

Anonymous Respondent 1

Dear Chair

Welcomed is the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) announcement that it is launching a market study into district heating networks.

The CMA's decision to investigate heat networks will shine a welcome spotlight on the unregulated firms heating thousands of people's homes.

Gaps in protections for the customers who rely on heat networks instead of gas in their homes mean they have no guarantees of being reconnected if their supply is interrupted or cut off. Customer service from district networks can be patchy because there are no agreed minimum standards and customers with a complaint can't turn to an ombudsman when things go wrong.

Heat networks have the potential to provide more customers with cheaper heating but this must not come at the expense of their consumer protections. It is important that the CMA's investigation looks carefully at where formal regulation and complaints systems could help heat network customers.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring these remarks to your attention.

Yours sincerely,

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