

Citizens Advice



A stronger voice for consumers

Representing consumers in energy, postal services and water (in Scotland)

March 2015

Foreword

Over recent years Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland have taken on new responsibilities for consumers. From 2012 to 2014 we took over the national telephone consumer helpline and the lead role for consumer education from the former Office for Fair Trading and the general consumer advocacy role of the former Consumer Focus¹.

Last year we took responsibility from Consumer Futures for representing the interests of consumers of energy and postal services in England, Scotland and Wales and for water consumers in Scotland.

Bringing these functions together in a single partnership between our two charities has delivered a simpler advice landscape for consumers, a deeper and richer evidence base of consumer experiences and a more powerful advocate for consumer interests.

Our particular role in energy, post and water requires us to be clear about our priorities so we can work closely with a range of policy makers, regulators and market participants to improve outcomes for consumers. This role is funded, in the main, by consumers through levies raised from market participants. We therefore also have a responsibility to be clear about how we use that money to achieve the best outcomes for consumers.

This work programme covers the activities of Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland in relation to our priorities in these essential markets for 2015/16. The outcomes identified against each priority reflect our focus for consumers over a longer period.

We will account for the impact of this work programme, and any additional activity undertaken in the financial year, in an Annual Report. That report will be published as soon after the end of the financial year as possible and will outline transparently how public funds have been spent against our priorities.

¹ After the transfer of general consumer responsibilities in April 2013, Consumer Focus was renamed Consumer Futures to reflect its emphasis on specific economically regulated markets.

Our Shared Vision

Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland have a shared vision of our role for consumers in these key markets.

We will be a stronger voice for all consumers, but especially those in vulnerable circumstances.

We will represent the interests of the whole person and of real households, not just as parties to a transaction.

We will help people find a way forward themselves, through better advice and information.

We will put consumers in a stronger position in these markets, and in relation to the decisions made about them.

Most of the issues in this work programme affect consumers across England, Scotland and Wales. Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland form a strong partnership, working together to ensure that particular national dimensions are understood and addressed.

For issues which are specific to England, Scotland or Wales, we work together to take those issues forward, but to ensure that our activities are aligned and consistent.

How we will work

We will achieve our vision through the way we work, the way we collaborate and by a focus on the outcomes we achieve for consumers.

We will:

- Base our influence on the strongest evidence from our clients, or through market research and industry investigations. We will gain greater insight from our clients through a programme of qualitative research on key market issues;
- Collaborate to achieve positive solutions, because little is achieved by acting alone. We will continue to work closely with regulators, Governments, European Institutions, other consumer groups and, importantly, market participants;
- Work as one team across England, Scotland and Wales recognising where there are devolved responsibilities, differences in consumer experience and levers to achieve change;
- Help people to be stronger agents for change by linking our research and policy priorities with simpler and more effective advice provision and consumer empowerment campaigns;
- Be a trusted partner and a critical friend for our stakeholders recognising our responsibilities and unique roles in these markets;
- Balance the interests of current and future consumers so that we understand and can influence the longer term implications of policy decisions and the trade-offs involved;
- Take our responsibilities seriously and engage in detailed industry and regulatory processes where the importance for consumers is clear and our resources allow.

Our Energy priorities

We want every household, regardless of income, to enjoy an affordable energy supply. That will require a market and policy framework that enables consumers to get the best deal and to control their energy use so that they waste less and pay less.

A fundamental competition review of the energy market by the Competition and Markets Authority is due to complete in 2015. The roll-out of smart meters has the potential to transform how consumers engage in the energy market and to end the second class service of pre-payment meter users. Policy makers have enormous expectations of how changes in consumer behaviour could the market work better, reduce bills and carbon.

Priority 1: Consumers have access to free and helpful advice to help them take control of their energy bills and get a better deal in the market

Outcomes

- **Consumers have simple access to comprehensive energy advice, including energy efficiency, tariffs, fuel debt and switching.**
- **Consumers have the information they need to make informed choices, including about supplier performance on complaint handling.**
- **Consumers enjoy better service and easier complaint resolution.**

