

# ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

**ISSUE 20: JANUARY 2023**

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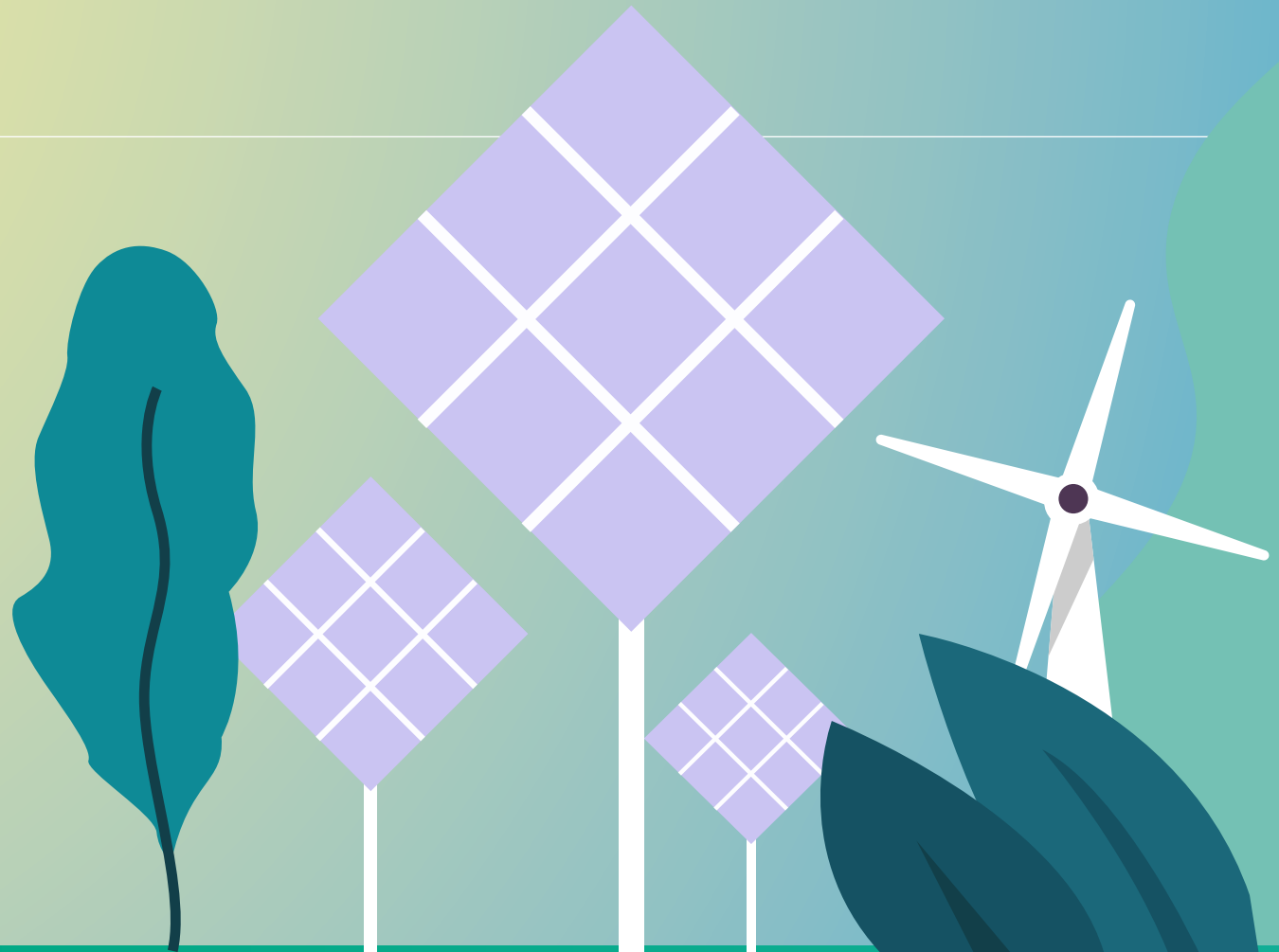


# ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

## WELCOME TO THE ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

In this edition we give you the opportunity to 'Have your Say' by responding to two energy consultations - the Energy One Stop Shop consultation and the Renewable Electricity consultation.

