

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS867)

Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Written Statement made by: **Minister of State for Data Protection and Telecoms (Chris Bryant)** on 21 Jul 2025.

Boosting growth by removing barriers to digital infrastructure deployment

The Government is committed to unlocking the barriers to telecoms deployment across the United Kingdom, as outlined in the recently published 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy by HM Treasury. This strategy underscores the vital role that modern infrastructure plays in fostering economic growth, enhancing connectivity, and driving innovation in all regions of the country.

Digital infrastructure underpins growth right across the economy, and is also a powerful contributor to the economy in its own right, with the sector worth an estimated £50 billion to the UK. It supports the adoption of new and emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence and enables citizens to participate in modern life. In an increasingly online world, growth in data consumption and increased demands on the UK's digital infrastructure mean there is an urgent need to support the sector in delivering greater connectivity for local communities and businesses.

We are committed to the rollout of gigabit-capable broadband and 5G networks, with the ultimate goal of enabling businesses, residents, and institutions to access seamless and reliable connectivity. These efforts are essential to building a more competitive, equitable, and digitally connected nation.

To overcome barriers to deployment of gigabit-capable infrastructure in blocks of flats, we will consult on measures by the autumn to create a new right for leaseholders to request a gigabit broadband connection and a duty for freeholders not to unreasonably refuse the request. Working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, we would seek to legislate for any resulting measures when parliamentary time allows.

Work is underway to ensure that delays arising from the higher risk building safety regime are addressed as soon as possible. We are working closely with the telecoms sector to understand the scale of the impact on telecoms deployment specifically, alongside developing appropriate remedies which will support the continued investment and rollout of 5G and gigabit broadband while upholding the government's commitment to building safety.

We will accelerate the rollout of gigabit-capable broadband by tackling barriers to the deployment of underground broadband infrastructure. We have trialed the use of flexi-permits for street works and will see the results of the evaluation in October. Should that demonstrate positive results, we will promptly consult on the necessary legislative changes.

We will consider areas where planning laws and guidance might be changed to facilitate the deployment of mobile masts. To that end, we will publish a call for evidence on Permitted Development Rights as soon as possible. Subject to feedback received, any resulting measures

designed to enable faster deployment of telecommunications infrastructure will be implemented as quickly as possible.

We will implement the remaining provisions of the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2022 to make it easier and cheaper for digital infrastructure to be deployed. Subject to considering the consultation responses, we intend to finalise s61-64 of the Act, relating to renewal agreements, by the end of the year.

The 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy represents a bold and ambitious step toward a more connected and thriving United Kingdom. By removing obstacles to telecoms deployment, we are creating the foundations for a brighter future, where digital connectivity transforms lives, drives economic progress, and strengthens communities across the country. We will continue to work closely with the telecoms sector to drive forward infrastructure build.