

seethelight's residential and small business Customer Code of Practice



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seethelight's residential and small business Customer Code of Practice.

1. Introduction

If you would like to find out information about any of our services, products and pricing, visit www.seethelight.co.uk, where you can view our FAQ's, packages, contact us or sign up for an online account. You can also call us on **02921 678 544** for more support and information.

This Code of Practice gives full and accurate information in plain language and is designed to:

- Provide answers to a range of questions which you may have regarding the services we offer
- Provide information on how and where you can obtain advice
- Provide information on how you can contact us
- Provide help on our products and services
- Give details of billing and payment arrangements
- Give details about how services are provided, what they cost, how they should perform, who is in charge and what to do if you are not satisfied with the service(s) you are receiving

Please note: Reference to “we”, “us”, “our” and “seethelight” means Independent Fibre Retail Limited. Reference to “you” or “your” means the customer.

This code will be reviewed annually – or immediately following any significant event or change in UK or European law which may materially affect it.

seethelight is regulated in the UK as a Publicly Available Communications Provider (PACP) by Ofcom (the Office of Communications) and offer both a PATS and ISP service.

Copies of this code may be obtained from our website at www.seethelight.co.uk or by contacting us. We have produced alternative formats in large print and braille for people with sight impairment which are also available upon request.

Nothing in this code affects your statutory or other legal rights. Whilst the code provides useful guidance as to the manner in which we operate, it does not form part of any contract between you and us. From time to time, the products and prices outlined in this code may change, as well as the terms and conditions. Our standard Terms and Conditions can be found at www.seethelight.co.uk.

2. About Us

Independent Fibre Retail Limited, (trading as “seethelight”) is a company registered in England and Wales at Energy House, Woolpit Business Park, Woolpit, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP30 9UP, registered company number 07443511.

seethelight is a broadband and voice communications provider. We only operate in areas of the UK where Independent Fibre Networks Limited (IFNL) is the network provider. seethelight offer ultrafast Fibre-to-the-Home broadband and crystal clear voice.

If you are interested in receiving service(s) from seethelight, please visit our website on www.seethelight.co.uk or get in touch with our UK based customer services team on the details outlined below.

3. Contacting Us

You can contact us in the following ways:

By Telephone:

- ➔ **Technical:** 02921 678 545
- ➔ **Customer Services:** 02921 678 544

By Website:

You can send us a contact form by visiting www.seethelight.co.uk/contact. We will endeavour to respond to your query within 3 working days. If you are contacting us regarding a complaint, our time-scales to respond are longer. To view our complaints procedure, including time-scales, you can find our Code of Practice on Complaints on our website at www.seethelight.co.uk or request one by contacting the call centre.

There is plenty to do on our website including:

- ➔ Request additional products and services
- ➔ Register for paperless electronic billing from us
- ➔ Sign up to an online account
- ➔ Change your account details, including setting up a second occupant or switching to Direct Debit
- ➔ View our help, document and FAQ sections for answers to your questions.
- ➔ Check the costs of your calls with our handy Tariff checker tool online <https://www.seethelight.co.uk/tariff-details.php>

By letter at:

seethelight
Driscoll 2
Ellen Street
Cardiff, CF10 4BP

Our contact centre is open 6 days a week, from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-1pm on Saturdays (excluding public holidays).

4. Our Services

We offer both voice communication and broadband services. For complete and up-to-date details of our services, pricing and availability, please contact us or check our website at www.seethelight.co.uk.

4.1 Telephone Service

Our telephone service is provided in a range of call packages to suit your needs. Our packages allow you to make unlimited local and national inland UK calls from your line at specified times of the day for a fixed charge per month. We also have available a Voice Anytime package, International package and Mobile package. Full details can be found on the website at www.seethelight.co.uk/phone.php.

Please note, outside of any monthly voice packages you may have, mobile, non-geographic and international calls are charged at our standard rates.

Tariffs can be found on the website in our tariff document, or alternatively, you can use our website tool, which allows you to input a number and find the cost of the call. Our tariff checker can be found here: www.seethelight.co.uk/tariff-details.php

4.2 Broadband Internet Service

Our broadband service is permanently connected and is provided in a range of broadband packages to suit your needs. The broadband service can be used to access your email, surf the web, game online, carry out legal music downloads and chat. We also provide practical information on our website on how to keep your PC safe from harm when you are online at <https://www.seethelight.co.uk/help/avg.php>

Our Internet Acceptable Usage Policy document provides specific guidelines regarding what is acceptable use of our broadband service by customers.

