

Smart Energy GB launches Britain's first 'Green Aisle' with Homebase

London, UK: 6 October 2020 - A first-of-its-kind destination for shoppers looking to be more eco-friendly, 'The Green Aisle', launches from today in 137 Homebase stores across Great Britain. In partnership with Smart Energy GB, 'The Green Aisle' showcases energy efficient and eco-friendly home improvement products which will help make homes greener and winter-ready in one place.

The nation's extended period spent indoors and the Government's Green Homes Grant scheme has helped drive the trend for green home improvements¹, with recent research commissioned by Smart Energy GB revealing that three-quarters (74%) of Brits are keen to make their home greener.

However, with half admitting that they don't know where to start, the launch of 'The Green Aisle' arms shoppers with the information needed to make more environmentally informed choices on their home improvements. Much like the specialist aisles in supermarkets for free-from products, 'The Green Aisle' collates greener items based on their energy efficiency credentials, as supported by Energy Saving Trust. It will be in Homebase stores nationwide from October.

Items on 'The Green Aisle' range from washing machines, fridge freezers and eco-friendly paint to insulation, draught excluders, and smart appliances. The aisle also includes information on how customers can request a smart meter installation from their energy supplier. Smart meters enable consumers to better manage their domestic energy consumption, and they also help to upgrade Britain's energy system to one that can help tackle the climate crisis and meet our net zero target.

As a key component of a smarter energy system, smart meters also help to reduce energy waste within the system, enable greater integration of renewable energy and allow for the mass uptake of low carbon technologies such as electric vehicles.

Craig Phillips, DIY expert and one of the first to visit the 'Green Aisle' in Haringey, said: "I've helped hundreds of people improve their homes over the years by making small changes which have a big impact – the same is true for taking small energy efficiency measures in the home.

"It can be hard to know where to start when it comes to making greener choices, so The Green Aisle helps make this process even easier for people by identifying which products are more environmentally-friendly, and likewise understand the positive impact they can have. Whether you're in the market for new LEDs or eco-friendly paint, something we can all do now is to speak to your energy supplier about getting a smart meter installed. Each installation is a step towards a lower carbon future for Britain and can help you manage your energy use."

New research of 4,000 respondents, commissioned by Smart Energy GB, reveals that Brits' key motivation behind making their homes greener is to help the environment (71%) - but equally to save money (71%). The Energy Saving Trust found that a household can save up to £581 on energy bills each year if they implement a full range of efficiency measures, purchase efficient appliances and exercise best practice energy saving behaviour, which can be encouraged with a smart meter. On top of the financial savings, a household could also save 2,141 kg of CO₂e emissions, which is the equivalent of driving 7,500 miles or enough energy to power the lights in 27 homes in the UK for a year².

Home improvement conversations increased during lockdown, with 'insulation' being the most discussed topic¹. However, Britons are also considering additional energy efficient or sustainable actions they can take in their home. The top five improvements people are keen to undertake in order to make their homes greener are:

- Use more environmentally friendly paint when redecorating (40%)
- Replace home appliances or products with energy efficient versions (38%)
- Add smart home tech (34%)
- Fit a water saving showerhead (31%)

- Get a smart meter installed (29%)

Chris O’Boyle, Trading Director from Homebase added: “We know that more and more of our customers are looking to make environmentally friendly decisions as they embark on home and garden improvement projects. ‘The Green Aisle’ not only puts some of our most sustainable and eco-friendly products all in one place for those who know what they’re looking for, but will also provide advice and inspiration, supported by our expert teams, for people who need a hand turning their green ambitions into reality.

“Whether it’s something as simple as a draught excluder to sit at the bottom of a door, getting a smart meter installed or a bigger project such as installing new insulation, there are hundreds of ways – both big and small – that can help people make a positive difference to their home.”

