

Service and standards delivered to you

A look at performance in 2010/11



What's covered in this booklet

This booklet provides important information about:

- The service we bring to you
- The levels of service provided by your Gas and Electricity Network Operators

It also covers everything from getting connected, organising service visits, dealing with problems and contact details if you need to get in touch.

Please keep it in a safe place so if anything does go wrong, you'll know how it will be put right.

The service we bring to you

Priority Service Customers

Our Priority Services Register (PSR) offers additional help to customers who are elderly, disabled or living with a long term illness. Anybody can ask on behalf of a customer for the customer's name to be added to our PSR free of charge.

The benefits of being on the register include:

- Free annual gas safety checks for qualifying customers
- Priority notification in the event of an interruption to supply
- Alternative bill formats e.g. large print, Braille or talking bills
- Gas and/or electricity meter relocation
- A password scheme so you know that when you are contacted by British Gas we are who we say we are
- A nominee scheme
- Specially designed appliance controls and adaptors
- Priority attention for any general enquires
- Quarterly meter reading services (if no person occupying the premises is able to read the meter)

To find out more, call **0800 072 8625** or for Pay As You Go Energy™ customers call **0800 294 8604**

We keep our appointments – or we make it up to you

When you book an appointment for work on your gas or electricity supply, we like to make things as simple as possible for you. So we'll offer you a morning or afternoon slot. You can also request a 2 hour slot to make it even more convenient.

If we can't keep any appointment we've made, and we fail to contact you in advance, you'll receive compensation of £20 (gas) or £22 (electricity).

We promise to compensate you quickly so payments will be with you within 10 working days, or you'll receive an additional £20 or £22.

Meter problems solved

If you think your gas or electricity meter is faulty, get in touch with us straightaway. We'll contact you to explain the problem within 5 working days either by phone or in writing. If a call-out is necessary we'll visit you within 7 working days.

Pay as you go meter problems solved too

If you report a fault with your pay as you go gas meter, and have no supply, an engineer will arrive within 4 hours, and 3 hours for your electricity meter (Mon – Fri). If there's a problem with either meter at the weekend, we'll get an engineer to you within 4 hours.

| Performance standard: how have we done? Our performance standard targets have been agreed with Ofgem, the industry regulator | Our target | We achieved for gas | We achieved for electricity |
|---|------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Moving your meter – if you ask for your gas or electricity meter to be moved, we'll visit your home within 15 working days. | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| Changing your meter – we'll visit your home within 10 working days. | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| Faulty pay as you go meter – if your gas or electricity pay as you go meter needs repairing or replacing and you have no supply, we'll visit you within 3 hours (electricity meter) or 4 hours (gas meter) on working days, or within 4 hours on other days. | 98% (95%) | 97% (97%) | 98% (99%) |
| Reconnecting a supply disconnected for non-payment – if you've been disconnected for not paying the charges due, we'll reconnect you before midnight on the next working day after your reconnection is agreed. This is subject to you keeping to our terms. | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The figures shown in brackets within the table above relate to any day other than a 'working day'. A 'working day' is any day, other than a Saturday, a Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a bank holiday within the meaning of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act, 1971.

Where our electricity comes from

We're required to calculate information on the mix of fuels used to generate the electricity we supply and its environmental impact.

This table shows the mix of fuels of the electricity British Gas supplied from April 2010 to March 2011 in percentage terms for coal, natural gas, nuclear and renewable

(e.g. wind power). It also shows information on CO₂ emissions and levels of radioactive waste generated. Our CO₂ emissions performance is better than the national average.

For more information on this, visit britishgas.co.uk/fuelmixchart

| Energy Source | Centrica | UK Average |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Coal | 11.4% | 28.9% |
| Natural Gas | 56.9% | 44.2% |
| Nuclear | 22.8% | 17.3% |
| Renewables | 7.7% | 7.9% |
| Other Fuels | 1.2% | 1.7% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| CO ₂ Emissions | 338 g/kWh | 450 g/kWh |
| High-level radioactive waste | 0.0023 g/kWh | 0.0017 g/kWh |

We take your safety seriously

It's important to us that our customers are not at risk from faulty installations, appliances or accidents. So we do everything we can to make sure you understand how to keep safe and avoid dangerous hazards.

