



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sarah Cardell  
Chief Executive, Competition and Markets Authority  
*[By Email]*

25<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Ms Cardell,

I am writing to follow up on the letter sent to you earlier this month from Conservative MPs, raising serious concerns about the heating oil supply market. In my constituency of West Suffolk, census data from 2021 shows that 19.8 per cent of households in West Suffolk used oil central heating, compared with the national average of 4.9 per cent. More than 130 constituents have contacted me with concerns about their experiences of price gouging, and I have included an anonymised sample of 22 such cases within the annex of this letter. They are deeply worried about the conduct of suppliers, and I would be grateful if you could include them in your investigation of the market.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Timothy".

*Nick Timothy MP*  
**Member of Parliament for West Suffolk**

## ANNEXE:

1. Constituent A is part of a vulnerable household, including their son who has a rare medical condition limiting life expectancy. On 2 March, they ordered oil from Goff Petroleum and paid approximately £450. On 9 March, they received an email saying their oil would be delivered on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November. Hours later a message followed saying to ignore the date. On 10 March, Goff Petroleum sent an email saying the company was unable to honour the order, and offered 3 solutions: 1) Pay the new rate of 10 March and receive the delivery, 2) Be fully refunded, or 3) Wait until oil prices decrease to the price Constituent A already paid in full. Constituent A's tank is now empty, leaving the household without heating and hot water. Goff Petroleum are not answering Constituent A's telephone calls.
2. Constituent B ordered kerosene from Goff Petroleum. On 12 March, Constituent B received the following email from the company:

Goff Petroleum <domestic@goffpetroleum.co.uk>  
to me

11:16 AM (11 hours ago) ☆ ☺ ↶ ⋮

Dear Customer,

Unfortunately we are not going to be able to deliver the kerosene heating oil you recently ordered as planned, due to the ongoing war in the Persian Gulf. The volatility of the global kerosene market has led to unprecedented price inflation, and shortage of supply.

As an explanation the Oil Markets Journal has published the following:

*Oil prices are surging as the oil market re-prices the impact of the US and Israeli attacks on Iran. Over the weekend it became clear to the oil market that the Trump Administration has no plan on how to keep the Straits of Hormuz open. However the oil market is priced on a global basis and as a result global prices are surging. This was clearly seen when an Asian buyer was short of Jet Kerosene and the price globally surged \$500/t. Then, a tanker with jet kerosene en route to Europe made a U-turn and headed to Asia.*

*Over the weekend the war intensified with Kuwait following Iraq and starting to shut down production as they cannot export and storage tanks are near full. In addition, the Sitra refinery in Bahrain was attacked and an oil tanker was also attacked near Iraq.*

*We are now in a COVID-time economic shock and we expect a stock market crash, oil prices to spike to \$150/b followed by a 20% global economic shutdown.*

*The Oil Market Journal, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026*

And the United Kingdom & Ireland Fuel Distributors Association has recently published the following:

*The main market driver of heating oil in the UK and Ireland is the wholesale price of jet fuel which is traded on the European market. This is because jet fuel and heating oil are kerosene based.*

*The wholesale price of jet fuel has more than doubled, representing a three-and-a-half-year peak. The price increase in jet fuel can be partly explained by Europe's and the UK's dependency on imports of this fuel from countries in the Middle East. At least 40% of Europe's jet fuel came from the Middle East in 2025 via the Strait of Hormuz, which is currently blocked.*

*This has resulted in a rapid rise in wholesale prices, which, in turn, has increased the price distributors pay for heating oil and, consequently, raised prices for customers.*

*Heating oil is supplied very differently from gas and electricity, and these differences help explain why heating oil prices can change quickly both up and down. Instead of a few national suppliers, the market is made up of many local, often family-owned distributors, each operating with limited storage and buying fuel at the daily market price.*

*Most distributors have little or no storage. Many hold no more than two days of supply. Therefore, they collect fuel from refineries or terminals at the market price almost daily. In effect, they are price takers.*

*UKIFDA Consumer Advice Note – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026*

This briefing perfectly describes the problems currently being faced – we only store one and a half to two days product, and rely on daily collections from refineries bought at today's prices. As we have no ability to control the price we find ourselves having to offer you three options:

1. Maintain your order with a March delivery date, but we will need to amend the price to reflect the market on the day before delivery

or

2. You may cancel your order, and if you paid in advance receive a full refund.

or

3. Maintain your order at the agreed price, and we will deliver to you when we are able to purchase fuel at prices previously seen in February this year.

