



For immediate release: Tuesday 28th June, 2011

BRITISH GAS PRICE RISE DUE 'IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS'

Centrica – the company which owns British Gas – has suggested that British Gas could announce a price rise in 'the next few weeks.' Tweeting from the Energy and Climate Change Committee, industry watchdog Consumer Focus quoted a Centrica representative as saying: ['On the balance of probabilities we will reluctantly put prices up in next few weeks.'](#)

British Gas is the first energy supplier to give an indication of when it is likely to put up its prices since ScottishPower's price rise announcement earlier in the month. On 7th June, [ScottishPower announced a price rise of 19% for gas and a 10% for electricity](#), which will take effect from 1st August this year. Since the announcement, [uSwitch.com](#) data shows that worried consumers have rushed to fix their energy prices - 59% of those switching their energy supplier or 205,000 households a month are now choosing a fixed price energy tariff^[1].

Tom Lyon, energy expert at [uSwitch.com](#), says: "The debate is no longer about what is going to happen to energy prices - it's now about what action consumers intend to take. The spectre of energy bills potentially hitting almost £1,400 a year is just too big to ignore^[2]. As a result, we are seeing a surge in the number of people looking to protect themselves by fixing their energy prices.

"Opting for a fixed price deal is a sure-fire way of safeguarding against energy price increases. However, like fixed-rate mortgages, these energy deals could swiftly disappear from the market. Consumers therefore need to act quickly to secure the best deals while they are still available. The message is clear: act fast if you want to fix for your future."

For more information visit [www.uSwitch.com](#) or call 0800 093 06 07

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Notes to editors:

1. uSwitch.com calculation based on 4.16 million switchers. Number of switchers based on Ofgem's Retail Market Review where Ofgem states: 'During 2010, 15 per cent of consumers report switching their gas supplier and 17 per cent report switching their electricity supplier.' Assuming each respondent reflects the views of one household and 26 million households with an average of 16% switching last year, 4.16 million households switched. When averaged across 12 months there are 346,667 switchers each month. Fixed switching rates data based on proportion of switches through uSwitch between 8th and 17th June, 2011 switching to a fixed tariff. Applying the 59% of customers in June 2011 switching to a fixed price tariff to the estimated total number of switches each month equals 204,534 switches across the market.
2. Based on a medium user customer consuming 3,300 kWh of electricity and 16,500 kWh of gas, on a standard plan paying by cash or cheque with bill sizes averaged across all regions and the big six suppliers.

About us

uSwitch.com is a free, impartial, online and telephone-based comparison and switching service, helping consumers compare prices on gas, electricity, water, heating cover, home telephone, broadband, digital television, mobile phones and personal finance products including mortgages, credit cards, current accounts and insurance. In 2010 uSwitch.com celebrated ten years of saving customers money.

uSwitch.com is the first comparison website to achieve the Plain English Campaign's Internet Crystal Mark, which is recognised as a standard that a website has clear language, is accessible and easy to use, and has been tested on a sample of its users.

uSwitch.com is dedicated to helping consumers save money whether they have internet access or not. It offers a dedicated call centre, manned by uSwitch customer service representatives, as well as a freepost 'Send us your bill' service, whereby customers can post their latest energy bills with their telephone number to FREEPOST USWITCH, to get a free call back from a dedicated customer services representative. The service is also available via fax, email and post. Consumers should fax 0203 214 8417, email CustomerServices@uswitch.com or write to Customer Services, uSwitch.com, Centro 3, 19 Mandela Street, London, NW1 0DU with their postcode and usage details.

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