

Green heating consumer protection to come under scrutiny

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has launched a call for information looking at consumer experiences and business practices in the green heating and insulation sectors. It will explore whether action is needed to help ensure consumers are treated fairly and businesses are supported to meet their obligations under consumer protection law.

Heating millions of homes across the country accounts for about 17% of the UK's carbon emissions. With this in mind, more people are taking steps to switch to greener forms of heating, and to insulate their homes, to help reduce their carbon footprint. With better insulation, many are also seeking to reduce household energy bills.

The CMA is concerned about the potential for poor practices, such as making misleading claims about potential cost savings, product performance and suitability – particularly when selling newer, next generation technologies. Consumer groups have already raised concerns, including that consumers have a limited understanding of some newer green heating products and the process for buying them can be complicated and confusing.

It is crucial that the many businesses stepping up to offer homeowners green solutions are clear on their obligations under consumer protection law, as they support the UK's aim to hit net zero by 2050.

The CMA wants to hear about consumer and business experiences of buying or selling home insulation (including wall, loft and spray foam), as well as existing and newer next-generation green home heating technology:

- Home solar – systems that are typically installed on roofs to generate electricity or heat water
- Heat pumps – draws heat from the outside air or from pipes buried in the ground and increase it to a higher temperature for use in the home
- Biomass boilers – boilers that use renewable sources (for example, wood pellets), as fuel to heat homes
- Hydrogen-ready boilers – boilers that use natural gas when initially installed but are specifically designed to be simply converted later to use 100% hydrogen instead

Sarah Cardell, the CMA's Interim Chief Executive, said:

Reducing energy use is at the top of everyone's agenda – be that because of rising bills, climate change or both.

To help more people move to green heating and better insulate their homes, it's essential that businesses understand and follow their legal obligations when selling and installing. That way, consumers can be confident they are being treated fairly.

That's why we want to hear from consumers, businesses and other key groups about their experience now, so we can root out any problems early on and avoid them in future.

Gillian Cooper, Head of Energy Policy for Citizens Advice, added:

Making our homes greener is key for us to reduce dependency on expensive gas and bring down our energy bills in the long-run. But people need to feel confident about installing new technology, like heat pumps and solar panels.

Strong consumer protections must be in place in case the installation goes wrong. It's essential to find out about any challenges people are facing, so that problems can be fixed.

Consumers, businesses and other interested groups are invited to [share their views through a questionnaire](#) by 1 November 2022.

All updates on the CMA's work in this area can be found on the [Green Heating and Insulation](#) case page.

Separately, the CMA has an ongoing investigation into [misleading environmental claims](#) and is [currently prioritising the fashion sector](#).

1. The figure relating to home heating representing about 17% of all UK carbon emissions is from [BEIS \(2021\) Heat and Buildings Strategy \(CP388\)](#).
2. The CMA carries out calls for information under its general review function in section 5 of the Enterprise Act 2002. This call for information is open from 8:30am on Tuesday 27 September for responses until 1 November 2022. The CMA expects to report on its findings in Spring 2023.
3. The CMA will look at the feedback from consumers, businesses, and other interested parties to inform its outputs and assess next steps. This could include for example, issuing guidance for businesses in the green heating and insulation sector to help ensure compliance with consumer protection law.
4. The call for information focuses on the promotion, sale and installation of 4 home heating technologies which are particularly relevant to Net Zero and expected to become more common in households over time. It is also looking at home insulation, which is an important way of making homes more energy efficient and may be necessary in some homes before installing a heat pump. This does not include other heating or energy efficiency products such as heat networks, or double and triple window

glazing.

5. Media queries should be directed to: press@cma.gov.uk or 020 3738 6460.

[PM call with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman: 26 September 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Liz Truss spoke to Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.



Prime Minister Liz Truss spoke to Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman this afternoon, in their first call since she took on the role.

The Prime Minister thanked the Crown Prince for his personal role in securing the release of five British detainees held by Russia-backed forces in Eastern Ukraine last week, to the great relief of their families.

They discussed the strategic partnership between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia across a range of issues, including cooperation on defence and energy security. The leaders welcomed progress in ending the conflict in Yemen and agreed on the importance of continuing political dialogue to extend the truce.

The Prime Minister reiterated her focus on agreeing a strong UK-GCC trade deal and growing bilateral trade and investment in areas like aviation and clean technology. She also offered the UK's continued support and encouragement for progress in Saudi Arabia's domestic reforms.

The Crown Prince extended his sincere condolences on the death of Her Majesty the Queen, and the leaders looked forward to continuing to grow the strong relationship fostered during her late Majesty's reign.

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Supporting action that moves Haiti closer to security and stability

Thank you President and to SRS La Lime and our briefers.

I'd like to add three brief points to the discussion today:

Firstly, like others, the United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the continued deterioration of the security and human rights situation in Haiti. Violence and insecurity further entrench the multifaceted challenges faced by Haiti and exacerbate the vulnerabilities of the Haitian population.

As we've heard today from our briefers, the humanitarian situation within Haiti also continues to deteriorate. Rooted in long standing economic, security and socio-political crises – the current escalation of these challenges has exacerbated the food

insecurity of the Haitian people. The looting of the World Food Programme office and warehouse is deeply concerning, preventing assistance from reaching thousands of Haiti's most vulnerable.

The United Kingdom encourages all actors to work constructively to find urgent solutions, and to support recovery and progress for the Haitian people.

Secondly, as others have also said, there must be greater efforts by Haitian stakeholders to resolve the political gridlock. This is critical in enabling Haiti to find its own pathway out of the compounded challenges it is facing.

We renew our call for all actors to resume political dialogue and to work together to ensure the necessary security environment within which free and fair elections can be held as soon as possible.

Thirdly, I would like to underscore the United Kingdom's support for the work of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti. BINUH is fundamental in supporting Haiti to resolve these multifaceted challenges. By strengthening the Haitian National Police and facilitating dialogue between Haitian political stakeholders, BINUH's efforts help lay the groundwork for stability in Haiti. We look forward to seeing the outcome of the strategic review of options to support security in Haiti and hope these are part of a renewed holistic and joined-up approach by the UN and other partners.

Finally President, we welcome the intention of the United States and Mexico to propose a draft resolution and look forward to discussing it with partners. We support action that moves Haiti closer to security and stability with a return to democratic processes as soon as possible.