

Credit Cards

The same green and ethical considerations that determine who you will and won't bank your money with should apply to who supplies your credit card too. Considerations with regard to climate change, the environment, financial exclusion and project finance may all be relevant, along with a host of other issues.

However, perhaps the most significant issue for you, the card holder, is whether your provider treats its customers responsibly.

Responsible Lending

At its most basic, a credit card provider lends users money at interest, usually a rate between 10 and 20 per cent APR. The card will have a spending limit and the balance of credit available to the card holder is determined by how much they use and how much they pay back.

The degree of credit card debt in the UK attests to the fact that the principles of responsible lending, as laid down by the British Bankers Association (BBA), are not always upheld. The BBA recommends that, before lending, thorough background checks are conducted and that vendors use their professional judgement to ensure that the people they are lending to can make their repayments without getting into difficulty.

Transparency is also key – credit card customers should be presented with the terms and conditions attached to their card upfront and in plain English.

Ask yourself: do you know what measures, if any, your credit card provider has in place to prevent its customers falling deeper into debt? And if they have a responsible lending/credit policy, how and by whom is it implemented?

What do I do next?

For information about your provider's responsible lending policy or to find out if they offer a debt management service, search for them via the credit card section on YourEthicalMoney.org. Alternatively, contact your provider directly for information on their responsibility policies.

If you're not happy with your provider's performance – tell them – and consider switching to a new service with green and ethical credentials you have confidence in. For advice on how to do this check out our guide [Next Steps - Credit Cards](#).

Lending responsibly and offering help to those in debt is the duty
of all credit card providers.