

Government knew of difficulties at Our Power in December

The Scottish Government knew of difficulties at Edinburgh-based Our Power in December. Minister for Communities and Local Government, Aileen Campbell, said at Holyrood that they were informed of ‘collection difficulties’ in December.

The minister also said that the government, as foundation lender, had made a £9.5 million loan to the company over the three and a half years since it was set up. 70 people, mainly from the Craigmillar area, may lose their jobs, but are being supported by the government using the [PACE](#) scheme.

The energy company offered variable tariffs to those who might not otherwise be able to move from one provider to another, and was aiming to become profitable by next year.



Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP

Scottish Liberal Democrat Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP raised concerns about the collapse of Our Power yesterday at Holyrood, after the Edinburgh-based energy supplier announced it had ceased trading over the weekend.

In response Ms Campbell said : “It is disappointing and sad that Our Power has had to cease trading. The Scottish Government has supported Our Power in its aim, since 2015, of tackling fuel poverty and supplying low-cost energy to households in Scotland. Our immediate response is focused on looking after the interests of the customers and staff of Our Power.

“The independent regulator, Ofgem—the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets—is in the process of appointing a new supplier to take over Our Power’s customers. Customers are protected and no one will be cut off as a result of the change in supplier. Ofgem’s advice is for customers to take a current meter reading and wait to be transferred automatically to a new supplier. In due course, we will provide further support to Our Power customers as needed, for example through our home energy Scotland service.

“This is a worrying time for Our Power’s employees in

Edinburgh and we have offered support through partnership action for continuing employment. PACE aims to minimise the time that individuals who are affected by redundancy are out of work, and we are making that help available immediately. We will also work with Our Power's partners to identify any further employment opportunities for those highly skilled and experienced staff."

Alex Cole-Hamilton said : "Our Power's plight is a shame for the 70 staff based in Edinburgh, customers and the prospect of healthier competition in the energy supply market.

"Our Power was a not-for-profit venture aimed at tackling fuel poverty, being socially responsible and giving customers a fair deal. Those are the exact same principles the Scottish Government wants to underpin its own new energy company.

"First and foremost, a fair outcome is needed for staff. Ministers must also be clear about what lessons are being learned for their own scheme and what guarantees there are that taxpayers cash won't go the same way as the £10 million they invested in this project."

If you got your power from Edinburgh-based Our Power, then the advice on the now defunct company's website is not to panic.

The company has posted a message explaining that the company is now in administration but that your power will continue while Ofgem seek another provider.

The not-for-profit company was backed by The Scottish Government and did business with housing associations and local authorities. It provided around 27,000 households with power and employed around 80 people in Edinburgh.

This is the advice : "It is with great regret that Our Power

Energy Supply Ltd has ceased to trade. Ofgem, the energy regulator, is appointing a new supplier for our customers.

“Customers should not worry, their supplies are secure and credit balances are protected through the transfer to a new supplier. Prepayment customers should continue to top up and payments will be allocated to their meters as usual.

“Ofgem’s advice is not to try to switch, but to sit tight and wait until the new supplier has been appointed. This will help make sure that the process of handing customers over to a new supplier, and honouring credit balances, is as hassle free for customers as possible.

“Customers can find support and advice on the Ofgem website.

“Or alternatively if they need additional support they can call Citizens Advice on [03454 04 05 06](tel:03454040506) or email them via webform, or get in touch through Ofgem’s facebook or twitter feed [@ofgem](https://www.facebook.com/ofgem)