Protect yourself from carbon monoxide poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly poisonous and sometimes deadly gas, produced when fuels such as coal, wood, oil or natural gas are burned without sufficient air. It's often emitted by appliances which haven't been properly installed or maintained, so we suggest you always ask a Gas Safe registered engineer to install and service your gas appliances.

As CO is odourless, tasteless and invisible, it's difficult to detect. So here are some danger signs that you should look out for:

- Stains, soot marks or discolouration, on or around your gas boiler
- Excessive condensation and seeing or smelling smoke in the room the appliance is installed
- A pilot light that goes out frequently. The colour of the pilot light should burn blue – if it is yellow or orange, CO may be present

Remember to keep vents in doors, walls and windows clear, and make sure your chimney isn't blocked by birds' nests or other debris.

A CO alarm can detect even the smallest amount of CO in your home, and emits a loud alarm before levels become dangerous. Before you buy one, check to make sure it complies with BS EN 50291: 2001 and carries a British Standard or approved mark, such as a Kitemark.

Symptoms of CO poisoning can be similar to flu and include headaches, dizziness, confusion and extreme tiredness, so if you or anyone in your home shows any symptoms, please see a doctor immediately.

Stay safe with your gas supply

Leaks and hazards may occur where there are old appliances or bad connections, and it's essential that these are avoided.

We can arrange a gas safety check with a Gas Safe registered engineer to be sure your home's gas appliances and other gas fittings are functioning safely. If we consider an appliance is unsafe to use, with your permission we'll make sure it doesn't present a safety risk and provide you with the information you need to replace it.

You could also qualify for a free gas safety check through our Priority Services Register (PSR).

If you're concerned about CO or gas safety, contact Gas Emergency Services (24 hours) on **0800 111 999** or textphone **18001 0800 371 787**

To find out about CO detectors, call **0800 294 4430** or visit **britishgas.co.uk/coalarm**

What you can expect from your Gas Network Operator

These are the standards of performance you can expect from the company who transports your gas as part of the gas network. Again they cover everything from getting connected to compensation payments. If you're entitled to compensation, your Network Operator will get a payment to you either directly, or via British Gas, within 20 working days. If they fail to do this, they'll give you an additional £20.

Customers with Priority Services

If you're on the Priority Services Register and your energy supply is disrupted, your Network Operator will get you back up and running with heating and cooking facilities within 4 hours. If more than 250 customers are affected at one time it will be provided within 8 hours (8pm – 8am excluded). If you don't get this and you inform the Network Operator within 3 months you'll receive £24 compensation.

Getting your connection right

When you ask for a new standard gas connection, you'll get the quote within 6 working days. A non-standard connection quote will take 11 working days and for a non-standard connection greater than 275 kWh it will take 21 working days.

If your Network Operator fails to do this, you'll receive compensation for every working day they're late:

- Connections up to 275 kWh: £10 per working day, up to £250
- Connections over 275 kWh: £20 per working day, up to £500

If the quote you've received isn't accurate, any overcharge will be refunded by your Network Operator.

Similarly, if you've made a land enquiry, your Network Operator will respond within 5 working days or you'll get:

- Connections up to 275 kWh: £40 per working day, up to £250
- Connections over 275 kWh: £40 per working day, up to £500

For all quotations, the Network Operator will offer a planned date within 20 working days for the start and substantial completion of the work. If the work is not substantially completed on the agreed date, you'll get a payment related to the value of the contract, plus a payment for each working day from then on to a maximum level.

Contact your Network Operator if you need any further details on getting connected. To find out who your local Network Operator is, just look on the top of your gas or electricity bill where you'll find their number.