We also highlight the Energy Consumer Charter and the Winter Energy Campaign, which are examples of some of the important initiatives that have been developed to support consumers this winter.



## ENERGY ONE STOP SHOP CONSULTATION EXTENDED TO 31ST JANUARY

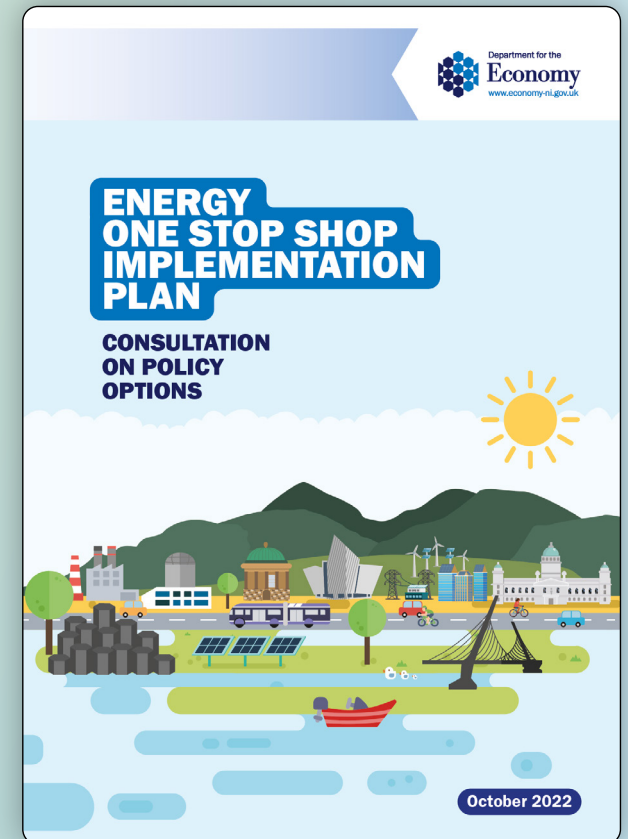
**The Department for the Economy's consultation for an Energy One Stop Shop has been extended until 31st of January.**

The One Stop Shop will be a vitally important pillar on the journey to energy decarbonisation. It aims to be a single point of contact where consumers, communities and businesses can source information, advice and support about energy issues.

The One Stop Shop will work with partners in an effort to simplify the energy decarbonisation journey for consumers, whether they need impartial advice on what to do and how to do it, or protection along the decarbonisation journey.

The service will eventually be available to all domestic consumers and non-domestic consumers, including SME businesses and community energy groups. It will have special regard to the needs of vulnerable consumers.

To have your say visit [Energy "One Stop Shop" Implementation Plan - consultation on policy options | Department for the Economy \(economy-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/energy-one-stop-shop-implementation-plan-consultation)



## OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY ACTION PLAN (OREAP) CONSULTATION NOW OPEN

The Department for the Economy (DfE) has published the draft offshore renewable energy action plan for public consultation.

The Draft OREAP delivers on Action 14 of The Energy Strategy Action Plan 2022 [1] to *“Develop an action plan to deliver 1GW of offshore wind from 2030”*. This is Northern Ireland’s most ambitious energy infrastructure plan, supplying enough energy to power one million homes with clean and affordable electricity.



## DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY (DFE) PUBLISHES THE DRAFT OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY ACTION PLAN FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION *(continued)*

Offshore renewable energy development in the NI marine area offers an opportunity for both decarbonisation and economic benefit to NI communities and businesses. The OREAP is designed to accelerate the Energy Strategy ambition, setting the pathway to achieving the deployment of offshore wind, in advance of 2030, if possible.

