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Ofgem
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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to welcome your plans to conduct engagement trials with consumers, as set out in the Forward Work Programme 2020-22.

As you will be aware, one of our brands energyhelpline worked with Ofgem on a series of consumer engagement trials designed to help the most disengaged customers who had been on an expensive standard variable tariff for over three years. Our three trials saw record numbers of people save money on their energy bills by taking part in a collective switch. In Ofgem's report on the collective switch trials, it was noted the results had "proven beyond doubt" that collective switching is an "effective intervention which can substantially change energy customer's willingness to switch tariff."

We are therefore delighted to see the Forward Work Programme commit Ofgem to conducting further trials with consumers. As set out by your new Chief Executive Jonathan Brearley at the Energy Conference in London, Ofgem is committed to intervening in the market to protect consumers. The collective switch intervention not only protects consumers, it helps them to engage with the market and make substantial savings. This echoes remarks made by your Chair, Martin Cave stating that switching suppliers remains the best way to save money. As our trials with Ofgem have shown, this intervention is also compatible with the current price cap, showing that multiple interventions can protect consumers.

In addition, we believe that a full, national roll out which covers at least all eight million disengaged customers, as identified by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), would also offer a long-term alternative to the price cap as Ofgem considers potential options for the market. We believe further trials must now be designed and held this year to help demonstrate this possibility and provide the evidence base necessary for Ofgem and government to make a long-term decision which reduces consumers' energy bills.

We support Ofgem's vision for a market where a combination of healthy competition and appropriate safeguards ensures that all consumers pay a competitive price for their energy, and consumers in vulnerable situations are properly protected. Over the coming weeks, we look forward to working with Ofgem to help identify areas that should be tested further, in line with your vision for the market.

If you have any further questions, please do contact my colleague Caitlin on CaitlinFordham@wacomms.co.uk or on 020 7227 1649.

Yours sincerely,



Tom Lyon
Director of Energy
Comparison Technologies, parent company of energyhelpline