Activities

1. Help consumers in England, Scotland and Wales engage in the market through Energy Best Deal and Energy Best Deal Extra.
2. Extend our supplier performance league table to include all domestic suppliers, launch a new league table for non-domestic suppliers and use that data to encourage suppliers to improve their customer service performance.
3. Provide more personalised pricing information for our clients, including through bespoke comparison tools.
4. Pilot a consumer forum with a strong energy focus, modelled on our successful financial capability forums and support local Consumer Empowerment Partnerships in England and Wales to deliver more effective education activities.
5. Publish research identifying gaps and inconsistencies in the current provision of energy advice and redress and recommend ways to strengthen and streamline
6. Work with suppliers to improve their signposting to the Citizens Advice consumer service and to Ombudsman Services.
7. Provide advice on consumers' options, opportunities and rights during the smart meter rollout.
8. Work with industry and the regulator to ensure improve the consistency of direct complaint recording and reporting by suppliers.
9. Help consumers to understand their right, access redress and navigate complex protection schemes in energy efficiency, renewable power, community energy, oil and LPG, heat and district heating.

Priority 2: Identify issues that cause harm and promote solutions to make the energy market work better

Outcomes

- **Consumers, particularly those who are more vulnerable, get a better service and are treated more fairly by suppliers including through the sharing of best practice.**
- **Consumer detriment caused by supplier policies or practices is identified and resolved quickly.**
- **Consumers in off-grid households enjoy the same access to consumer information, support, protection and redress rights as dual fuel customers.**

Activities

1. Work with the industry and the regulator to ensure that suppliers' debt policies and practices take account of consumers' individual needs.
2. Identify price support options for vulnerable consumers that will ensure better outcomes for these consumers.
3. Provide analysis of problems with energy suppliers and service providers in the emerging energy services market.
4. Refer companies to relevant enforcement bodies in cases of licence or code breaches or where they have been treating consumers unfairly.
5. Provide suppliers and other providers with regular information about the volume and type of contacts made to the Consumer Service and Extra Help Unit to help them understand the nature of their customers' problems and take action.
6. Gather evidence regarding off-grid consumers to inform the regulation of markets such as bottled gas and heating oil, renewables and micro generation, and ensure that off-grid consumers across England, Wales and Scotland do not suffer through lack of access to regulated energy markets.
7. Publish research on energy tariff options for vulnerable consumers, informed by the experience of other European countries.
8. Report on consumers' experience of energy bills, 10 years on from the super complaint on energy billing, identifying where further improvements are possible to make it easier for consumers to take control.
9. Monitor and influence market developments to ensure that suppliers deliver a smart prepay offer that transforms the service offered to prepay consumers.
10. Represent GB consumer interests in the EU review of the retail market design.

Priority 3: Promote ways to eliminate fuel poverty through coordinated energy, housing, health and income policies

Outcomes

- **Low income and fuel poor households have access to strong programmes that contribute towards meeting fuel poverty targets in England, Scotland and Wales.**
- **Consumers benefit from locally delivered programmes which use detailed knowledge of local housing and residents' circumstances to provide targeted services.**
- **Minimum energy efficiency standards, adequately enforced, become a central tool for eliminating cold homes, particularly those of low income households.**

Activities

1. Demonstrate how collaboration between the health sector, housing providers, advice agencies, local authorities and others can prevent ill health, deliver affordable warmth and increase low income households' incomes.
2. Research and compare the fuel poverty policies in England, Scotland and Wales, and learn from the policies and programmes of other EU countries, to promote the adoption of best practice across Great Britain.
3. Achieve and influence a Scottish Government review of its existing fuel poverty strategy and target to better reflect current circumstances, and considers alternative objectives, while continuing to reflect the need for urgent action.
4. Persuade the Welsh Government to undertake detailed and regular monitoring of fuel poverty and cold homes in Wales, including at small area level, in order to improve the targeting of its fuel poverty programmes.
5. Support, through gathering evidence and sharing best practice, the delivery of comprehensive fuel poverty services by trusted local agencies wherever they are best placed to do so.
6. Represent consumers in fuel poverty forums and working groups of UK, Scottish and Welsh governments, Ofgem and the European Commission.
7. Issue a call for evidence to determine whether the ECO Affordable Warmth and CSCO programmes meet the needs of low income households.