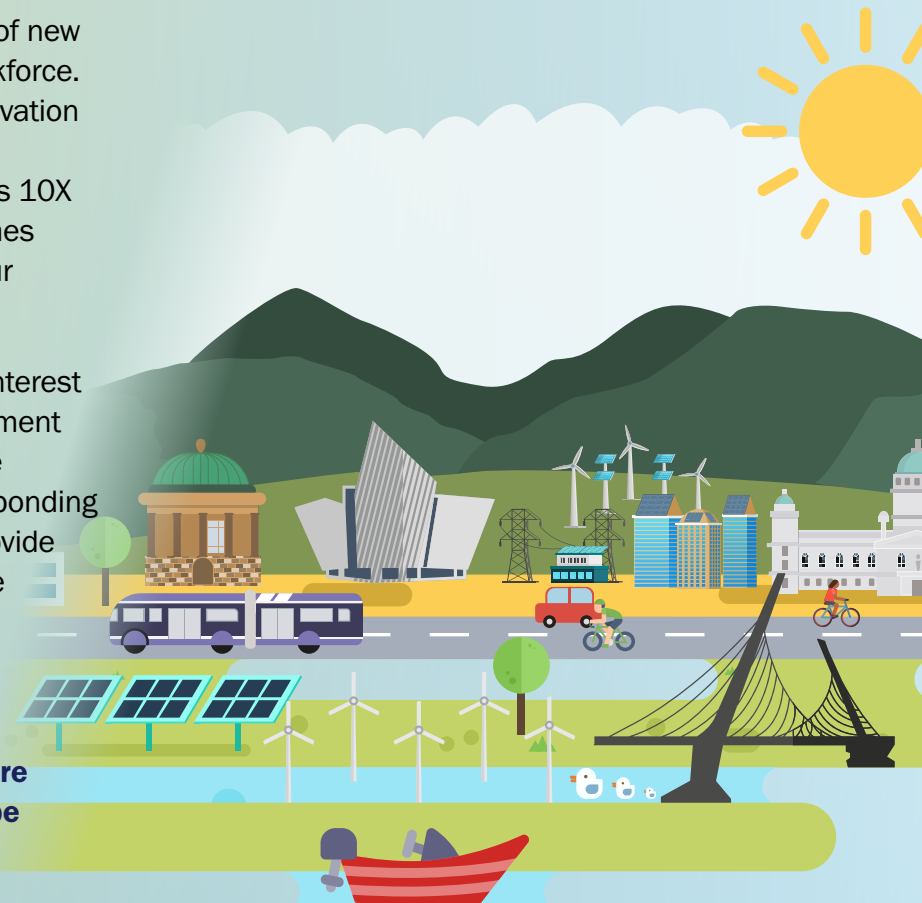
Delivering this will require the input of a wide range of stakeholders from across society. Therefore, the OREAP takes a collaborative approach working across government with those who manage, live close to, or work in the marine environment, and with the energy industry, to ensure that activities are being taken forward in a coordinated, informed, and transparent manner.

The OREAP will not only deliver clean electricity for Northern Ireland but will also attract investment into local communities

and businesses and see the creation of new skilled jobs for Northern Ireland's workforce. All of this will support growth and innovation in the green economy and low carbon technology sector, contributing to DfE's 10X Economic Vision<sup>[1]</sup> - to deliver a ten times better economy with benefits for all our people.

We encourage everyone who has an interest in offshore renewable energy development and the wider energy sector to provide comments on the Draft OREAP by responding to the public consultation. This will provide DfE with valuable insight, which will be analysed and considered throughout the further development and implementation of the OREAP.

**The Consultation on the Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan can be viewed on the [DFE Website](#).**



[1] [10X Economy - an economic vision for a decade of innovation | Department for the Economy \(economy-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

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## WINTER ENERGY CAMPAIGN

**As a trusted voice for Consumers in Northern Ireland, the Consumer Council NI are collaborating with the Department for the Economy and the Utility Regulator, to deliver a Winter Energy information Campaign.**

The campaign, which will run until March 2023, provides consumers with online and offline support, including practical advice and tips on:

- 1. Energy efficiency for electricity.**
- 2. Energy efficiency for heating.**
- 3. Reading your gas and electricity meter.**
- 4. Gas and electricity bills.**
- 5. Tariffs and switching providers.**

