



## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

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### Contents

| Section                                    | Page Number |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Introduction                            | 3           |
| 2. Compliments and Feedback                | 3           |
| 3. Complaints                              | 4           |
| 3.1 Informal Complaints                    | 4           |
| 3.2 Formal Complaints                      | 5           |
| 4 Procedure                                | 5           |
| 5 Investigation and Appeals for Complaints | 6           |
| 6 External Review                          | 7           |
| 7 Reasonable Adjustments                   | 7           |

## 1 Introduction

Established in 2016, Next Energy has grown to be one of the most reputable, active and reliable domestic retrofit specialists in the United Kingdom. Specialising in renewables, insulation and heating systems, we provide energy-saving measures for our clients across funded schemes and private contracts. As a demonstration of our commitment, this policy and procedure have been produced to underpin our Mission and Values to ensure we offer a service that is inclusive for all.

Next Energy aims to deliver the best possible service to all our stakeholders and positively welcomes feedback. We use the information to maintain and positively develop our working practices and services going forward.

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## 2 Compliments and Feedback

We love to hear from people who have had a positive experience with Next Energy. It could range from an installation that has been completed to a great customer experience or to recognise a staff member who has gone above and beyond to assist a customer in some way. We welcome any feedback, suggestions and general comments about our services and the impacts these may have on stakeholders and the surrounding communities.

Anyone wishing to pass on a compliment, feedback or suggestion about a staff member or an aspect of our service can do so by the following access routes:

- **Email:** [customer.services@nextenergyuk.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@nextenergyuk.co.uk)
- **Telephone:** Next Energy Head Office; 0800 021 3145, during office hours; Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00
- **Mail:** Head Office, Unit 5, Puma Court, Kings Business Park, L34 1BD

Where adverse comments have been made on social media platforms, a copy of the complaints procedure will be sent, where possible, to the customer advising them of the complaints process.

All compliments, feedback and suggestions will be acknowledged within 1 working day, passed to the Customer Service Department and used to formulate relevant reports.

### 3 Complaints

We appreciate all feedback so we can learn and improve as a service. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of actions by Next Energy, its staff or those acting on its behalf. We take complaints very seriously and we will investigate all complaints thoroughly within the appropriate timescales.

We will ensure that complainants are kept updated as the investigation progresses and of the outcome. We will also monitor satisfaction with both the outcome and the process.

We recognise that some people may wish to have an advocate to act on their behalf; we will positively support this once we receive written permission from the complainant. We can also involve third parties where it is considered reasonable to do so based on the complainants' individual circumstances. In a minority of cases, some complainants pursue their issues in ways that can impede any investigation or create unreasonable and significant resource issues.

We would not ordinarily expect our staff to spend a significant part of their time dealing with any unreasonable, abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints. We have adopted the Local Government Ombudsman's definition of unreasonable complainant behaviour and persistence.

#### 3.1 Informal Complaints

We encourage customers to talk to us; our staff are here to help and many issues can be resolved informally and immediately. If, after discussion, the problem has not been resolved or the complainant remains dissatisfied, then a formal complaint can be submitted via the following channels:

- **Email:** [customer.services@nextenergyuk.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@nextenergyuk.co.uk)
- **Telephone:** Next Energy Head Office; 0800 021 3145 (option 5), during office hours; Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00
- **Mail:** Head Office, Unit 5, Puma Court, Kings Business Park, L34 1BD
- **Via an identified Customer Liaison Offer:** Details specific to contract

#### What is not a complaint?

- A first-time request for service
- A first-time request to deal with a situation or about the behaviour of others who do not represent the company
- A request to explain a policy
- Disagreeing with a policy or target to deliver a service

## 3.2 Formal Complaints

### What is a complaint?

A complaint may include (but is not limited to):

- Failure to deliver a service within an expected timeframe
- Failure to deliver a service following a specific request
- Unsatisfactory quality of service
- Failure to answer reasonable questions
- Giving misleading or incorrect advice
- Unacceptable behaviour of staff or contractors
- Failure to follow policies and procedures
- Bias, prejudice or unfair acts that result in discrimination on the grounds of protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010

Any information that the complainant provides will be dealt with in confidence and only used in connection with the complaint. Where no contact details are supplied, no response can be given however, the complaint will still be recorded, investigated and reported to the Directors.

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## 4 Procedure

**Contact Customer Service:** While we acknowledge that some customers may have varying degrees of tolerance before raising any form of concern or issue, we expect formal complaints to be submitted via the channels outlined below:

- **Email:** customer.service@nextenergyuk.co.uk
- **Mail:** Head Office Unit 5, Puma Court, Kings Business Park, L34 1BD
- **Telephone:** 0800 021 3145 - during office hours; Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00

**Provide necessary details:** To help the business deal with a complaint and continuously improve our services, we require a range of information including:

- Name and contact details
- Clear description of the complaint
- What the complainant would like us to do to put things right
- The preferred method of contact
- Any relevant evidence to support the complaint

## **Acknowledgment of a Formal Complaint**

There are 3 stages in our complaints process.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint at Stage 1, we will send an acknowledgment within 1 working day confirming receipt. The complaint will be forwarded to the most appropriate department to handle the case. The acknowledgment will also include a reference number for the complaint which will be used in all correspondence.

## **Investigation and Management of the Complaint**

We will collect all relevant information related to the complaint, which may involve reviewing account records, service logs and any communications between the customer and our staff. We will analyse the information gathered to identify the root cause of the issue. We aim to submit a plan of action within 5 working days, requesting the customers' acceptance.

If the complaint is upheld, we will offer appropriate remedial actions, which may include an apology, corrective measures or compensation, where applicable.

We will aim to resolve the complaint within 10 working days from the date of customer agreement.

We will inform the customer of the results of our investigation and the steps we have taken to resolve the complaint. If we need more time to resolve the issue, we will provide a written update and an estimated timeline for resolution.

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## **5 Investigation and Appeals for Complaints**

If the customer is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they can appeal the decision within 14 days of receiving our response and request that the complaint is escalated to Stage 2.

The appeal can be sent to [customer.service@nextenergyuk.co.uk](mailto:customer.service@nextenergyuk.co.uk) or by contacting our Customer Service Team on 0800 021 3145 to request an appeal.

### **Review by Senior Management – Stage 2**

The appeal will be reviewed by a senior manager, who was not involved in the original investigation, to ensure an impartial and thorough re-evaluation of the formal complaint.

Should we require more time, we will provide a written update and an estimated timeline for resolution.

## **Final Decision**

We aim to provide a final decision on the appeal within 10 working days of receiving the appeal request. This will be communicated to the customer in writing, detailing the findings and any further actions to be taken.

If the customer disputes this decision, they can appeal further and request that the complaint is escalated to Stage 3 and we will complete the Senior Management Review at Director level.

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## **6 External Review**

If the customer remains dissatisfied with our final decision, they have the right to raise a dispute with the following:

### **For Renewable Energy i.e. solar panels, air source heat pump:**

Contact Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC):

- Online: <https://www.ghdr.org.uk/raise-a-dispute/>
- Telephone: 0204 616 0848

### **For Government Funded Schemes:**

- Contact the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman at [enquiry@energyombudsman.org](mailto:enquiry@energyombudsman.org)
- Telephone: 0333 241 3209

We value all feedback and are committed to improving our services based on the customer experience. For any further assistance, our Customer Service Team are happy to assist and support.

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## **7 Reasonable Adjustments**

The Equality Act 2010 states we must provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people. Any complainant may request reasonable adjustments to make a complaint and we will give due consideration to these requests.