



## Lewes District Citizens Advice

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# More than one in six struggling to afford broadband

This comes at a time when people are reliant on broadband to work, teach their children, order essentials and stay in touch with others.

Citizens Advice found that certain groups, including people with children, disabled people, people from Black, Asian or ethnic minority backgrounds, those who were shielding and young people are struggling with their broadband bill.

Also, that broadband customers in receipt of low-income benefits such as Universal Credit were twice as likely to struggle to pay their bill. Towards the end of last year, 2.3 million people were behind with their broadband bill.

In December, regulator Ofcom “strongly urged” all providers to consider offering cheaper tariffs for those on a low income or are struggling financially.

Citizens Advice is calling on the government and Ofcom to fast-track these plans by making it compulsory for all providers to offer affordable tariffs to people on low-income benefits. For people on welfare benefits, every single decision about how they spend £1 can make a difference. However currently only three of the largest 13 firms offer these tariffs.

The Acting Chief Executive of Citizens Advice, said: “The pandemic has cemented the fact that broadband is an essential utility. It is not a luxury for those who can afford it.”

If you are struggling with broadband payments or any other bills please contact your local Citizens Advice office on 0800 144 8848 and they will be able to help.

### Citizens Advice Helplines

- **Adviceline** call **03444 111 444**. Monday- Friday 9am to 5pm.
- Email advice [www.eastsussexcab.co.uk](http://www.eastsussexcab.co.uk)
- Chat online to an advisor on our website [citizensadvice.org.uk/contact-us](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/contact-us).
- **Consumer Helpline** on 0808 223 1133
- **Universal Credit** Help to Claim line 0800 1448444.

### Notes to editors:

1. The Citizens Advice service comprises a network of local bureaux, all of which are independent charities and the national charity Citizens Advice. Together we help people resolve their money, debt, legal and other problems by providing information and advice and by influencing policy makers. For more information please visit our website [www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk](http://www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk). We are also on Twitter @lewescab1.
2. The advice provided by the Citizens Advice service is free, independent, confidential and impartial and is available to everyone regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality.
3. The majority of our staff are trained volunteers, working at around 3,500 offices across England & Wales.