5. Our Obligations to You

We are regulated by Ofcom, the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries. As a Publicly Available Communications Provider and Internet Service Provider we have made a number of commitments to consistently deliver high quality services to meet our customers' needs.

5.1 Service Installation

We provide both voice communications and broadband services to premises connected to an Independent Fibre Networks Limited network. We try to deliver services to you by an agreed date. However, we may need appropriate access to your premises in order to complete the necessary installation and handover to you.

If you live in a property connected to an Independent Fibre Networks Limited (IFNL) network and wish to take our services - moving from another communications provider - you will generally be able to keep your existing telephone number (through a process called number portability) although there may be a charge for doing so.

If you subsequently move to another communications provider (i.e. away from us) you should again be able to take your number with you, although there may be a charge (determined by the new provider). If you move address please contact us in good time beforehand and we will arrange to move your seethelight services at your convenience to your new address if possible.

We reserve the right to credit reference all customers. In doing so, we will at all times use best practice and conform to applicable UK law. Information acquired during a credit reference may be passed to third parties (i.e. credit vetting agencies) but will be managed strictly in accordance with applicable UK law. You may be required to provide some form of identification; any documents provided to us by you as part of the credit reference process will be returned promptly.

5.1.1 Assured Telephone Service (Primary Line)

Our Assured Telephone Service is provided via network terminating equipment that is part of the IFNL access network. This equipment is required in your premises to deliver our service.

You can connect standard BAPT- approved wired and cordless (DECT) handsets to the equipment. The equipment requires a mains (240 volts AC) power supply to power it under normal conditions. If a power failure should occur, the equipment contains a battery that will power it for a further 1 hour, providing normal telephone services. The back-up also ensures we continue to provide access to emergency telephone services (999/112).

Please note: the back-up power supply does not support powering of telephone equipment such as DECT base stations. Our Assured Telephone Service is specifically enhanced to support carrier quality voice telephone service.

5.1.2 Broadband Service

Our Broadband Service is provided via network terminating equipment that is part of the IFNL access network. This equipment is required in your premises to deliver our service. The equipment requires a mains (240 volts AC) power supply to power it under normal conditions. We may provide additional equipment at your premises in order to deliver our broadband service to you.

Please note: our Broadband Service is capable of supporting voice over IP (VoIP) services from other service providers. However, we do not transit such VoIP services with any quality of service guarantee as is offered with our Assured Telephone Service (Primary Line) described in 5.1.1.

5.1.3 Identifying Our Staff

All staff who work for, or on behalf of us, and who visit customers' premises, carry official company identification which will be clearly displayed. You should request this identification before allowing anyone into your premises. If in doubt refuse entry and contact us.

5.2 Fault Repair and Maintenance

We carry out proactive preventative and corrective maintenance activity on our network. We aim to identify the majority of problems in our network before they affect our customers. However, if you do experience problems with service(s) that we provide, please contact us.

5.2.1 Cessation of Service

You are able to discontinue your service with us at any time in accordance with the terms and conditions of your contract. We normally require 30 days notification for any cessation of service. Please note, an early termination fee may apply, but you will be notified of any charges on cancellation.

5.3 Billing and Payments

It is our policy that we invoice you on a monthly basis. Our preferred choice of billing is via E-Billing, but you can choose to receive paper bills each month. If you choose E-Billing, we will email you to tell you when your latest bill is ready to view – before the due payment date. It is your responsibility as a customer to keep your email address up to date, so you can continue to receive and pay your E-Bills.

You will be able to see your latest and historic bills by logging into your online customer account. Please note, customers who choose not to use the E-Billing function, will be charged every month for paper billing.

We produce itemised bills that clearly show the cost of making calls or using our broadband service. You may have to pay a deposit in advance of receiving any service as part of the contract you enter into with us. We will notify you of any such deposit requirement before you sign a contract with us. If a deposit is required it will be returned by way of a credit to your account upon customer request (after a satisfactory six month payment history). The deposit may be used by us to pay all or part of any outstanding debt that you owe us. Please note that no interest is payable on any deposits held by us.

