

## Ofcom urges all UK ISPs to support low-income homes by offering discounted packages

Consumer broadband services are often considered to be quite reasonably priced in the UK, but there are always those, often in the most disadvantaged groups (i.e. those on a low income or those who are unemployed) who may struggle with paying their bills, a recent ISP Review article notes.

This has become a much bigger problem during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is also being made worse by a surge in inflation and the rising cost of key services, such as energy (gas and electric).

According to Ofcom's new [Affordability Report](#), some 1.1 million households (5% of the UK) are "*struggling to afford their home broadband service*".

However, the report also notes that out of an estimated 4.2 million households in receipt of Universal Credit – just 55,000 homes (1.2% of those eligible) have actually taken up one of the cheaper broadband social tariff packages that are available from a number of UK ISPs.

One of the biggest reasons for this has been a sheer lack of consumer awareness around the existence of such tariffs. The regulator has called on all ISPs to do a lot more to raise awareness and ensure it is easy for those eligible to sign-up.

To read the ISP Review article in full, including information on some of the ISPs who are already offering social tariff packages, visit [Ofcom finds just 55000 UK Homes on a Social Broadband Tariff](#).

## Finding out your data usage can help you get the right broadband package for your household

When you are looking for the best broadband package to suit your household's needs, one of the most difficult things to get to grips with is exactly how much data does your household use each month.

For example, playing online games and streaming music uses a lot less data than you might think. On the other hand, those of you binge-watching high definition box sets on Netflix can soon find your data allowance used up in no time if you don't have an unlimited broadband package.

Fasterbroadband's broadband usage calculator can help you find out how much data your household is using by giving you an idea of your data usage needs in an average month.

To get your broadband usage estimation, you simply need to answer the twelve questions on their [broadband usage calculator](#) web page. These questions will gather information regarding your household's usage habits, for example: internet browsing, emails sent and received, online gaming and the streaming of music and TV.

The data that is entered into the calculator is anonymous and isn't stored anywhere. It is used solely for the purpose of the calculation.

While the broadband usage calculator should only be used as a guide, it will give you an indication of your usage, which could be invaluable in helping you to choose a broadband package to suit your household's needs.