

### Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland response

The ACNI broadly welcomes the latest recommendations for the guide. They note the increasing affordability issues for consumers in Northern Ireland, and ACNI especially wants to see more done to raise awareness of the help available.

As mentioned in their previous submission, ACNI felt that more could be done regarding social tariffs and protecting consumers from contract penalties when moving to one. ACNI was reassured, therefore, to learn that the social tariffs are widely available, and that Ofcom continues to urge major providers who do not yet offer a social tariff to do so. This will help reduce the likelihood that customers would need to switch, and thus potentially incur early termination charges, in order to access a social tariff.

The ACNI was also reassured to learn that some providers who currently offer social tariffs intend to waive early termination charges for existing customers who are eligible for a social tariff and want to take it up. This may also extend to customers switching between providers within a wider group of companies, such as BT Group.

The ACNI encourages Ofcom to continue to push to raise awareness and close any gaps in the availability of social tariffs. Finally, the ACNI would be keen to be kept informed of any progress and/or issues as they arise.