Priority 4: Put consumers in control of their energy bills and build consumer confidence in the emerging energy services market for households, through the delivery of affordable, accessible, safe options for all

Outcomes

- **Consumers have access to good quality energy related products and services provided to common standards with prompt action taken against rogue traders.**
- **Consumers understand their rights and where to get advice during the installation of smart meters which, together with associated services, give those in vulnerable positions greater control over their use of energy.**
- **Improving home energy efficiency standards - achieved via regulation, grants, zero interest loans and free energy advice - means that consumers have warmer, healthier homes and more affordable energy bills.**
- **More consumers benefit from lower energy bills as a result of the development of cost effective heat networks and renewable heat and power.**

Activities

1. Monitor and report on consumer detriment arising from the provision and marketing of energy related products and services and advocate clear, credible and comparable evidence in the promotion of such products and services.
2. Research consumer rights and attitudes to the use of energy services data and options to ensure and enable their control and use of that data.
3. Ensure EU strategies and legislative proposals for energy efficiency in products and buildings, renewable heat, demand response and electricity market design address the needs of British energy consumers.
4. Identify options for filling the gaps in current plans to support vulnerable consumers during the rollout of smart meters.
5. Research the needs of consumers in the smart meter rollout and promote solutions through forums and related working groups in GB and the EU.
6. Make the case for the designation of home energy efficiency as a national infrastructure priority.
7. Support initiatives to embed energy efficiency within property values and promote using the sale or rental of a home as a key trigger for energy efficiency investment.
8. Research and promote consumer needs in the development and delivery of the UK and devolved government's heat and renewable energy strategies, with a particular focus on emerging consumer protection frameworks.
9. Monitor and inform the development of emerging energy service models that enable consumers to take control of their energy bills.

Priority 5: Inform the CMA competition investigation

Outcomes

- **The CMA investigation tackles the cause of distrust, disengagement and poor consumer outcomes that have come to define the energy market in recent years.**
- **A way to identify trends in costs, prices and profits that is accepted by firms, regulators and consumer groups.**
- **Remedies to protect the interests of consumers who are not beneficiaries of competitive market.**

Activities

1. Respond to consultations, in particular by providing evidence and causes of consumer detriment, as well as commenting on possible remedies.
2. Work with Ofgem and others to understand the impact on consumers across England, Scotland and Wales of the implementation of any reform package proposed by the CMA.
3. Provide analysis of different models of backstop tariff for those who do not benefit from competitive offers.

Priority 6: Effective industry governance and network regulation

Outcomes

- **Gas and electricity consumers get the services they need at a price that represents value for money from their energy networks.**
- **Improved transparency in regulated networks through better reporting and disclosure of performance and earnings.**
- **More responsive and accessible code governance arrangements that reduce barriers to reform enable the consumer interest to contribute fully.**

Activities

1. Research and promote models of more transparent reporting of network performance.
2. Monitor networks' performance against their commitments under the 'RIIO' price controls.
3. Represent the consumer interest on network code modification panels.
4. Ensure that the regulation and governance of energy networks takes into account the needs of consumers in the different nations and regions across Great Britain.
5. Make the case for building a consumer interest objective into the industry codes.
6. Influence the development of the new European network codes and broader market design, ensuring consumer interests are not overlooked and an open change process is put in place.
7. Represent consumers in DECC, Ofgem and European regulatory and governance initiatives.

The Extra Help Unit

Outcomes

- **Provide support to consumers experiencing problems resolving difficulties with the energy supplier.**
- **Suppliers improve the way they respond to consumers in the most vulnerable circumstances.**

Activities

1. Produce a detailed operational business plan that sets out targets, expected volumes and outcomes.
2. Investigate and negotiate with suppliers until a consumers' case is resolved or deadlock reached.
3. Ensure appropriate payment methods and payment plans are in place.
4. Signpost and make referrals for consumers to trust funds, debt advice, food banks, energy efficiency and social services.
5. Carry out policy analysis on casework and raise any concerns initially with energy policy team, suppliers, and Ofgem.
6. Meet supplier groups and individual companies to address issues that emerge from our caseload.

Our Postal Services priorities

We want postal services to respond to the needs of consumers and communities across England, Scotland and Wales, now and in the near future. We want the debate about the public benefit and value of these services to be driven by how people live their lives, not just by market drivers or network rationalisation. Our society and economy are becoming increasingly digitised. That affects digital natives and the digitally excluded. We want consumers to have continued access to reliable and affordable delivery of letters and goods and access to essential services through the post office network.

The volume of mail posted by consumers continues to reduce as the volume of parcels posted increases. Convenience and transparency around the costs and service of parcel delivery becomes a more important consideration. The transformation of the post office network runs in parallel to other massive changes for consumers as high streets transform, shopping behaviours change, public services go digital and bank branches close; all providing risks and opportunities.

