

# InBrief

January 2012



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## Campaign urges over 75s to apply for their free TV Licence

TV Licensing and Age UK have launched an information campaign urging anyone aged 75 and over to make sure they're claiming their free TV Licence. The campaign also reminds those aged 74 they may be eligible for a short term licence to take them up to their 75th birthday. This involves working with local community organisations and the media to remind older people, their relatives and friends how to apply.

As we enter the new year, TV Licensing and Age UK are reminding anyone aged 75 or over that they are entitled to a free TV Licence for their main address. Nearly 4 million people across the UK already enjoy the benefits of the concession, and almost 70,000 people due to turn 75 in the next 12 months are currently benefitting from a short term TV licence. Both TV Licensing and Age UK are keen to make sure that all those eligible for a concession are taking advantage of it, especially following the Christmas period when money can be tight.

If your organisation works with people aged 75 or over, please make sure they are aware which concessions may be open to them. It might also be worth other clients knowing, if they live with someone aged 75 or over, a free licence will cover the household and not just them. If someone is currently 74 and has a licence due to expire before their 75th birthday they can also apply for a short-term licence to cover the period in between.

TV Licensing has been working with advice groups for older people across the UK to make sure anyone who is eligible is

aware of the free over 75 TV Licence. For more information on how Age UK can help you, please visit [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

Michelle Mitchell, charity director for Age UK, said:

"The cost of living continues to rise and affects everyone, but particularly older people who live on low fixed incomes. The free over 75 licence is a valuable concession which offers older people the chance to have a little extra to put towards other bills. We would encourage those who are already 75 and have not yet applied for their free licence to contact TV Licensing. Those aged 74 should also get in touch so that a short-term licence can be arranged."

Applying for a free licence is easy and, once you have done it, TV Licensing will renew your licence automatically on an annual basis for three years, cutting down on excess paperwork.

It's quick and easy to apply either online at [www.tvlicensing.co.uk/over75](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/over75) or by calling 0300 790 6073.

Clients should also be aware some changes have recently been made to the annual Direct Debit renewal process. Those paying by Direct Debit will now receive a single renewal notification when their current licence expires, outlining their payment plan until 2016-17. There is no need to contact TV Licensing unless there is a change to their address, bank details or they become eligible for a short-term or free licence once they turn 74 or 75.

We've been sending printed copies of In Brief, the TV Licensing newsletter you're reading now, to thousands of organisations providing advice services for over eight years.

We're always looking for ways to be greener, so we've now moved the newsletter entirely online. This is the first issue you'll have received from us that has landed in your inbox rather than your in-tray.

From now on, we will send you an email including a simple link to the online location for viewing and downloading the newsletter. The new digital In Brief is not only environmentally friendly, it's also more interactive. Our online issues allow you to access information about organisations, or get in touch with us, with a single click.

We already have a good database of email addresses but would like to ensure you continue to receive In Brief. If you would like to be added to our contact list, please email us at [campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info](mailto:campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info) and put 'In Brief' in the subject line. If there are other people in your team, or in other offices, who you think should be receiving In Brief then do send us their details and we'll add them to our distribution list.

We're also on twitter, and regularly tweet about events we're attending, workshops we're delivering, and other dates we've got in the diary. You can also see what we're up to in your local area by following us at [www.twitter.com/tvl\\_info](http://www.twitter.com/tvl_info)



# TV Licensing on the road



Developing lasting relationships with community groups is central to the work of TV Licensing's Community Relations team. Money Advice Scotland is one such organisation that has worked closely with our colleagues north of the border. Chief Executive Yvonne MacDermid provides an update:

## What is the role of Money Advice Scotland?

Money Advice Scotland is the national umbrella organisation which promotes free, independent, impartial, confidential debt advice and financial inclusion. We are the professional organisation for the sector providing training, consultancy, conferences and seminars. We also have members from the credit and banking industries, debt collection and insolvency practitioners. We work with the Scottish government and aim to help shape social policy in debt matters.

## Which money issues are your clients having to deal with?

Our members' clients are dealing with a range of different issues – everything from non-payment of Council Tax or TV Licence through to credit card debts. People are having a difficult time due to the recession and unfortunately some have found themselves either short-time working or facing redundancy. Also, many people already living on the breadline are finding it harder and harder as costs are increasing for normal everyday food items and fuel.

## How have you worked with TV Licensing in the past? How important is it for TV Licensing to have a range of easy ways to pay and concessions available?

We have a long-standing relationship with TV Licensing, over probably around 15 years. We have seen the real benefits of open dialogue and communication with the organisation, and how that can result in changing payment methods and keeping some people out of the court system.

Providing flexible payment options is particularly important. There are a sizeable number of Scots who don't have access to traditional financial services such as bank accounts, so it's vital that there are options available such as TV Licensing's Payment Card. Several years ago we were involved in advising on the development of the Cash Easy Entry scheme (now called Payment Card) and it's a positive move that this option is now available to all.

If you can provide as many different ways for people to pay as possible which suit their lifestyles then that is a win-win for everyone. Money advisers will always ensure that the TV licence is included in an income and expenditure sheet, and will look at the easiest way for a client to pay.

## Does Scotland have its own identity when it comes to issues around money advice? Is it important that there is local representation from TV Licensing?

Scotland does have its own identity. We have a separate legal system from England and Wales, and the enforcement of debt in Scotland is different. We also have very rural and island communities in Scotland for whom access to services aren't always easy. That is why it is so important that payments methods are flexible and inclusive.

It is absolutely essential that there is local representation from TV Licensing in Scotland as it is important that the organisation is aware of everything that is happening in the world of debt, and at grass-roots level.

## Can you provide your key contact information for MAS?

Our website address is [www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk](http://www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk) and our main telephone contact number is 0141 572 0237.

