# EDF demands £2,700 from young Londoner due to hidden electricity meter confusion



A young Londoner’s experience highlights the complexities and challenges faced by individuals transitioning from foster care into independent living, particularly when managing utility bills. Having moved into their first flat in 2020, this person topped up a prepaid credit meter monthly, believing it covered their gas and electricity as instructed by their housing association. However, in 2023, they were surprised by a demand from EDF for over £2,700 in unpaid electricity bills they had not been aware of, leading to a payment plan of £108 a month. They feel the situation exploits their lack of knowledge about the electricity billing system.

The flat is part of a communal heating setup, where heating and hot water costs are shared among residents and included in service charges, often payable through incremental prepayment meters — which the tenant was using correctly for these utilities. Unbeknownst to them, their electricity consumption was separately recorded by a second meter under EDF, a meter inaccessible to them and known only to the housing association and EDF. Because they did not inform EDF directly of their tenancy, the supplier billed the property owner or previous occupant, which EDF maintains means backbilling rules—capping retroactive charges to 12 months where no prior bills were sent—do not apply in this case. Consequently, EDF holds the tenant responsible for all charges since 2020.

Since the introduction of a smart meter in 2023, EDF revised the debt downward slightly due to more accurate consumption data and moved the customer onto a better tariff that reduces monthly payments. While the tenant cannot access the meter themselves, they are now able to monitor consumption through EDF’s app. The housing association acknowledged its previous unawareness of the tenant’s vulnerability and promised to provide additional support and clearer energy guidance for new residents to prevent similar problems.

EDF Energy offers a range of support measures for customers facing financial hardship, particularly vulnerable households. In 2023, the company cleared £1.1 million in customer debt and invested £29 million in winter support initiatives, including payment matching for prepayment meter customers, debt relief, and energy efficiency improvements. These efforts extend into campaigns like ‘Fresh Start,’ which writes off debts up to £2,000 for vulnerable clients, and ‘Helping Hands,’ offering weekly automatic top-ups of £10 for up to six months. Such programmes are part of EDF’s broader commitment to assist customers in saving money and reducing carbon emissions through the adoption of smart meters, heat pumps, electric vehicle chargers, and solar technology.

Government actions have also sought to ease the burden on prepayment meter users, who historically paid more for energy than customers on standard tariffs. Since July 2023, additional charges on prepayment meters were removed, saving these households approximately £21 annually and aligning their payment costs with those of direct debit customers.

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to pressure both consumers and energy suppliers. EDF’s increased investment targets exactly those most vulnerable, ensuring financial relief and practical support, such as non-disconnection periods for prepayment meters and emergency credit advances. These measures illustrate the complex intersection of energy provision, consumer protection, and social welfare, especially for young adults moving from institutional care to independent living.

This case underlines the critical importance of clear communication between landlords, energy suppliers, and residents, combined with tailored support for vulnerable individuals to prevent confusion and undue financial hardship.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/money/2025/jun/17/edf-sent-me-a-2700-bill-in-my-first-home-after-foster-care)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/money/2025/jun/17/edf-sent-me-a-2700-bill-in-my-first-home-after-foster-care)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/money/2025/jun/17/edf-sent-me-a-2700-bill-in-my-first-home-after-foster-care)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.edfenergy.com/about/support-for-customers), [[4]](https://www.edfenergy.com/about/sustainability/helping-customers), [[5]](https://www.edfenergy.com/energywise/how-edf-are-supporting-their-customers-through-uks-cost-living-crisis), [[6]](https://www.edfenergy.com/media-centre/edf-invests-29m-help-most-vulnerable-winter)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prepayment-meter-customers-to-pay-less-for-energy-from-today)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.edfenergy.com/about/support-for-customers), [[4]](https://www.edfenergy.com/about/sustainability/helping-customers), [[5]](https://www.edfenergy.com/energywise/how-edf-are-supporting-their-customers-through-uks-cost-living-crisis), [[6]](https://www.edfenergy.com/media-centre/edf-invests-29m-help-most-vulnerable-winter), [[7]](https://www.edfenergy.com/help-support/prepayment-meter)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/money/2025/jun/17/edf-sent-me-a-2700-bill-in-my-first-home-after-foster-care)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2025/jun/17/edf-sent-me-a-2700-bill-in-my-first-home-after-foster-care> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.edfenergy.com/about/support-for-customers> - EDF Energy offers a range of financial and practical support tailored to customers facing difficulties managing their energy. As the first energy supplier to establish a dedicated customer support fund, EDF cleared £1.1 million of debt in 2023 to assist those struggling. Additionally, the company invested an extra £29 million to help vulnerable customers during the winter months, providing debt relief, payment matching for prepayment meter customers, and energy efficiency measures.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prepayment-meter-customers-to-pay-less-for-energy-from-today> - The UK government has removed the additional charge previously applied to prepayment meter customers, ensuring they no longer pay more on average than direct debit customers. This change, effective from July 2023, benefits approximately three million households using prepayment meters, aligning their bills with those of direct debit customers and providing savings of around £21 annually.
4. <https://www.edfenergy.com/about/sustainability/helping-customers> - EDF Energy is committed to assisting vulnerable and fuel-poor households, aiming to help customers achieve Net Zero. In 2023, the company invested over £200 million to support customers in saving money and reducing carbon emissions through low-carbon solutions like smart meters, EV chargers, heat pumps, and solar PVs. Initiatives include the 'Fresh Start' campaign, which clears existing debt up to £2,000 for vulnerable customers, and the 'Helping Hands' scheme, offering weekly £10 automatic top-up contributions for up to six months.
5. <https://www.edfenergy.com/energywise/how-edf-are-supporting-their-customers-through-uks-cost-living-crisis> - EDF Energy is enhancing support for customers amid the UK's cost of living crisis by investing an additional £29 million this winter. The company offers debt relief, payment matching for prepayment meter customers, and energy efficiency measures. Initiatives include the 'Fresh Start' campaign, which cleared £1.1 million of debt in 2023, and the 'Helping Hands' scheme, providing weekly £10 automatic top-up contributions for up to six months. EDF also supports the Warm Home Discount Scheme, offering a one-off payment of £150 to eligible customers during the winter months.
6. <https://www.edfenergy.com/media-centre/edf-invests-29m-help-most-vulnerable-winter> - EDF Energy is investing £29 million to assist its most vulnerable customers this winter, marking the third consecutive year of increased funding. The support includes the return of EDF’s successful debt-matching scheme, which cleared £1.1 million of debt in 2023, and the £150 Warm Home Discount payments, benefiting over 380,000 EDF customers. The company is also collaborating with partners to help vulnerable customers both financially and by providing warmth and insulation for their homes.
7. <https://www.edfenergy.com/help-support/prepayment-meter> - EDF Energy provides assistance to prepayment meter customers, offering £10 of emergency credit on each meter for emergencies. This credit is available when the electricity meter balance drops to 50p or less, and the gas meter balance drops to £0. Customers can access this emergency credit by removing and reinserting their key or card into the meter. EDF also offers non-disconnection hours, ensuring that electricity prepayment meters do not get cut off during specific times, such as evenings, weekends, and bank holidays.