Ofcom

GEOGRAPHIC NUMBERING AND LOCAL DIALLING

REPORT OF FINDINGS

NOVEMBER 2010

Prepared for: Ofcom

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Contents

Section 1

Executive Summary

Demand for geographic telephone numbers (numbers beginning with the digits '01' and '02') has meant that some areas in the UK could run out of supplies of new number blocks under the current system. Ofcom has identified two possible options for resolving the shortfall:

- "Close local dialling", i.e. remove the ability to dial the local number without the area code. This measure would create more numbers as it allows local numbers beginning with the digits '0' and '1' to be used if dialled with the area code.

- Introduce new "overlay" area codes on top of existing ones as areas near exhaustion. The 'overlay' code numbers would be used to meet demand for new numbers – existing numbers from the established area code would not change.

Ofcom wished to gather feedback on geographic numbering and local dialling from UK fixed line users – both residential consumers and businesses (Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) only – sole traders up to 25 employees).

Our survey suggests that the proportion of calls using a fixed line appears to be decreasing over time – just under two-thirds of calls were made using a fixed line in 2005 compared with just under half of all calls in 2010. The proportion of calls from a fixed line using the memory facility or speed dialling also appears to be decreasing – from 36% in 2005 to 25% in 2010.

Use of the local dialling facility (i.e. calls made without using the area code) is still widespread, although it has declined significantly since 2005 – the average proportion of calls made using local dialling has dropped from 76% in 2005 to 57% in 2010. Attitudes towards the service remain very similar however – local dialling remains largely taken for granted and is seen as a nice to have, not a necessity. Very few people had concerns if it were to disappear.

In contrast, the number of consumers who think that geographic significance is important has increased – 64% in 2010 think geographic numbering is important compared with 52% in 2005.

Attitudes towards geographical significance remain largely the same as 2005 – both businesses and residential consumers thought this was important for a mixture of emotional and practical reasons. The removal of the ability to identify someone's location from an area code was a concern to almost all businesses and to some residential consumers.

Maintaining geographical identity is valued much more highly than the facility for local dialling and so all businesses and almost all residential users preferred to lose local dialling rather than introduce a new code into their current area.

Removal of local dialling was considered a small leap behaviourally, was easily understood and would therefore be easy to communicate. There was some recognition, however, that remembering the full 11-digits of a telephone number could cause problems for some people.

Overlay codes were seen as confusing by almost everyone. Generally, people did not like the idea of dialling a different code for someone who might live very close to them – this seemed to be counter-intuitive to the numbering system they were familiar with. Businesses also felt there would be a disadvantage to taking on the new code as it would not have the same value as the old one, particularly in the Oxford and Brighton areas.

There was almost no sense of injustice if this change was to happen on a local rather than national level in all the locations surveyed except Whitehaven. Several people in Whitehaven thought it was odd that the change would not simply involve an additional number, as had happened in most other places in the UK.

There appears to be a concern about the longevity of these changes – on average people thought that changes like these should last for a minimum of ten years. If closing local dialling would only alleviate the problem for less than ten years before overlay codes were to be brought in, then opinions became more divided on the preferred option:

- Some felt that closing local dialling was still a sensible first step as it conditioned people to dial the code and so, when a new code was introduced, this would be absorbed relatively easily.

- Others felt that the early introduction of an overlay code would build awareness of that new code as early as possible and was the longer term solution.

Overall, attitudes to change would appear to be much more relaxed than in 2005 and this, combined with relatively mild reactions to all the options, suggests that either of the two options could be pursued. Many also recognise the changes in technology over the past few years and accept that things could look very different in ten years time anyway.

The key criteria to a successful change would appear to be in the communication, including a solid rationale, some reassurance that the solution is long-term and clear communication of the details of the change. There is also a need to be very clear about call costs as there seems to be some confusion about additional cost when using a dialling code.

The key issue is the strength of feeling towards maintaining geographic numbering or, more precisely, the strength of feeling against its potential erosion. Local dialling does not appear to be as much of an issue now as it was perhaps in the past, and there is overwhelming preference for closing this facility rather than introducing a new overlay code into the areas affected.

Section 2

Introduction

2.1 Objectives:

The objectives were to:

- Identify typical dialling habits of residential consumers and SMEs.

- Understand current usage of, and assess attitudes towards, local dialling.

- Assess attitudes towards the current numbering system, in particular numbers with geographic significance.