# No TV Licence? The most unbelievable evasion excuses of last year



## A fling with the postman and a TV-watching parakeet top this year's list of excuses

When it comes to the most implausible excuses given over the last 12 months for not having a TV Licence, it's been a top year for outlandish tales.

Alongside the usual attempts to blame relatives, demanding pets and amorous twists were part of the excuses offered to TV Licensing's enquiry officers last year.

### The top three reasons given by licence fee evaders in 2011 include:

- Amorous postman: "Since I had a bit of a fling with the postman I haven't been receiving my mail so I didn't get my TV Licence reminder."
- Paranoid parakeet: "No-one watches TV apart from the parakeet. It calms him down and stops him ripping out his feathers."
- Sticky-fingered kids: "I went to the PayPoint to pay for my licence, but I had to leave before I could pay as my kids were stealing sweets and I had to get them out fast."

No matter how inventive people get with their excuses, watching or recording programmes as they are shown on TV without a licence is against the law.

We would always rather people pay than risk prosecution and a fine, so we're urging advice organisations to help ensure people know when they need a licence and which of the many ways to pay might suit them best. If your organisation works with people who have questions about TV Licensing and need further information, do get in touch with the TV Licensing Community Relations team on 020 7544 3116 or via [campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info](mailto:campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info). The team will be happy to provide you with training presentations, leaflets and other materials to help you advise your clients.

The TV Licensing Community Relations team works with a range of money advice organisations nationally and locally across the UK.

David Hawkes, National Money Advice Co-ordinator at Advice UK, says:

"The TV Licence should be treated as essential expenditure when drawing up a household budget. You could get a Magistrates' Court fine [or fine from the Justice of the Peace courts or Sherriff's Court if in Scotland] for not having a licence. We know that some people find managing their finances challenging so it's important they have access to free independent advice on how to budget and spread the cost of household bills. Advice UK works with TV Licensing to raise awareness of the different ways you can pay for your licence, including over the phone, online, or in weekly instalments at a PayPoint outlet."

To help those that may find it difficult to pay in one go, we offer a range of ways to pay – all of which can be set up quickly and easily online at [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk) or by calling 0300 790 6112.



# Ask TV Licensing

TV Licensing's Community Relations team speaks to hundreds of organisations every year to help make sure people understand when a licence is needed and how to pay. We often attend conferences, provide workshops, and put on Q&A sessions.

As part of a regular feature, we answer the questions we are asked most frequently by advisers. Have a question you need answering? Email us at [campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info](mailto:campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info) or call us on 020 7544 3116.

## Q: Does someone who watches TV on a laptop need a licence?

Anyone who is watching programmes as they are being shown on TV needs to be covered by a licence, but it's important to remember that only 0.2% of people choose to watch TV exclusively online. The vast majority of people will also watch TV via a television set and if they have a home licence this will cover any household online viewing.

## Q: Is it true that even though someone pays for a licence for 12 months they only get an 11 month licence?

A licence is administered and issued on a monthly basis. For example if a licence is issued on 15 November 2011 it will expire on 31 October 2012. Usually people are only affected by this the first time that they buy a licence. With 25 million TV licences currently in force, managing each from day of issue would be very complex and wouldn't deliver good value for licence fee payers.

## Q: One of our clients is blind and doesn't have a TV. She listens to TV through her Hi-Fi equipment. Does she need a licence?

As long as the equipment isn't a 'television receiver', i.e. able to receive TV pictures then she won't need a licence. The 2003 Communications Act sets out the legal definitions, but if in any doubt do contact us at [campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info](mailto:campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info)

## Ways to pay There are several ways to pay for a TV Licence

### Direct Debit

Phone 0300 790 6063 to set up a monthly, quarterly or annual Direct Debit payment. Direct Debit is now used by the majority of customers and it's now also possible to set it up online by visiting [www.tvlicensing.co.uk/info](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/info)

### Debit and Credit Card

Call 0300 790 6063 in order to pay by debit or credit card. This facility accepts payment from a range of debit cards including Maestro/Switch and Delta. You can also pay online at [www.tvlicensing.co.uk/info](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/info)

### By Post

Send a cheque made payable to TV Licensing to: TV Licensing, Freepost BS6689, Bristol BS1 3YJ

### Over-the-counter

Make payments in person at one of more than 23,800 PayPoint outlets around the UK. Go to [www.paypoint.co.uk/locator](http://www.paypoint.co.uk/locator) to find your nearest outlet. To find out about using PayPoint to make payments under a cash payment plan, call 0300 555 0300.

### TV Licensing Savings Card

The TV Licensing Savings Card is designed to help people save towards the cost of their next TV Licence in small, manageable amounts. People can make a payment at any time, either online, by text, at any PayPoint outlet or over the phone. Call 0300 555 3434 for further information.

### Useful numbers

Direct Debit and credit card enquiries	0300 790 6063
Change of address notifications	0300 790 6065
Cash payment plan enquiries	0300 790 6078
Requests for TV Licensing literature	0300 790 6022
Minicom facility	0300 790 6050
Over 75s enquiries	0300 790 6073
National Debtline*	0808 808 4000

\* National Debtline is an external telephone advice service not run by TV Licensing

### TV Licensing contact details

TV Licensing, 6th Floor, 77 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SR  
Tel: 020 7544 3116 Fax: 020 7242 4202

## Your Feedback

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of In Brief, and we would welcome your views on both its current design and content. Please tell us the kind of TV Licensing stories you would find useful and interesting, and whether any other improvements could be made.

You can contact us on 020 7544 3116, or at [campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info](mailto:campaignoffice@tvlicensing.info)

We look forward to hearing from you.