

## Energy Update December 2014

TMBC has joined the Energy Deal collective switching scheme working on a winter campaign between December 2014 - February 2015 in collaboration with Dartford, Dover, Gravesham and Tunbridge Wells.

Members may be aware that Collective Switching is where a third party negotiates a better energy tariff on behalf of a group of residents. The Government has encouraged local councils to take on this role and develop schemes for the benefit of residents. Such schemes enable residents to register an interest in participating in a 'reverse energy auction' and to subsequently receive a new energy provider offer. The energy providers that offer the best deal on that day for the majority of residents will be selected. There is no obligation on registrants to accept the offer.

Collective switching schemes help residents to obtain a low price for energy, assisting in maximising household income and helping to alleviate fuel poverty. By registering interest in the scheme local residents will have the opportunity to access cheaper energy tariffs. The scheme will be promoted borough wide but particular emphasis will be directed towards vulnerable households and in the priority areas of East Malling, Snodland and Trench. Whilst there is no obligation to switch, the scheme does prompt residents to assess their energy costs and consumption. Any new tariff will be offered for a 12 month fixed priced period.

Household savings will depend on the existing tariff, as well as current energy consumption. Whilst the scheme does not 'guarantee' that each resident will save on their current energy costs, as the LGA Chair Councillor David Sparks recently said, *"collective switching is making a real difference to people, both saving them money on their bills and providing an easy way to avoid the headache of having to spend time trying to wade through the complex wording of price plans, particularly for those residents without access to the internet. Councils are at the heart of their communities and can act as a trusted local broker to facilitate such schemes and help the elderly and vulnerable"*.

The Energy Deal scheme is free to join and requires no obligation to switch energy supplier. Residents can register with the scheme to see if they could save on their energy bill and get support to guide them through the process. The scheme will negotiate directly with energy suppliers and aims to secure a competitive tariff for the residents taking part.

The Energy Deal February 2014 campaign saw average savings of £190 per year for dual fuel customers. The current campaign launches on 2 December and will continue until 2 February 2015.

To register to take part resident's will need to have their annual energy statement to hand, or a recent fuel bill. Registration can be completed online or, **if a resident does not have access to a computer, by calling the Private Sector Housing Team on 01732 876395**



(leave your contact details to receive a callback). For further information and to register go to [www.energydealswitch.com](http://www.energydealswitch.com)

We would appreciate any assistance you can offer to raise awareness of the scheme with residents in your area. Thank you.