- Assess responses to the two proposed options for increasing the supply of numbers.

- Understand how best to communicate the proposed changes to the numbering scheme.

2.2 Method and Sample

The research was conducted in two phases:

- Phase 1: Qualitative exploration – to understand usage of, and attitudes towards, geographic numbering and local dialling.

- Phase 2: Short omnibus survey – to provide numerical validation and comparison with previous studies.

Phase 1: Qualitative

- We conducted 12 x 1 hour focus groups – eight with residential fixed line users, four with businesses - in four locations across the UK (Brighton, Oxford, Bradford and Whitehaven).

- Locations were selected because they represented some of the area codes that are forecast to run out of numbers first. The groups took place on the outskirts of each location so that we could attract both urban and rural residents – except Whitehaven, which was rural.

- Within both business and residential groups, all were regular users of their fixed line (i.e. they used a fixed line the same amount or more than their mobile).

- Within each business group, there was a mix of company size and industry/profession included, and all considered a local presence important for trade.

- The groups were conducted during w/c 23rd August 2010. Full sample specification, discussion guide and proposed options can be found in the Annex.

<u>Phase 2: Quantitative</u>

We placed six questions on a telephone omnibus survey, i.e. questions went to a sample of the GB adult population (n=1002) who use a fixed line telephone. The omnibus survey was conducted in October 2010.

A similar telephone omnibus survey was conducted in July 2005.[1] We have compared the results of the 2005 and 2010 surveys, and highlight similarities and changes in attitudes and behaviours associated with UK telephone numbers among residential and business consumers in the main findings of this report.

Questions included:

- Proportion of calls made using a fixed line.

- Proportion of calls made from a fixed line using the handset's memory facility or the speed dial service.

- Importance of being able to tell the location where you are dialling from the telephone number.

- Proportion of local calls made from a fixed line without using the area dialling code.

- Importance of having the facility to leave off the area dialling code when calling from a fixed line to a local number.

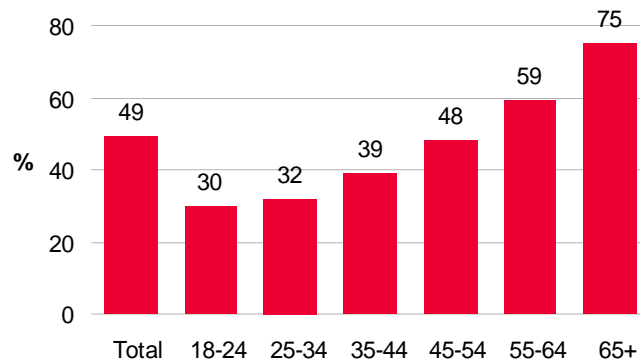- Preferences for giving out a telephone number to another person.

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[1] *Numbering Review: Report of Market Research Findings*, published by Ofcom on 23 February 2006 http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/numberingreview/research/

Section 3

Main Findings

3.1 Proportion of calls using a fixed line

Average proportion of calls made from a landline - by age
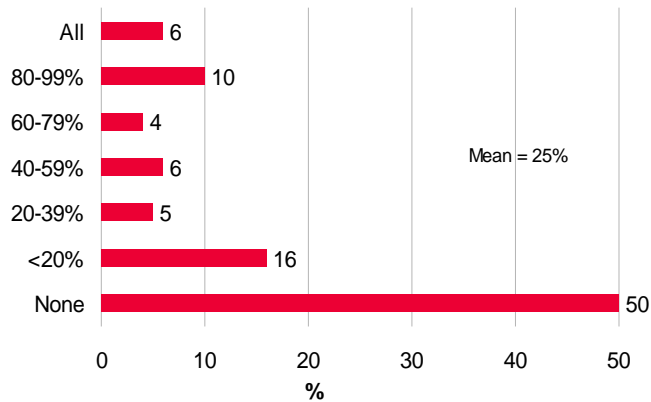

Base=all (n=1002)

The trend for the proportion of fixed line calls increasing in line with age remains the same in 2010 as it was in 2005.

However, according to our survey overall usage of fixed line appears to be decreasing over time. In 2005, almost two-thirds of all calls were made from a fixed line (63%) compared with just under half in 2010 (49%).