If you wish to keep your order as it is and wait for the market to settle you need to do nothing. If you wish to maintain your order and pay the additional cost to receive delivery this month call our team and let them know and they will contact you with confirmation of price and delivery date later this month. If you wish to cancel your order please call our contact centre and they will be able to deal with this request. In the event that we don't hear from you we will assume that you wish to accept option 3.

Again, please accept our apologies and we hope that you understand that we are facing unprecedented events, as the global situation has led to an unexpected influx of orders.

3. Constituent C ordered heating oil from Goff on 1 March, before any price increases. They quoted, Constituent C accepted and paid in full. On 10th March Goff gave Constituent C three options: to cancel the order, pay more (amount undisclosed until the day of delivery) or wait until prices dropped back to what they were when Constituent C originally ordered. Constituent C has contacted Goff by email but received no reply. The only way Constituent C can cancel their order for a refund is by phone but Goff is not answering calls.

4. Constituent D ordered oil from Goff Petroleum on 2 March, and paid £487 for express delivery. The delivery was due 9 March, but on 10 March Constituent D received an email saying Goff was unable to deliver for the price they had paid. Constituent D was presented with three choices – get a refund, wait until the market price fell back to that which was originally paid, or pay the extra the market price had subsequently risen to.
5. Constituent E ordered oil before the price hike. Constituent E's order was cancelled, and was told to order again but pay the new – higher – price. Prior to the hike the cost was 0.34p/litre. By the time Constituent E contacted me on 7 March, it was 1.74p/litre. Constituent E now cannot afford to buy and heat their home.
6. Constituent F ordered and paid for oil at the end of February. It was not delivered, and instead Constituent F was told the supplies were not available, but they would be if Constituent F reordered with a 120% increase in price.
7. Constituent G ordered 500 litres from Goff Petroleum on 1 March, for which they paid £348. Constituent G was told that the order would be delivered in 10 days. On March 10, Constituent G received an email saying Goff was unable to deliver and they had three options – to cancel the order, wait until the price comes down, or pay the difference between original sum paid and current market price. Constituent G noticed Goff had changed their Terms and Conditions and proceeded to telephone Goff, asking the company to deliver the order at the price paid. Goff declined and said they would have to pay £380 on top of the original payment and only then would the company deliver it within two days. On 12 March, Constituent G received an email saying Goff would honour the original price and that it would be delivered in 10 days. It has subsequently been more than 10 days and Constituent G has not received the order. They telephoned again and Goff said it would try to deliver when it can. Constituent G is not sure what that means or if they will ever get it, unlike how 'they were quick enough to take and keep [their] money.'
8. Constituent H ordered 600L of heating oil in early March via their community group and has paid the supplier. Their order has subsequently been cancelled with the three options of a refund, wait for the market to settle or pay whatever they demand. Constituent H's husband is a cancer patient and needs to keep warm.
9. Constituent I placed an order for 65p/litre. It was later cancelled and Constituent I was quoted over 145p/litre.
10. Constituent J placed an order and paid in advance for delivery on March 4th with CPS. This was done before the actions in the Middle East started. The order did not arrive as expected. This week, they received an email telling them the order had been cancelled and that they had three options: 1) Get their money refunded, 2) Get the delivery but at the price CPS are charging on the day of delivery (no indication of what the price will be) or 3, CPS will hold on to their money until such time as they will make a delivery at the price agreed.
11. Constituent K placed an order on 1 March for 1000ltrs of heating oil, which cost £722.00 and which was paid with the order. Constituent K heard nothing from the supplier Goff Petroleum until 10 March, when they were told they couldn't supply at the price and that they could cancel, wait until the price dropped or pay the price on the day the oil is delivered. Constituent K cancelled the order and asked for an immediate refund (they need the money back to buy heating oil, as they have about 3 weeks supply left). It has not arrived. The supplier has made no progress effort to help Constituent K.

