

# Making your energy easy

Ways we can help

  
British Gas

## What's in this booklet

Each year we update and send this booklet to all our customers. It's packed with information from us and other organisations to help you keep your home safe, warm and working.

## Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How can we help you? .....              | 2 |
| Helping you pay your energy bills ..... | 3 |
| Financial support .....                 | 3 |
| Helping you stay safe .....             | 6 |
| Need more information? .....            | 7 |
| Useful information .....                | 8 |

## How can we help you?

There are lots of ways we can help you easily manage your gas and electricity.

### Helping to make your home more energy efficient

Save money by making your energy go further. Go to [britishgas.co.uk/ee](http://britishgas.co.uk/ee) or call us for free on 0800 072 8629\* to find out everything from changing your heating settings to getting energy efficiency advice and more.

### Are you entitled to any benefits?

Sometimes our customers are missing out on benefits they could be claiming. Call our Priority Services Team on 0800 072 8625\* to find out. It's easy for us to check for you.

If you're disabled, or care for someone who is, you can also call the Disability Living Allowance helpline on 0800 121 4600. If you have a textphone, the number is 0800 121 4523.

### Smart meters, smart choice

Smart meters are gas and electricity meters that simplify how you view and manage your energy. They'll automatically send us your meter readings, so you don't have to.

They come with a smart energy monitor that shows you how much energy you are using in pounds and pence. Or, you can go online and use the British Gas interactive tool and app.

They're also handy for Pay As You Go customers. You can view your balance on your smart energy monitor and then top up anywhere by using our app, going online, or calling us from a phone.

## Arranging an interpreter

If English isn't your first language, we'll do our best to find an interpreter who can help.

## Video Relay Service for British Sign Language users

We have partnered with SignVideo to offer a Video Relay service for BSL users.

The service is free to use and is available Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

Visit [britishgas.co.uk/Priority-Service-Register](http://britishgas.co.uk/Priority-Service-Register)

## Helping you pay your energy bills

If you're having problems paying your bills, please talk to us. We've got a team who can help, with plenty of options: call them on 0333 202 9804\*. If you have a textphone, the number's 18001 0800 072 8626\*.

We can:

- Work out a way for you to pay in instalments
- Change your tariff or the way you pay – like switching your bills to Direct Debit
- Fit a Pay As You Go meter
- Take payments straight from your benefits under the government's Fuel Direct scheme
- Install a smart meter to help you keep track of the energy you're using
- Help you on how to make your energy go further with energy efficiency tips
- Let you know how the British Gas Energy Trust and other organisations may be able to help you

## Additional financial support

### The Warm Home Discount scheme

This government scheme includes a one-off payment towards your energy bill.

To find out if you're eligible, visit [britishgas.co.uk/warmhomediscount](http://britishgas.co.uk/warmhomediscount) or call

0800 072 8625\*. Or if you're a Pay As You Go Energy customer, call

0800 294 8604.

### The British Gas Energy Trust

You could be eligible for a grant from this independent charity to help pay your energy bill. Go to [britishgasenergytrust.org.uk](http://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk) for more information, or call them on 01733 421 060.

### Citizens Advice

Citizen Advice can give you help or information about your energy supply – from how to switch supplier to what to do if you have a power outage. Go online at [citizensadvice.org.uk/energy](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/energy) or call 0345 404 0506.

## **StepChange Debt Charity**

For free debt advice, visit their website at [stepchange.org](http://stepchange.org) or call them on 0800 138 1111.

## **Your water company**

If you're struggling to pay your water bills or need some more support, get in touch with your water company for more information.

## **Priority support for the vulnerable**

The Priority Services Register (PSR) is for people who need a bit more help from us, or different kinds of services. It's completely free and suits your needs. So, if you need your bill in a different format like Braille, or you'd like help with meter readings, it's a good idea to register.

## **Who can sign up?**

You can sign up if you or someone in your household is:

- Of pensionable age
- Disabled
- Chronically sick

Or if there are children aged five and under living with you.

We also recognise that people can be vulnerable because of life-changing events such as bereavement, relationship breakdown, job loss, recovery from hospital treatment or living independently for the first time. If you'd like to join the register for any of these reasons, then please let us know.

## **We've signed up to the PSR promise**

This has been made by all participating energy companies in the UK. We'll only share details about your personal situation as agreed with you so that our trusted partners can tailor their services to help. You'll get extra support when you need it.

We'll always follow privacy laws and your PSR information will never be used for marketing. Once you've joined we may contact you occasionally to make sure your details are accurate and up to date. If your situation changes, or you don't want to be on the PSR anymore, just get in touch and we'll sort it out for you.

## **How to join**

Call us on 0800 072 8625\*; or if you're a Pay As You Go customer on 0800 294 8604\*. If you have a textphone, the number's 18001 0800 072 8626\*. If you use British Sign Language, we also have a video relay sign interpretation service. Visit [britishgas.co.uk/Priority-Service-Register](http://britishgas.co.uk/Priority-Service-Register) for more information.

## **What you get from the Priority Services Register**

We'll let you know in advance about any planned supply interruptions.

If your gas or electricity is going to be stopped, your network operator will get in touch beforehand and advise you on what to do. Your network operator is the company that manages your supply but not your bills. You'll also get priority reconnection.

## **Free annual gas safety checks**

You may be eligible for a free annual check for your gas appliances if you:

- Live alone, or with other people who are all eligible for a pension, or are disabled, chronically sick or under 18
- Live with a child under five years old

You'll need to meet certain conditions, like being a homeowner and on means tested benefits.

