

Consumer Protection in Green heating & insulation sector: Stakeholder questionnaire

This questionnaire should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. The closing date for responses is 1 November 2022.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is looking at consumer protection in the green heating and insulation sector – covering heat pumps, home insulation, home solar, hydrogen-ready and biomass boilers. We are carrying out this work under section 5 of the Enterprise Act 2002.

We want to hear from interested parties about information or research that is relevant to the consumer experience and business practices in this sector, to ensure that consumers are adequately informed and protected. Your input will help inform our understanding and enable us to determine whether any further action may be needed to protect consumers including, business guidance or recommendations/advice to government. We also plan to publish a short report summarising our key findings in Spring 2023.

Further information about the project, including our areas of focus, how we may use any information you provide us with and the potential outcomes following our call for information, is set out on the case page and in this overview.

If you need help completing this questionnaire email: greenheating@cma.gov.uk

Although we ask you to provide your name, your organisation and contact details, do not provide any personal information in your response relating to individual consumers from which they could be identified.

Not all questions may be relevant to your organisation – where this is the case and the question is optional, please skip to the next question.

About your organisation

1. How would you describe your organisation? *

Consumer representative organisation
Third sector organisation
Government department
Regulatory or enforcement body
Trade association
Academic
Other

2. Organisation name: *
3. Your name, job role, title and work email: *

4. Are you happy to participate in further engagement with the CMA about your questionnaire responses? *

Yes No

5. Where in the UK does your organisation operate? * Select all that apply;

Across the UK

England

Wales

Scotland

Northern Ireland

The consumer journey

This section will focus on the consumer journey for the below products:

Biomass boiler

A biomass boiler works in a similar way to a standard gas boiler but uses a renewable material such as wood pellets as fuel.

Heat pump

A heat pump draws heat from a low temperature source and raises it to a higher temperature. For homes, there are two main types: air source (heat from the outside air) and ground source (heat from pipes buried in the ground).

Home insulation

Helps to keep heat in the home and can use different materials including fibre glass and spray foam, among others. It can be applied to: under the roof; over the loft floor; into the gap between cavity walls; as an added layer to solid walls or underfloor.

Home solar

A home solar system uses energy from the sun to generate electricity or to heat up water for use in the home. Photovoltaic (PV) panels create electricity. Thermal (or water heating) systems warm water for storage in a hot water cylinder. Solar systems typically are installed on the roofs of homes.

Hydrogen-ready boiler

A hydrogen-ready boiler uses natural gas when it is initially installed but is designed to be converted later to use 100% hydrogen instead. It is not a natural gas boiler capable of taking a blend of 20% hydrogen and 80% natural gas.

6. What are the key challenges consumers face when deciding whether to buy green heating and insulation products/services (as above) and associated services for their homes?
7. Are consumers given sufficient information by businesses (and other sources) to make informed decisions about buying these products/services? Outline reasons for your answer including what information is most important/useful for consumers.
8. Does your organisation engage directly with consumers and/or receive consumer

complaints in relation to any of these products? If so, outline any consumer protection issues or themes that you wish to bring to the CMA's attention.

9. Are there any issues or examples of good practice with consumer redress in this sector? If so, detail them below.
10. Are there groups of consumers who face additional consumer protection issues/challenges when buying these products? If so, set out which groups, the nature of the challenge(s) and how the CMA could help to address this? Reference any evidence you have to support this.
11. Are there additional consumer protection considerations or issues for consumers in social housing / private rented sector? If so, reference any evidence you have supporting this.

Business practices

12. Do you think there's sufficient information and guidance for businesses in the green heating and insulation sector to help them understand and comply with their obligations under consumer protection law?

Yes No

13. Provide reasons for your answer including the information/guidance currently available to businesses and the additional support/information that could assist business. Specify if this is important for any particular product(s) (i.e. heat pumps, home insulation, solar panels, hydrogen-ready or biomass boilers) and/or business practice(s).
14. When advertising/selling/engaging with consumers are there any examples of good business practices, behaviours or guidance for businesses? Detail below and include links.

Consumer protection framework

15. In the green heating and insulation sector, do you think existing laws and regulation designed to protect consumers are sufficient? Outline your reasons including, if relevant, how consumer protection laws could be improved to provide further protection for consumers in this sector.
16. Which consumer protection issues in the green heating and insulation sector should the CMA focus on and why? Detail your reason, including any particular products or business practices you think the CMA should focus on.

Standards landscape - Certification schemes and Codes of Practice

17. Do you think the current certification scheme/Codes of Practice landscape in the green heating and insulation sector is working effectively for consumers and/or businesses? Detail why or why not.
18. What steps, if any, could be taken to improve the effectiveness of these measures for

consumers and/or businesses? Focus on the certification schemes/Codes of Practice specific to the low carbon and energy efficient home heating sectors rather than broader codes such as building regulations or gas safety compliance.

19. How well do you think consumers understand the current certification/Codes of Practice landscape and the various schemes/codes within it? Detail your reasons.
20. Do you have any examples of good or particularly effective practice by certification scheme/Code of Practice providers that promote the interests and rights of consumers? If yes, share the name and provided details including links.

Your activity

21. Has your organisation been involved in or is your organisation currently planning work related to consumer protection issues in the green heating and insulation sector? This could include business or consumer advice, reports, research or survey/questionnaires. Provide details and share links to any relevant material.
22. If yes, please send any information you may have to greenheating@cma.gov.uk

Other information

23. Please share any relevant consumer or business research by other organisations that you are aware of, which would be helpful to inform the CMA's understanding of consumer experiences and business practices in the sector (please provide links).
24. Let us know about any other issues you think are relevant for our consumer protection project.