We expect you to pay your bills on the due date. A late payment charge may be incurred if payment has not been made in time – which will be added to your next bill. You are responsible for any charges incurred on your account.

Payment Methods

You can pay your bill in the following ways:

➤ **By Direct Debit**

Contact us to set-up payment by Direct Debit. It is the most convenient way to pay and does not incur a monthly administration charge. The date when we collect the amount due will be clearly shown on the front of your bill. Please note: if you choose not to pay by direct debit, we will charge you a separate payment handling fee for processing your payment.

➤ **By Debit or Credit Card**

You can pay your bill by Switch, Solo, Delta, Master Card, or Visa, over the phone with Customer Services or on our website www.seethelight.co.uk

➤ **By Cash**

You can take your bill to any bank and pay by cash. Some banks may charge you for this, but if you use Barclays it's free.

➤ **By Cheque**

You can pay by cheque. Just fill in the payment slip and post it to us.

5.4 Pricing and Credit

Our prices are published both on our website and in paper form. We may change these from time to time either permanently or for limited periods (offers and promotions). We will provide notification in advance of any changes which affect you.

We operate a simple, easy to understand, credit policy. We expect you to:

- Pay your bills promptly
- Inform us of any significant change in your personal circumstances which may affect your ability to settle bill payments as they become due
- Be straightforward with us when providing personal information

If you experience problems in paying your bill, we operate a policy designed to:

- Help you manage your costs
- Protect both you and us
- Help minimise debt and avoid disconnection
- Promote excellent customer service

We offer a wide range of methods for you to pay your bill, as set out in 5.3, and have a number of ways of helping you minimise the risk of large debts for communications services. Where appropriate a third party “nominee” can be appointed by you to help you with your bill payment by ensuring you remember to pay it by the due date, or dealing on your behalf if you are away for an extended period. The nominee will not have any legal responsibility to pay the bill, but simply to help you to manage your account.

We will make clear the respective responsibilities to both parties in such a situation.

You are required to pay your bills by the due date shown on the bill. If this doesn't happen we may chase payment by calling you and/or sending reminders. If there is no response to the initial contact and/or full payment of the arrears is not made, then your services may be restricted. You will be reminded that continued non-payment will lead to full disconnection of the service. We will follow this by debt recovery procedures, which include disclosure of relevant customer information to appropriate credit vetting agencies, which may lead to a poor credit score.

In addition to monthly bills being sent, you may be informed that you have had a credit limit applied to your account. If a credit limit is exceeded then we may restrict service without notice.

In the event that debt recovery procedures are deemed to be necessary, we will execute them in a professional manner and in accordance with relevant UK legislation and best industry practice. If you are in genuine dispute with us and make this known to us, then the disconnection process may not be invoked – pending the outcome of the dispute resolution.

We are aware that some customers can get into financial difficulties unintentionally and this is taken into account when dealing with instances of non-payment. We will advise you of our processes to minimise debt and help you manage your bills. You may of course wish to take advantage of help from external debt counselling agencies.

We reserve the right to disconnect you without notice if we have reasonable grounds for suspecting that there is an unacceptable credit risk to us – for example: through suspected illegal behaviour (e.g. fraud) or a breach of your contract with us. We will carry out a review of any such decision if you request it. You must settle any outstanding debts you have with us, and may be subject to credit checking and payment of any appropriate published re-connection charges, before a service can be reconnected.

In the unlikely event that we were to terminate your service incorrectly you would be reconnected free of charge. The existence of this code will be brought to your attention if you experience payment difficulties.

5.5 Complaints Procedure and Resolution

We strive to offer excellent value for money and the highest quality of service. If you are unhappy with our service and would like to make a complaint, then you can do so by following our process as set out in our Complaints Code of practice, which can be found on our website: www.seethelight.co.uk/documents.php

5.6 Emergency, Operator and Directory Services

Access to the emergency services (police, fire, ambulance or coastguard) is available free of charge in the normal way by dialling 999 (or 112).

Access to the national and international operator is available by dialling 100 and 155 respectively. Please note that for some services there will be a charge.

We do not publish a printed directory, but offer you the option of being included in a paper “white pages” directory. Inclusion in the paper directory will mean that your details will be included in publicly available directory services provided by other companies, such as voice directory enquiry services, internet enquiry services and CD-ROM directories. If you do not wish all of your details to be made available in this way, we provide the following option to protect and control the use of your directory data.

🔒 No Query Restricted (NQR)

This prevents your directory data from being passed to any other company. Consequently, your details will not be available from any directory information product or service and this may therefore cause problems for people trying to contact you.

Access to both national and international Directory Query (DQ) services is available at standard published charges. To access standard DQ services dial your preferred 118 XXX supplier.

Please see our Tariff Guide for our latest prices. These can be found at www.seethelight.co.uk/documents.php or use our number checker tool online here: <https://www.seethelight.co.uk/tariff-details.php>

5.6.1 Prevention of Unsolicited Calls

Whilst your directory classification may help to reduce unsolicited calls from companies marketing their products and services, it will not necessarily prevent all such calls. This is because your number may be available from other sources – for example: from other companies to which you may have given your details.

To prevent unsolicited calls you must register your number with the **Telephone Preference Service (TPS)**. The Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (2003) make it unlawful to telephone anyone who has registered with the TPS for the purposes of unsolicited marketing activity. Registering with the TPS is free to do. Please note: it takes up to 28 days for this to become effective.

To register, please contact:

Telephone Preference Service (TPS)

DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London
W1W 8SS

Email: tps@dma.org.uk

Web: www.tpsonline.org.uk

Tel: 0845 070 0707

The Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (2003) also make it unlawful, for the purposes of unsolicited marketing activity, to send faxes to an individual without their prior permission or to send faxes to anyone who has registered with the **Facsimile Preference Service (FPS)**.

If you receive such faxes and wish to stop them, you could consider registering your telephone number with the FPS. Registering is free. Please note, it can take up to 28 days for this to become effective.

To register, please contact:

Facsimile Preference Service (FPS)

DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London
W1W 8SS

Email: fps@dma.org.uk

Web: www.fpsonline.org.uk

Tel: 0845 070 0702

5.7 Confidentiality

seethelight respects your right as our customer to privacy and takes its responsibilities regarding the security of your customer information very seriously. For more information, please refer to our Privacy Policy document which can be found on our website; www.seethelight.co.uk.

You can find more details on the Information Commissioner's website at:

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Or write to them at:

The Office of the Information Commissioner

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

5.8 Individual Needs

We take our responsibility to customers with individual needs very seriously and work hard to ensure we comply with current UK law and best practice guidelines where possible. We offer a number of services for customers with individual needs:

➤ **Our literature**

If you would like to request any of our literature, including this code, in large print (16 point font size) or Grade 2 abbreviated Braille, please contact customer services, or alternatively, log into your online account and request it there.

➤ **Priority Fault Repair**

In the event of a fault, where a individual needs customer has a bona fide need of urgent repair, priority is given to restoring such a customer's service. In order to take advantage of our priority fault repair service, customers with individual needs should register their requirements. In order to register any individual needs, customers can either log into their online account, or contact customer services.

➤ **Bill Payment**

Disabled customers who are dependent upon the phone may nominate somebody who can help them deal with phone bills and their account in general. Specifically, this nominee can:

- Be the person to whom your bill is sent
- Be the person to whom any enquiry will be made by us in the event of a bill not being paid
- Pay the bill on your behalf, although they will not be held legally liable for the bill

➤ **Contracts**

If you have problems reading the terms and conditions of your contract you can ask for our representative to explain it to you. If you would like to request the contract to be in Large Print or Braille, you can request this by logging into your online account or by contacting customer services.

➤ **Next Generation Text Service (NGTS)**

NGTS enables hearing and speech-impaired customers to communicate with each other using a relay assistant. If on telephone calls you can't hear the other person or they can't understand what you say, NGTS can help.

By using a smartphone, tablet, or computer to make a phone call, you can type to a relay assistant who will speak your words to the recipient. The relay assistant will type their response so you can read what they say.

Website: <http://ngts.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0800 7311 888

Textphone or NGT Lite app: 0800 500 888

c/o Internal Box 14
Telephone House
170 – 175 Moor Lane
Preston
Lancashire
PR1 1BA

📞 Relay Assist

Relay assist is for callers who either need or would like help to make calls. To use this service, you will need to dial a relay assist access code.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired and use a textphone, dial 0870 240 95 98 to be connected to a Relay Assist operator.

If you are calling from an ordinary voice phone, dial 0870 240 51 52 to be connected to a Relay Assist operator.

Alternatively, if you have an internet enabled device, for example, laptop, smartphone or tablet, you may want to download the NGT Lite app. For more information on the NGT app and more about relay assist, please visit the NGTS website; www.ngts.org.uk

📞 Textphone User Calls To The Emergency Services

Textphone users needing to call the emergency services (police, fire, ambulance or coast guard) should dial 18000 .

📞 Free Directory Enquiries For Those Requiring Individual Needs (195)

A free directory enquiries service is available to any customer who cannot use a phone book. The free 195 directory enquiries service requires you to pre-register by calling 195. Textphone users can call 0800 838 363. You will be sent a form to complete which must be authorised by your doctor, or a qualified care worker, familiar with your disability. You will be given a personal identification number (PIN) after registration which must be quoted when using the 195 free service.

5.9 Customer Communication

We are committed to effective communications with our customers. You can contact us in a number of ways (see Contact Us).

From time to time, we will promote our services through a variety of media but only where you have agreed to such contact. We will do so in accordance with accepted industry best practice and standards, in particular:

- 📞 Following the UK Direct Marketing Association guidelines on when to contact customers (i.e. only between 8.00 am and 9.00pm unless specifically requested to call outside these hours)
- 📞 Stopping specified “promotional” contact with individual customers if requested to do so by the customer. Where requested by you we will do so in accordance with the Data Protection Act, Telephone Preference Service (TPS), Mailing Preference Scheme (MPS), and the Facsimile Preference Scheme (FPS)
- 📞 We will follow the rules of relevant regulatory bodies such as Ofcom, PhonepayPlus and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)
- 📞 Abiding by the Distance and Doorstep Selling, and other relevant UK and EU regulations

The existence of this code will be brought to customers’ attention in appropriate ways.

6. seethelight's Code of Practice for Premium Rate Services (PRS) and Number Translation Services (NTS)

Premium Rate Services/Numbers

Premium rate services offer information and entertainment via phone, fax, PC (e-mail, Internet, bulletin board), mobile (SMS/ WAP) or interactive satellite TV. They tend to cost more than a normal phone call or text message. Premium rate numbers offer goods and services that are charged to your telephone bill, including services such as:

- ➔ Information
- ➔ Entertainment
- ➔ Competitions
- ➔ TV voting
- ➔ TV games

UK based premium rate services start '09'. '0871' is also now classified by Ofcom as premium rate for regulation purposes by PhonepayPlus. You should note that some information and entertainment services are provided by international companies using international numbers. These are not covered by PhonepayPlus and are not considered premium rate services. We can, upon request from the customer, block international, premium rate or directory enquiry numbers or any combination thereof.

A breakdown of Premium Rate Numbers

➔ 118 - Directory Enquiries

These numbers, starting 118, are used for directory enquiries, by people who wish to find out the phone number or address of an individual or business. The cost of these calls is split into an Access charge and a service charge. The access charge is what seethelight will charge you per minute for connecting the call. The service charge is the rest of the call charge. The organisation you are calling will tell you how much this is. You can find out the breakdown of the call by using our seethelight number checker tool online.

➔ 0870, 0871, 0872, 0873

These numbers are usually used for customer services/technical support lines, chat and horoscope lines and booking/sales lines. The cost of these calls is split into an Access charge and a service charge. The access charge is what seethelight will charge you per minute for connecting the call. The service charge is the rest of the call charge. The organisation you are calling will tell you how much this is. You can find out the breakdown of the call by using our seethelight number checker tool online.

➔ 09

These numbers are usually used for competitions, TV voting, chat/adult and horoscope lines and professional advice services. The cost of these calls is split into an Access charge and a service charge. The access charge is what seethelight will charge you per minute for connecting the call. The service charge is the rest of the call charge. The organisation you are calling will tell you how much this is. You can find out the breakdown of the call by using our seethelight number checker tool online.

➔ 070

These numbers are used to divert calls to another number.

For more information on all of these types of calls, please visit <http://www.phonepayplus.org.uk>

Tariffs for accessing PRS numbers are shown in our tariff guides – available from our website at www.seethelight.co.uk or by contacting us. You can also check the cost to PRS by using our number checker tool online at <https://www.seethelight.co.uk/tariff-details.php>.

You can also go to the PhonePayplus website and check the cost of a number here: <http://www.phonepayplus.org.uk/>

PhonepayPlus

PhonepayPlus is the UK industry funded regulatory body for all premium rate charged telecommunications services. It regulates services in their entirety including content, promotion and overall operation, through a Code of Practice which is available on their website - www.phonepayplus.org.uk. Their prime role is to prevent consumer harm. Among other things, they require Service Providers to provide consumers with clear and accurate pricing information, honest advertising and service content, appropriate and targeted promotions. PhonepayPlus will investigate complaints, and they have the power to fine companies and bar access to services if the code is breached.

PhonepayPlus

Clove Building
4 Maguire Street
London
SE1 2NQ

Website: www.phonepayplus.org.uk

PRS Complaints

What seethelight can do for you

seethelight will

- Give you more information about premium rate services/numbers and how they work
- Check the cost of a number using our number checker tool online or through the facilities on the PhonepayPlus website
- Give basic information about whether the calls were on our own network or on the network of another provider.
- Give information on how call charges are shared between networks, for example access and service charges
- Give you details of the service provider (where available) for the premium rate service number so you can contact them directly for a refund.
- Give information on how you can bar calls to premium rate numbers

Due to the potential for consumer harm with PRS, we will take a sympathetic view of PRS complaints, and where it is clear that a customer is the unknowing victim of illegal activity, sensible arrangements will be made with the customer, where appropriate.

What PhonepayPlus can do for you

If you have a complaint about the content of premium rate calls, please contact PhonepayPlus free on 0800 500212, or 020 7407 3430 for textphone assistance or by using their details stated above.

Ombudsman Services will become involved if appropriate. Visit their website at: www.ombudsman-services.org/communications.html. Alternatively you can also contact them in writing or call them:

Ombudsman Services

PO Box, 730
Warrington
WA4 6WU

Tel: 0330 440 1614

Fax: 0330 440 1615

Textphone: 0330 440 1600

Controlling PRS Charges.

We offer a call-barring facility if you wish to prevent access to PRS numbers. Please contact us for more information or alternatively, you can check our Telephone User Guide at <https://www.seethelight.co.uk/help.php>

Number Translation Services (NTS)

Number Translation Services (NTS) are types of non-geographic numbers where the number dialled does not relate to a specific geographic location, but instead relates to a particular service or organisation. This allows the organisations using these numbers to change physical location without having to change their telephone number and to have a national presence.

Examples of such numbers are 0800, 0870, 0871, 0844, 0845 and 0500. Some NTS numbers also enable organisations to share the revenues generated by the telephone calls made to the numbers. These are shared between the organisations offering the service.

Tariffs for accessing NTS numbers are shown in our tariff guides available on our website at www.seethelight.co.uk or by contacting us. Alternatively, you can use our number checker tool on our website at <https://www.seethelight.co.uk/tariff-details.php>

What seethelight can do for you

seethelight will

- Give details of charges that apply to the aforementioned NTS numbers
- Give information on NTS call charges at different times of the day
- Give details of whether NTS numbers are included within any of seethelight Voice packages

Ofcom Guidelines

Ofcom have published guidelines on how we should provide clarity on NTS charges (in both relevant advertising and customer documentation).

Michael Harding, Head of Regulation, is responsible for making sure that we comply to seethelight's Code of Practice for premium rate services and Number Translation Services.

If you would like to contact Michael Harding or comment on the Code, please email Michael at compliance@seethelight.co.uk or you can write to him at:

seethelight Compliance
Energy House
Woolpit Business Park
Woolpit
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP30 9UP

Other useful contacts

➔ Citizen Advice

Further help and advice can be obtained from your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). www.citizensadvice.org.uk/

➔ National Debtline

<https://www.nationaldebtline.org/> or call them on 0808 808 4000

7. Malicious and Nuisance Calls

We understand how distressing malicious and nuisance calls can be, so we make it a priority to offer help and guidance to you in such instances. Our customer service agents can offer advice on coping with unwanted calls and guide you through some simple procedures which may help prevent further calls of this nature.

Identifying unwanted calls.

