

**Title:**

Mrs

**Forename:**

Tara

**Surname:**

Morrison

**Representing:**

Self

**Additional comments:**

Please contact me if you require any detailed information on my research which is looking at broadband utility in remote rural areas of the Scottish Highlands.

**Question 1: Are there areas of Ofcom's overall strategic approaches and purposes, outlined in last years' annual plan that may need to change?:**

I don't have an issue with the overall approach and purpose of last year's annual plan. My concern is with ensuring that certain parts are carried out effectively.

**Question 2: What are the issues and areas that should form Ofcom's priorities or major work areas in 2014/15?:**

A key issue is the recognition that rural broadband provision needs a thorough investigation as there is evidence which suggests that the process of securing funding and tenders has not been as transparent as it could have been. For rural inhabitants, access to superfast broadband is not a given, and, for some, even 2mbps is not possible, and yet they will still be required to pay the same amount as customers in urban areas with speeds in excess of 20 mbps. So there is an issue of parity of provision but there is also an issue of necessity. My research has highlighted that those in remote rural areas need and use broadband more extensively than urban dwellers and that broadband availability and speed are the biggest threats to their livelihoods and their overall well-being. The fact is that rural dwellers need broadband MORE because of their location and yet they will receive a poorer service and limited choice but still be required to pay the same amount...and in some cases - actually more.

**Question 3: Are there any specific areas for deregulation or simplification in the coming year?:**