

GREATER MANCHESTER'S ENERGY SWITCHING SCHEME:

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO SAVE UP TO £250 ON YOUR ELECTRICITY AND GAS BILLS

Background

We know that rising energy prices are an increasing concern for residents.

We also know that many people would get a better deal on their energy by switching providers.

Greater Manchester's Energy Switching Scheme is being organised by the ten councils within Greater Manchester (Manchester, Bury, Oldham, Salford, Stockport, Wigan, Bolton, Rochdale, Tameside and Trafford). The scheme brings together a number of people who want to switch providers into one 'auction'. Energy providers then bid for their business by offering the best available prices.

The more people join the collective scheme, the better a deal everybody gets.

On average we expect residents to save up to £250 a year by switching energy suppliers through this scheme. The £250 figure is based on previous auctions.

How does the scheme work?

Residents can sign up **free** and with **no obligation** to tell us they are interested in switching suppliers to save money. Businesses currently on a domestic tariff are also eligible to sign up.

The more people sign up, the better deal we all get.

Anyone can sign up from 2 January to 28 January 2013.

On 29 January iChoosr (the company which has been selected to facilitate the switching process) will run an auction asking energy suppliers to bid for the collective business of everyone who signs up.

After 29 January iChoosr will contact everyone who has signed up individually with an offer of an energy tariff based on their usage. This will outline how much you will save by switching to the winning energy provider.

Residents then choose whether or not to sign up to the new supplier. There is no obligation to change if residents choose not to, but they have a few weeks to accept the offer. They will be then be contacted by the new supplier to arrange switching.

Frequently asked questions

How do I sign up?

Just fill in one simple online form at www.gmfairenergy.com

You will need the following details to complete your registration:

1. Your name, address and contact details.
2. The name of your current energy supplier(s) and current tariff plan(s).
3. Your current consumption in kWh or spend – this information will be on your energy bill.

Once you have signed up, they will receive an overview of their registration by email – they will then be asked to confirm this registration online.

If I agree to the switch, when will my supplier change?

The scheme will take care of the switching process for you. Once you have agreed to switch, your new energy supplier will contact your former supplier to agree a date for your switch. This should be completed within five weeks.

Your new supplier will then send you a welcome letter explaining the conditions of the contract. The letter will explain what your contract entails and what will happen next. Your gas and electricity supply will not be interrupted at any time.

If I'm on a pre-payment meter, can I switch suppliers?

If you are currently on a pre-payment meter, you can sign up to the scheme provided you are not in more than £500 of debt to your current supplier. You will be asked to choose whether you wish to stay on a pre-payment meter or switch to credit meter payments (not 'pay as you go'). If you wish to stay on pre-payment, a separate auction will take place for you and others on pre-payment meters, and you will get a different offer from the chosen supplier as a result.

I don't have access to the Internet or email – can I still sign up?

You can register up to five households on the same email address. Why not help out a neighbour or friend who does not have access to the Internet or email?

Alternatively, you can register by calling into your local library. Don't forget to take along a recent energy bill. You can also call 0800 009 3363.

How are you going to use the information I provide?

Your details will only be shared with the winning supplier after you have confirmed that you want to switch.

If you choose not to accept the offer, you will not be contacted again about this deal. We may email about future energy tariff auctions we are conducting, but there is no obligation to participate.

Where can I go for more information?

There is a full explanation of the scheme plus detailed FAQs on the website at www.gmfairenergy.com