

**For immediate release  
29 September 2014**

## **Callers reminded to dial the code from Wednesday**

### **The 01642 area code will be needed to make local calls**

Ofcom is reminding telephone users in the Middlesbrough telephone area that, from Wednesday, they must include the code when making a local call over a landline.

The change is designed to safeguard the future supply of landline numbers in the 01642 area, avoiding the need to change existing phone numbers.

From Wednesday, callers in the Middlesbrough area who omit the 01642 code when dialling locally will not be connected. Instead, they will hear a message telling them to redial and include the code.

Ofcom has been co-ordinating a local information campaign, including adverts in local media, leaflets and posters in public places and letters sent by telephone companies. Ofcom has also worked with local councils to inform and prepare the local community, and is encouraging friends and family to lend a hand to someone who may need extra help.

Telephone companies are expected to have implemented the change by late afternoon on Wednesday. The price of making local calls is not affected by dialling the code.

### **Why the change is needed**

The number of communications providers with landline numbers has increased significantly over recent years, leading to more competition and cheaper landline bills for millions of homes and businesses. But it has also led to increased pressure on the supply of phone numbers.

Currently, Ofcom cannot allocate phone numbers in which the first digit after the area code is 0 or 1 (for example, 01642 012 345 or 01642 123 456). This is because the network that is connecting the call may confuse the number with other existing dialling codes (such as a mobile number beginning with 075) or with a number reserved for special use (such as 118 for calls to directory enquiry services).

Dialling the code avoids this confusion and allows Ofcom to allocate numbers in which the first digit after the area code is 0 or 1. This makes almost 200,000 more 01642 numbers available for use.

Further information is available at [ofcom.org.uk/dialthecode](http://ofcom.org.uk/dialthecode)

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#### NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Under section 63 (1) of the Communications Act 2003, Ofcom has a duty to encourage the most appropriate and efficient use of telephone numbers.
2. Ofcom is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications, wireless communications and postal services.
3. For further information about Ofcom please visit: [ofcom.org.uk](https://www.ofcom.org.uk). Ofcom's news releases can be found at: [media.ofcom.org.uk](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/media)