You'll be the first to know about planned supply interruptions

When your Network Operator carries out planned work they may need to interrupt your gas supply. They'll always keep you well informed about any such interruption and will let you know the date and reason at least 5 working days before it happens.

If they fail to let you know and you inform them of their failure within 3 months, you'll get a payment of £20 if you're a domestic customer and £50 if you're a non-domestic customer.

Compensation if your gas is cut off

If your gas supply is cut off because of an unplanned gas interruption, it will be restored within 24 hours. For every complete 24 hour period without gas you'll be compensated as follows:

- Domestic customers: £30
- Non-domestic customers with annual consumption less than 73,200 kWh per annum: £50 up to a maximum of £1,000
- Non-domestic customers with annual consumption above 73,200 kWh per annum: alternative compensations are made

These do not include interruptions resulting from damage caused by a third party.

Your complaints are dealt with in good time

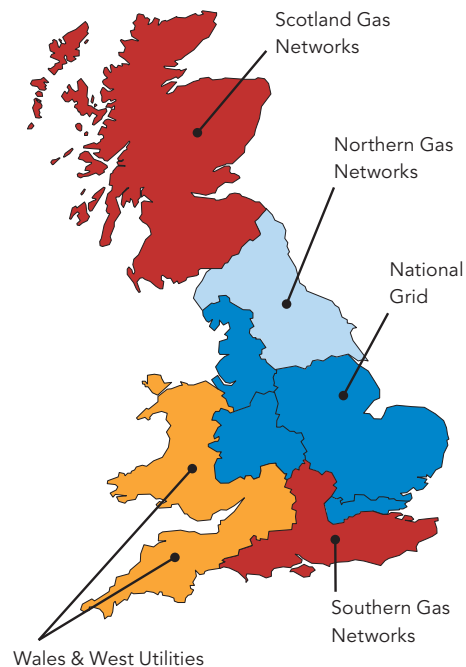
The Network Operator will always deal with complaints as swiftly as possible. If you complain in writing or over the phone, they'll respond to your complaint within 10 working days of receipt. However, if a visit to your premises or more information from a third party is needed to sort things out, they'll send you an initial written response within 10 working days to explain the situation. They'll then give you a final response within 20 working days of your complaint.

If the Network Operator fails to do this on time, you'll get a payment of £20 and an additional £20 for each succeeding period of 5 working days thereafter, up to a maximum of £100.

Getting you back to normal after pipe work

If your Network Operator needs to replace or re-lay your gas pipes, they'll make good your home or premises within 5 working days of completion of work. If not, domestic customers will receive £50 and non-domestic customers will receive £100 compensation, plus the same amount for each period of 5 working days that the work is delayed.

Map of Gas Network Operators



Standards of performance set for Gas Network Operators

| Standards | Target |
|---|--------|
| 1. Responding to telephone calls Calls will be answered within 30 seconds. This covers the National Gas Emergency Service (24 hours a day), the general enquiry line and the meter point reference number helpline (during the hours they operate). | 90% |
| 2. Responding to all reported uncontrolled escapes/gas emergencies within 1 hour Including significant carbon monoxide escapes or other hazardous situations. | 97% |
| 3. Responding to all reported controlled escapes/gas emergencies within 2 hours Including significant carbon monoxide escapes or other hazardous situations. | 97% |

Standards achieved by Gas Network Operators against their targets

| Networks | Region | Standard 1 | Standard 2 | Standard 3 |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| National Grid | East of England | 90% | 95% | 96% |
| | London | 90% | 96% | 97% |
| | North West | 90% | 92% | 95% |
| | West Midlands | 90% | 95% | 97% |
| Scotland Gas Networks | Scotland | 90% | 97% | 98% |
| Southern Gas Networks | Southern | 90% | 97% | 98% |
| Wales & West Utilities | Wales | 90% | 98% | 99% |
| Northern Gas Networks | Northern | 90% | 91% | 94% |

What you can expect from your Electricity Network Operator

These are the standards of performance you can expect from the company who supplies your electricity. They cover everything from getting connected to compensation payments. If you're entitled to compensation, your Network Operator will pay you directly, or via British Gas within 10 working days, or you'll get an additional £22.