Since 2005, claimed fixed line use has dropped significantly across all age groups except the over 65s.
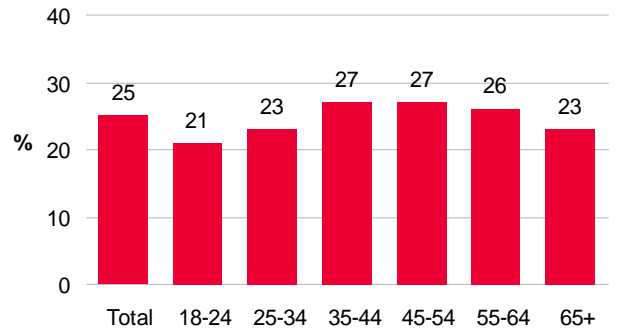
3.2 Use of memory facility

Proportion of calls made from a fixed line using the handset's memory facility or speed dial service

Category	%
All	6
80-99%	10
60-79%	4
40-59%	6
20-39%	5
<20%	16
None	50

Mean = 25%

Base=all (n=1002)

Average proportion of calls made from a fixed line using the handset's memory facility - by age

	%
Total	25
18-24	21
25-34	23
35-44	27
45-54	27
55-64	26
65+	23

Base=all (n=1002)

Use of the memory facility or speed dialling has also decreased since 2005 – the average proportion of calls using a memory facility or speed dialling was 36% in 2005 compared with 24% in 2010.

As in 2005, usage of the memory facility in 2010 appeared to be fairly consistent across the different age groups.

In the qualitative groups, use of a memory facility was more widespread, with about half of residential consumers using the memory facility on their fixed line. Everyone used the facility on their mobile.

Numbers called from a fixed line tended to be friends and family and these were memorised by those who did not use the memory facility:
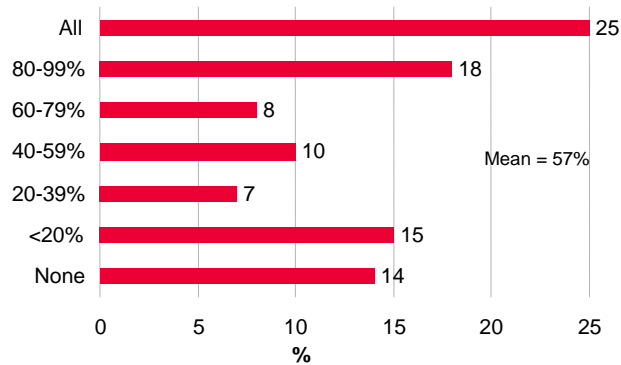
- *"I call the same numbers all the time – most of them tend to be six digits so it's easy to remember them" (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

Use of fixed line memory facilities by business users was much more varied. The variety of different numbers dialled by some businesses meant most numbers would be looked up and then manually dialled.

The few who were dialling the same numbers regularly could have as many as up to fifty numbers stored in their fixed line memory facility. All business users used the memory facility when dialling from their mobile.
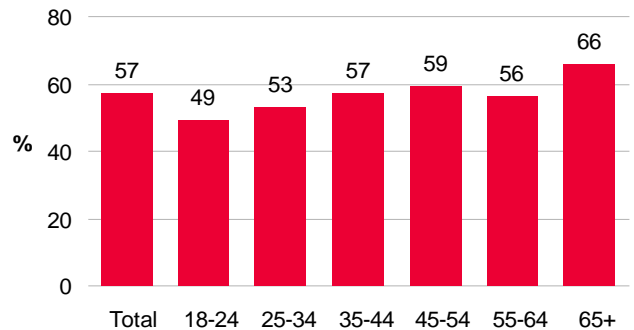
3.3 Use of local dialling

Proportion of local calls made from a fixed line by leaving off the area dialling code (e.g. dialling just the 6 digits)

Category	%
All	25
80-99%	18
60-79%	8
40-59%	10
20-39%	7
<20%	15
None	14

Mean = 57%

Base=all (n=1002)

Average proportion of local calls made from a fixed line by leaving off the area dialling code (i.e. dialling just the 6 digits) - by age

Age group	%
Total	57
18-24	49
25-34	53
35-44	57
45-54	59
55-64	56
65+	66

Base=all (n=1002)

Use of local dialling has decreased since 2005 – the average proportion of calls made using the local dialling facility in 2005 was 76%, compared with 57% in 2010.

In 2010, usage of local dialling across the different age groups was largely in keeping with 2005 – older people still use the facility slightly more than younger age groups.

In the qualitative groups, usage of local dialling was largely similar - the majority still used the facility:

- Brighton and Oxford area codes covered large areas, so many would have friends and family within the area and would just dial the six digit number.

- The area codes for Whitehaven and Bradford appeared to cover slightly smaller areas and so use of local dialling was more varied as the code boundary might be only a few miles away.

Most used the local dialling facility 'without thinking' and many, particularly those who did not use a memory facility, were able to remember most of the six digit numbers they called (five digits in Whitehaven). Those using a memory facility tended to store a six digit number without the area code.

However, several mentioned they had begun to dial the area code with some non-regular numbers because they were used to doing so on their mobile:
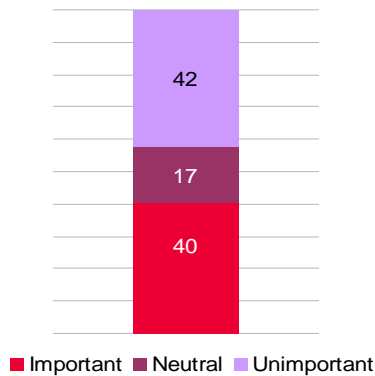
- *"I just do it out of habit now, because I use my mobile so much during the day, that it's habit to dial 01274 anyway" (Residential consumer, Bradford)*

Business users were similar to residential users in their use of the local dialling facility – if the call was local then they would just dial the six digits. Overall use of the facility was more varied, as most businesses were dialling a large proportion of their numbers outside of the local area:

- *"We provide facilities for getting people back to work so they are often calling locally and just use the six digit numbers. I'm calling all over the country so I'm using area codes more often". (Business, Brighton)*
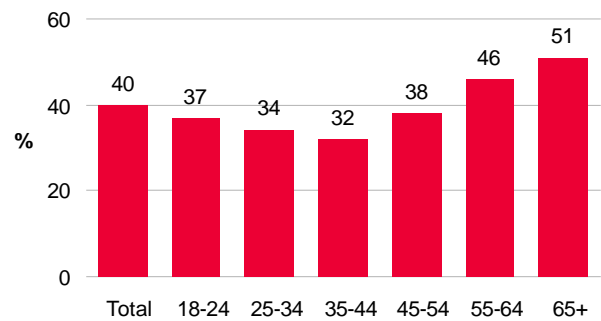
3.4 Attitudes towards local dialling

Importance of having the facility to leave off the area dialling code when dialling a local number from a fixed line

Important: 40
Neutral: 17
Unimportant: 42

■ Important ■ Neutral ■ Unimportant

Base=all (n=1002)

% of people who think it is important to be able to leave off the area dialling code when dialling a local number

	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
%	40	37	34	32	38	46	51

Base=all (n=1002)

Overall, consumers appear to be split on whether they think the local dialling facility is important. Middle age groups tend to think the facility is less important than younger or older groups.

These results are very similar to 2005, where 39% of consumer thought this facility was important compared with 40% in 2010.

The findings from the qualitative groups were consistent. The local dialling facility appeared to be a 'nice to have' rather than being highly valued, although it was not without some benefits:

- Numbers were considered easy to remember.

- There was less opportunity for mistakes.

- For many, not using the code meant 'localness' and many residential users would just give out a six digit number with no area code.

Across both business and residential audiences there appeared to be very little concern at the thought of losing local dialling:

- *"It would be a bit of pain if I've got a lot of calls to get through. But really it'd be no big deal, you have to do this on a mobile anyway so I'm already doing it". (Business, Brighton)*

Although one business which had recently moved to a VoIP system said it was difficult to change old habits:

- *"It's not a big deal but with this new system we have to dial the full code with every number and I'm still getting caught out even five months later". (Business, Brighton)*

3.5 Preferences for giving out a telephone number

Preferences for giving out a telephone number to someone (and you don't know where they live)

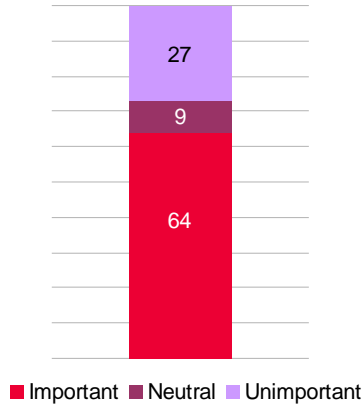| Category	%
Give the area code and number as digits, i.e. 01865 234567	73
Give the area code name and number, i.e. Oxford 234567	3
Give just the telephone number, i.e. 234567	11
All of them	8

%

Base=all (n=1002)

In the omnibus survey, the vast majority of consumers would give out the number and the area code as numbers (i.e. 01865 234567).

