



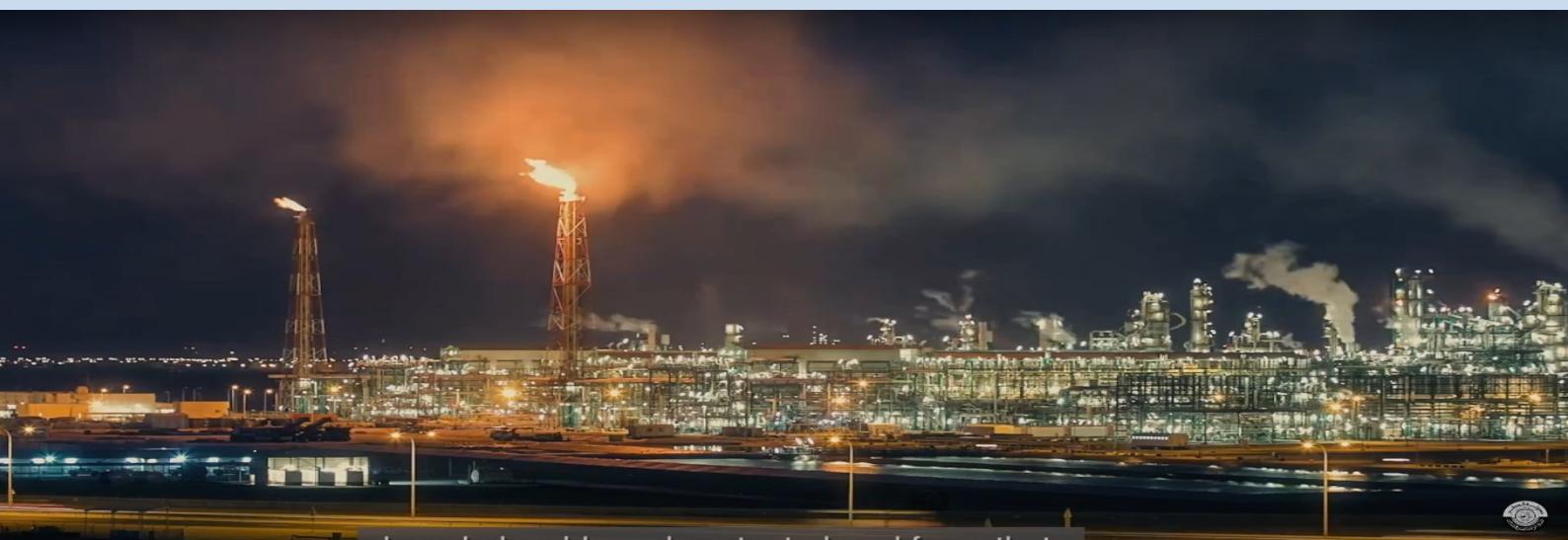
GAS PRICES UNDER PRESSURE

A number of factors are causing unease in the gas market and causing volatility.

- High temperatures in Asia have increased the demand for cooling, meaning prices Europe will have to pay will rise to attract supplies of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)
- New sanctions against Russia by the EU, that included the transshipment of Russian LNG
- Finland's Gasum, a key supplier, will stop buying and importing Russian LNG.
- The EU, at the request of Sweden and Finland, banning the purchase of Russian LNG via EU terminals that are not connected to the EU gas networks, enabling those two countries to cancel existing contracts
- Egypt needs to import natural gas, due to persistent power cuts during hot weather

In addition to the above, tensions continue surrounding Russia/Ukraine, China/Taiwan and the Middle East.

At the time of writing, wholesale gas is around the price it was in December 2023 and has risen since February 2024, despite this being the Summer when demand is usually lower.



ENERGY SUPPLIERS– TERRIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Since the failure of the many energy providers during the energy crisis, customer service has declined by all the energy suppliers apart from one (we won't name them as they are busy and not all brokers have access to them).