If your mains fuse fails you'll get a fast response

If you report a mains fuse failure your Electricity Network Operator will get you back to normal as quickly as possible. An engineer will visit your home within 3 hours on a working day, or 4 hours on any other day, subject to certain working hours. If they don't get an engineer to you in this time, you'll receive £22 in compensation.

Power cuts taken seriously

If your electricity supply fails during normal weather conditions, your Electricity Network Operator will always make sure it's restored within 18 hours.

Sometimes faults are beyond anyone's control

Sometimes compensation is not payable, due to matters beyond our or the Network Operator's control. In severe weather conditions the following standards apply.

| Category of severe weather | Definition |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Category 1 (medium events) | Lightning events – when a Network Operator experiences at least 8 times the normal amount of faults in 1 day – supplies will be restored within 24 hours. |
| Category 2 (large events) | At least 13 times the normal amount of faults in 1 day – supplies will be restored within 48 hours. |
| Category 3 (very large events) | Any severe weather events where at least 35% of exposed customers are affected – supplies will be restored within a period as calculated using a set formula based on the number of customers affected (please contact your Network Operator for further details). |

If your Network Operator fails these standards, you can claim £25, plus £25 for each additional 12-hour period you're without supply up to a maximum of £200.

Otherwise domestic customers can claim £54, plus £27 for each additional 12 hour period, non-domestic customers can claim £108, plus £27 for each additional 12 hour period.

If a power cut affects 5,000 premises or more during normal weather conditions, electricity will be restored within 24 hours. If the Network Operator fails to do this you will receive £54 if you're a domestic customer or £108 if you're a non-domestic customer.

You will also receive a further payment of £27 for each additional 12 hour period that you are off supply up to a maximum of £216.

If you suffer a power cut during severe weather conditions, putting you back on line will depend on the severity of the conditions.

What happens during disconnections due to power shortages

On rare occasions, there may be supply shortages in your area and you may have to take it in turns to have your electricity supply interrupted, in order to spread the available power.

In these circumstances, your Network Operator will work as hard as possible to keep the time you're without electricity to a minimum and this will be no more than 24 hours.

If you're without supply before the power shortage starts, this would be covered by your Network Operator's normal standards. If they fail and you make a claim within 3 months of the supply being restored, domestic customers will receive £54 compensation and non-domestic customers £108.

You should be told about planned interruptions

If your electricity supply is interrupted because of planned work in your area, your Network Operator will give you at least 2 days notice.

If this doesn't happen, or your supply is interrupted on a different day than you've been told, you can claim £22 compensation as a domestic customer or £44 as a non-domestic customer.

You'll be informed about voltage changes

If you think your electricity supply voltage has changed, contact your Network Operator immediately and they'll explain the problem, by either writing to you or phoning you within 5 working days. If your Network Operator needs to visit your home it will be within 7 working days. You'll be offered a morning or afternoon appointment slot. Or you can ask them for a 2 hour slot to make it more convenient.

If your Network Operator doesn't visit within 7 working days or misses the appointment, you'll receive £22 compensation.

Multiple interruptions add up

If you have 4 or more separate power cuts of more than 3 hours each between 1st April and 31st March the following year, you can also claim £54 compensation.

Getting your connection estimates on time

If you ask your Network Operator for an estimate of connection costs, providing you have given them all the information they need, no visit is necessary and you've paid any fees, they'll reply within the timescales below or you'll receive £50 compensation:

- 1 Megavolt amp – 10 working days
- 1 Megavolt amp or more – 20 working days

Megavolt amp is the power in the electrical circuit.

