

# Association of Cairngorms Community Councils

"Promoting and representing the shared interests of communities in and around the  
Cairngorms National Park"

14 October 2005

Mr Alan Pridmore  
Ofcom  
Riverside House  
2a Southwark Bridge Road  
London Se1 9HA

Dear Mr Pridmore

## **Universal Service Obligation – Consultation**

As the Convenor of the Association of Cairngorms Community Councils I am writing on behalf of the 26 Community Councils in the Cairngorms National Park area.

I write concerning Ofcom's proposal to restrict the right of local veto on proposed BT payphone closures to Local Authorities, and as yet we have not heard any cogent reason for the recommended change. I appreciate, from the information on your website, that the closing date for responses was 28<sup>th</sup> September, but unfortunately we were unaware of your proposed action until we were alerted by a recent article in the local newspaper.

The members of the Association understand and appreciate the economic grounds for the desire on the part of BT to close many of the payphones in our area. Earlier this year the Community Councils were informed of the payphones BT wished to close, and in many cases agreed with the decision. However there were some cases, notably in the more remote areas where there is no mobile phone signal, and where local knowledge was used to advise BT against closure. We are pleased to note that BT have consequently revised their proposals, and vital payphones have been retained.

We feel that Community Councils have an important role to play in this consultation process, and therefore we fail to see the benefit of changing the system whereby they would have to reply through Local Authorities.

Yours sincerely

Dr Katharine Adamson  
Convenor  
Association of Cairngorms Community Councils