



MARK GARNIER MP
Member of Parliament for Wyre Forest

Sir John Whittingdale
Minister of State
Department for Science Innovation and Technology

15th November 2023

Dear John,

Thank you for your kind follow up letter in respect of the fibre broadband, and more importantly telegraph poles.

Within your letter you state that: *Openreach are still able to use poles installed by other operators:..... This requirement is imposed by the Electronic Communications Code (conditions and restrictions).*

Unfortunately, further to a meeting with Openreach this is not a policy they have incorporated into their corporation. In fact, it has been confirmed, it is their policy **not** to use any third-party equipment, due to concerns of health and safety and protecting their workforce.

Openreach will, and do install, secondary equipment, duplicating telegraph poles into communities, increasing street furniture and creating a web of wires. Additionally prior to Openreach commencing works, on a positive side, they do send out surveyors to refresh their network database. The same database which has been opened up to third parties. Openreach admit that until they are due to roll out fibre to the area, their database is not 100% accurate. This increases unnecessary installation of telegraph poles in areas by error of outdated information.

At present, my community is at risk of multiple telegraph poles being installed. I am grateful to Full Fibre who have delayed their installation whilst I try and seek clarification on this process and possible additional funding for underground works as well as now confirming that if Openreach have installed in locations during this period they will use their poles. My concern is that I do not have the same commitment from Openreach.

I also like to raise that Openreach have kindly withdrawn from one street within the community due to residents objections, but other companies will continue to install under the new guidelines of permitted rights.

Installing fibre to the property is of importance, with many people requiring modern infrastructure to enable them to meet the requirements of modern living, but currently here in Wyre Forest and across the country our communities are being blighted by a market bubble with ignored guidance and no overall scrutiny.

Kind Regards,

Mark Garnier MP for Wyre Forest