These results are reflected in the qualitative groups. The way the number was given out depended on whether the recipient's address was known. If they knew the person was 'local', most would say the place (e.g. Oxford) and then give out the five or six digit number. If the recipient's address was not known, then the number and area code would be given out as numbers.

Business users tended to give out their number by saying the area code and number as they were more used to giving this number out to people from outside the area.
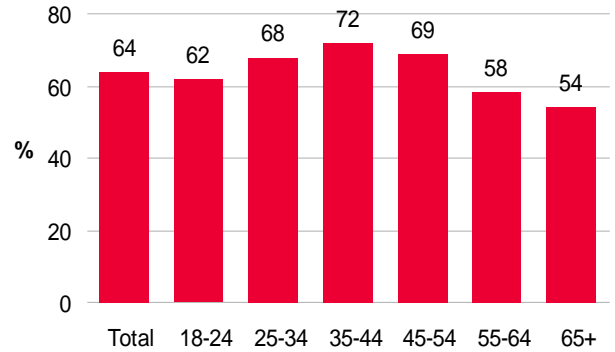
3.6 Geographic Numbering

Importance of being able to tell from the telephone number the location where you are calling

| Important | Neutral | Unimportant |

Base=all (n=1002)

% of people who think it is important to be able to tell the location they are calling from the telephone number - by age

Base=all (n=1002)

The majority of consumers thought it was important to be able to identify the location from the telephone number – and more consumers felt this way in 2010 than back in 2005 (64% compared with 52% respectively).

More people felt this was important than the local dialling facility – although fewer older people thought geographical significance was important when compared to other age groups.

These results were in keeping with the qualitative findings. Amongst both residential and business users there was a strong legacy of geographical significance – everyone could recall several codes and their associated locations locally and around the UK.

Residential consumers valued being able to identify location via the area code but were often not sure why:

- *"It's just nice isn't it, I'm not sure why I think it's important but it just is". (Residential consumer, Brighton)*

Several others gave rather more practical reasons:

- To identify local suppliers – many wanted to 'buy local'.

- As reassurance about the cost of a call – several thought there was a difference in the cost of a local call compared with a call outside the local area.

- Identifying a caller and screening calls – there was some suspicion that numbers that were not recognised could be a sales call, particularly those that started with 08xx.

- *"If you don't recognise the code then the chances are that it's a sales call and you don't pick up". (Business, Oxford)*

Businesses also valued geographical significance, with some valuing it very highly. All those that relied heavily on local trade thought it was important for their customers to be able to identify where they were:

- *"We're a garage so it's vital our customers know vaguely where we are". (Business, Brighton)*

- *"I like the geographic reference, being based in Brighton is important for me and all my clients are local". (Business, Brighton)*

A few also used areas codes as means of business planning – they would organise their sales calls according to area codes.

Some businesses used the area code to prioritise their call backs or to redirect people to another office:

- *"As an estate agent, we would always put those people we could identify as local to the top of the list or we would send them to another one of our offices based on their area code". (Business, Brighton)*

Screening calls was important for quite a few small office / home office workers. Several mentioned the increasing numbers of sales calls and geographic numbering helped them to make a judgement on whether to accept or return the call.

For those businesses operating beyond the local area, attitudes towards geographic numbering worked both ways:

- Some felt a non-geographic number gave the impression of greater size and national presence, although they recognised some of the stigma attached to 08xx numbers.

- Others, particularly in the Oxford and Brighton areas, felt that their area code implied that they were established in a good area:

  — *"We decided to keep the 01865 code and not go for the non geographic number – our clients liked to know we're in Oxford and not some dodgy fly by night travel company. I think it gives off a more solid image". (Business, Oxford)*

Again, with business users, there was a potential cost issue – a minority thought that calling outside of their area code would increase costs.

Overall, the ability to identify the location through an area code was valued much more highly than local dialling by both businesses and residential consumers. Businesses, in particular, would be concerned if geographic numbering were to disappear:

- *"01273 is part of the town's identity, I wouldn't want to lose it, it ties you to an area, gives you a head start". (Business, Brighton)*

There was, however, widespread acceptance that the ability to identify the location with any degree of accuracy had diminished considerably in comparison to the past.