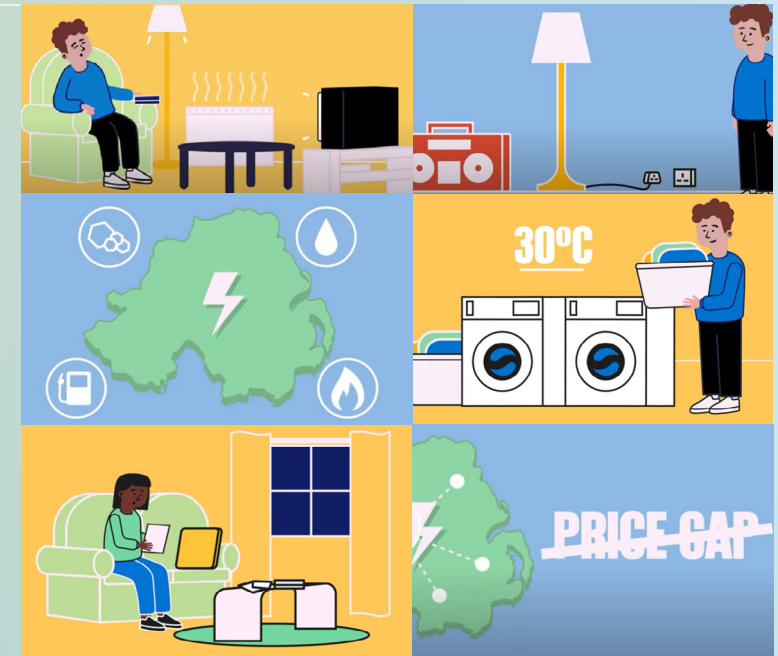
A range of video guides, information booklets and online tools are available to help people with energy issues.

### **Campaign statistics to end December 2022:**

To date, the campaign advertisements have appeared over 2.2m times across all digital platforms (impressions). From this over 19,000 clicks were generated on the campaign website and over 45,000 video views were generated.

Newspaper and radio adverts have been used to direct consumers towards campaign information.

For further information visit [Save energy and money | Consumer Council](#)



## CONSUMER ENERGY CHARTER LAUNCHED

**Electricity and gas suppliers in Northern Ireland have voluntarily signed up to a Consumer Energy Charter designed to help consumers in need.**

The list of suppliers involved in the Charter are Budget Energy, Click Energy, Electric Ireland, firmus energy, Power NI, and SSE Airtricity. These organisations have worked alongside the Utility Regulator, the Consumer Council NI, the Department for Communities and the Department for the Economy to develop the Charter, which includes the following overarching principles:

### **Financial commitment**

- Electricity and gas suppliers will commit to making a financial contribution to a hardship fund to support customers struggling to pay their bills.

### **Pre-payment meter customer commitment**

- From 1 December 2022, electricity and gas suppliers are supporting those in debt by reducing the debt repayment amount from a maximum of 40% down to 20%. In addition, they will also undertake a bespoke assessment of the customer's ability to pay.
- Electricity and gas suppliers will ensure that customers on their customer care registers are not moved on to a prepayment meter, unless the customer requests it.
- Electricity and gas suppliers will not compel customers in debt to move onto a prepayment meter over the Christmas period (16 December 2022 to 20 January 2023), unless specifically requested by the customer.



## CONSUMER ENERGY CHARTER LAUNCHED *(continued)*

### Debt

- For all credit customers, electricity and gas suppliers will continue to assess customers' ability to pay, and if this identifies any issues, they will look to reducing repayment rates and/or extending debt repayment timeframes.
- Electricity and gas suppliers will review and commit that debt collections processes, including those carried out by their agents, will be strictly conducted in line with the Utility Regulator's Code of Practice for Payment of Bills.
- Electricity and gas suppliers will make contact with those on their customer care registers and inform them of the best available tariffs.

### Communications

- Electricity and gas suppliers, government and consumer bodies will together, provide up-to-date, accurate information to consumers through the Consumer Council's website, and their own individual social media channels.
- Suppliers will have staff appropriately trained to deal with the needs of vulnerable consumers and make this option clear to on their websites and other customer communications.

All signatories have agreed to implement the commitments as soon as possible and adhere to them until 31 March 2023.

CCNI have published information on how suppliers are helping consumers this winter, see [Consumer Energy Charter | Consumer Council](#)

