

These notes refer to the Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c.17) which received Royal Assent on 19th July 2007

CONSUMERS, ESTATE AGENTS AND REDRESS ACT 2007

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SUMMARY

3. The Act's main provisions are as follows:
- to create a new statutory National Consumer Council to replace the existing National Consumer Council (a company limited by guarantee), the Gas and Electricity Consumers Council ("energywatch")¹ and the Consumer Council for Postal Services ("Postwatch")². The Act also contains a power to dissolve the Consumer Council for Water³ and transfer its functions to the new body established by the Act.
 - to enable the Secretary of State to require service providers in the electricity and gas (in Great Britain), postal services (in the United Kingdom) and water (in England and Wales) sectors to belong to redress schemes to ensure resolution of complaints in those sectors and to award compensation where warranted. The energy and postal services regulators (the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority and the Postal Services Commission respectively) are given a duty to prescribe complaint handling standards which will be binding on regulated providers in Great Britain (and the United Kingdom in relation to postal services).
 - to enable the Secretary of State to require estate agents to join an ombudsman scheme and strengthen the regulation of estate agents through measures such as: requiring estate agents to keep records, allowing trading standards officers to inspect those records, and expanding the circumstances in which the Office of Fair Trading ("OFT") can take regulatory action against estate agents.
 - to enable the Secretary of State to make regulations giving individuals similar rights to cancel contracts for goods or services made during a solicited sales visit to their home or workplace as they have in relation to an unsolicited visit.

¹ Established by section 2 of the [Utilities Act 2000 \(c.27\)](#)

² Established by section 2 of the [Postal Services Act 2000 \(c.26\)](#)

³ Established by section 27A [Water Industry Act 1991 \(c.56\)](#)