Robert Cheesewright from Smart Energy GB concluded: “We’re delighted to be working with Homebase to launch the first ever ‘Green Aisle’ in 137 stores nationwide. The Government’s Green Homes Grant provides investment for us to make our homes more energy efficient. But energy efficiency steps don’t always have to be expensive. Contacting your energy supplier to get a smart meter installed will also help you to do your bit for the environment. Each installation moves Britain closer to achieving a smart energy system that makes better use of renewable power and reduces our reliance on fossil fuels.”

‘The Green Aisle’ is in place at Homebase stores in Haringey, Edinburgh, Bridgend, Birmingham and Leeds, with further dedicated energy efficient product space found at all other stores nationwide, from now until the end of October. The products featured on the ‘The Green Aisle’ are also available online at www.homebase.co.uk/the-green-aisle. To request a smart meter for your home, contact your energy supplier to book your installation.

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Notes to Editors:

Consumer research was conducted with 4,000 respondents in August 2020 by One Poll, as commissioned by Smart Energy GB.

¹ In 2019, only 16% of UK homeowners improved their homes to increase energy efficiency and twice as many people are planning to do this in 2020. Source: Rated People: Home Improvement Trends Report: 2020. Also social listening analysis on home improvement discussions on Twitter, blogs and forums in August took place

² To create the equivalent statements the Energy Saving Trust used the CO₂e saving figure and divided by emission activities to give equivalent values. The kWh savings figure was divided by the energy consumption of household items to give equivalent values. The following calculations provide a breakdown of the specific figures used. Please note all figures have been rounded: Equivalent miles 2,141kgCO₂e / 0.285kgCO₂e/mile = 7,500 miles driven in a car. Light homes in UK: 11,076 kWh / 404 kWh = 27 homes for a year.

About Homebase

Founded in 1979, Homebase is a home and garden projects retailer offering customers the inspiration, expertise and products to create a home they love – all in one place.

Its wide range of products covers garden, decorating, home furnishings, kitchens and bathrooms, alongside complimentary concession from some of the UK’s leading brand. Inspirational new store layouts are helping millions of customers combine on-trend collections with the project ideas, practical advice, partners and tools to bring their home and garden visions to life.

Homebase operates 155 stores and 16 standalone Bathstore stores employing over 6,600 people across the UK and Ireland, whose specialist knowledge sits at the heart of the friendly and inspiring in-store experience Homebase offers its customers.

For more information visit <https://www.homebase.co.uk/about-us/who-we-are>.

About Smart Energy GB

Smart Energy GB is the campaign for a smarter Britain. It's our task to help everyone in Great Britain understand smart meters, the national rollout and how to use their new meters to be cleaner and greener with their energy use. Our national campaign is reaching households and microbusinesses in England, Scotland and Wales. For more information visit our website smartenergyGB.org

Smart Energy GB media contacts

For more information including interview requests, case studies of smart meter users, infographics, photography and video content please contact the Smart Energy GB media team: smartenergygb@hkstrategies.com

About smart meters and the rollout

Britain is committed to a cleaner future – one with zero carbon emissions and reduced pollution.

To make this happen, our nation requires a major upgrade to its energy infrastructure, specifically, it requires the creation of a smart energy system. Smart meters, which replace traditional, analogue meters, are the building blocks of a more reliable, clean and affordable energy infrastructure, allowing Great Britain to better manage energy use, transition to mass uptake of electric vehicles and to build a greener economy.

There are already 17.4 million smart meters installed in homes and microbusinesses across Great Britain. Every household in England, Scotland and Wales can now see their energy use in near real time, receive accurate bills and do their bit for the planet, by requesting a smart meter, at no extra cost, from their energy supplier.

About Energy Saving Trust

Energy Saving Trust is an independent organisation dedicated to promoting energy efficiency, low carbon transport and sustainable energy use. We aim to address the climate emergency and deliver the wider benefits of clean energy as we transition to net zero.

We empower householders to make better choices, deliver transformative programmes for governments and support businesses with strategy, research and assurance – enabling everyone to play their part in building a sustainable future.