



Citizens Advice recommends Internet-based financial calculators

As you read these paragraphs, multitudes of people in this country are taking stock of their financial positions and finding plenty of reasons for feeling glum. The near future looks bleak with higher and higher food bills, galloping gas and electricity charges, zooming mortgages. But worse comes if we give way to our mood and allow reasonable concerns to be clouded in uncontrollable fears, so it is important to be calm and objective about our situations. In this respect the “calculator” tool is a big help: it tells us very simply what our financial position is, giving an objective diagnosis, without judging us.

Citizens Advice recommends two calculators in particular. The first is a benefits calculator on the trusted Turn2us website. You might not have thought your finances were so bad that you needed to claim, but you could be eligible to receive benefits and you only need to answer a few simple questions. Go to <https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk> and find out.

The second is an energy calculator on the Citizens Advice website which will tell you the cost of using various electrical appliances. For this calculator you need to have some data ready – for instance, how much energy you are consuming and the unit price you pay. Visit <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> and search “consumer energy”.

Another calculator that you might be interested in is one that gives you your own personal inflation rate – i.e. the effect of inflation on your own spending. This gives you an objective percentage figure which you can use to establish whether your bank balance is going to hover above or below zero. The calculator is on the Office for National Statistics website at <https://www.ons.gov.uk>

Whatever your problem is, volunteers at Citizens Advice are available to help. Call Adviceline on 0808 278 7907. There is much more information on <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>