

ELECTRICITY SWITCHING UPDATE – JUNE 2020

THE LSHA energy advice team has been in existence for ten years and has made over 2000 home visits in Skye, Lochalsh and other parts of the Highlands. Although based in the Housing Association the Service is for everyone in Skye and Lochalsh.

Although currently no home visits are possible due to the Covid19 pandemic the service can still be contacted by phone and email and can still give advice remotely.

The Energy Advice Team has noticed with some satisfaction that more and more households have made arrangements to switch their electricity supplier, but many more can still do so, so if you want some switching advice then please give the Energy Advice team a call on 01478 612035 or preferably email them at energyadvice@lsha.co.uk. **The team are not allowed to advise which energy company you choose, but we can tell you what current options are available as we check available prices regularly.**

Electricity pricing has become more complicated in the last few years due to multiple caps on pricing that have been introduced by the Regulator Ofgem but there are still good switch savings to be made. Some of the best options include

- SINGLE TARIFF – MOST PEOPLE WITH OIL OR LPG BOILERS OR WHO HAVE SOLID FUEL DEVICES FOR HEAT HAVE A SINGLE RATE ELECTRICITY METER AND ALL ENERGY COMPANIES CAN SELL TO THESE METERS SO THE MARKET IS HUGE. BIG SIX ENERGY COMPANY RATES ARE FREQUENTLY AROUND 18P PER UNIT – BEST PRICES AVAILABLE ARE HOWEVER SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER AT 12.25p PER UNIT FOR CREDIT METERS AND 14.48P PER UNIT FOR PREPAY METERS – ALL SINGLE TARIFF SWITCHES CAN BE DONE ONLINE VIA A PRICE COMPARISON WEBSITE SUCH AS <https://energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- ECONOMY 10 (E10) – THIS IS A TWO RATE TARIFF AND IS COMMON FOR HOUSES WITH ELECTRIC BOILERS AND EARLY HEAT PUMP INSTALLS. FEW SWITCHING OPTIONS ARE EASILY AVAILABLE FOR E10 BUT ALMOST ALL E10 CONSUMERS CAN BENEFIT FROM SWITCHING TO A SINGLE RATE METER AND THEN CHOOSING THE CHEAPEST SINGLE RATE SUPPLIER THOUGH CHANGING METERS AT THIS TIME MIGHT BE PROBLEMATIC. THERE ARE STILL SOME ALTERNATE COMPANIES THAT WILL SUPPORT E10 METERS AND THERE ARE OPTIONS FOR BOTH CREDIT AND PREPAY METERS TO MAKE DECENT SAVINGS OVER THE DOMINANT SUPPLIERS. IF YOU HAVE AN E10 METER YOU WILL NEED TO CONTACT A PROPOSED NEW COMPANY BY PHONE OR BY WEBCHAT AS E10 CHANGES CANNOT CURRENTLY BE EASILY MADE ON A PRICE COMPARISON WEBSITE .
- TOTAL HEAT TOTAL CONTROL (THTC) – THIS LIKE E10 IS KNOWN AS A RESTRICTED METER TARIFF. IT IS THE MOST COMMON TARIFF USED FOR STORAGE HEATERS IN SKYE AND LOCHALSH AND 90% OF CONSUMERS ARE STILL WITH THE DOMINANT SUPPLIER SSE. IT IS A TWO RATE SYSTEM - ONE METER MEASURES HEAT USE AND THE OTHER METER MEASURES NON HEAT USE. AS A RESTRICTED METER THERE ARE NO ONLINE SWITCHING OPTIONS AND IT IS VERY CHALLENGING TO FIND ALTERNATE SUPPLIERS BUT THERE IS A REMEDY THAT SOME PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO USE – TO ASK AN ENERGY COMPANY TO PROVIDE THEIR

SINGLE RATE TO BOTH THTC METERS. IF IT IS A CHEAP SINGLE RATE THEN SAVINGS CAN BE MADE. THIS IS QUITE COMPLEX BUT IT IS KNOWN AS THE RESTRICTED METER REMEDY. THE ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE IS AWARE OF SOME SWITCHING OPTIONS THAT SOME HOUSEHOLDS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY MADE. BUT WE ARE ALSO AWARE OF MANY HUNDREDS OF FAILED SWITCHING PROCESSES.

- ECONOMY 7 (E7) – THIS IS THE MOST COMMON TARIFF FOR STORAGE HEATERS OUTWITH THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS AND THERE ARE STILL QUITE A FEW E7 TARIFFS IN HOUSES ON SKYE AND LOCHALSH – IF YOU ARE WITH SSE THEY CALL IT DOMESTIC ECONOMY. BASICALLY ON E7 THERE IS A CHEAPER NIGHT RATE AND A MORE EXPENSIVE DAY RATE. ALL ENERGY COMPANIES OFFER A E7 RATE AND THE BEST TARIFF DEPENDS ON THE REAL ACTUAL BALANCE OF USE IN YOUR HOME BETWEEN NIGHT AND DAY SO ONCE YOU KNOW THIS YOU CAN CHOOSE A SUPPLIER WITH TARIFF RATES THAT MORE CLOSELY MATCH YOUR USE. AGAIN ALL E7 CREDIT AND PREPAY CUSTOMERS CAN SWITCH ONLINE VIA A PRICE COMPARISON WEBSITE – OUR FAVOURITE IS THE ONE RUN BY CITIZENS ADVICE AS <https://energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

AN IMPORTANT THING FOR ANY POTENTIAL SWITCHER TO CONSIDER IS WHETHER THEY RECEIVE WARM HOME DISCOUNT (WHD) FROM THEIR EXISTING SUPPLIER. THAT GIVES YOU AN ANNUAL PAYMENT OF AROUND £140 TOWARDS YOUR BILL AND NOT ALL ENERGY COMPANIES OFFER THIS PAYMENT SO BEFORE SWITCHING ASK THE NEW COMPANY ABOUT WHD..

WITH SUMMER INCOMES LIKELY TO BE LOW OR NON EXISTENT THIS YEAR IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER THAT FOLK PLAN FOR THE WINTER MONTHS AND CONSIDER ENERGY SWITCHING. TO HEAR MORE INFORMATION ON THE AVAILABLE SWITCHING OPTIONS PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE. THE SERVICE IS FREE AND WE WONT RECOMMEND WHICH OPTIONS YOU TAKE BUT CAN EXPLAIN WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE .

EMAIL THE ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE ON ENERGYADVICE@LSHA.CO.UK OR CALL 01478 612035 AND WE WILL ARRANGE TO CALL YOU BACK. (9.6.2020)

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association
Energy Advice

 **Services**