



Helping Vulnerable Customers

April 2020



Introduction

AH&P think it's important to make sure that, should you need them, you can access the range of services we offer. We recognise that you may have different needs based on your situation and we want to ensure your safety at all times so it's important we understand your circumstances.

If you believe your situation means that you need extra support from us, let us know so that we can make things easier for you. Every situation is different, but here are a few examples of some where you might need extra support. We explore some of these examples later on in this document:

- Customers with young children
- Customers who are of pensionable age
- Customers who have a disability, impairment, or who are chronically sick.
- Customers with a visual or hearing impairment.

Over the following pages we set out our range of services for our vulnerable customers. We have specified which of these services are designed to benefit customers with particular needs. We aim to communicate with our customers in a clear and jargon-free manner at all times. If, however, you find any parts of this document difficult to understand, or would like to discuss anything further, please contact us using one of the methods detailed at the end.

1. You can ask to go on our Priority Services Register (PSR)

To identify households which may need additional help in the case of an emergency (such as loss of supply) and to quickly and easily provide advanced warning and additional help in the case of a planned interruption in your supply, we keep a confidential register, called the Priority Services Register.

If, due to your personal characteristics or circumstances, you require additional assistance, you can ask to be added to our Priority Services Register at any time. This may, for example, be because you are of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick, or you have a visual, hearing or other impairment.



You can call us on **01224 580058** or contact us using one of the methods detailed at the end of this document to let us know your details. Alternatively, someone else can contact us on your behalf and give us your details.

You don't have to go on the PSR if you don't want to. There are other services you may find helpful depending on your needs. Read on for more information.

2. You can appoint someone to receive your bills, or talk to us on your behalf.

We can arrange to send your energy bills to any other person (for example, a relative or friend) who has agreed to receive them. As our customer, responsibility for payment of the bill will remain with you at all times, but this service can be useful if someone else is helping you manage your day to day affairs. You can also appoint that person to discuss your account with us on your behalf. These services are completely free of charge. They can be temporary or permanent, and we can still send you a copy of your bill at the same time if you wish to receive one. You can set things up quickly and easily by calling us on **01224 580058** or using one of the other contact methods detailed at the end of this document.

3. What we'll do when visiting your home

There are occasions where we may need to access your property. Should we or our representatives, need to visit your home we will prioritise your request. Visits will otherwise be arranged by appointment and will always take place within normal working hours (between 8am and 5pm on a weekday). If you'd prefer our representatives to visit you during daylight hours only, let us know by contacting us on **01224 580058** or using one of the other contact methods detailed at the end of this document, and we can arrange this.

4. Identification cards

All our representatives carry an identity card at all times, which they will show you without being prompted. Do not be embarrassed to ask for and check their identity



card carefully before letting them into your property. If you are concerned in any way about whether someone is genuinely representing Aberdeen Heat & Power contact us on **01224 580058** to check their credentials. If you are at all suspicious don't take any risks – call the police.

5. Passwords

For your security and peace of mind, you can ask, when booking an appointment, that our representative uses a password or signal when arriving at your property. We will pass this to any representatives involved in a visit. When they arrive at your home you can then ask them for the password or signal before letting them in. To use this service, simply ask us when arranging any such appointment. In case of emergency access being required by a member of staff who has not pre-arranged an appointment please identify yourself as vulnerable.

6. We'll help you with your meter.

Reading your meter

If you have an energy meter we will receive your meter data remotely. This means we will not require regular access to your home to read your meter. However, we may, on occasion, need to access your property to inspect your meter equipment. We will always do our best to agree an appointment with you.

Meter location

If you pay your energy charges through a prepayment meter and you are finding it difficult to access your meter, you can ask us to move it in order to provide better access. We will do so free of charge if it is appropriate and reasonably practicable for us to do this. You must be of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick, or have a visual or hearing impairment to benefit from free meter relocation.



7. Paying your bill.

We offer a number of payment options. Please contact us on **01224 580058** if you would like further information.

If you are unable to pay your bill, or are worried that you may have difficulty paying, please contact us. We will talk through the options with you so that we can agree with you what the best plan of action would be for your particular circumstances. This will allow you to carry on using energy. We will also provide you with information on energy efficiency information.

Disconnecting your energy for non payment

In extreme circumstances, if you do not pay your bill, we may take steps to disconnect your supply. However, we will not do so without first fully considering your individual circumstances at the time. We would only disconnect as a last resort. If you or anyone in your household is vulnerable, then we will not disconnect you between 1 October and 31 March. In any event, we will take all reasonable steps to find out whether you or someone in the household is vulnerable before disconnecting the electricity and/or gas supply to your premises.

8. Providing information to you

We will always aim to provide the facilities you need to communicate effectively with us. See below for further details. If you are blind or partially sighted and you (or someone on your behalf) asks us for information about any bill or statement of account, we will provide you with that information free of charge in a format that is readily accessible to you.



9. Communication with us.

We have a full range of ways you can communicate with us to suit your specific requirements:

Telephone: **01224 580058**

Email: **info@aberdeenheatandpower.co.uk**

Post: **Aberdeen Heat & Power Ltd, 63 Cotton Street, Aberdeen AB11 5EG**

Talking bill: If you have poor eyesight we can have your monthly bill read out to you free of charge. Please call us on **01224 580058** to arrange this.

Large print bills: We can arrange for you to receive your monthly bill in large print format. Please call us on **01224 580058** to arrange for this.

10. Useful contacts.

SCARF

Aberdeen HQ: 1 Cotton Street Aberdeen AB11 5EE Telephone: 01224 213005

Website: www.scarf.org.uk

Email: info@scarf.org.uk

Cash in Your Pocket

Address: The Bridges Centre, 2-4 Poynerook Road, Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB11 5RW

Telephone: 0800 953 4330

Website: www.ciyp.co.uk

Age UK

Scotland: Causewayside House 160 Causewayside Edinburgh EH9 1PR

Telephone: 0845 470 80 90

Email: enquiries@ageconcernandhelptheagedscotland.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk