

Radiotele Switching (RTS) is Closing!

The Radiotele Switching Phase-Out

RTS is an old system used by **multi-rate electric meters** to switch between peak and off-peak heating. It supports systems like **electric storage heaters, panel heaters and immersion heaters (charged overnight)**. This system will stop working from **30 June 2025**.

All electricity suppliers have been contacting impacted customers to offer them a smart meter upgrade, at no extra cost, before the RTS service ends.

All customers should have been contacted by the end of 2024. If you haven't heard from them, do phone up to ask about upgrading your meter.

Heat to Rent Scheme Ending

If you're a City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) tenant in a property using the **Heat to Rent** scheme (e.g., in areas like **the Calders**), your heating charge used to be included in your rent but has been **removed** since **March 2025**.



What this means: You will **no longer be billed through your rent** for heating. Instead, you will need to **pay a supplier directly** for your heating and hot water and a smart meter will need to be installed.

The Council is contacting affected tenants to explain what's changing and what support is available. Some households may face **higher energy bills** or even **temporary loss of heating** if no action is taken. If you or someone you support is affected, **reach out as soon as possible** to get the help you need.

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Welcome to our Spring Edition!

This newsletter includes information on benefits and tips for income maximisation, to keep you informed & empowered.

Our **Advice Team** provides advice and assistance with **benefits, housing and debt issues & employability**.

To make an appointment: 0131 442 2100 or chai@chaiedinburgh.org.uk

Broadband Social Tariffs: Apply for Yours!

Around **four million low-income households** across the UK could be **missing out on discounted broadband and phone bills**, according to Ofcom, the communications regulator.

If you're receiving **means-tested benefits** like **Universal Credit**, **Pension Credit**, or **legacy benefits** such as **income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)** or **income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**, you may qualify for a **social tariff**—a special low-cost broadband package designed to make essential connectivity more affordable.

What is a Social Tariff?

Social tariffs are discounted broadband and phone deals offered by many major providers. They work just like regular contracts but come at a **much lower cost—often between £10 and £20 per month**. On average, they could save you **up to £200 a year**. Social tariffs are:

- **Price-protected** – Your monthly cost won't rise mid-contract.
- **Penalty-free** – You can leave a social tariff at any time without paying exit fees.
- **Reliable and fast enough** – Speeds vary, but most are suitable for everyday internet use like browsing, emails, streaming and video calls.

How Do I Apply?

1. **Check with your current provider** – Visit their website or call their customer service to ask if they offer a social tariff.



2. **Switch if needed** – If your provider doesn't offer one, or if you find a better deal elsewhere, you're free to switch. But **check whether you'll face any early termination fees** before moving.

The list of all providers offering social tariffs can be found here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/saving-money/social-tariffs>

Each provider may have different application steps and slightly different eligibility criteria, so do check the details. You'll usually just need to confirm your benefit status—often by logging into your benefits account or sending a copy of your entitlement letter.

Why This Matters

Access to the internet is essential for everything from **job hunting** and **education**, to **accessing public services** and **staying in touch with loved ones**. If you or someone you know is on a low income, **check today** whether you could be paying less for your broadband.



Join us for a focus group
discussion on CHAI's services!

Contact us on 0131 442 2100 or
email chai@chaiedinburgh.org.uk



**Participants will receive a £50 gift
vouchers for their time!**



Have your say on CHAI's services – and get rewarded for your time!

We're inviting clients and community members to take part in a **focus group discussion** (sometime in August, tbc) to help us improve how we deliver our services. Your feedback is vital to ensure our support is accessible, effective, and shaped by the people who use it.

Benefits for the Under 18 Expecting a Child & Living Independently



If you're under 18 and expecting a baby, you may be entitled to several types of support if you're on a low income and **living independently**.

Universal Credit (UC)

UC provides help with both living costs, and housing costs. You may be eligible for UC even if you're under 18, if:

- You're pregnant and within 11 weeks of your due date; or
- You're in a couple where your partner is over 18 (only the single person's allowance will be paid though); or
- You have no parental support, e.g. estranged or leaving care, & you're in non-advanced education (below HNC level).

You may also qualify as a 16-17 year-old if you have a disability and you have been assessed as having limited capability for work, or if you are a carer and meet the conditions for the Carer Support Payment.

Apply at www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start or phone **0800 328 5644**.

Council Tax Reduction

If you have your own tenancy and you are on a low income, you can apply for council Tax Reduction to help with council tax. Apply on the City of Edinburgh Council's website.

Best Start Grant and Foods

You may be eligible for help from Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods from Social Security Scotland. **The Best**

Start Grant: Pregnancy and Baby

Payment is a one-off payment of

£767.50 for your first child (or £383.75 for later children) to help with the costs of having a baby. You can apply from 24 weeks of pregnancy up to the day your baby turns 6 months old.

Best Start Foods provides a prepaid card to help buy healthy food from as early as 10 weeks of pregnancy.

