

# Telecoms industry agrees to new cost-of-living plan following government summit led by Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries

- Customers who can no longer afford their bills will be offered help to stay connected
- Digital Secretary urges anyone struggling to speak to their provider following No 10 summit co-chaired by cost-of-living tsar David Buttress

The UK's biggest broadband and mobile operators have agreed to a raft of new commitments to further help customers with the rising cost of living following a government-led summit at No 10 Downing Street.

These include measures such as allowing customers struggling with bills to move to cheaper packages without charge or penalty, or agreeing manageable payment plans, and options to improve existing low cost offers and increasing promotion of existing deals.

The measures, put forward by the government in consultation with the industry, will ensure people struggling with bills due to the economic aftermath of the pandemic and war in Ukraine can continue to make calls, send texts and get online.

Bosses representing the vast majority of the UK telecoms market – including BT Group, Openreach, Virgin Media O2, Vodafone, Three, TalkTalk and Sky – signed up to the pledges at an event chaired by Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries and Cost of Living Business Tsar David Buttress today.

The commitments, which take effect immediately, are:

- All providers commit to supporting their customers who may be struggling with the cost-of-living and to treat them with compassion, understanding and as individuals.
- All providers commit to supporting customers struggling with their bills and to offer ways to keep them connected, such as allowing them to move to cheaper packages without charge or penalty, or agreeing manageable payment plans.
- All operators commit to continue to protect the connectivity of their customers known to be vulnerable as a priority.
- Providers – supported by Government – commit to take steps to raise

awareness of low cost products to those claiming Universal Credit.

- Mobile providers commit to considering more ways to help their customers, including exploring tariffs, options to improve existing low cost offers, and increasing promotion of existing deals.

The government has already taken action to help those on benefits access cheaper deals by negotiating social tariffs for those on Universal Credit which are now available across 99 per cent of the UK, but this latest intervention means anyone struggling to pay their broadband or mobile bill as a result of global price rises can expect support from their provider if they ask for it.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

Families across the country face increased anxiety about keeping up with bills, so today I agreed with broadband and mobile industry bosses what more can be done to support people during this difficult time.

I'm pleased to report the industry is listening and has signed up to new commitments offering customers struggling with the cost of living help to stay connected. Those who need support should contact their supplier to see what is available.

Commenting on the meeting, Chief Executive at Mobile UK, Hamish MacLeod, said:

Mobile operators welcome the commitments agreed upon today with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, which build on offers already in place to help the most vulnerable. We welcomed the chance to discuss with the Government not only how to raise awareness of such schemes but also to set out the further steps being taken to support those struggling with their bills.

Andrew Glover, Chair of the Internet Service Providers' Association, said:

The telecoms sector knows that people are facing real challenges with the cost-of-living crisis. Our members are determined to do what they can to help their customers through this period and, together with government, we will work to raise greater awareness of the support available.

These commitments, along with the social tariffs that are available from many members, will hopefully help people in need at this challenging time. We encourage customers who are struggling with their bills to reach out to their broadband provider to get help.

The Digital Secretary has been calling on all providers yet to offer social tariffs – discounted broadband and mobile deals for people on Universal Credit and other benefits – to step up and support their customers. She has called on broadband providers that do offer social tariffs to do more to raise awareness of them, after Ofcom data showed less than two per cent of eligible people are taking up these discounted offers.

In a letter sent in April to the bosses of BT Group, Virgin Media O2, Hyperoptic, KCom, G.Network and Community Fibre, she asked for an outline of their plans to promote social tariffs and for estimates of take-up over the coming twelve months. These companies all offer social tariff products to low-income households, with some providers offering deals from as low as £10 per month. Vodafone – via its Voxi brand – recently launched the first mobile social tariff.

Social tariff offers are available to eligible people in 99 per cent of the country and could represent a saving of more than 50 per cent (around £180 per year) against the average cost of broadband.

Landline and broadband social tariffs have been offered by BT, Virgin Media O2 and KCom for several years, but since 2021 there has been a threefold rise in companies voluntarily offering their own social tariffs – with Sky, Now Broadband, County Broadband and others coming forward – after the government stepped in to negotiate the low-cost deals.

