

## Miliband is crazy to freeze energy prices

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The Labour party are obviously concerned about rising energy prices but to truly tackle the problem they need to look at reducing the countries energy consumption. Ed Milliband's approach to reducing the energy consumption is all wrong. The fact is the cost of energy is increasing not just in the UK but around the world as gas and oil supplies plateau, freezing the price of energy for two years will do nothing abate the problem in the UK.

In order to seriously reduce the cost of monthly energy bills we need tangible policies to encourage the public to become more energy aware and switch over to energy efficient products and become less reliant on the national grid. With majority of the UK's housing stock still languishing in band D and E of the EPC (energy performance certificate) scale there is clearly still a lot of work to be done.

Incentives are there at the moment but they are nowhere near enough. The "Green Deal" which was launched in January by the government to encourage home owners to take up energy efficient home improvements at no upfront cost by loaning them the money through subsidies in their electricity has only seen 372 household sign up's since launch. They were hoping for 14 million homes to take advantage of the scheme.

For example, Ledstop, one of the UK's largest LED lighting providers believe the benefits of switching to LED Lighting are obvious but feel there isn't enough support coming from the government to encourage home owners to make the switch. Ben Hopkins from Ledstop explains

"We want to see the government do more to push green products, in the middle of a recession the up-front costs of switching over to LED lighting can look daunting for the average home owner but with LED electricity usage just 10% of traditional lighting consumption our customers can expect to recoup their initial investment with 18 months and with no loss of light quality and an average 16 year light bulb lifespan the benefits speak for themselves, so we were very frustrated to see that LED Lighting wasn't included in the Green Deal plan launched in January. Instead of elaborate schemes a simple reduction in VAT for energy efficient products would go a long way to making them more accessible to the average home owner"

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