

## Heat Trust Committee Meeting Minutes

14<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
 Video conference  
 PUBLIC MINUTES

<b>In attendance:</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Voting?</b>
Karen McArthur	Independent Chair	N/A	Casting
Lizzie Moreton	Scheme Administrator	Heat Trust	No
Stephen Knight	Scheme Administrator	Heat Trust	No
Meghan Newman	ADE representative	Association of Decentralised Energy	Yes
Ben Felstead	UK Government (DESNZ) representative	Department for Energy Security & Net Zero	No
Lisa Gregory	Relevant sector representative	Ginger Energy	Yes
Ed Weightman	Independent expert	Severn Trent	Yes
Rosie-May Tilley	Registered Participant representative	SSE	Yes
Anna Eager	Board representative	Heat Trust Board	No
Malcom Rose	Scottish Government - alternate	Scottish Government	No
Robert Frew (alternate)	Ofgem representative	Ofgem	No
Charlotte Rennie (alternate)	Consumer representative	Citizens Advice	Yes
David Bowker	Energy Ombudsman	Attendee	No
Louise Dillon	Energy Ombudsman	Attendee	No
Dave Newton	UK Government (DESNZ) representative	Department for Energy Security & Net Zero	No
Jo Mayall	Registered Participant representative	Veolia	Yes



## Apologies:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Voting</b>
Christine Tate	Scope	Consumer representative	Yes
John Porter	Citizens Advice Scotland	Consumer representative	Yes
Michael O'Brien	Consumer Scotland	Consumer representative	Yes
Tricia Quinn	Ofgem	Ofgem representative	No
Cecelia Robertson dos Santos	Citizens Advice	Consumer representative	Yes
Madeha Ahmed	Department for Energy Security & Net Zero	UK Government (DESNZ) representative	No
Rebecca Robbins	Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC)	Independent expert	Yes
Sonia Facchini	Energy Ombudsman	Attendee	No
Jay Ross	Energy Ombudsman	Attendee	No



# 1. Introduction

The Chair:

- Reminded all attendees of the Competition Law guidance and that the meeting would be recorded for minute-taking purposes.
- Noted that the non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting in February 2026 were published on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026, after circulating them by correspondence for the Committee's review and receiving no comments.
- Noted the apologies received.

## 2. Energy Ombudsman 6-monthly complaints update

The Energy Ombudsman presented the latest summary statistics and themes relating to the Complaints that have been referred to it by Heat Customers under the Heat Trust Scheme. The data covered the period up to 31 March 2026 and included only Complaints about Heat Trust-registered heat networks.

Findings include the following:

- There has been an increase in Accepted cases, this is believed to be due to greater consumer awareness of the Energy Ombudsman and their right to redress
- Signposting remains good following work completed by Heat Trust with their Registered Participants, with the highest volume of signposting being via Deadlock letters
- Top complaint types still remains as Billing and Customer service. Currently there is no category for supply interruptions, so these are captured within Customer Service
- Continue to see a strong upheld rate. Over the full year upheld outcomes is around 70%, which is comparable to gas and electricity supply at 72%
- RPs accept Ombudsman outcomes about 80% of the time. This includes a lot of upheld outcomes. This means that while the Energy Ombudsman didn't agree necessarily with what the supplier did or offered to do, suppliers did agree with the energy ombudsman ruling, showing that suppliers understand ombudsman reasoning.

The Committee:

- a) NOTED the update.

## 3. Scheme Growth Update

Heat Trust updated the Committee on recent Scheme growth. It advised that it now protects 97,800 consumers across 154 heat networks registered by 32 heat suppliers. This includes seven new site registrations from existing RPs since its last update at the February 2026 Committee meeting.



Heat Trust noted that it continues to receive and process applications to register with the Scheme.

Heat Trust confirmed that at present there is no end date for accepting applications and continue to have a steady stream of applications, largely from existing RPs. During the year a Permitted Variation will be completed as per the Scheme Transition Rules to cease accepting applications.

The Committee:

- a) NOTED the update.

## 4. Heat Trust update

Heat Trust advised that they are working collaboratively across organisations (Ofgem, DESNZ etc) about the impact of the Iran war on commercial gas prices and what that might do to heat prices in due course. Heat Trust met with the Minister for Energy Consumers to share our findings and intelligence from the sector. This will continue to be topical and on all parties' radar for the coming months.

As noted in the previous committee meeting, Heat Trust is in the process of taking on a secondee from Ofgem to fill Kathryn's role. We hope to have a start date shortly and will share details in due course.

Operationally Heat Trust has continued to respond to Govt consultations, with the most recent being the HNTAS consultation. The latest set of 6 monthly monitoring data has been supplied by all RPs which covers from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. Heat Trust confirmed it will collect the last set of data for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026- 30<sup>th</sup> September 2026. Final invoicing has started with 80% sent to RPs and PO's requested for the remaining organisations. These invoices reflect the Schemes end date of January 2027, aligning with the Scheme Transition Schedule.