In most instances, you will be in no doubt that you have received a malicious or nuisance call. However, it is important to distinguish between the two types of problem phone calls. One can be a serious criminal offence, whilst the other, however annoying, is not.

Nuisance calls can range from an excessive level of incorrectly dialled numbers to persistent unsolicited calls.

Malicious calls may be a criminal offence under Section 52 of the Telecommunications Act (2003). A malicious call can be identified by its content. If you receive a call containing obscene suggestions, personal threats, or abusive language, you have been subject to a malicious call.

Protecting You From Unwanted Calls

There are a number of things you can do to protect yourself from unwanted calls. If you have received a malicious call and want to make sure it doesn't happen again, or simply want to make yourself less vulnerable to being targeted, there are some further steps you should take. Be cautious and bear these simple rules in mind whenever you receive a call you're not comfortable with:

- DO NOT enter into any conversation with a suspicious caller and, in particular, avoid emotional outbursts that may encourage the caller to make further malicious calls
- DO NOT hang up straight away. Instead, place the receiver beside the phone and ignore it for a few minutes, before replacing it gently
- DO NOT say anything when you answer a call - a genuine caller will speak first
- DO NOT attempt to coax the caller into speaking if you receive a silent call. Instead, calmly replace the receiver
- DO NOT give out any information about yourself or your family unless you are convinced that you know and trust the caller

Recording Outgoing Answer Phone Messages

Take care when recording outgoing answer phone messages, as malicious callers can obtain information about you from them. Follow these simple points and keep your message as vague as possible, as a genuine caller will know who you are:

- Do not include your name and number - this could provide a malicious caller with information they can use to call you back
- NEVER refer to the fact that you live alone, as malicious callers can target single households. Say: "We can't come to the phone at the moment" rather than "I cannot come to the phone"

- NEVER refer to periods when you'll be away on business or on holiday, especially if you live alone. Anyone getting through who isn't a genuine caller could use this information to their benefit

Persistent Nuisance Calls

Even if you follow all recommended precautions, there may be times when a caller becomes persistent and tries to contact you over and over again. If this happens, stay calm and answer the phone as usual, but do not speak until the caller identifies him/herself. If the caller does not speak first, try one of these three options:

- Place the receiver gently beside the phone and leave it for a minute or two
- Hang up - although a persistent caller may try again
- Unplug your phone and extensions from the wall sockets for a short time

However, if you are regularly being bothered by unwanted phone calls, you should contact our customer services team who can offer you advice and guidance. Calls will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

Anonymous Caller Rejection

This facility allows you to reject any calls which do not display the calling number. Once activated on your telephone line by us, this feature can be switched on and off at any time. Note: this feature may be subject to change and a monthly subscription charge.

Help With Nuisance Calls

If you feel it is necessary to take further action, please call our customer services team, who will be able to provide you with help and support in resolving your unwanted or malicious calling problems speedily. This may include law enforcement (police) and victim support in appropriate circumstances. We have specially trained staff on hand to advise you. Every case is different, and we can assist you with whatever approach you decide to take.

8. Advertising

Our advertising follows the code of practice that the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) issues. The ASA deals with all advertising. You can visit their website at www.asa.org.uk or call them on 020 7492 2222, or write to them at:

Advertising Standards Authority

Mid City Place
High Holborn
London
WC1V 6QT

9. Social Responsibility

We operate a well-defined two way internal communications approach that includes regular company-wide email and printed announcements on our performance, special events and business achievements. In addition, formal employee forums have been established across the organisation to promote further employee involvement.

We are committed to equal opportunities and to enhancing the diversity of our workforce, based on performance and capability. Through our policies, we aim to ensure that we do not discriminate between employees or potential employees on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, age, marital status, physical appearance or ethnic origin. If individuals become disabled during employment and they are unable to continue to perform their jobs, consideration is given to retraining for alternative jobs. We invest in the development and training of all our people, encouraging them to focus their learning around business needs and to pursue appropriate development opportunities.

10. Useful Contacts

Ofcom

Ofcom is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries. Please note Ofcom will expect a complaint to be referred to us in the first instance. Ofcom can be contacted in the following way:

Ofcom Contact Centre

Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA

Tel: 020 7981 3040 or 0300 123 3333

Web: www.ofcom.org.uk

Further help and advice can be obtained from your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).