- A major energy supplier was last week opening emails from February 2024-yes 4 months late.
- It is common for queries to take 4 weeks to answer and often the reply doesn't resolve the problem.
- Every week we are contacted by a care provider that has an issue with a contract we didn't arrange. That requires us to contact a Director of an energy supplier. (They get paid the large salaries and if THEIR organisation's staff can't resolve IT, then they need to

Our quotes give our assessment of the customer service provided by each energy supplier out of 10, one has 10, none of the others are over 5 and one has a score of 1 out of 10, hence they don't have any supplies passed to them.

Have you been calling one of these suppliers?

We deal with any queries for the care providers we assist, saving you a lot of



TIMING OF QUOTATIONS



Timing of quoting and entering contracts has always been crucial, but even more so when markets are volatile. Quotes have to be current to be achievable and for comparison purposes. A good consultative broker rather than a sales orientated broker/consultant has a thorough knowledge of the how the energy suppliers and energy markets operate.

Allowing you to make an informed decision, and be offered the most appropriate contract and price.

THINKING ABOUT BUYING A CARE/NURSING HOME

We receive a number of calls regarding the energy costs of a potential care or nursing home purchase.

If you purchase the Limited Company that owns/runs the home then any energy contracts will continue. If you are only buying the property, as long as you aren't financially linked with the current owners, then the contracts will end.

If you are looking at buying the Limited Company and energy contracts are due for renewal or due within the next year, care should be taken if the current provider has or intends to renew them, as you will be responsible for the costs, however high they may be.

If you have a question about your relationship with the current provider and it's impact on the existing contracts please contact us.

We are often able to give an indication of the potential energy costs, for the potential purchase, without any obligation. We may even have arranged the contracts.

CARE ENGLAND TENDER MEMBERS

Back in December 2022 when Focus Energy Services Limited were announced as Energy Partner to Care England, Providers were asked to send their latest energy bills to us. Since that time, we have steadily assisted and engaged with hundreds of care providers who have found our open and transparent services (and prices) to be a welcome change to the usually sales-oriented and largely unregulated energy industry.

If you have a utility supply that you would like to discuss or would like an indicative quote to see how much the market has stabilised in comparison to the last few years, please contact. David Woodward 01904 202294 or david@focusenergyservices.co.uk



Focus Energy Services Limited - proud Energy Partner to
CARE ENGLAND
Representing independent care providers

You can join the free Care England Energy Tender at careengland.org.uk/energy/

MULTIPLE ENERGY CONTRACT END DATES?



Having different contract end dates causes an increased work load, possibly higher bank charges and a higher risk of accidentally moving onto higher out of contract or deemed rates.

A consultative broker/consultant with an interest in reducing the above, will work with you and demonstrate how they can align your renewal dates. It takes a lot more work but just advising providers to renew each contract is both lazy and not helping you.

ENERGY BILL AUDITS

We continue every week to discover overcharges on energy bills. During the 3rd week of June 2024, we discovered over £300,000 of overcharging, which we are assisting with recovering.

QUESTIONS FROM PROVIDERS

Q-We have just purchased out fourth care home. Our existing broker advises he can't add the electricity supplies to our existing supplier as its domestic.

After discussion with you and your advising the MPAN numbers (supply numbers) you have commercial meters within the home as well as a supply to a staff flat, which is a domestic meter. This is a common problem within the care sector and one we have resolved with a number of energy suppliers, that will now allow us to mix domestic and commercial meters within the same contract.

Q-Why do different energy suppliers charge different standing charges?

We often see that standing charge of over £3 or £4 is cheaper on an annual cost than a standing charge of 30p for example, this is due to the higher standing charge having a lower unit rate. As long as your quote is based on actual consumption figures, the standing charge doesn't matter.

If your broker/ consultant or energy supplier isn't using accurate figures, you could face tolerance penalties, and it raises the question why?

If you have a question please send it to info@focusenergyservices.co.uk

Your questions are often the same as many other providers, so asking it and getting a reply can provide the answer for many in the sector.

Our website www.focusenergyservices.co.uk has regular updates and testimonials.