Priority 1: postal services and post office network should anticipate and respond to changing consumer and community needs
Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Postal services develop in response to the broader social, behavioural, economic and public service delivery changes that affect people's lives.
Activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Engage with evidence and insight from a broad range of stakeholders within and beyond the postal services markets.2. Identify the key issues that may determine how postal services could evolve to meet changing consumer and community needs.3. Understand any likely threats and opportunities that change may present to consumers in different parts of England, Scotland and Wales, how different consumer and community needs may converge or diverge and what new business models may emerge.4. Employ scenario and trend analysis to obtain a range of views of need given likely increases in home working, an aging population, the impact of sustainability and green issues.5. Consider the impact of the growing ability to collect and drop off packages from post offices, other retail premises and lockers.6. Explore the role of the post office in delivering public and financial services and how these may provide essential cover for vulnerable and rural communities in England, Scotland and Wales.

Priority 2: a sustainable post office network that is accessible and offers services and products relevant to each diverse community it serves

Outcomes

- **Consumers are seen to benefit from a restructured branch network that offers improved access, services and opening hours for consumers, maintaining access to the full range of services and products in rural areas.**
- **Consumers are able to influence effectively decision on local branches and the impact of proposed changes on communities.**
- **Proposals to move or close branches that would significantly weaken consumer access to Post Office services are withdrawn.**
- **Diverse funding sources are in place in England, Scotland and Wales to support the impact of branch conversions in local communities.**

Activities

1. Refresh our role on the transformation programme so that our case by case evaluation is properly focused and represents the needs of consumers and communities.
2. Strengthen our resources around the country to engage on proposed changes in their localities, and at an earlier stage.
3. Provide evidence on access to services and products across the network.
4. Engage with Bureaux in areas where significant post office changes are proposed.
5. Share insights from the transformation programme with POL and other stakeholders in England, Scotland and Wales.

Priority 3: consumers expect good services and products at a fair and reasonable price

Outcomes

- **The postal products and services available to consumers are accessible and represent good value for money.**
- **Consumers see improved service standards in Post Office Locals, Mains, the busiest High Street Crown and franchised Post Offices, and across all postal service providers, including accurate product and pricing advice.**
- **Consumers have access to a responsive complaints handling and redress procures in the mail and parcel market and understand to use it.**

Activities

1. Highlight the major areas of detriment and good performance for consumers in England, Scotland and Wales.
2. Monitor the firms' own standards of performance data.
3. Push for Postal Operators and Post Office Ltd to report performance and quality of service in a more transparent fashion.
4. Develop strong evidence about the needs of consumers in relation to issues including collections and deliveries, parcels and tracking services.

Priority 4: keep the consumer voice at the heart of developing UK and European mail and parcel markets

Outcomes

- **Consumer needs determine any proposals to change the scope of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) and wider postal services regulatory frameworks at a UK and EU level.**
- **End-to-end competition in the mail market leads to innovation and efficiency which benefits all consumers.**
- **Any proposed changes to regulation of Member State and cross-border postal services from the EU Commission reflect the views of UK consumers.**

Activities

1. Monitor the impact of competition in mail market and the threats and opportunities to the USO.
2. Provide evidence regarding the future need and expectations for USO services of residential consumers and small and micro businesses.
3. Represent the consumer interest in any consideration regarding current USO requirements and any scope for change.
4. Engage with EU Commission on policy and regulatory proposals that could impact UK consumers.

Our Water priorities

Citizens Advice Scotland is the statutory representative body for water customers in Scotland. We want to ensure that water charges are easily understood and affordable for all, to work with partners to prevent consumers from getting into debt and to ensure that any debt recovery is fair for customers and sustainable for industry. We want to support consumers to have their voice heard in policy making processes and we want business users to benefit from competition.

Priority 1: A consumer focused water industry

Outcomes

- **The role for customer challenge and representation in the water industry is clearly defined and supports a more customer-centric industry with improved services and value for money.**
- **Consumer access to and experience of redress processes are improved**
- **Consumers have a better understanding of their rights and are empowered to input into key decisions in the water industry.**
- **Scottish Water can evidence additional benefits to consumers and communities through effective consultation processes around investment works and renewables.**

Activities

1. Learn from the evaluation of the Customer Forum with Scottish Water and WICS and identify an appropriate framework for any future consumer representation.
2. Work with SPSO and others to identify areas where the consumer redress process can be improved for water customers.
3. Support Scottish Water in developing customer engagement, information and education activities to empower consumers.
4. Work with Scottish Water and others to ensure consumer experiences, views and needs shape the industry's approach to quality and resilience and to broader strategic aims such as economic growth, tackling climate change and environmental protection.
5. Work with Scottish Water in areas that potentially impact consumers such as capital investment works and renewable initiatives.

