

## PRESS RELEASE

London, 11 June 2013

### FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY COULD INCREASE FUEL POVERTY OVER NEXT FIVE YEARS

*9 in 10 consumers think energy efficiency technology could cut their bills, but 63% say cost is an issue*

**London, UK 11 June 2013** – A survey of UK adults by the Rexel Foundation and Opinion Way, published today, reveals that more than nine in ten people think fuel poverty levels in Britain will increase if nothing is done to improve the adoption of energy efficiency.

Three quarters of British consumers admit to being worried about their energy bills so it is perhaps unsurprising that 68% of people have made some energy efficiency improvements to their homes in the past five years. Four in five (79%) of these cited reducing their bills as the main motivation and 27% said the environment was a key driver. In fact, most consumers see the potential of energy efficiency products and solutions, with 89% of Brits convinced that investing in energy efficiency products such as LED lighting, efficient heating and air conditioning systems or upgrading the insulation of their homes, will allow them to reduce their bills. Almost half (41%) think the reduction will be up to 20% or more.

But despite high levels of confidence in energy efficiency upgrades to reduce bills, the majority of consumers (63%) say that cost and other financial considerations are holding them back, followed by renters not feeling it would be worth their while (24%). The choice of technologies available is also too overwhelming for 21% of people.

Drilling down into the financial barriers, the top concern (35%) was a lack of disposable income to invest in energy efficiency followed by a reluctance to borrow money and get into debt (23%). Electricians agree; 64% said cost considerations and other financial implications are putting customers off adopting energy efficiency measures, compounded by a lack of knowledge of what energy efficiency is all about (47%).

When asked what was needed to develop energy efficiency in the future, 91% of electricians agreed with a need for better financing solutions, 76% said stricter regulation was needed from the government and 68% called for a more simplified range of energy efficient products.

Despite the noted barriers for consumers, the vast majority of electricians have great confidence in the sector with 87% recommending specialising in energy efficiency to today's young electricians.

Brian Smithers, strategic development director for Rexel Northern European Zone, commented: "It's worrying to hear that cost concerns are still putting consumers off investing in energy efficiency measures especially in view of the launch of incentives such as the Green Deal, which allows homeowners to access funding for energy efficiency at no upfront cost. However, this survey makes it clear that there is little awareness of the options available.

"While the Government and the energy companies have an important role to play here, it's crucial that the UK's army of trusted electricians are able to educate their customers about the support available. Soft skills



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are as valuable here as technical ones; the future of energy efficiency in the UK depends on the ability to better communicate financial incentives, ROI and long term cost savings. Rexel is committed to providing the tools and knowhow needed to help electricians drive greater adoption of energy efficiency through training and by raising awareness and understanding of the most effective energy efficient technologies and products available.”

<b>CONSUMERS</b>
On motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 in 10 consumers think energy efficiency technology could cut their bills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 in 10 people think fuel poverty levels in Britain will increase if the adoption of energy efficient technologies doesn't improve</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three quarters of British consumers admit to being worried about their energy bills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68% of people have made some energy efficiency improvements to their homes in the past five years</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four in five (79%) consumers cited reducing their bills as the main motivation for making energy efficiency improvements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27% said the environment was a driver in making energy efficiency improvements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 89% of Brits are convinced that investing in energy efficiency products such as LED lighting, efficient heating and air conditioning, smart meters or upgrading the insulation of their homes, will allow them to reduce their bills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almost half (41%) think they could reduce their bills by up to 20% or more by investing in energy efficiency products</li> </ul>
On barriers to adoption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 63% of consumers say that cost and other financial considerations are holding them back from making improvements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24% of renters do not feel that energy efficiency improvements would be worth their while</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21% of people stated the choice of technologies available is also too overwhelming</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35% claimed that a lack of disposable income to invest in energy efficiency was holding them back</li> </ul>
On what is needed to develop energy efficiency in the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46% thought better financial incentives and subsidies were needed from the government</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31% said access to attractive financial packages would help manage the cost</li> </ul>
<b>ELECTRICIANS</b>
On consumer barriers to adoption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 64% said cost considerations and other financial implications are putting customers off adopting energy efficiency measures</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47% believe that it is a lack of knowledge among customers of what energy efficiency is all about</li> </ul>
On what is needed to develop energy efficiency in the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91% of electricians agreed with the need for better financing solutions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 76% said stricter regulation was needed from the government</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68% called for a more simplified range of energy efficient products</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 82% stated that knowing how to explain the benefits of products to customers would help</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87% of electricians would recommend specialising in energy efficiency to today's young electricians</li> </ul>



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### **About the Rexel Foundation for a better energy future**

The Rexel Foundation for a better energy future was founded in May 2013 by the Rexel Group, a global leader in the professional distribution of products and services for the energy world, under the aegis of the Fondation de France. The Rexel Foundation's mission is to promote access to energy efficiency for all based on three key pillars: to improve understanding and raise awareness of energy efficiency; to encourage innovation through research and education, and to support community projects both in France and abroad in partnership with NGOs, social entrepreneurs and other key stakeholders.

For more information, please visit: [www.rexelfoundation.com](http://www.rexelfoundation.com)

### **About Rexel UK**

Rexel UK operates through 5 operating businesses in the UK and Ireland (Newey& Eyre, Denmans, the newly merged WF and Senate, Parker Merchanting, and Wilts Wholesale Electrical) selling to a wide range of customers from small electrical contractors to major contracting companies and international end users. With sales over €950m in 2011, Rexel UK, the country's market leader, operates through a national network of 400 branches with a highly developed service proposition.

For more information, please visit: [www.rexel.co.uk](http://www.rexel.co.uk)

### **About Rexel Group**

Rexel, a global leader in the professional distribution of products and services for the energy world, addresses three main markets - industrial, commercial and residential. The Group supports customers around the globe, wherever they are, to create value and run their businesses better. With a network of some 2,300 branches in 37 countries, and over 31,000 employees, Rexel's sales were €13.4 billion in 2012. Its major shareholders are an investor group led by Clayton, Dubilier & Rice, Eurazeo and BAML Capital Partners.

Rexel is listed on the Eurolist market of Euronext Paris (compartment A, ticker RXL, ISIN code FR0010451203). It is included in the following indices: SBF 120, CAC Mid 100, CAC AllTrade, CAC AllShares, FTSE EuroMid, FTSE4Good, STOXX600, STOXX Europe Sustainability, Euronext Vigeo Europe 120 and ASPI Eurozone.

For more information, please visit: [www.rexel.com](http://www.rexel.com)

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