Did you know? If you live in rented accommodation, it's your landlord's responsibility to make sure your gas appliances get checked every year.

## **We'll send your information in a format that suits you**

We can send bills, letters and information in large print, Braille or on a CD.

And we can call you every quarter to talk you through your bills, if that's helpful.

You can also nominate someone else to discuss or handle your account, if you prefer. Or support you in setting up of a Power of Attorney.

## **We'll help you with meter readings**

If there's no one who can help you read your meter, we'll send someone to do it for you.

## **We'll give you your own personal password**

You can ask us to use a personal password whenever anyone from British Gas visits your home. That way, you can have confidence about their identity.

## **We can move your meters**

We can look at moving your meters for free if you:

- Can't reach the safety handle on your gas meter
- Can't get to your Pay As You Go meter to top it up
- Are looking at the lowest cost option
- Need to do a site survey

However, we won't move them if you think they'd look better somewhere else. Sorry.

## Helping you stay safe

Sometimes old gas boilers, appliances and damaged pipes can cause gas or carbon monoxide leaks. We've got ways to keep you and your energy supply safe.

### What is carbon monoxide?

It's a poisonous gas. When you burn fuels like wood, oil or gas without enough air around them, they make carbon monoxide. This could happen in a broken boiler or fireplace.

### How can I tell if it's carbon monoxide?



Carbon monoxide is odourless, tasteless and invisible, so it's difficult to detect.

Here are some things you should look out for:

- Stains, soot marks or discolouration on or around your gas boiler
- A smoke smell or a lot of condensation in the room the appliance is in
- A pilot light that goes out a lot. Also, pilot lights should burn blue – if it's yellow or orange, it's a sign that carbon monoxide might be present

The physical symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning feel a bit like flu. They include headaches, dizziness, confusion and extreme tiredness. If you or anyone in your home shows any of these symptoms, you need to see a doctor immediately.

### Carbon monoxide detectors

These set off an alarm if they detect a dangerous amount of carbon monoxide. They're easy to get, but if you do buy one, make sure it complies with BS EN 50291: 2010 and carries one of these signs:  

**Tip:** We've got more information online about carbon monoxide alarms. Visit [britishgas.co.uk/coalarm](http://britishgas.co.uk/coalarm) or call 0333 202 9530\*.

### Gas safety checks

If you'd like someone else to carry out any repairs, it's really important to make sure they're Gas Safe registered. You can check they're qualified at [gassaferegister.co.uk](http://gassaferegister.co.uk)

We can check your gas appliances are safe with our Gas Safety Check. If you're not eligible for a free gas safety check but would still like your appliances checking, we can do it for you.

If we find any problems we'll explain what's wrong, what you need to do, and how much it'll cost for us to fix it.

Concerned? Call the National Gas Emergency Services. They're open 24 hours a day. Call 0800 111 999. If you have a textphone, dial 18001 0800 371 787.

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

## Need more information?

- To download a copy of this leaflet, go to [britishgas.co.uk/info](http://britishgas.co.uk/info)
- For a free paper copy call us on 0300 048 0202\*
- If you'd like this information in another format, like large print, Braille or CD, call 0800 072 8625\*
- If you have hearing difficulties, and you use a textphone, please call 18001 0800 072 8626\*

## Emergency?

- Gas leaks – call 0800 111 999, textphone: 18001 0800 371 787
- Power cuts - call 105 to be put through to your local electricity network operator

## Not 100% happy with our service?

Let us know if something's gone wrong. We can then try and set it right. To tell us what's happened, you can:

- Call us on 0333 202 9802\*
- Go online, at [britishgas.co.uk/energycomplaints](http://britishgas.co.uk/energycomplaints)
- Or write to us at: Complaints Management Team, PO Box 226, Rotherham S98 1PB

If you'd like to see a copy of our complaints handling procedure (We're listening), just ask and we'll send you one free of charge. You can also find details on our website at [britishgas.co.uk/info](http://britishgas.co.uk/info)

If you want to complain about your network operator, you can usually find their phone number on your bill.

If you'd like advice from an independent body, you can call the Citizens Advice consumer service on 0345 404 0506 or visit their website at: [citizensadvice.org.uk/energy](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/energy)

## Useful information

If you'd like more information, we have free leaflets we can send out, or you can look at them online at [britishgas.co.uk/info](http://britishgas.co.uk/info)

### Lots of ways to pay

How to pay your gas and electricity bill and information on what to do if you can't.

### Is a Pay As You Go meter right for you?

Everything you need to know about our Pay As You Go meters and how to switch.

### Standards you can expect

The services we provide, the levels of customer care we guarantee, and what you're entitled to from the companies that maintain your pipes and cables.

### British Gas calling

What to check before you let one of our representatives into your home.

### Our Values and Our Code

Our values and our code demonstrate our commitment to being a responsible business and bind us together in common pursuit of our strategy and purpose. Find out more on [centrica.com](http://centrica.com)



### All the information in this leaflet applies to both British Gas and Scottish Gas.

\*We may record calls to help improve our service to you. Calls to 0800 numbers are free. Call charges to 03 numbers will cost no more than 01 or 02 numbers, please check with your phone provider.

British Gas is a trading name of British Gas Trading Limited. Registered in England and Wales (No. 03078711). Registered office: Millstream, Maidenhead Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 5GD.

British Gas is a mandatory FIT Licensee. [britishgas.co.uk](http://britishgas.co.uk)

All the information in this leaflet was correct when we printed it (February 2019).