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5.7 million thanks to PayPoint retailers over Christmas

Welwyn Garden City, 2 February 2015: PayPoint, the UK's leading retail and payments services provider, has revealed that consumers across the UK topped up their gas or electricity prepayment meters at PayPoint **3,881,686** times on the Christmas and New Year bank holidays in 2014/15. The figures demonstrate how vital it is for consumers with pay-as-you-go energy meters to have easy access to top-up facilities all day, every day, including bank holidays.

In addition to energy meter pre-payments, 10,532 customers collected their pension or benefits in cash from PayPoint on one of the bank holidays. In total, PayPoint was used **5,664,542** times over the three days (four days in Scotland) by consumers for a wide variety of payments.

Commenting on the figures, Andrew Goddard, Retail Director of PayPoint, said: "Once again, the thousands of multiple, symbol and independent retailers in the PayPoint network came to the rescue of the millions of people in their communities who ran out of gas and or electricity over the festive period. It's further evidence, if more were needed, of the massive contribution that our retailers make to their local communities.

"Most of the shops that offer their customers PayPoint are open long hours from morning to late evening, seven days a week, and are usually open bank holidays as well. While only one in seven Post Offices – those that are the Local format – was *potentially* open over any of the holidays, half of all shops with PayPoint were open on Christmas Day itself, with nine out of ten open in Feltham and Heston in London, and many other areas with more than three-quarters open. All our shops were open on Boxing Day and New Year's Day. As a result, **217,213** people were able to top up their gas or electricity on Christmas Day itself and nearly 350 were able to collect their pension or benefits – which they wouldn't be able to do if relying on a Post Office Card account (POCA) for their cash."

"Energy prepayment is just one of many of the services provided by PayPoint to address the needs of businesses and consumers from all walks of life," added Andrew Goddard. "We operate the largest network of its kind in the UK, with over 28,200 outlets. Over 99% of the population in urban areas live within one mile of a PayPoint or within five miles in rural areas. While other branch networks claim similar national coverage, none comes near to PayPoint for the number, choice and accessibility of outlets close to where they live, despite the fact that we receive no subsidy to enable us to achieve this.

"We share this commitment to serving our customers with the thousands of retailers whose shops are at the very heart of their communities."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

PayPoint handles cash payments for the utility, housing, water, telecoms, media, financial services, transport, retail, e-commerce and public sectors. More than four million households have prepayment gas and/or electricity meters that they are able to 'load' at PayPoint terminals. This analysis looks at the number of times those individuals loaded their prepayment meters at PayPoint on Christmas Day and Boxing Day 2013 and New Year's Day 2014 – the three bank holidays. In Scotland, the analysis included 2 January 2014, which is also a bank holiday.

ABOUT PAYPOINT

PayPoint is an international leader in payment technologies, its solutions transforming payments for everyone from consumer and financial services companies to retailers, utilities, media, e-commerce, gaming and government clients.

PayPoint delivers payments and services by taking the complexity of multi-channel payments and translating it into convenient, simple, value-added solutions. It handles almost £15 billion from over 800 million transactions annually for more than 6,000 clients and merchants.

With the backing of 24/7 operations centres with dual site processing, PayPoint is widely recognised for its leadership in payment systems, smart technology and service.

Retail networks

The PayPoint retail network across the UK numbers over 28,200 local shops (including Co-op, Spar, McColls, Costcutter, Sainsbury's Local, Tesco Express, One Stop, Asda, Londis and thousands of independents), where it processes energy meter pre-payments, bill payments, benefit payments, mobile phone top-ups, transport tickets, BBC TV licences, cash withdrawals and a range of other transactions. In Romania, the retail network numbers over 9,000 terminals in local shops, helping people to make cash bill payments, money transfers, road tax payments and mobile phone top-ups. In the Republic of Ireland, over 500 terminals in shops and credit unions process mobile top-ups and bill payments.

Collect+, a joint venture with Yodel, provides a parcel drop-off and pick-up service at more than 5,800 PayPoint retailers. PayPoint's ATM network numbers more than 3,900 'LINK' branded machines across the UK, and 9,700 PayPoint terminals enable retailers to accept credit and debit cards.

Mobile and Online

PayPoint Mobile and Online (formerly trading as PayPoint.net, PayByPhone and Adaptis) handles over 142 million payments for parking, payments and consumer services. In major cities in the UK, Canada, USA, France, Switzerland and Australia, its parking solutions make it easy for people to pay for parking by mobile, as well as providing electronic parking permits, automatic number plate recognition systems for car parks and penalty charge notices.

PayPoint's core online payments platform is linked to 16 major acquiring banks in the UK, Europe and North America, delivering secure credit and debit card payments for almost 4,800 online merchants. Its suite of products ranges from transaction gateway to a bureau service, in addition to value-added services such as FraudGuard, an advanced service that mitigates the risk of fraud in card not present transactions.