Priority 2: Paying for Water: fair charges and debt management

Outcomes

- **The water industry, government and local authorities have a greater understanding of water debt and its causes and effects for consumers.**
- **Plans are put in place for a more effective and customer-centric model of debt recovery and support for consumers who struggle to pay for water, taking into account the need to balance income maximisation with protection for vulnerable consumers.**
- **Long term charging strategies take into account changing consumer needs across domestic and non-domestic consumers.**

Activities

1. Use evidence from research into consumers' experience of water and sewerage debt to advocate for additional measures to be considered by industry partners and the Scottish Government that mitigate hardship and vulnerability.
2. Represent consumers as part of the Long Term Charging Review Group to ensure that water and sewerage charges are affordable to all consumers.
3. Work with Scottish Water and other key stakeholders to identify gaps within the existing billing and collection framework.
4. Work with the Scottish Government, the Water Direct Steering Group and local authorities to develop an approach to recovering water and sewerage debt that demonstrates a balance between maximising revenue and protecting customers that are experiencing hardship.

Priority 3: Supporting non-domestic water consumers

Outcomes

- **Non-domestic consumers, particularly small businesses and sole traders have equal access to the benefits that competition offers.**
- **Debt recovery practices are improved for non-domestic consumers in a way which balances income maximisation with protecting consumers.**

Activities

1. Use evidence from research into small to medium sized businesses to work with relevant parties to explore additional measures required to ensure that non-domestic consumers have equal access to the benefits that competition offers.
2. Work with licensed providers, In-court Advisors and others to advocate for fairer measures to be taken to address problem debt cases and to push for improved debt recovery procedures that balance income maximisation with protecting non-domestic consumers.

Our Cross Cutting priorities

We want markets, regulators and policy makers to test their outcomes for consumers against the best performing sectors, to reflect the needs of all consumers, not just those who are most engaged and to have the deepest understanding of the experience of consumers who may be vulnerable or treated unfairly.

We want all consumers to be the beneficiaries not victims of an increasingly digital economy. We want more imaginative responses from policy makers and businesses that enable consumers to exert meaningful control over their data and digital experience, within a trusted and safe system.

Around £310bn of infrastructure investments are identified in the National Infrastructure Plan, around two-thirds of which are expected to be paid for through bills rather than taxes. We want Governments and regulators to make decisions on priorities for investment, and the targets and rewards for doing so, fully appraised of legitimate competing demands, of what consumers want and can afford, and of best practice in ensuring value for money.

Priority 1: Consumers get a better deal from infrastructure regulation

Outcomes

- **Improved transparency of the value for money for consumers from monopoly network utilities.**
- **A framework for helping policymakers make better choices when providing stimulus for immature technologies in order to improve the value for money that consumers receive from this investment and to maximise the amount of decarbonisation that they get for their investment.**
- **An assessment of the winners and losers from investment in infrastructure in order to understand if national infrastructure plans are affordable and to identify who is left behind and how to help them.**

Activities

1. Publish a report on whether the rates of return for regulated network firms represent good value for consumers and whether there is the potential for positive reforms in different markets.
2. Explore how consumer interests can be protected when regulators and policy makers seek to provide stimulus for new types of technology and business models.
3. Reveal how the shifting balance between bill paying and tax paying for infrastructure affects groups of consumers across England, Wales and Scotland.
4. Compare the different forms of consumer engagement and evaluation of outcomes across network price control processes.

