



Managing Customer Complaints

High on our 'to-do' list is the need to get on top of the volume of complaints we're seeing in the business at the moment. It's an uncomfortable truth for us – complaint levels are just too high, which essentially means that we're failing our customers.

Overall, up to the end of September this year nearly 2,100 complaints have been received across London and the East of England. They arise for a variety of reasons. The top three in the last week are:

1. Not keeping customers informed during work
2. Gas not back on when expected
3. Damage to property

We monitor and measure all complaints that come in so to give you a better idea of where things are going wrong for customers here are the other seven complaints in the top ten:

4. Workmanship
5. Compensation request
6. Future works
7. Private reinstatement not completed in ≤ 5 days
8. Private reinstatement not completed in >5 days (GS2)
9. Private reinstatement of poor quality
10. Meter/pipe position

We're managing to close a lot of them within one day, but the fact remains they shouldn't be coming in. So first things first: if you're in a position to influence any of the causes of complaints – please step up and stop them. If for any reason you can't, here are some other things you can do:

- Take ownership of the complaint from start to end
- Contact the customer as soon as possible – get a clear understanding of the issues, expectations and a potential resolution
- Keep the VoC updated even if you haven't spoken to the customer

- Deliver on your promises
- Manage the customer's expectations, advising what you can and can't do
- If you can't resolve the complaint, seek advice
- Speak to the customer and jointly close the complaint down
- On resolution give VoC clear and accurate information to close
- Remember – a customer complaint is also an opportunity to learn from failings and improve our customer delivery in the future

Your help in reducing the level of complaints is going to make a world of difference to us and to National Grid.