

# Switched on

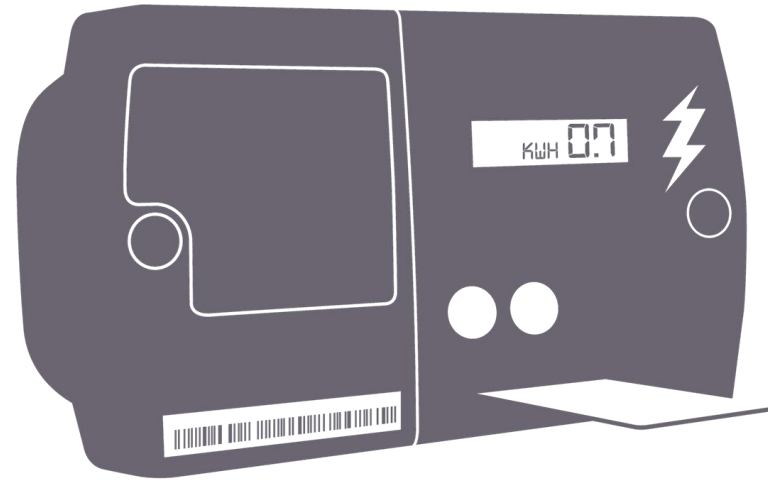


Improving support for prepayment  
consumers who've self  
disconnected

**citizens  
advice**

## What is self-disconnection?

- 'Self-disconnection'
- 'Self-rationing'
- consequences for the health and wellbeing



### Our research sample

- 8,171 citizens across GB
- Of these 1,226 were prepayment meter users.
- 10 in-depth interviews.
- We also surveyed our local network in February 2018. We received 428 responses.

## Addressing self-disconnection among PPM users

People need an affordable supply of energy to keep warm and well in their homes.

We want to ensure prepayment meter customers:



Have access to emergency fuel credit quickly and easily when they don't have enough money to top up.



Get holistic advice and support to help them stay on supply.



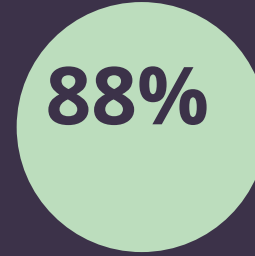
Can access alternative payment methods when a prepayment meter is not suitable for them.

## What we found



**140,000**

households could not afford to top-up their PPM in the last 12 months.



**88%**

are vulnerable to cold homes (households with children or people with health issues)



**50%**

of households said that keeping their PPM topped up and connected is a major daily concern.



# What we want to happen now:

1. Energy suppliers should review processes for identifying whether a household is at risk of harm from self-disconnection before a prepayment meter is installed.



2. Where vulnerable people are put onto PPMs, suppliers should use new opportunities offered by smart to ensure they stay on supply.

## What we want to happen now:

3. DWP and Jobcentres should improve coordination with suppliers to ensure vulnerable customers are given help to prevent self-disconnection through a change in benefits

DWP

jobcentreplus

Energy  
UK

4. Energy UK should use its upcoming vulnerability commission to produce a clear offer of support to those who have self disconnected.

5. The government should use the Warm Home Discount scheme to encourage consistent provision of non-refundable discretionary credit.



# Press Coverage

**Mirror**

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## 140,000 households cannot afford to heat their homes - and at least half of those affected are in the poorest areas

...ures show the true reality of Britain's families trapped in poverty

By **Josie Clarke**  
05:00, 20 APR 2018

**BBC**

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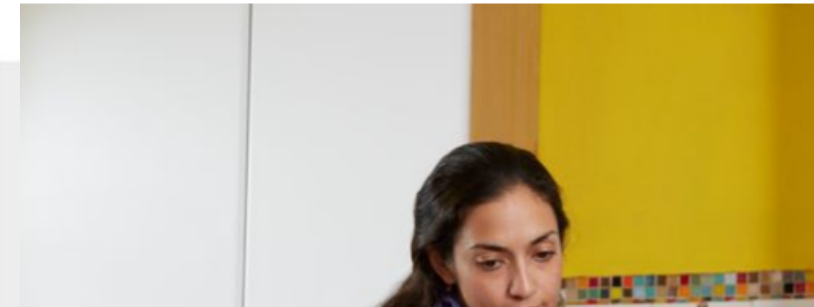
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## Poorest families 'going without food or power'

20 April 2018 | 722

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