



## Cost of Living Support

### Support with Utilities

#### Cost of Living Advice

Cheshire East offer support through their Cost of Living Crisis Team:

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/education-employment-and-money/money-matters/cost-of-living.aspx>

#### Hardship Support Funds

Warm Home Discounts are going live in November 2022

United Utilities have a hardship fund for water debt:

[Application form - United Utilities Trust Fund : United Utilities Trust Fund \(uutf.org.uk\)](#)

#### Utility hardship grants

Energy suppliers will support young people to access up to 3 emergency top ups in times of crisis (although they have known them to do more than this on occasion):

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/#h--a-name-grants-to-help-pay-energy-debts-a-grants-to-help-pay-off-your-energy-debts>

The following energy suppliers offer grants to their customers:

- **British Gas** Energy Support Fund - [apply for a grant on the British Gas Energy Trust website](#)
- **Scottish Power** Hardship Fund - <https://www.scottishpower.co.uk/support-centre/help-paying-your-bill/hardship-fund>
- **Ovo** Energy Fund - [apply for a grant on the Ovo Energy Fund website](#)
- **E.ON** Energy Fund - [apply for a grant on the E.ON Energy Fund website](#)
- **EDF** Energy Customer Support Fund - [sign up to the priority services register to apply for a grant on the EDF Energy website](#)
- **Octopus** 'Octo Assist Fund' - [apply for a grant on the Octopus website](#)

Check if you can get a grant from the **British Gas** Energy Trust – [www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/](http://www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/)

The [Energy Saving Trust](#) has shared some quick and easy tips to save energy and money.

# Cheaper Broadband and Phone Packages

## Social Tariffs – what are they?

Social tariffs are cheaper broadband and phone packages that are available for people claiming Universal Credit, Pension Credit and some other benefits. They are delivered in the same way as normal packages, just at a lower price. They are offered by all of the major providers but the deals are often far less prominent on their websites than standard tariffs.

## Aspects of Social Tariffs

- Cheaper than a regular package: Current prices range from about £10 to £20.
- Fast, unlimited broadband: Several tariffs offer broadband speeds over 25Mb/sec, which is fast enough to use the internet for streaming films, shopping, using websites, gaming etc.
- Low cost: Setup costs are minimal or even zero but, unlike standard deals, they typically do not offer special introductory discounts for the first year or so.
- Free to switch: Social tariffs can usually be switched to free of charge.
- Free to leave: No exit fee if terminated before the end of the contract.
- Predictable price: Social tariff prices don't go up mid-contract.

Note that the terms and conditions of a particular contract may differ from the typical aspects listed above, and should be checked before any contract is entered into.

## Who is eligible for a social tariff?

All of the major providers also include people on Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseeker's Allowance and Income Support. Some providers also include additional benefits such as Personal Independence Payment and Attendance Allowance. The person receiving the benefit must be the main person on the contract.

## How to apply

First, check if your current provider offers a social tariff. Our table below lists all of the tariffs available now. You can apply for most tariffs online, or call your provider and ask to switch.

If your provider doesn't offer a social tariff, you can switch to one that does. Your provider might let you leave your current contract without paying a penalty fee. Read our guide to switching broadband to find out more.

## Social tariff providers

A list of social tariff providers can be found on several websites, including:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/costs-and-billing/social-tariffs>

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/compare-broadband-deals/broadband-social-tariffs/?feature=setupCosts>

<https://www.uswitch.com/broadband/guides/broadband-deals-for-low-income-families/>

However, not all providers provide telecoms within the Alsager area. Thus, to simplify matters, the following shortlist is provided but please note that others are available, and the ones listed should not be taken as being recommended by Alsager Community Support.

Package	Price	Average Speed	Eligibility Constraints (check the company website for full details)	Comments
<a href="#">BT Home Essentials</a>	£15/Month	36 Mbit/sec		
<a href="#">EE Basics</a>	£12/Month	Up to 25 Mbit/sec	Eligibility rules apply for Employment & Support Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance.	Sim only
<a href="#">Virgin Media Essential Broadband</a>	£12.50/month	15 Mbit/sec		OK for shopping. Less suitable for streaming or gaming. Not available over the whole area around Alsager.
<a href="#">Virgin Media Essential Broadband Plus</a>	£20/month	54 Mbit/sec		Not available over the whole area around Alsager.
<a href="#">Vodafone Fibre 1 Essentials</a>	£12/month	38 Mbit/sec		

## Tips and Tricks to Cutting Costs

The Homeworker has some suggestions for some desk-based staff. It can be hard to keep warm throughout the day when you're not moving much, so it's important to make the most of the times you do move to avoid getting too cold. Here are some practical tips that may give you some ideas for beating the chill and avoid turning up the heating! [How to keep warm and costs down when you work from home - The Homeworker](#)

Martin Lewis - [90 ways to save on the cost of living](#)

This is money - [50 tips to beat the cost of living crunch | This is Money](#)

This is money - [Best money management apps to keep track of your finances | This is Money](#)

Supermarket Comparison - [Get the Trolley.co.uk App - Compare supermarket prices on-the-go - Trolley.co.uk](#)

Too Good to Go: [Save Food - Help The Planet | Too Good To Go](#)

Money saving blogs and resources: [45 Money Saving Blogs That Could Rival Money Saving Expert - Savings 4 Savvy Mums](#)

Loyalty apps [Over 50 Of The Best Loyalty Cards And Discount Apps In The UK - Household Money Saving](#)