

Question 1: Do you agree with our proposals that local dialling should be closed in the Five Area Codes - Aberdeen (01224), Bradford (01274), Brighton (01273), Middlesbrough (01642) and Milton Keynes (01908) - on 1 October 2014?:

I believe this is a short-termist approach and that Ofcom should be looking at more robust solutions (like in Ireland, which has completed a sensible phased renumbering over recent years). There is undeniably a benefit in avoiding number changes, but I believe Ofcom's current approach is tilted too much in favour of short term convenience, at the expense of long-term stability and numbering availability.

Milton Keynes in particular will surely soon outgrow the extra capacity added by removing local dialling and would be much better served by a single, higher-capacity area code rather than drifting into the situation of having multiple area codes. More should be done to avoid having multiple codes for one area which dilutes local identity and disadvantages new entrants into the telecoms markets who get allocated "secondary" or unfamiliar area codes.

The situation in Bradford would be better handled by allowing the use of 0113 numbers in this area. There need be no migration, nor the closing of local dialling - simply allow local businesses and individuals to use numbers from a neighbouring area code with ample free capacity.

Aberdeen's numbering should not be changed without first investigating whether there would be advantages or public support for a country-wide solution for Scotland. (The Welsh Government has in the past responded to consultation by Ofcom pointing out that a single distinctive, all-Wales area code might be beneficial, so there may be an appetite for the same in Scotland.)

Question 2: Are you aware of any local or national events that may dilute consumer awareness communications/any other factors suggesting that 1 October 2014 is an unsuitable date/time of year to introduce the proposed changes to local dialling?:

Scottish independence referendum