

# Don't it just drive you *mad...*

**H**ello everyone. This month is about your responses to the columns on BT. Many of you had something to say, including helpful information about alternatives, useful websites and avenues to complain through.

Len Charlton has routed his pesky BT gremlins and found an alternative. 'Tiscali were advertising broadband contracts with Tiscali line rental and I installed their Option1 last week. This includes free weekend phone calls, broadband and you keep the same number.' Len goes on to say 'my personal bug-bear is automated phone systems, I once managed to get back to the start in 8 buttons.' I totally agree, automated telephone systems are a nightmare. John Kelman also suggests Tiscali, 'they have various packages and some of the broadband ones offer broadband, line rental, free calls and they take over the existing BT phone line.' Anne Longshawe (my Nan) commented that she left BT for Talk Talk and now pays £17.50 a month, (which includes line rental) for unlimited 24hour free calls and they also offer other packages to include broadband, international calls, mobile phones etc.

Tiscali and Talk Talk certainly sound good, however a word to the wise, I considered having a BT line with Tiscali broadband, as the combinations often work out cheaper. Then I spoke to Donna (another long suffering friend) who said that it was great until BT added "equipment rental" and "payment processing fees" to their line rental bill. It seems that if you decide not to have a full service from BT, they find other ways to extort money!

Stephen Knapp says 'I finally had enough of BT, British Gas and Southern Electric, so I switched to Utilities Warehouse. I now have a mobile, electricity, gas, broadband as well as a home and business telephone with them. All those services are at cheaper price than the original supplier, on one monthly direct debit bill and all supported by an account manager, based at their headquarters in North London. I also get free landline calls 24 hours a day and pay a reduced amount of

line rental.' This sounds good, I had not heard of the company before so I will be having a perusal myself. Mandy Dyer also supports the Utility Warehouse and has been with them for six years.



'Customer Services is based in England and it is brilliant - our calls are usually answered within 30 seconds, they are always pleasant and can answer questions on any of the services.' Well that certainly sounds promising, not only a help line in the UK, but one with knowledgeable staff.

For anyone who wishes to stay with BT but would like a more direct way to complain, Mark Stewart is a man in the know, he has furnished me with a variety of helpful information.

1. 'There are message forums at [www.bt.beta.com](http://www.bt.beta.com), which are frequented by BT support people, who don't get involved in detailed disputes, but will offer useful advice.'

2. 'The message forums at <http://forums.moneysavingexpert.com/> are very useful and frequented by thousands. Just navigate to the "home, work and play" group then click on "telephones board"'

3. 'E-mail Ben Verwaayen at [ben.verwaayen@bt.com](mailto:ben.verwaayen@bt.com), he is the Chief Executive of BT. He responds quickly and tends to take decisive action to sort problems out. You will need to give him something to work with, such as a documented account of the problems, communications you have had with BT including dates, times and the names of people you have spoken to.'

Well I hope that this has helped, many thanks for all of your E-mails.

Victoria Ladmore  
[victoria@stables5.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:victoria@stables5.wanadoo.co.uk)