

Appendix 4: Heat Network Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose and scope

This appendix forms part of MSV's Complaints Policy and sets out the additional arrangements that apply to complaints relating to regulated Heat Network services.

MSV's Complaints Policy applies to customers receiving services from MSV, including tenants, leaseholders, shared owners, and customers receiving heating, cooling, or hot water services through a regulated Heat Network.

For the purposes of this appendix, a **Heat Network Complaint** is any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the provision of Heat Network services. This may include billing and payments, customer service, metering, installation, delays, interruptions to heating or hot water supply, maintenance, communication, contractual arrangements, or any action or omission by MSV or those acting on its behalf.

A **Relevant Consumer** is a consumer who falls within the definition of Relevant Consumer under the applicable Heat Network regulatory requirements.

Unless additional requirements are set out within this appendix, Heat Network Complaints will be managed in accordance with MSV's Complaints Policy.

When receiving and handling a Heat Network Complaint, MSV will take account of the customer's individual circumstances, including where they may be in a vulnerable situation, and will take appropriate steps to support them and seek prompt resolution of their complaint.

2. How customers can complain

Heat Network Complaints can be raised by any reasonable means, including:

- orally, by telephone or in person;
- in writing; or
- through available digital channels.

Customers can continue to progress their complaint through each stage using any of these methods and are not required to use the same communication method throughout the complaint.

MSV will make reasonable adjustments and provide information in alternative formats where required, taking account of customers' individual circumstances and relevant equality requirements.

3. Investigating and resolving Heat Network Complaints

MSV will investigate Heat Network Complaints fairly and consistently and will clearly explain the steps being taken to investigate and resolve the complaint.

Where investigation or resolution requires involvement from another authorised person, managing agent, maintenance provider, or service contractor, MSV will coordinate with the relevant organisation as necessary.

Where MSV is responsible for the complaint, we will remain the customer's point of contact and will make reasonable efforts to coordinate the investigation and obtain the information required to provide a clear response.

Depending on the circumstances of the complaint, remedies may include:

- an apology;
- an explanation;
- appropriate corrective or remedial action; and
- compensation where appropriate.

Learning identified through complaints may also be used to support wider service improvement.

4. Internal review and Stage Two

Customers who remain dissatisfied with the handling or outcome of their complaint can request escalation in accordance with MSV's Complaints Policy.

For Heat Network Complaints, Stage Two of MSV's complaints process provides the formal internal review of the complaint.

The Stage Two review will consider the handling and outcome of the complaint and whether any further action or remedy is appropriate.

5. Energy Ombudsman

Heat Network customers have the right to refer an eligible unresolved complaint to the Energy Ombudsman.

A complaint may be referred to the Energy Ombudsman:

- where MSV has informed the customer that it is unable to resolve the complaint to their satisfaction; or
- where the complaint remains unresolved eight weeks after it was first made.

MSV will inform customers of their right to approach the Energy Ombudsman at the appropriate point and provide the information necessary to enable them to do so.

The Energy Ombudsman is independent of MSV and provides its service free of charge to customers.

6. Independent advice and support

Customers can seek independent advice and support in relation to Heat Network services and complaints.

MSV will provide information about the main sources of independent advice, help, and information available to Heat Network customers. This may include Citizens Advice and other relevant independent consumer support organisations.

Current contact information and signposting will be made available to customers through appropriate customer information and communication channels.

7. Access to the Complaints Policy

MSV will provide Heat Network customers with its Complaints Policy, including this appendix, in writing before entering into a Heat Supply Agreement.

A copy will be provided free of charge to any Heat Network customer who requests one.

The Complaints Policy will be published or signposted prominently and accessibly within Heat Network buildings, on MSV's website where appropriate, and through other appropriate channels.

MSV will also send Heat Network customers written information about the Complaints Policy at least once every 12 months.

Where a Heat Network Complaint has not been resolved by the end of the first working day following the day it was received, MSV will direct the customer to the Complaints Policy and offer them a copy free of charge.

Where reasonably requested, information will be provided in an appropriate alternative format, taking account of the customer's circumstances and relevant equality requirements.

8. Recording Heat Network Complaints

MSV will maintain clear and auditable records of Heat Network Complaints.

Records will include, where applicable:

- the date the complaint was received;
- how the complaint was received;
- relevant customer and account information;
- a summary of the complaint;

- advice and information provided to the customer;
- actions taken to investigate and resolve the complaint;
- relevant communications with the customer;
- the customer's communication preferences;
- the outcome of the complaint; and
- the date the complaint was resolved.

Where a complaint has not been resolved by the end of the first working day following the day it was received, MSV will maintain additional records as required, including:

- the steps taken to investigate and resolve the complaint;
- the date on which the complaint was subsequently resolved, where applicable;
- relevant complaint resolution deadlines; and
- the date on which the customer was informed of their right to refer the complaint for independent dispute resolution.

Heat Network Complaint information will be clearly categorised and maintained in a format that supports effective regulatory review and audit.

9. Record retention

Heat Network Complaint records will be retained for a minimum of five years from the date on which the relevant information is recorded.

Records will be stored and maintained in accordance with MSV's information governance and data protection requirements.

10. Monitoring, reporting, and learning

MSV will monitor Heat Network Complaint information to understand performance and identify:

- service failures;
- recurring issues and themes;
- customer detriment;
- opportunities for service improvement; and
- learning that should be shared across the organisation.

Complaint information will be maintained in a format capable of supporting regulatory reporting, assurance, and audit requirements.

Learning from Heat Network Complaints will form part of MSV's wider approach to learning from complaints and customer feedback.

11. Colleague capability

MSV will ensure sufficient suitably trained colleagues are available to manage Heat Network Complaints effectively.

Colleagues responsible for complaint handling will:

- understand MSV's Complaints Policy and the additional requirements applying to Heat Network Complaints;
- have appropriate access to operational teams and information required to investigate complaints;
- have appropriate authority to support fair and timely complaint resolution; and
- be able to explain complaint rights, review arrangements, and external escalation routes clearly to customers.

Relevant training and guidance will be maintained as Heat Network regulation develops.

12. Review

This appendix will be reviewed as part of the annual review of MSV's Complaints Policy and sooner where changes to legislation, Ofgem's Heat Network Authorisation Conditions, or other applicable regulatory requirements require an amendment.