contestable works can only be carried out by your network operator:

- Processing the customer's application.
- The design, specification for reinforcement of the DNOs distribution network.
- Determining the relevant point of connection to the existing distribution network.
- Removing or diverting existing connection assets that are partly funded by the DNO.
- Approving the design, specification and method of installation of an extension which is to be adopted by the DNO, with inspection, monitoring and testing of the contestable works prior to the connection to the distribution network.
- Connection of the extension to the DNO's network.
- The energisation of the connection and any subsequent live connections to that extension.

Certain connection schemes, generally new build housing (> 4 properties), industrial and commercial developments, retail parks etc, are attractive to third party connection providers. Other work, for example one off domestic connections, may not be attractive to third party connection providers.

7. Where can I find a list of qualified Independent Connection (third party) providers

Lloyds Register maintains a database of third party connection providers that are able to undertake certain contestable connections works. The database outlines the scope of approved registered parties. Please use the links below for a list of Lloyds Register approved connection providers and contractors:

[National Electricity Registration Scheme](#)

[Gas Industry Registration Scheme](#)

8. What is a construction and Adoption Agreement

If a customer opts to appoint a third party provider to carry out the contestable works, the provider / customer will be required to enter into a Construction and Adoption Agreement (CAA) with the network operator.

The CAA is a legal document between the customer and the network operator containing all the relevant requirements for the construction and adoption of the contestable works undertaken by the third party connection provider.

9. What do I do if I am not happy with how my network operator is dealing with my connection / service alteration?

As a result of changes to complaint handling legislation, network operators have established arrangements to handle complaints and disputes more effectively. In the

event of a complaint or dispute arising we advise customers to make full use of these established processes. When making a complaint customers should follow the steps set out below:

- i. Raise the complaint or dispute with your network operator. You can request a copy of their complaints procedure from them directly.

If the matter remains outstanding for more than eight weeks or reaches a point of deadlock where the network operator cannot do anything more to resolve your complaint, domestic and micro business customers are able to take their complaint to the Energy Ombudsman.

Micro businesses are defined as a person supplied or requiring to be supplied at premises with an annual consumption of electricity of not more than 55,000 kWh; or gas of not more than 200,000 kWh; or fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover not exceeding 2m. For general details about how the Ombudsman scheme operates, including details about how to raise a complaint and the types of complaints the Ombudsman will take forward, visit: www.energy-ombudsman.org.uk

- ii. For domestic and microbusiness² customers, if your dispute is with a network operator and you are dissatisfied with the Ombudsman's decision the matter may be referred to Ofgem to determine³. Issues we may be able to look at in a determination include disputes over the costs of a connection or the terms of a connection offer. We may not be able (i.e. have legal power) to determine on all matters.

Before referring a matter to us for determination we expect all customers to have progressed their complaint through the distributor's complaints process and domestic and microbusiness customers to have referred the matter to the Energy Ombudsman.

- iii. For business customers that do not fit within the microbusiness definition, the dispute should still be escalated through the network operators complaints process. If the complaint is against a network operator and it remains unresolved having been escalated through their complaints process, as above Ofgem may be able to determine the issue.

10. I need the new connection / service alteration completed quickly. Can I dispute the quotation after the work has been completed?

Yes, the Authority can usually determine a dispute up to 12 months after the connection has been completed. Although raising a determination does not mean that you will have to delay the work being completed it is usual you will have to pay for the work upfront.

² A person supplied or requiring to be supplied at premises with an annual consumption of electricity of not more than 55,000 kWh; or gas of not more than 200,000 kWh; or fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover not exceeding 2m.

³ <http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Pages/MoreInformation.aspx?docid=25&refer=Consumers/CI/ncamm>