

Advisors Toolkit Factsheet No 1.a

Billing and Payment

Who supplies electricity and gas to the home?

To find out who supplies a home with electricity or gas contact the following distribution companies:

Electricity:

- for Central & Southern Scotland **0330 101 0300**
- for Northern Scotland **0345 026 2554**

Gas:

- for Scotland **0870 608 1524**

What next – setting up an account?

First, phone the electricity and/or gas supplier with the meter readings. The previous tenant might not have given a final reading and it's important to make sure that the new tenant's bills are accurate right from the start of their tenancy. If the home already has a prepayment meter, ask the supplier to ensure that any debts outstanding from a previous customer are cleared from the meter.

If the householder wants to change their supplier, they do not usually need their landlord's permission, but it may be advisable to check first because some landlords have contracts with suppliers.

Changing energy supplier can be a fairly simple way to save money, but it is worth shopping around for the best deals – that includes asking the current supplier whether the bill payer is on the best tariff they offer. There are many different tariffs to choose from. If there is access to the internet, try using one of the independent price comparison websites. These list most of the tariffs available. Online deals are often amongst the cheapest. If the householder's new home has both electricity and gas, they should consider buying both fuels from the same supplier ('dual fuel'), because they may get a further discount.

For access to approved comparison websites:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/consumers/energy-supplier-comparison-data>

The householder must keep a note of their meter readings during the transfer process to ensure they are billed correctly by both the existing and new supplier(s). See more on Switching in Factsheet 1.c Tariffs and Factsheet 1.d Switching.

However, if the householder has a debt with their current energy supplier that has been outstanding for 28 days or more it may prevent a transfer (though prepayment meter customers can switch even if they have an outstanding debt of up to £500).

How to pay for fuel

There are several different ways to pay for electricity and gas. It is important to choose the method of payment that suits the householder's circumstances – there are potential difficulties as well as benefits associated with all payment arrangements.

See more on each in the Factsheets in Chapter 2 Paying for Energy

See also Factsheet 1.c Tariffs and Factsheet 2.a Understanding Fuel Bills and Annual Statements