Meeting attendees:

- Nadine Dorries, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and sport
- David Buttress, Cost of Living Business Tsar
- Sabine Chalmers, BT Group – Director of Regulatory Affairs and Company Secretary
- Marc Allera, Chief Executive, BT Consumer
- Jeff Dodds, Virgin Media O2 – Chief Operating Officer
- Stephen Van Rooyen, Sky – Chief Executive Officer
- Tristia Harrison, TalkTalk – Chief Executive Officer
- Dana Tobak, Hyperoptic – Chief Executive Officer
- Graeme Oxby, CommunityFibre – Chief Executive

- David Sangster, G.Network – Chief Executive Officer
  - Clive Selley, Openreach – Chief Executive Officer
  - Ahmed Essam, Vodafone UK, Chief Executive
  - Tony Keeling, Shell Energy – Chief Executive Officer
  - Greg Mesch, CityFibre – Chief Executive Officer
  - Gareth Williams, Gigaclear – Chief Executive Officer
  - Malcolm Corbett, Independent Networks Cooperative Association (INCA) – Chief Executive Officer
  - Tim Shaw, Kcom – Chief Executive
  - Andrew Glovers, Internet Service Providers Association, Chair
  - Lindsey Fussell, Ofcom – Group Director
  - Elaine Carey, Three – Chief Commercial Officer
  - Hamish MacLeod, Mobile UK – Chief Executive
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## [Opening Speech: World Drugs Day event at Accra](#)

Dear Honourable Ministers, Ambassadors, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to thank the Government of Ghana and the Narcotics Control Commission for inviting me to give a speech today, as Charge d’Affairs for the British High Commission. This is an important day to reflect on this global challenge, which affects us all.

The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World

Drug Day, is marked on 26 June every year, to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving the goal of a world free of drug abuse.

Each year, individuals, communities, and organisations all over the world join in this global observance, to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent for societies around the world. The theme this year – addressing drug challenges in health and humanitarian crises – really resonates with the UK.

In December last year, we published From Harm to Hope – the UK's new drugs strategy.

This is a long term, 10-year plan designed to cut crime and save lives. It recognises explicitly that the challenge around drugs is more than the criminal elements – it is about healthcare and society as well. As our strategy sets out, there is a massive financial cost from drugs. In the UK the financial cost is estimated at least £20 billion a year. But there is also a human cost – of lives ruined, or lost. For example:

- there are 300,000 crack cocaine or heroin addicts committing crimes to feed their habit across the UK
- in England and Wales 3,000 people lost their lives through drug misuse last year

We recognise in our new strategy that we must increase efforts to tackle drug addiction as well as drug crime.

This is complex, and it will mean getting public services to work better together, to provide more support to people battling their addictions – recognising that these are chronic and long term, so that they do not affect employment, or housing, or mental health because, then the cost to the state increases exponentially.

So the UK's strategy will not only continue to disincentivise drug use – through awareness and stronger enforcement – but also to undermine the markets in the UK, Europe and the US that are driving this crime. We will also significantly increase funding for health workers, treatments and interventions – with an ambition for 50,000 more treatment places to be available in the coming years.

Thankfully, Ghana does not suffer as many of the debilitating issues stemming from class A drug addiction. We hope this continues, though there are signs across West Africa that domestic markets may start to expand. So far though, it is around the supply of drugs where the UK and Ghana have worked together so closely over the last few years.

The global availability of drugs is higher than ever before, and it is not enough to work only at the source and destination points. We need to continue to disrupt every point of the supply chain. And that's where we need your help and support.

Ghana is noted as a transit country for drug trafficking particularly cocaine – with South America directly across the ocean – but also heroin and some

psychotropic substances as well as precursor chemicals.

The UK has invested over £3 million in Narcotics Control Commission (NCC) over the last 10 years. And our teams from Border Force, Immigration Enforcement and the National Crime Agency have developed strong partnerships not only with the NCC, but also EOCO, Ghana Police, FIC and other law enforcement agencies. We have made great progress together.

As many of you will already be aware, the UK has also now partnered with Germany (through GIZ) to set up a new Serious Organised Crime programme. This will build upon progress already made and continue to support and strengthen some of the institutions here in Ghana.

I am delighted to say, on this World Drugs Day, that the new programme will be collaborating with NCC on a new awareness raising campaign. This programme is designed to protect fishermen and their communities from the dangers of substance abuse and ensure they are aware of the dangers of becoming involved in trafficking.

Why fishing communities?

Because we understand that, globally, people are at risk of turning to the drugs trade as an economic buffer against poverty. And in the context of mounting competition over declining fish stocks, this risk rises.

In February, we saw 9 Ghanaian fishermen arrested in Nigeria for smuggling Indian hemp. We are realists. We know that where there are profits, crimes will continue to be committed. But we need to ensure that those who commit these are fully aware of the significance of their crimes, and the risks in doing so. And this means supporting vulnerable communities – like the fishing communities along the coast of Ghana in Osu, Labone, Pram Pram and Ada.

We hope that the campaign will reach a minimum of 500 individuals. And for each one of these individuals, to become an agent for change, within their families and communities.

Much as we are trying to do in the UK, we hope that this will help act as a disincentive to stop people from committing some of these crimes. And so I'm pleased that the UK and GIZ, through our new partnership, can support NCC in this really important awareness raising campaign.

So, once again, thank you for inviting me to attend today, thank you for your support on World Drugs Day, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to tackle this crucial issue.

ENDS

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# PM meeting with President Ramaphosa: 27 June 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met South African President Ramaphosa at the G7 Summit in Germany today.



The Prime Minister met South African President Ramaphosa at the G7 Summit in Germany today.

He began by updating the President on last week's successful Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The leaders agreed on the imperative for the world's richest economies to support developing countries to build clean and green infrastructure. The Prime Minister commended the work being done through the South Africa Just Energy Transition Partnership and confirmed the UK will contribute up to \$1.8bn towards it. The JETP which will accelerate South Africa's transition to a green economy.

The Prime Minister and President Ramaphosa agreed that South Africa has enormous potential to follow in the UK's footsteps and phase out the use of coal, and all the raw materials it needs to achieve green and sustainable growth.

The Prime Minister and President Ramaphosa discussed the ongoing atrocities being committed in Ukraine. The Prime Minister underlined the far reaching consequences of Putin's aggression, in particular its impact on global food and energy prices – an impact the developing world is bearing the brunt of. The leaders agreed on the urgent need for Putin to open up a safe passage for grain to leave Ukraine and reaffirmed their support for the UN efforts on this.

The Prime Minister stressed that Putin must fail in Ukraine to prevent the creeping normalisation of his flagrant disregard for sovereignty and human rights.

## [Waste criminals fined a combined £1,440 after depositing waste at illegal sites](#)

The Environment Agency has successfully prosecuted Brian Ward, Patrick Ward and Patrick Ward (unrelated), at Wimbledon Magistrates Court for waste crimes.

Mr Brian Ward (21), of The Gardens, Bessbrook, Newry, pleaded guilty to 3 charges of unlawfully depositing waste on land off Bianca Road in Peckham. He was fined £480 and ordered to pay £3,777 in costs and a £48 victim charge.

Mr Brian Ward pleaded guilty for offences committed between 2 and 6 December 2019, of depositing mixed waste at an illegal waste site on Bianca Road.

Mr Patrick Ward (50), of Dobsons Way, Bessbrook, Newry, pleaded guilty to one charge of knowingly causing the unlawful depositing of waste at an illegal waste site at Herringham Road, Charlton. He was fined £480 and ordered to pay £48 victim charge.

A vehicle that was owned and insured by Mr Patrick Ward (50) was filmed on CCTV entering the site laden with waste and then reversing into a warehouse on 30 September 2021. The vehicle was subsequently filmed driving away with the vehicle empty of waste. Mr Patrick Ward (50), in pleading guilty, accepted that he was either in control of the vehicle or in a position to control it and, accordingly, accepted that he knowingly permitted the unlawful deposit of waste.

Mr Patrick Ward (26) of St. Marys Street, Newry pleaded guilty to 3 charges of knowingly causing waste to be unlawfully deposited at an illegal waste site at Pensbury Place, Wandsworth, London.

Between 14 and 19 November 2021, a vehicle insured to Mr Patrick Ward was filmed 3 times on CCTV entering the site at Pensbury Place with waste in the vehicle and subsequently filmed twice leaving the site without any waste.

The 3 sites at Herringham Road, Pensbury Place and Bianca Road were all the subject of incursions by travellers who cut locks to gain access and then moved in, taking up residence. They then proceeded to deposit waste at each site before eventually being evicted.

The case is part of a series of prosecutions resulting from the Environment Agency's major investigation into waste crime in London, Operation Angola.



The Environment Agency is targeting waste criminals who break into empty sites and fill them with waste. All the sites in these prosecutions had been broken into and set up as illegal waste sites.

Sean Coleman, Environment Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

These prosecutions along with others from Op Angola, send out a strong message that we will search out and prosecute anyone found to be dumping waste illegally. We're pleased that our hard work has resulted in securing these convictions. Op Angola has now secured 20 convictions.

Illegally depositing waste at illegal waste sites without regard for the environment and the law, blights communities and undermines the legitimate businesses that follow the rules.

In many cases householders and businesses are offered cheap waste clearance by rogue operators who then dump it illegally. We urge everyone to check that their waste collector is registered as a waste carrier or they could also unwittingly become liable to prosecution.

To check a waste collector is registered as a waste carrier, you can [check on Gov.uk](http://Gov.uk)

Operation Angola is an ongoing investigation since 2015 into a series of incursions by groups of individuals onto third party sites throughout the South East of England who have, while in occupation, unlawfully deposited large quantities of controlled waste. Often referred to as 'fly tipping', the scale of offending under Operation Angola is estimated to have cost its victims in the region of £22 million to date.

