

# Utilities

Utilities are (usually) fuel services provided to residential and business properties. They include gas, electricity, water and telephone. The UK utility market is now de-regulated and open for competition by private companies offering cheaper bills.

As with all services, competition is fierce and it is not always easy to find out who can give you the best service at the best price. All the UK regulated utility providers, offer “special services” to people with disabilities. If you are happy with your supplier of gas, electricity etc and have special needs contact them on the numbers given below and ensure that you receive the service that you require.

## GAS

British Gas Home Energy offers a Priority Service Register "Gas Care Register" service for disabled or older customers.

Priority Service Register services include:-

- A free Gas Safety Check
- Special adapters or controls
- Mark appliances for the blind or partially sighted
- Password Scheme to identify British Gas employees if they need to call



- Talking Bills, Braille and large print for blind and partially sighted customers
- Access by "Type talk" and Text phones for Deaf and hearing impaired customers
- Priority scheme
- Moving your gas and/or electricity meters

If you want to know more about the Priority Service Register or any other service on offer, ring Gas Priority Service Register.

You can register now for extra help by calling:

### ***Home Energy care***

Telephone: 0800 072 8625, or call 0800 294 8604

Mobile (PAY AS YOU GO): 0800 048 0202.

## **ELECTRICITY**

There are now so many different electricity suppliers. Below is a list of the main three in our area, it will be best to call your individual supplier to find out about facilities and services they provide for disabled people.



The main suppliers are:

### ***EON***

Telephone: 0800 051 1480, 0845 303 4010

Website: [www.eon-uk.com](http://www.eon-uk.com)

### ***Npower***

Telephone: 0800 073 3000

Mobiles: 0330 100 3000, 0845 070 4850

Website: [www.npower.co.uk](http://www.npower.co.uk)

## ***British Gas***

Telephone: 0845 955 5404 , 0800 048 0202

Website: [www.britishgas.co.uk](http://www.britishgas.co.uk)

HAD.org.uk can also provide details of other organisations that may be able to supply specialised equipment, commercial or otherwise.

## **COMPLAINTS**

If you have a complaint about the service provided by any of the above, their direct telephone numbers for complaints are:

### ***EON***

Telephone: 0845 300 6301, 0333 202 4606

### ***Npower***

Telephone: 0845 070 4856

Landlines: 0800 316 9328

Mobiles: 0330 100 8628

### ***British Gas***

Telephone: 0800 072 8632

If your complaint is unresolved after eight weeks, you should contact:

### ***The Energy Ombudsman***

Telephone: 0330 440 1624 or 01925 530263

Text phone: 0330 440 1600 or 01925 430886

If you have any concerns about your overall consumer rights, more detailed information can be found on the Government's website:

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/Governmentcitizensandrights/Consumer-rights/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Governmentcitizensandrights/Consumer-rights/index.htm)

# TELEPHONES

## BT Special Services

- ▶ Identity cards - genuine BT callers carry an identity card bearing their name and photograph.
- ▶ Priority Fault Repair Service - priority treatment for fault calls for housebound customers.
- ▶ Protected Services Scheme - available to "at risk" customers who can nominate a friend, neighbour or relative to take care of BT bills in the unfortunate event of the customer being unable to arrange payment due to extended hospital stay etc.
- ▶ Special Format BT Bills - braille, "talking bills" and large print versions of BT bills available.

Telephone: 0800 443 311 OR 0800 800 150

You can also find more information at [www.bt.com/inclusion](http://www.bt.com/inclusion).

Free Directory Enquiries service is available for visually impaired or mobility restricted customers. Call 118 500 – Calls are not free.

There are many ways that BT can help people with sensory impairments:-

Hearing impairments	Speech impairments	Visual impairments
Extension bells & sockets  Amplifiers & inductive couplers  Flashing lights & vibrating indicators  "Type talk"  "Minicoms"	Voice synthesizers  Recorded messages	Large button phones  Hands free phones with memory

"Telephones for the Blind" may assist with grants towards installation costs.

Telephone: 01737 248032

## **WATER**

The Water Supplier for the Harrow area is: Veolia Water Central and they can offer a range of special services for customers with special needs including:



- ▶ Supply of special fittings and modifications.
- ▶ Large print bills.
- ▶ Braille bills and letters.
- ▶ Customer "password" scheme.
- ▶ Priority help with interrupted supplies

Further information and registration forms about their 'Safeguard' and 'WaterSure' schemes can be obtained from:

### ***Veolia Water Central***

Address: Tamblin Way

Hatfield

Hertfordshire

AL10 9EZ

Telephone: 0845 769 7985

Email: [helpinghands@veoliawater.co.uk](mailto:helpinghands@veoliawater.co.uk)

Further information including Veolia's Special needs information sheet can be found on their website:

<https://central.veoliawater.co.uk/special-care-get-in-touch.aspx> .

This fact sheet is one of a series, providing information and advice on a number of topics.

## **HAD.ORG.UK FACTSHEETS:**

Fact Sheet 1	Blue Badges
Fact Sheet 2	Utilities
Fact Sheet 3	Wheelchairs
Fact Sheet 4	Accessible Public Transport
Fact Sheet 5	Voluntary Transport
Fact Sheet 6	Holidays
Fact Sheet 7	Dial-a-Ride and Taxicard Schemes
Fact Sheet 8	Motoring
Fact Sheet 9	Aids & Adaptations
Fact Sheet 10	Welfare Benefits
Fact Sheet 11	Direct Payments
Fact Sheet 12	Education & Learning
Fact Sheet 13	Sports
Fact Sheet 14	Visiting Places of Interest
Fact Sheet 15	Access to Shops, Cafes and Everyday Services
Fact Sheet 16	Leisure at Home
Fact Sheet 17	Performing Arts
Fact Sheet 18	Concessionary Travel
Fact Sheet 19	The Care Act 2014
Fact Sheet 20	A General Guide to Housing Benefit
Fact Sheet 21	Housing Benefit for Disabled Students
Fact Sheet 22	Universal Credit

## **HOUSING MATTERS:**

1	General Guide to Housing Benefit
2	Homelessness (Out of Hours) Emergencies
3	10 Rights of Private Tenants
4	Applying as Homelessness (Priority Need)
5	Private Tenants: smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
6	The Right to Rent
7	Rent Increases : Assured Shorthold Tenancies