

6th September 2016

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about broadband and BT.

I appreciate how important broadband is to both individuals and businesses. Reliable, fast broadband is now seen as the norm across the UK. It underpins economic growth and allows homes to function in a digital age. Over 90 per cent of UK premises are now able to connect to superfast broadband and we are on track to reach 95 per cent by the end of next year. This means that the UK has the highest superfast broadband coverage amongst the top five European economies. However, I recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that all parts of the country have access to the broadband they need.

I welcome Ofcom's determination in tackling issues that may prevent this from happening. Ministers have noted its view that the current relationship between BT and Openreach will not deliver the country's needs for more competition, better innovation and better service, and they strongly support Ofcom in taking whatever action is needed to correct any competition problems. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is clear that a more independent Openreach is needed to benefit consumers and the UK's digital infrastructure. I share Ministers' concerns that BT's proposals do not go far enough and think it is right that full structural separation remains an option.

I understand just how frustrating it is to have a bad broadband connection. Broadband is a modern necessity and the Government is working hard to ensure that the whole of Britain has the broadband that it needs.

Thank you again for contacting me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP