

Broadband Deals Study: UK Homes Overpay by Hundreds as £12.50 Social Tariffs Go Unclaimed

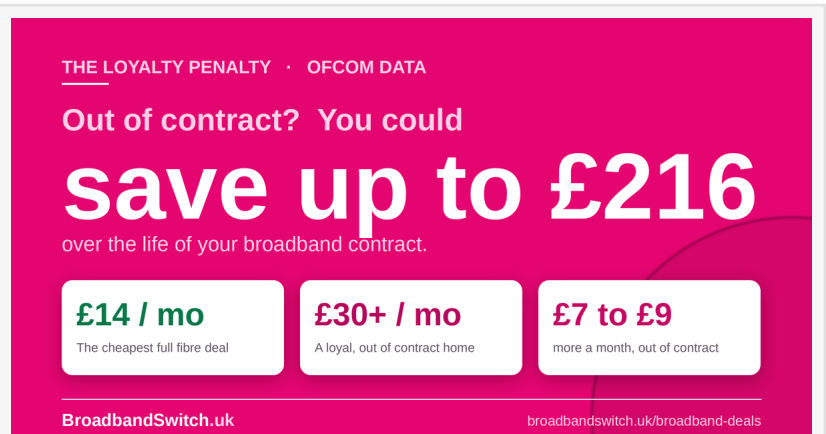
A hand checked study of 377 UK broadband deals finds homes overpaying by hundreds, while social tariffs from £12.50 go unclaimed by most who qualify.

LONDON, LONDON, ENGLAND, UNITED KINGDOM, July 7, 2026

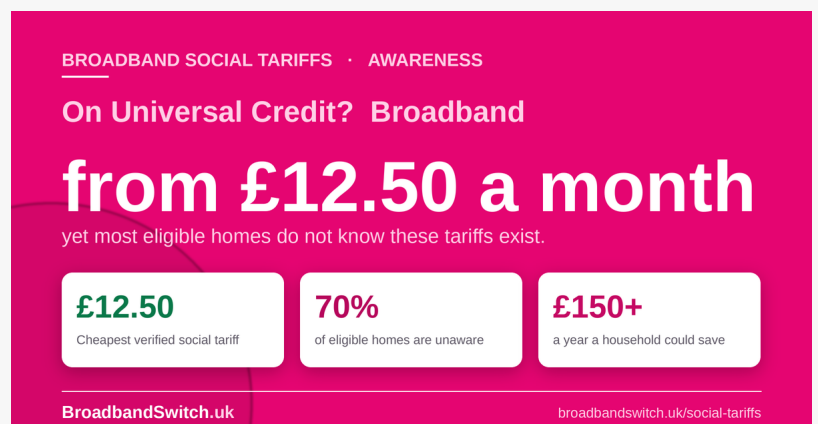
/EINPresswire.com/ -- Millions of British households are paying more than they need to for broadband, and many are missing a cheaper option they are entitled to, according to a new hand checked study of the UK broadband market.

The independent comparison service BroadbandSwitch.uk examined 377 broadband deals from 33 UK providers, checking every price against what each provider actually shows. Two findings stand out. First, households that stay put when their contract ends are quietly paying a loyalty penalty that adds up to hundreds of pounds over a typical contract. Second, a cheaper class of deal designed for people on lower incomes, the social tariff, is going unclaimed by most of the households who qualify for it.

Ofcom reports that 28% of UK broadband customers are out of contract, and that those customers pay between £7 and £9 a



Out of contract broadband customers in the UK could save up to £216 over the life of a contract, with the cheapest full fibre deal at £14 a month against roughly £30 for a loyal, out of contract home. Ofcom data, July 2026.



UK broadband social tariffs start at £12.50 a month for households on Universal Credit, yet around 70 per cent of eligible homes do not know these tariffs exist, and a family could save more than £150 a year. BroadbandSwitch.uk, July 2026.

month more than people on a current deal (Ofcom, 2026). That is a loyalty penalty of £84 to £108 a year, or £168 to £216 across a two year contract, before any mid contract price rise is added.