12. Constituent L paid for oil two weeks ago for 61p. They then received an email from CPS to say the order was no longer available, that they could cancel and get a refund, rebook at double the price (132p) or they would hold Constituent L's money and deliver when the price goes down again. Constituent L has been unable to make contact with CPS to get their money back.
13. Constituent M ordered 500 litres from Goff Petroleum on 2 March, to be delivered on 9 March, and paid for express delivery. At the time, the price was 81.45, and with the express delivery, Constituent M paid £487.45 in advance. On 10 March, they received an email saying Goff was unable to deliver their order, and had the choice to cancel the order, wait until the price came down to what they originally paid, or to keep the order for March but pay the price reflecting the market the day before the delivery. Goff did not give Constituent M a price as it would be quoted the day prior to delivery, and subsequently Constituent M cancelled the order.
14. Constituent N ordered 500 litres of oil from Goff Petroleum at the end of February, paying £348 and with a delivery date of 10 March. Constituent N subsequently received an email from Goff saying the company was unable to deliver what was agreed and paid for, and that Constituent N had the option of cancelling their order or paying an additional £300.
15. Constituent O was quoted 0.75ppl for 500 litres on 7 March. Their order was subsequently cancelled by the supplier and they were told their price had increased to 1.23ppl.
16. Constituent P ordered 500 litres and paid £300. Within a week they were told their order had been cancelled and the new price was £799.
17. Constituent Q prepaid for an order of 700 litres of Kerosene at 62p/litre. Bell Fuels Ltd subsequently altered the order reducing it to a maximum of 500 litres at a price of £1.50/litre.
18. Constituent R placed an order with Goff in February 2026. Their order was subsequently cancelled by Goff, with the company offering Constituent R a refund, to buy at the new price, or wait until the heating oil prices reverted to February prices. Constituent R also received a text message saying they would receive their delivery in November 2026, almost a year after the order was placed.
19. Constituent S ordered 600 litres from Goff at a cost of £1007. Constituent S paid at the point of order. Goff informed Constituent S that even if the price went up after they had ordered they would be billed the additional. The unit price was £159.99 plus 5% VAT.
20. Constituent T relies on oil from Goff Petroleum for heating and hot water, as they do not live in a village on the gas grid. On 10 March, Constituent F was informed by Goff that they cannot guarantee delivery and price. Constituent F is a full time carer for their 89 year old mother, who is recovering from breast cancer treatment. Constituent F's mother relies on morphine with the side effect of heightened sensitivity to cold. Constituent F is deeply concerned for their mother's wellbeing if they run out of oil and cannot afford to purchase more. On 16 March, Goff Petroleum contacted Constituent F to quote their best price as £708.49/ PPL:134.95p. Four weeks prior to this, the price was 57p PPL.

21. Constituent U ordered and paid in full (58ppl) for 750 litres of heating oil through Boiler Juice on 23 February, with a promised delivery date of 9 March. On 9 March, Bedford Fuels arrived but only delivered 500 litres citing fuel shortages. Constituent U was advised by the driver to take it up with Boiler Juice. After several calls and many emails, requesting the remainder of the paid for oil order (250l) to be delivered and stating they did not want to be reimbursed, Boiler Juice have closed Constituent U's case saying there's nothing they can do but Constituent U can reorder whenever they wish. The oil price was at that point c.£1.25l, meaning 250l oil will now cost them more than double. Constituent U believes that while the oil situation may have progressed, on 23/2 and 9/3 there was no shortage and therefore no need to inflate the price, so the reason given for insufficient delivery was untrue.
  
22. Constituent V typically uses NRG, but prices rose from £320 for 500 litres to £781 within 4 days. Constituent V subsequently secured a quote for £665 with Goff, so rang to pay and was placed at position 21 in the queue. It took 31 minutes to get through, whereupon they were told that Goff could no longer honour that quote as it was 30 minutes ago. When Constituent V asked how much the order would then be, they were told by Goff that the company could book it in but there would be no price available until on the day of delivery. Constituent V did not accept this and kept looking, eventually ordering from R. Stiff via Fuels Direct for £667, with delivery offered in just 7 working days. 5 days later, a Goffs lorry delivered Constituent V's oil. Constituent V was surprised to learn that 'apparently they own R Stiff' and that the driver advised them they had a very large reserve of oil and that the price hike was unnecessary.