Heat Trust continue to audit RPs and host Members Forums. Recent Members Forums have focussed on Ofgem registration, led by the Ofgem data team to upskill RPs on the registration portal and process.

Heat Trust confirm they continue to lobby and campaign for better consumer protections focused on improving regulations for heat networks.

Key concerns include:

- Price protection and consumer standards: heat network customers lack protections equivalent to energy price caps, guaranteed standards, and compensation schemes available in the gas and electricity sectors. Ofgem are due to consult on Guaranteed Standards of Performance later in the year, which Heat Trust will respond to
- Debt relief: Ofgem was going to have a debt relief scheme for the gas and electricity sector. Although on hold now, we have concerns that the relief scheme didn't cover



heat networks and there's not an equivalent scheme for heat networks. This is despite the fact there's a lot of debt out there hanging over from the energy crisis.

- HNTAS remediation costs: Heat Trust advised that although greatly supportive of the essential need for a Technical Assurance programme, efforts must be made to ensure remediation costs are not passed onto consumers (especially Leaseholders)
- Scottish efficiency support: Heat Trust has continued its work alongside Consumer Scotland/Citizens Advice Scotland to press the Scottish Government to have an equivalent scheme in Scotland to the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme. Once the new Scottish Minister et al are in place campaigning will resume.

The Committee:

- a) NOTED the update

## 5. Scottish Gov update

The Scottish Government gave an update on its regulatory developments, advising they have an ongoing consultation on the proposed new licensing regime in Scotland, the Installation and Maintenance License. It is much more similar to what GB is proposing than the previous mandatory one. Currently in consultation on it now and the changes required to our existing act are included in the draft Heat and Buildings Bill, which was paused last year. The intention is to try and bring it forward to the next session of Parliament. This is subject to the new ministers coming in and making decisions. The draft bill is available here:

[Heat networks - installation and maintenance licence: consultation - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/topics/energy/heat-networks-installation-and-maintenance-licence-consultation)

Scottish Govt are working with colleagues in DESNZ to better understand the Heat Network Efficiency scheme and are preparing briefing materials for incoming ministers. These briefs will outline the potential benefits and costs of the scheme to support future policy decisions.

The Committee:

- a) NOTED the update.

## 6. Ofgem update

Ofgem advised that at the end of April the Private beta digital platform went live and they are starting to see full registrations of networks coming through. Ofgem are continuing to work with Heat Trust on how best to pull and share the relevant data over. Ofgem hosted a few events about registration and how to complete it. This includes a YouTube video on how to register your network and what information you will need to have at hand to complete it. There will be a public register of all organisations (Suppliers and/or Operators and networks) once full registration has been completed per network.

Ofgem confirmed that as part of their work on the middle east conflict, they have sent out a voluntary Request for Information (shared by Heat Trust to RPs). The RFI aims to collect data, linked to energy procurement and debt.



Qualitative research has been ongoing on domestic and non-domestic consumers which will be published this summer. They continue their work on GSoP and are looking to engage with the sector further evidence to aid their work on the proposals and ensure there is understanding of some of the interactions that may occur, such as with housing legislation. Introductory sessions have been held with MHCLG and a review alongside the HNTAS scheme for any correlation between technical standards and payments.

The Committee:

- a) NOTED the update.

## 7. DESNZ update

DESNZ provided an update on the HTNAS consultation, noting that they are currently analysing all responses and all questions to come to a final policy decision. Alongside the consultation responses, it will also be considering other sources of feedback such as the UKDEA working groups letter. It will also include the technical feedback process that is ongoing. This gives industry the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft code documents, which includes the assessment procedures and technical specifications. It also includes a heat network technical standard and a metering and monitoring standard. All of this will be reviewed and will form the draft a government response to the consultation. DESNZ is also preparing some guidance documents that will sit alongside the technical standards. There will also be a launch of some further H&S training that it's looking to do to help prepare the sector.

Heat Trust expressed its explicit support for technical standards and emphasised that from a consumer perspective, that robust technical standards is an essential part of the whole consumer protection framework and urged government to put in place a robust scheme as soon as possible.

DESNZ wanted the minutes to reflect the thanks from the leadership of the DESNZ consumer protection team for the work the Heat Trust team have completed over the last year, including a huge amount of effort to keep DESNZ informed of emerging consumer detriment issues. They have been invaluable in supporting the minister and others on recent issues. And, more generally whenever DESNZ has looked to progress policy decisions the insight provided by the Heat Trust team has been invaluable in helping to shape it.

One area of work where their input has been crucial is in relation to the middle east conflict. Many heat network consumers are already facing higher costs due to expensive energy contracts signed in recent months. More contracts are expected to be renewed before winter, creating a risk of further price increases as consumers may be exposed to high non-domestic gas prices. In response, the government is working with stakeholders across departments, including the Treasury, to better understand the scale of the issue and develop proportionate but wide-reaching mitigation measures. The aim is to prepare solutions in case the expected price pressures materialise, with consumer protection remaining a key focus.

## 8. Any other business



Date of next meeting: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2026

