

From: Andrew Batchelder
Sent: 20 September 2016 12:53
To: Confidencecode <confidencecode@ofgem.gov.uk>
Subject: Confidence code review

Having tried to read this, I get the feeling that it's probably not really aimed at me (Joe Public), however, I do have a couple of points which I would like to make in case they're relevant to your document (as opposed to the 'Proposed changes to rules around tariff comparability and marketing' document - which I've also tried to read...)

Whilst it is good that 51% of people that switched got some use from a price comparison website, my concern is that it's very difficult to know if you can really trust the information they're telling you (especially when you hear on the news etc. about them being sort of "sponsored/rewarded" to only show some tariffs and/or favour some tariffs) - and that's only going to get worse if we do go back to dozens/hundreds of different tariffs

There needs to be somewhere that you know is truly independent - i.e. OFGEM's website - where Joe Public can go to get reliable unbiased information about tariffs

I accept you probably don't see yourselves as being in the business of performing price comparisons, but at the end of the day all customers really want is to know which tariff will work out the cheapest for them - and certainly if you try to get quotes from the individual big six companies websites, they don't want to make it easy for you to find out the basic information i.e. what is the cost per unit and what is the daily standing charge (yes, you then have to factor in usage, but if even I can figure that out, then...)

And then to try and do that six times...I know that's why there are price comparison websites, but if you don't feel you can trust their answers....

And finally - possibly not anything to do with your document, but...I'm "lucky enough" not to have a prepayment meter, but it seems to me that it is really unfair for the people that do have them to be on anything other than the cheapest tariff available - certainly if the TV is to be believed, people who have them are often either finding it difficult to pay their bills or have had issues in the past - either way, it's just not fair that they're not given a decent tariff (admittedly, I'm not too clear how that would be done in practice because you need to avoid everybody wanting to change to a prepayment meter, but there are mentions of the word principles in the document and it feels like a principle that the suppliers should be made to adopt, and are presumably clever enough to know how to implement)

Sorry I couldn't stick to your prescribed questions to answer, regards,