Giving you accurate quotations for Low Voltage projects

If you ask your Network Operator for a quotation for a Low Voltage project, it will be provided within the timescales on the following page, or they will pay you compensation. You have the right to challenge the quotation under the Quotation Accuracy Scheme. If the quotation is found to be inaccurate or incomplete, your Network Operator will make a fixed payment. Your Network Operator will then provide you with a correct quotation and refund you any overpayment. If they have undercharged you, you'll need to repay the additional amount.

Sticking to work schedules for single and small Low Voltage projects

First you'll need to send written acceptance of the Network Operator's quotation and pay the full amount. They'll then contact you within 7 working days to discuss a good time to carry out the work or they'll pay you £10 for each working day they're late. Works on moving meters aren't covered by this standard. It may not always be possible

to agree a date to carry out the work initially, for example, if other consents are needed.

The original date may change either at your request, or as notified by your Network Operator, for example, if severe weather causes them to postpone planned works.

Your Network Operator will complete the works by the agreed date. If they don't, they'll give you £25 compensation for each working day they're late.

Standards set for Low Voltage projects

| Type of connection | Demand (Timescales) | Generation (Timescales) | Late payment per working day | Payment for inaccurate or incomplete quotes |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Single domestic Low Voltage service demand connection, or alteration including moving a meter | 5 working days | – | £10 | £250 |
| Small Low Voltage demand projects. Domestic developments of less than 5 houses or single non-domestic connections with whole current metering | 15 working days | – | £10 | £500 |
| Other Low Voltage connections with Low Voltage works | 25 working days | 45 working days | £50 | – |

Receiving payments

We appreciate that you'll want any payments made to you as soon as possible. So if your Network Operator fails to meet any of the Guaranteed Standards, they'll make your payment by cheque, electronic transmission or as a credit to your connection invoice, within 10 working days. If they don't make the payment within 10 working days they'll send you an additional £50 compensation.

In line with Section 39A (5) of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended by the Utilities Act 2000), any Guaranteed Standards payments you get will not affect your entitlement to any other remedy or action that may be due to you because of your Network Operator's failure.

Clear performance information

We always like to be open and honest in everything we do, so the performance against these Guaranteed Standards, including the levels of compensation paid out, is published by the consumer champion, Consumer Focus.

Visit consumerfocus.org.uk/publications

Complaints and advice

A complaint about a Network Operator

If you have any complaints at all about your Network Operator's service, contact them directly and they'll sort it out as swiftly as possible. You'll find their contact details on your electricity bill.

A complaint about us

We are committed to providing the highest quality service. However when things do go wrong, you can make a complaint and we'll aim to resolve it, and improve as a result.

Where to get a copy of our complaints handling procedure

You can call us on **0800 048 0202**, or email britishgas.co.uk/complaints or you can write to British Gas, PO Box 4805, Worthing BN11 9QU.

Where to get independent advice

If you need independent advice, you can contact Consumer Direct, the Government's helpline for consumer advice on **08454 04 05 06** or via consumerdirect.gov.uk

Codes of practice leaflets

Our codes of practice leaflets provide more information about the levels of service we provide. Find out more at britishgas.co.uk/codesofpractice or call **0800 048 0202**.

If you have any special requirements



If you're hard of hearing or speech impaired and use a textphone, call **18001 0800 072 8626**



