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From:

Sent: 26 March 2008 22:22

To: Vicki Nash

Subject: Additional Charges

Dear Ms Nash,

I read Ofcom's review of Additional Charges and am very happy that they are looking into the effects of these on prices for poorer people.

I wish to raise the issue of fixed year-long contracts: for many people this is impractical and so being charged for cancelling early is unfair. Students are normally in a rented house for only 8 months of the year, so even if they sign up for broadband as soon as they move in, which is unlikely given how hectic this period is, they won't be able to use the last 4 months of the service.

Effectively, for this year I am paying £37.25 a month for a service that is advertised at £31 a month - simply because I don't have a fixed address.

There doesn't seem to be a good reason for treating students this way; we're not using any hardware provided by our ISP (Virgin), and we paid a separate fee for installation. A year is a long time in most markets, and for broadband especially so; competition can only be aided by forcing ISP's to provide shorter contracts.

A final note, do you know how I can find out what is an acceptable level of service from my ISP? I feel really let down by Virgin - the service we get is nothing like I expected, but I don't know if it is reasonable to complain. We are meant to have a 20Mb connection, but it doesn't seem anything like that fast. But I don't know how to prove what service we've been getting.

Please find attached the Ofcom cover sheet for feedback, with the above comments included.

Thank you,