

Treating Customers Fairly November 2015



We like to think that treating you fairly is the minimum your energy company can do.

We really are committed to giving you market-leading customer service and treating you fairly. We never forget that by buying your gas and electricity from Ebico that you've chosen to join us in the fight against fuel poverty. We really appreciate that.

We're proud to publish our updated 'Treating Customers Fairly' statement in conjunction with our supply partner SSE, which sets out how we meet the Standards of Conduct set out by Ofgem. These standards were introduced to improve the experience you have with your energy supplier and to ensure fair treatment. If you feel our service doesn't meet these standards you should let us know and we'll try and put things right. If you'd like more information about how we respond to such feedback please see our 'Complaints Procedure' [here](#).

Standards of Conduct

Above all, our decisions and actions are based on our commitment to treating you fairly.

To help achieve this, we promise to meet the following standards:

1. We will behave and carry out any actions in a fair, honest, transparent, appropriate and professional way
2. The information we give to you (whether verbally or in writing) will be:
 - complete, accurate and truthful
 - in clear and plain language
 - related to products and/or services that are appropriate for you
 - fairly presented, with the most important information highlighted to you
3. We will always act promptly and courteously to help you. If something goes wrong or a mistake is made, we will work with you to fix this without fuss
4. We continually review the way we do things to ensure our work is complete, thorough, fit for purpose and transparent
5. We will make it easy for you to contact us

On the following pages we have detailed some of our key actions taken to meet these standards.

We will behave and carry out any actions in a fair, honest, transparent, appropriate and professional way

Working together with our supply partner SSE, we listen to employees who are in contact with our customers each day. We make it easy for employees to keep us informed about the areas where we could do more to treat you fairly.

We continue to work closely with organisations such as Citizens Advice, NEA and the Department for Energy and Climate Change. These organisations help us to understand customers' needs and keep our customers at the forefront of everything we do.

Our mission at Ebico is to help those who are affected by fuel poverty. One of the ways we do this is through our Trust. The [Ebico Trust](#) regularly invites applications for funding from organisations that wish us to support projects that tackle fuel poverty in sustainable ways. It funds a range of projects from providing advice or guidance, to making practical and sustainable improvements to the conditions of properties occupied by those affected by fuel poverty.

In the six short years that the Ebico Trust has been in operation, we have donated over £1 million in grants to support projects that tackle fuel poverty across England, Scotland and Wales. This financial support has enabled these community projects to help thousands of people in fuel poverty and train-up local energy advisers who continue to do this important work.

The information we give to you (whether verbally or in writing) will be:

- **complete, accurate and truthful.**
- **in clear and plain language.**
- **related to products and/or services that are appropriate for you.**
- **fairly presented, with the most important information highlighted to you.**

Our bill design provides you with a bill that's easy to understand at a glance, so you can clearly see the energy you've used and how much it costs.

Our bills are available in Braille, large print and audio format for our sight and hearing-impaired customers. If you need your bill in one of these formats, please get in touch.

We have launched a SignVideo service for customers who use British Sign Language, through which they can communicate in sign language via a live video link. This enables customers who could not previously have had real-time conversations with us to do so.

Our new website has been designed with you, our customers in mind. We've reviewed all the content so that it is written in plain English. We hope it lets you make an informed choice about the products and services that are right for you, at a time that's convenient.

You can get an estimate of your annual energy costs based on our energy plan quickly and easily at ebico.org.uk. If you know how much gas or electricity you have used in the last year, we can provide a more personalised estimate suited to your individual circumstances.

You can also now apply to join Ebico over the phone. Please call 0345 071 9546. Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than calling 01 and 02 prefixed numbers. For specific call charge details please check with your own provider.

We will always act promptly and courteously to help you. If something goes wrong or a mistake is made, we will work with you to fix this without fuss

We have an ongoing commitment to provide you with the very best experience you can have with an energy provider. While every complaint is one too many, we are pleased that our continued commitment to resolving issues quickly and directly with our customers is working.

Our success in this area is achieved through the hard work of our customer service teams who are committed to delivering the very best standard of service.

This is recognised in independent surveys and for the last six years Ebico has been amongst the top-rated UK energy companies in the Which? Energy Company Satisfaction Survey. Ebico has been voted into third place in the Which? 2015 Energy Companies Satisfaction Survey.

Our supply partner SSE aims to lead the industry by reducing the average time it takes them to resolve a complaint from six days to four days. In an independent report commissioned by our regulator, Ofgem, in September 2014 SSE was the leading supplier for complaint handling amongst the major suppliers. They are proud to have been recognised as the best performing energy supplier for complaint handling in every quarterly Citizens Advice Energy Supplier Performance report since it was first launched in 2010.* But they don't stop there. They took on board the report findings and are working hard to enhance their performance as part of their commitment to continual improvement.

We continually review our Complaints Handling Procedure and publish our Annual Complaints Report on our website, so that you can see how we're doing.

A report by Ombudsman Services: Energy also showed that between April and June 2015 the number of complaints it accepted from SSE (Ebico's supply partner) customers was the lowest among Great Britain's 10 largest suppliers, with just 3.98 complaints for every 100,000 SSE customers compared to an industry average of 27.234. However, their aim is to remain the best in the industry at putting things right and they want to improve their performance further still.

So, from now on, we will inform you of your right to contact the Ombudsman for resolution of your complaint after just six weeks, rather than the mandatory eight weeks, as part of our efforts to raise the bar on complaint handling. Our ambition over the next 12 months will be to reduce the time even further to four weeks. As part of this we are making it easier for you to contact us and follow up on complaints. We have introduced SMS texting as an easy way to contact us while dealing with a problem as well as providing you with direct routes back to our expert handlers.

* Citizens Advice, formerly Consumer Futures, has published performance data on major suppliers' complaint handling since 2010. The latest data can be found here: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/how-citizens-advice-works/citizensadvice-consumer-work/supplier-performance/energy-supplier-performance/>

We continually review the way we do things to ensure our work is complete, thorough, fit for purpose and transparent

We're committed to treating customers fairly. In particular our customer service team here at Ebico is dedicated to ensuring that our customers are central to everything we do.

We have developed an enhanced Disability and Equality Act training package for customer service and sales employees. This will ensure that our teams are better equipped to identify vulnerability, are able to adapt our service to ensure customers are given the most support possible, and have a sound understanding of the legislation

Working closely with the Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) at Stirling University we have prepared a guide for all employees to assist in dealing with customers with dementia, as well as a booklet containing practical tips for those caring for someone suffering from dementia. In addition, specialist teams have received additional training from the DSDC.

We will make it easy for you to contact us

As well as by phone or in writing, you can contact us by email at info@ebico.org.uk letting you contact us using the channel that suits you.

It's our aim to have your call answered by the people who are best equipped to help you with your query. Whether you're calling to discuss moving home or ask a question about your payment arrangements, our experts in dedicated departments are trained to help you with efficiency and care.

- If you would like a printed copy of our Treating Customers Fairly statement please get in touch.
- Call us on 0800 458 7689 or 01993 608 404. Our contact centre is UK-based and is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.
- Email us at info@ebico.org.uk
- Contact us via Twitter @ebicoltd or on Facebook.
- Write to us at: Ebico Limited, PO Box 354, Witney OX29 7WN