The study also found real alternatives for households willing to look. The cheapest deal it verified was £14 a month, for full fibre from Community Fibre in London. Across all 33 providers, the average of each provider's cheapest deal was £22.55 a month, and gigabit full fibre now starts at £20 a month. For a household that has drifted out of contract, moving to one of the lowest deals can save well over £100 a year.

UK BROADBAND STUDY · 377 DEALS · 33 PROVIDERS

Full fibre from
£14 a month

What 377 UK broadband deals really cost, checked by hand.

BT sky virgin media vodafone three youfibre zen

BroadbandSwitch.uk broadbandswitch.uk/broadband-deals

Full fibre broadband from £14 a month, the cheapest of 377 UK broadband deals from 33 providers checked by hand, including BT, Sky, Virgin Media, Vodafone, Three, YouFibre and Zen. BroadbandSwitch.uk, July 2026.

The clearest gap is around broadband social tariffs, the cheaper packages available to households where someone receives a qualifying benefit such as Universal Credit or Pension Credit. Verified prices start at £12.50 a month. Yet Ofcom reports that around 70% of eligible households do not know these tariffs exist, and take up remains low (Ofcom, 2026). For a family on a lower income, the difference between a standard deal and a social tariff can be more than £150 a year.

"The most useful thing anyone can do here is raise awareness, because the cheapest options are the ones people hear least about," said Dr Alex J. Martin-Smith, Founder and Chief Executive of BroadbandSwitch.uk. "A household on Universal Credit could be paying twelve pounds fifty a month, and a household that simply forgot to switch could save a hundred pounds a year. Neither of those needs any special knowledge, only that someone points it out."

The study also looked at annual price rises. Since 17 January 2025, providers have had to state any mid contract rise in pounds and pence rather than as a percentage. Several of the largest providers, including BT, EE, Plusnet, TalkTalk and Virgin Media, add a fixed £4 a month increase each year on the deals checked, which is £96 over a two year contract. A number of smaller networks, among them YouFibre, Zen, Fibrus and Truespeed, hold their price for the whole contract.

"People are not careless, they are busy," said Adrian James, Broadband Editor at BroadbandSwitch.uk. "The system quietly rewards staying still. The aim is to make the cheaper choice the obvious one, and to make sure nobody who qualifies for a social tariff misses out simply because no one told them."

For households wanting to act, the study points to three simple steps. Check whether anyone in the home receives a qualifying benefit, because a social tariff is often the cheapest route. Check your postcode, because the lowest prices come from newer networks that reach some streets and not others. And avoid drifting out of contract, where the loyalty penalty lives.

Households can [compare broadband deals](#) and check their eligibility for broadband social tariffs on the BroadbandSwitch.uk website, where the full evidence pack behind the study is published so any figure can be checked independently.

****Notes to editors****

Methodology: every deal was checked against the provider's own listing on 6 July 2026. The study covers 377 broadband deals across 33 UK providers, sorted by what a household pays across the first year. Prices depend on postcode.

About BroadbandSwitch.uk: an independent UK broadband comparison service. Every page carries a named editor, a published method and a public corrections log, and deals are ordered by value to the reader rather than by commission.

References: Ofcom. (2026). Pricing and consumer engagement report. (28% of customers out of contract; out of contract customers pay £7 to £9 a month more; around 70% of eligible households unaware of social tariffs; year to September 2025.) Ofcom. (2025). Mid contract price rise rules. (Rises stated in pounds and pence from 17 January 2025.)

Media enquiries: Dr Alex J. Martin-Smith and Adrian James are available for interview, comment or a phone call. Submit questions or request an interview at <https://broadbandswitch.uk/media>, call 0330 122 1223, or email press@broadbandswitch.uk

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