

# **COST OF LIVING CRISIS: FIGHTBACK**

## **Fact sheet 1**

### **Need Help with your Water Bills ?**

Try this link

<https://www.ccwater.org.uk/households/help-with-my-bills/thames-water-watersure-plus/>

Water companies understand that people can struggle to pay their bills and fall into debt at times. If this happens to you, **contact your water company** and explain your situation so that they can provide you with the best support they can offer.

Every water company has a **social tariff scheme** which can help reduce your bills if you're on a low income. Who is eligible for help and the level of support varies depending on your water company.

Ask your water company about its debt support scheme. These can reduce debt if customers stick to a payment plan. You will need to make payments against a pre-agreed payment plan set by your water company.

### **Stop your energy supplier moving you to prepayment**

#### **When you can refuse to be moved to prepayment**

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/stop-your-energy-supplier-installing-a-prepayment-meter/>

Your supplier can't make you move to prepayment if it wouldn't be safe or practical. This means you can refuse to move to prepayment if an illness or disability means you'd be harmed if your gas or electricity was cut off. You can also refuse if you wouldn't be able to get to or use your meter.

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Your supplier also has to follow rules set by Ofgem, the energy regulator. These rules mean your supplier can't make you move to prepayment if:

- you don't agree that you owe them money, and you've told them this - for example if the debt came from a previous tenant
- they haven't offered you other ways to repay money you owe - for example a [repayment plan or payments through your benefits](#)
- they come to your home to install a prepayment meter without giving you notice - at least 7 days for gas and 7 working days for electricity
- they haven't given you at least 28 days to repay your debt before writing to you to say they want to move you to prepayment

Tell your supplier if any of these apply. If they still want to move you to prepayment, you should [complain](#) to get them to change their mind.

## **If you're disabled or ill**

Your supplier can't make you move to prepayment if you:

- are disabled in a way that makes it hard to get to, read or use the meter
- have a mental health condition that makes it hard to get to, read or use the meter
- have an illness that affects your breathing, such as asthma
- have an illness that's made worse by the cold, such as arthritis
- use medical equipment that needs electricity - for example a stairlift or dialysis machine

Tell your supplier if any of these apply. If they still want to move you to prepayment, you should [complain](#) to get them to change their mind.

You should also [ask to be put on your supplier's priority services register](#) - you could get extra help with your energy supply.