Under Operation Angola, since 2017, Environment Agency investigators and partners either have or are currently investigating or prosecuting a total of 23 offenders for Offences Contrary to Section 33(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Unlawful Depositing of Waste on Land) and other associated offences.

Waste crime is a major issue across the country, not only spoiling our environment and impacting on our health but it also effects the economy and undermines legitimate businesses. The Environmental Services Association have estimated that illegal waste activity costs over £1 billion annually in England.

Waste crime is much more than fly tipping, it also includes operating without the correct permits and authorisations, large scale illegal dumping, burning of waste, mis-description of waste, operating illegal waste sites and illegally exporting waste. Waste criminals are becoming more sophisticated by working in a more organised manner and infiltrating legitimate industry. They operate across county boundaries and they are likely to be involved in a wide variety of other criminal activity such as drugs trafficking, modern slavery,

firearms and fraud.

**Brian Ward (DoB 01/10/2001) –**

This offence is charged under Section 33 (1) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990. Section 33 (1) of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 states that “a person shall not-

- Deposit controlled waste, or knowingly cause or knowingly permit controlled waste to be deposited in or on any land unless a waste management licence (an environmental permit) authorising the deposit is in force and the deposit is in accordance with the licence (the permit)”.

Section 75 (4) to the EPA 1990 defines controlled waste as meaning “household, industrial and commercial waste or any such waste”. Section 75 (2) defines “waste” as meaning “anything that is waste within the meaning of Article 3 (1) of Directive 2008/98/EC” (the Waste Framework Directive – WFD).

Article 3(1) to the Waste Framework Directive states that: “For the purposes of this Directive, the following definitions shall apply: “waste” means any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard”.

Section 33 (6) to the EPA 1990 stipulates that a person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence. The offence is 2 3 either way. Section 33 (8) provides that upon summary conviction the offence is punishable either with a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or a fine or both; upon, conviction on indictment, the offence is punishable with a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine or both.

**Patrick Ward (DoB 10/02/72) –**

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Section 33 (5) to the EPA 1990 states that, "Where controlled waste is carried in and deposited from a motor vehicle, the person who controls or is in a position to control the use of the vehicle shall, for the purposes of subsection (1) (a) above, be treated as knowingly causing the waste to be deposited whether or not he gave any instructions for this to be done".

### **Patrick Ward (DoB 25/11/1995) –**

This offence is charged under Section 33 (1) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990. Section 33 (1) of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 states that "a person shall not-

- Deposit controlled waste, or knowingly cause or knowingly permit controlled waste to be deposited in or on any land unless a waste management licence (an environmental permit) authorising the deposit is in force and the deposit is in accordance with the licence (the permit)"

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## **A lasting resolution that delivers peace for Israelis and Palestinians is long overdue**

Thank you President. I also thank Special Coordinator Wennesland for his briefing and for the continued efforts of his team.

Last week, the UK Minister for the Middle East, Amanda Milling, visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The Minister met many inspirational Israelis and Palestinians doing vital work to improve the situation. This included Palestinian business leaders who, despite the challenges, are driving success in the Palestinian economy. The Minister also

met Israelis in Lod who are working to bridge gaps and foster tolerance and co-existence in their communities.

However, the visit took place against a backdrop of ongoing violence and instability across the Occupied Palestinian Territories. As the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of resolution 2334 highlights, we are seeing continued negative trends and unnecessary loss of life. The Minister saw for herself last week the pain and suffering evictions and demolitions are causing Palestinians in Masafar Yatta and Sheikh Jarrah. Protecting human rights and ensuring accountability for illegal actions and abuses is essential.

Turning to UNRWA, the Minister observed first hand the critical role the agency plays in helping maintain stability through its delivery of core services and humanitarian and protection assistance to Palestinian refugees. The UK was proud to announce this week our new multi-year funding agreement with UNRWA and provide £15 million this year.

We are alive to the challenges facing the agency, and are committed to ensuring it's on a more viable financial footing. We call on all donors, especially in the region, to provide predictable, multi-year funding so it can continue its vital work.

President, we must not ignore the toll this prolonged conflict has taken on the people of Gaza. We continue to call on the Israeli authorities to end restrictions on movement, access and trade. Fifteen years of these restrictions have caused significant damage to the living standards of ordinary Palestinians in Gaza. Supporting prosperity for Gazans is firmly in Israel's long-term interests. We encourage a time bound commitment for a durable solution for Gaza.

The ongoing tensions underline that a just and lasting resolution that ends the occupation and delivers peace for both Israelis and for the Palestinians is long overdue. We urge the parties, supported by the international community, to do all they can to rebuild trust and take the path back to dialogue.

Thank you.