



The law

The consumer contract regulations came into effect on 13 June 2014. [Regulation 41](#) prohibits use of numbers charged at “more than the basic rate”. Confirmation that “basic rate” excludes numbers beginning 084 and 087 is given in the [accompanying Guidance](#).

(N.B. This Guidance was written before the relevant charging structures were changed and clarified by Ofcom with effect from 1 July 2015. A promise to update the Guidance to reflect those changes has not yet been honoured, although this would not alter the effect.)

Coverage by You and Yours

As well as the item explained by this briefing ([listen here](#)), You and Yours has covered this issue, sometimes alongside others, also on:

- 🔊 20 Aug 2012 - [listen here](#)
- 🔊 25 Jan 2017 - [listen here](#)
- 🔊 13 Nov 2017 - [listen here](#)

Other National BBC News output has covered the issue repeatedly, for example, on the day that the regulation came into force – 13 Jun 2014 [listen here](#).

The offenders mentioned

Domino's advise an illegal customer service number on [this page](#) and, until recently, through tweets by [@Dominos UK](#).

I referred to “**Football Clubs**” – see [The un - fair telecoms football league table - 2018/9](#).

I referred to “**numbers used by local authorities for payments**” – see [Rip-off surcharge on local authority payment lines](#).

As well as ripping off those booking by telephone, in particular disabled patrons (an issue covered twice by You and Yours), many theatre and concert venues are in breach of the law regarding enquiry lines for customers – see relevant sections of [The theatre and concert ticketing rip-off](#).

Because the BBC had not been able to arrange the right of reply, I was unable to name the “**provider of family entertainment experiences at many sites throughout the country**” on air.

I was referring to **Merlin Entertainments**, which operates many (perhaps most of the leading) venues of this type.

The following names, with links to the relevant web page, are those where an illegal contact telephone number can be found published on the web. Other Merlin venues suggest that numbers are available, but fail to publish them on the main website. They may be given with booking confirmations or printed on tickets or other literature – that would be no less a breach of the regulations, although it is harder to find by general research.

[Alton Towers](#), [Chessington World of Adventures](#), [LEGOLAND Windsor](#), [SeaLife Manchester](#), [Thorpe Park](#), [UK SEALIFE Centres \(e.g. Birmingham\)](#), [Warwick Castle](#).