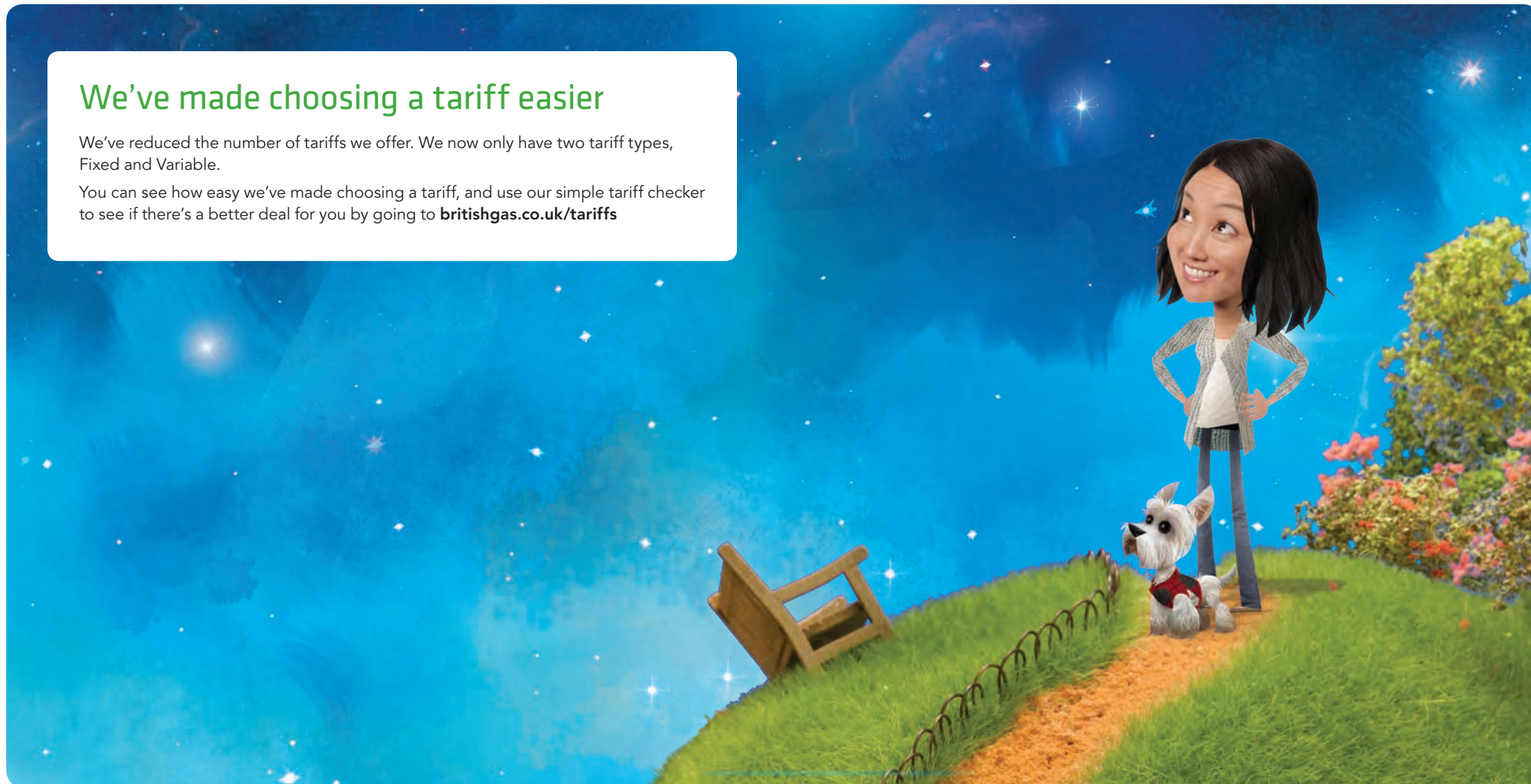
If you need a leaflet in another format, e.g. large print, Braille or audio, call **0800 072 8625**

If you speak a language other than English, let us know and we'll arrange an interpreter.

We've made choosing a tariff easier

We've reduced the number of tariffs we offer. We now only have two tariff types, Fixed and Variable.

You can see how easy we've made choosing a tariff, and use our simple tariff checker to see if there's a better deal for you by going to britishgas.co.uk/tariffs



How to contact us

If you would like any further information, you can contact us on:

Telephone: **0800 048 0202***

Textphone: **18001 0800 072 8626**

Online: britishgas.co.uk/help

Post: **British Gas, PO Box 4805, Worthing BN11 9QW**

*Phone lines are open 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 6pm Saturday. Closed bank holidays. Calls are free from a BT landline, however charges from mobile phones and other networks may vary. Calls may be monitored and/or recorded for quality assurance and compliance purposes.

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