Priority 2: Essential regulated markets treat consumers fairly and consumers can see the difference

Outcomes

- **Firms, regulators and consumers can see just how fairly different markets treat consumers, especially those in vulnerable circumstances.**
- **Firms embed the principle of treating consumers fairly into their business culture.**
- **The poverty premium is progressively eliminated in key markets, ensuring low income consumers have access to more affordable goods and services.**
- **Consumers are better able to deal with regulated companies in the Welsh language.**

Activities

1. Compare different regulatory approaches to the Treating Consumers Fairly principle.
2. Explore how cross sector benchmarks for Treating Consumer Fairly may be established.
3. Identify and draw out what existing good practice looks like for different groups of consumers.
4. Work with regulators and the UK Regulatory Network to build on the progress made through sector specific Consumer Vulnerability strategies.
5. Consider how allowances for vulnerability can be weighed against the cost of any given intervention.
6. Work with relevant companies operating in Wales to encourage them to develop, design and deliver responsive Welsh language provision for their customers.
7. Explore how different aspects of the consumer journey operate for domestic and small businesses in different markets – switching, securing redress, complaints process, regulatory oversight, compensation for disruption of service – to compare how customers are treated in any given situation.
8. Examine consumer and firm behaviours which lead people on low incomes to pay more for goods and services. Use this knowledge to better support people to access more affordable goods and services through changes in firm behaviours and a consumer empowerment campaign.

Priority 3: Consumers are in control of data within a trusted and safe system

Outcomes

- **Consumers are aware of the value of their data, understand how it is used and know how to control that use to best value from it.**
- **Consumers are able to articulate what they want from digital services and are confident rules and regulations will back them up if things go wrong.**
- **Companies recognise the value of offering choice, a fair value exchange and security guarantees for consumer data and invoke the spirit not the letter of the law on data.**

Activities

1. Publish a report into Personal Data Empowerment (PDE) looking into the challenges and inevitable tensions between data protection, consumer privacy and the use of data to drive greater consumer empowerment.
2. Explore tools and approaches to help those who might be otherwise excluded from the benefits of increasingly digital markets.
3. Run a thought provoking social media campaign to raise consumer awareness of the imbalances in the data system/deal.
4. Ensure that our policy advocacy and organisational practice are aligned so that we are consistent in policy messages and an example of good practice on digital and data issues.
5. Work with consumers and their representatives to establish the elements of a more effective trust agenda for data and digital services (and promote with relevant national and European policy and implementation bodies.)
6. Provide clarity and guidance on how new digital tools, approaches and services could empower consumers in regulated markets, drawing out common insights for all markets.
7. Feed PDE report research conclusions on challenges and opportunities of new technologies for data management into the new EU digital market package.
8. Audit EU policy landscape to identify and represent consumer interests on measures likely to influence the control of data in the regulated markets.
9. Represent consumer concerns for the adoption of the EU data protection regulation.
10. Monitor the application of the new EU data framework with GB regulated markets and tailor actions as needed.

Priority 4: Deeper insight from our clients inform critical issues in energy, postal services, water and other regulated markets

Outcomes

- **Our research and campaign activities are informed by a deeper insight of how market issues – current and emerging - may affect, benefit or harm consumers, especially those in vulnerable circumstances.**
- **Key decisions and outcomes in essential markets are tested with our clients.**
- **There is a stronger voice for consumers who are most often neglected in debates about market reform or policy design.**

Activities

1. Deliver a programme of qualitative research that will test the experience, attitudes, preferences and priorities of our clients in relation to key issues in essential markets.
2. Establish a project team to develop and deliver the research programme working closely with key stakeholders in economically regulated markets.
3. Work across the Citizens Advice service to ensure the programme aligns with other research activity and sources of evidence and insight to produce a comprehensive picture.
4. Engage regulators and others to add value to existing forms of consumer insight and evidence.
5. Share evidence and insight with key stakeholders at early stages of policy formation or during periods of review.
6. Publish results of the programme to inform wider debates about the impact of market behaviour and policy formation on key groups of consumers.

Resource Allocation

Our operating budget for 2014/15 was £8.5 million comprising levies on the energy and, postal services sector, a grant from Scottish Water for our work on behalf of water customers in Scotland and a contribution from BIS toward our cross-cutting work. We expect our budget for 2015/16 to be the same as in the previous year.

We will publish an Annual Report on the impact of this work programme, and any additional activity undertaken in the financial year. That report will be published after the end of the financial year and will outline transparently how public funds have been spent against our priorities.

Budget for work programme (including costs of the EHU):

Revenue stream	2014/15	2015/16
Energy	£5.690m	£5.690m
Postal services	£2.591m	£2.591m
Water (Scotland)	£0.300m	£0.300m
BIS grant	£0.250m	£0.250m

The Extra Help Unit is an operational unit with a dynamic case load. In 2014/15 the cost of the EHU was £1.545m.

