

News story: Rule changes to speed up rollout of mobile and fast broadband in rural areas

The reforms to the outdated legislation will reduce the costs of housing phone masts and other communications infrastructure on private land. This opens the way for faster and more reliable broadband and mobile services, particularly in rural areas.

The changes to the UK's Electronic Communications Code will:

- bring down the rents telecoms operators pay to landowners to install equipment to be more in line with utilities providers, such as gas and water
- make it easier for operators to upgrade and share their equipment with other operators to help increase coverage
- make it easier for telecoms operators and landowners to resolve legal disputes, and
- help to drive investment and stimulate the continued growth, rollout and maintenance of communication technology infrastructure, an increasingly significant area of the UK's economy.

Minister for Digital Matt Hancock said:

The laws that we've brought into force today strike another blow to diminish the digital divide. Improving mobile and broadband services for people struggling with poor connections is a top priority for us – we want everyone to benefit from the digital revolution. Removing these outdated restrictions will help promote investment and give mobile operators more freedom to improve their networks in hard-to-reach places.