

We welcome Ofcom attempting to address obvious conflicts of interest present within the current status quo between Openreach and BT Group.

However, there is a far bigger problem that should be addressed which if resolved would potentially resolve the issues Ofcom are trying to address here as well. As a large Housing Association we experience significant delays getting new developments connected to the infrastructure outside our site boundary, delaying the delivery of much needed affordable housing. Mainly because regardless of how early we as Developer's place orders and pay fees up front, BT never arrive in sufficient time to properly assess if their record drawings match the infrastructure in the ground and actual capacity provision.

Different teams within Openreach then carry out different parts of the work (ducting and cabling for example), requiring liaison with other external stakeholders such as Local Authority Highways. All of which leads to lack of communication, disorganisation and late delivery. We estimate that on more than 50% of our projects, regardless of size, location or build contractor, BT deliver their infrastructure late and are often so late that it causes a delay to the overall practical completion of new housing units.

Ofcom should seriously consider opening up infrastructure provision to others. If it can be done for roads and drainage it should be possible to develop a pre-agreed adoptable standard to be delivered by others and adopted by BT. It would free up capacity for Openreach who will always be over-stretched regardless of their relationship and structure to BT Group.

It would speed up connection to services for developers and end users alike. It would also provide cost and time certainty for customers and BT themselves.