If you are under 18, you qualify regardless of income. If you are over 18 (and living independently), you qualify if you get Universal Credit or another means-tested benefit. Apply online or phone 0800 182 2222

www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/how-to-apply

Young Parent Support

Your school, college or local council may offer tailored guidance through a young parent programme and help to stay in education during and after pregnancy.

If you are a student, some types of student income (loan, some bursaries etc.) are taken into account & will reduce your Universal Credit.

Need help? Contact us for a benefit check!

Benefits for Young People Under 18

After the Birth of the Baby

Are you living independently?

There's a range of support for young people aged under 18 who are living independently. The benefits mentioned overleaf (Universal Credit, Council Tax Reduction, Best Start Grant/Foods) would still be relevant for you. In addition, you can also make the following claims after the birth:

Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance

If you've worked for the same employer for at least 26 weeks by the 15th week before your due date (around 6 months before your baby is due) and earn at least £125 a week (before tax), you may be eligible for **Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)**. SMP is paid for up to 39 weeks and is paid through your employer.

If you don't qualify for SMP—perhaps because you've had multiple employers, are self-employed, or haven't been in your current job long enough—you may be eligible for **Maternity Allowance (MA)** instead. To qualify, you must have been working (employed or self-employed) for at least 26 weeks in the 66 weeks before your due date and have earned at least £30 a week for 13 of those weeks. Maternity Allowance is paid by Jobcentre Plus for up to 39 weeks.

You can apply for **both SMP and MA from the 11th week** before the expected week of childbirth.

Child Benefit

You can apply for Child Benefit: £26.05 per week for the first child, and £17.25 for additional children. This is not means-tested and can be claimed regardless of income (except for high earners earning over £60k per annum). Apply at www.gov.uk/child-benefit/how-to-claim or phone 0300 200 3100.

The Scottish Child Payment

If you claim Universal Credit, you qualify for an additional £27.15 per week for your child from Social Security Scotland. Apply at www.mygov.scot/scottish-child-payment/how-to-apply or phone 0800 182 2222

Universal Credit (UC) additions

After the birth, you will need to notify the DWP so that they can add a **child element** to your UC claim. Contact the DWP's UC Helpline on 0800 328 5644, or report the change through your UC account.

You may also add **childcare costs** to your Universal Credit claim if you (and your partner) are in work.

Are you living with your parents?

If you are still living with your parents, they may be able to claim the **Child Element** of Universal Credit for you and your baby, providing you still count as a qualifying young person because you are under 20 and in non-advanced education (below HNC level). The 2 child-limit applies but is waived for the child of a child under 16. **Help with childcare costs** can be added to your parents' Universal Credit if they work. Note that your parents could also get **Child Benefit** for your baby if you're under 16. Finally, you can qualify for **Best Start Grants/Foods** if you are aged 18-19 and your parents get Child Benefit, or the child additions part of Universal Credit or Pension Credit, for looking after you.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

If you're aged 16 to 19 and still in school or college, you may be eligible for **£30 a week**. Your household income must be below £24,421 per year net, or below £26,884 net if there is more than one child in education in the family. Your own earnings are not taken into account, just your parents'. Apply through your local council each academic year.

Don't Forget to Apply for Universal Credit!

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) continues to send **migration notices** to people who are currently receiving **legacy benefits** such as Housing Benefit, Income Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). These letters invite you to **move to Universal Credit (UC)** as part of the government's ongoing **managed migration** process.

Once you receive a migration notice, you have three **months** to apply for Universal Credit.

Missing this deadline could result in the **loss of your current benefit payments** and could also mean you **lose out on transitional protection**—a payment top-up that ensures your Universal Credit amount is not less than what you received through your legacy benefits.

Worryingly, over one in five households who received a migration notice have not made a claim and have had their benefits stopped, according to the latest government figures (DWP, 2024). That means thousands of families across the UK may have lost out on vital support.



What Should You Do

- **Act quickly:** You have **three months** to make your claim but **ask for an extension** if you're not ready—this is possible in many cases.
- **Get help:** You don't need to do it alone. Contact us for assistance!

How to Make a Claim

You'll need to set up an online UC account here:

www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start

Or, if you need to claim by phone, call the **Universal Credit helpline: 0800 328 5644**.

CHAI has produced a **new FAQ leaflet on Managed Migration to Universal Credit**. You can **pick up a free copy** from any of our advisers - just ask!



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Thank you to our funders:

• Advice UK's Advice in Accessible Settings Fund (Scottish Government)
• The Albert Hunt Trust
• ARCHIE (Alliance of Registered Co-operatives and Housing Associations, Independent in Edinburgh)
• The City of Edinburgh Council, Children & Families
• The City of Edinburgh Council Community and Families

• The Corra Foundation Improvement Fund
• Edinburgh & SE Scotland City Region Deal
• Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership
• Murdoch Forest Charitable Trust
• National Lottery Cost of Living Fund
• NHS Lothian
• No One Left Behind (NEST)
• Robertson Trust
• The Russell Trust
• Scottish Legal Aid Board
• UK Shared Prosperity Fund

