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If you've been with the same energy provider for several years, industry regulators recommended shopping around and comparing other tariffs offered by different companies, which could be cheaper and better suited to your situation.

Britain's energy markets are very dynamic and changing all the time, influenced by multiple factors including resource scarcity and import duties that can serve to dramatically increase the cost of fuel delivery to homes and business premises. Understanding the factors that affect the cost of your electricity and gas bills could help you make positive changes to your property and to your usage habits, allowing you to reduce the amount of energy you consume - but there's only so much that's in your hands.

If you've never compared energy prices before, you don't necessarily have to switch to a new provider. Visiting your current supplier's official website or reading through their promotional material should give you details of different tariffs available, some of which are tailored for properties of certain sizes and for people with different lifestyles and energy consumption habits, and could be better suited to your situation than a standard electricity or gas tariff.

If your current contract with your energy supplier will soon reach its end though, you are under no obligation to continue using the same company, and this is the best time to use price comparison websites to research prices and compare other features of energy tariffs offered by different providers. You should always read the small print on promotions and special offers to ensure you understand what's involved and what you can expect to pay.

There are limitations to price comparison websites however, so it can be useful to extend your research into visiting the home pages of energy suppliers you're interested in, for more reliable and timely information on the latest tariffs. It's often the case that promotions and special offers are only included in official sources, and some price comparison websites may be in partnership with certain suppliers, which can impair the reliability of these results.

After you compare energy prices and you've found the tariff that's right for you, you should also check for any other ways you can save money. Some providers offer discounted rates overall when signing up for a longer term contract, and you could also receive discounts when paying your bills by direct debit.

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