



Damian Hinds
MP for East Hampshire

News release

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For immediate release

Damian Hinds Speaks Out on Energy Prices; Highlights the Potential of Oil Clubs

Damian Hinds has drawn attention to the rising cost of energy for homes and called for new ways to help consumers find the best deal for them. During the debate in the House of Commons on energy prices, he highlighted the role of local community groups in helping people conserve energy in their own homes, making them more economical to heat and more environmentally sustainable.

Damian Hinds said

"This is a matter of the first importance to so many people in East Hampshire and many of the most vulnerable households nationwide. Some will be making a choice between heating and eating this winter.

"There are important community-based initiatives, such as our own Greening Petersfield and Greening Alton & Holybourne, which are working with people on sensible, simple measures to better insulate homes and save money."

Damian also raised the example of oil clubs. Oil clubs are groups of customers, usually around 20 people or more, in an area who come together to place domestic fuel orders and arrange deliveries all at once. They can be very positive in villages in areas like East Hampshire. When people act together they can often arrange better prices with suppliers. In addition, deliveries become easier to arrange as a tanker truck can arrange to deliver to several homes in one area on the same day instead of having to make separate trips. According to the Citizens Advice Bureau, most oil clubs are able to see saving of around 10% on their costs.

Speaking after the debate, Damian Hinds said

"Oil Clubs are a brilliant way for rural communities to come together and help each other and themselves. With energy prices rising and winter weather growing fiercer, now is a good time to consider starting a oil club. You can advertise for members among your friends and neighbours, on village notice boards and through the local Citizens Advice Bureau - all you need is someone willing to be the coordinator and contact the energy providers on behalf of the group.

"If anyone would like to start their own club, they can get advice from their local Citizens Advice Bureau, and there is also a link you can follow on damianhinds.com. If you are already a member of an oil club, I would encourage you to register it with the CAB so they can help other people find clubs in their area."

Damian also welcomed the government's Green Deal initiative, which provides the capital for people to have their homes made more energy efficient and to pay for the work through savings in their energy bills. He said it was vital that local small businesses could share in the work, a point that has also been championed by the Greening Campaign.

Damian also raised specific concerns about how the Green Deal would work for low income households in East Hampshire and those with prepayment meters.

He said *"I will be following up on all these matters with Ministers."*

Finally, Damian criticised the incredible complexity of the tariffs on the market and called for new ways to make it easier to compare and be confident that you have found the best deal.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For the full text of Damian's speech please see

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111019/debtext/111019-0003.htm#11101946001273>

From more information on Oil Clubs and how to start one, visit

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/oilclubs>

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