3.7 Response to the proposed options

As part of our qualitative study, we explored the two proposed options of overlay codes and the removal of local dialling in open discussion.

A. Close local Dialling

This option was almost unanimously preferred by both businesses and residential consumers:

- *"It's much easier than the other one" (Residential consumer, Bradford)*

- *"Nothing really changes, we're already doing this on mobiles" (Residential consumer, Brighton)*

- *"No changes to numbers, no sign writing, fine" (Business, Whitehaven)*

- *"Lesser of the two evils – you can get this in about 10 minutes, in fact I'm already there" (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

A few thought that moving from a 6-digit number to a 11-digit number might cause problems for some people:

- *"This would cause my mum a few problems as she's disabled with learning difficulties" (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

And quite a few questioned whether this would have any impact on the cost of the call:

- *"I've been told that if I put an area code in front of the number then I'd get charged more than if I just use the 6-digit number; just the same as if you put +44 in front of the number you get charged more – is this right?" (Business, Brighton)*

Almost nobody had an issue with changes to local dialling being localised to their area with the exception of one or two in Whitehaven, who thought it was odd that there was a change and that change did not involve adding another digit:

- *"Why us? They're always using us as a testing ground for something, last year it was digital TV, now it's this. I can't believe numbers are running out here, it's not as if new businesses are popping up all over the place" (Business, Whitehaven)*

- *"Why not just make it 6 digits like everyone else?" (Residential consumer, Whitehaven)*

One suggested that it might make more sense to make this national rather than a local exercise:

- *"It just seems to make sense to get everyone to do the same thing – everyone dials the code, that's it, rather than someone in Abingdon doesn't have to, whereas someone in Oxford does". (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

Overall, almost everyone felt that local dialling was a nice facility but was increasingly being eroded by the use of mobiles. This option was seen as a small step for most consumers and the change would therefore be relatively easy to communicate.

B. Overlay Codes

This option was almost unanimously rejected by both businesses and residential consumers:

- *"I don't like this one, it seems really complicated" (Residential consumer, Bradford)*

- *"Not nearly as straightforward as the other" (Residential consumer, Whitehaven)*

- *"This will be confusing for everyone – you wouldn't know whether they are local or not" (Residential consumer, Brighton)*

Business users, in particular, disliked this option - some suggested that they would even pay more to have a number with the old code:

- *"I've got seven offices in the 01273 area. If I want to open a new office, I wouldn't want to take on a new number that wasn't consistent with what I've already got" (Business, Brighton)*

- *"Yes, I'd definitely want the old Oxford code so if I had to pay more for it, then I would". (Business, Oxford)*

Lack of consistency was the main barrier:

- *"It just seems a bit silly that if a new housing estate is built round the corner from where I live, then people next door to me will have a different area code to me". (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

- *"When I give my number out now I say Oxford 345678 – it'll be very confusing when these new numbers come in as we won't know which one they're talking about" (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

And one or two suggested that these codes could be somewhat divisive if these numbers were handed out to residents in a new housing estate:

- *"It's probably going to be the case that residential users will get these numbers as businesses will insist on the old code. So if a new estate is built, these numbers will become associated with those estates and that's probably not a good idea" (Residential consumer, Brighton)*

But several people felt that this option could work if the new area code was very similar to the old one:

- *"If it was 02865 then at least it would be a small step; we would all realise it was this area but just one of the new numbers. If it was very different then it would be confusing" (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

A few residential users in Oxford however recognised the longevity of this option and preferred it because they felt that they would not be affected in any way:

- *"Nothing changes and if they bring in a new code then this option will mean no changes for a long time". (Residential consumer, Oxford)*

But there was also widespread acceptance that if a new code was brought in then people would get used to it:

- *"Eight million people in London made the change twice in five years, I'm sure we'll cope" (Residential consumer, Brighton)*

3.8 Timings / longevity of change

On average, most people thought that if a change was to be made then it should last a minimum of ten years.

If the Close Local Dialling option was to last for less than ten years and then the Overlay Code option was to be brought in, then attitudes changed somewhat and both businesses and residential consumers were more divided on which option they preferred:

- About half felt that they might as well bring in the Overlay code straightaway as the longer people had to get used to it the better.

- Others felt that closing the local dialling scheme would be a sensible interim measure if it was rolled out nationally - everyone would get in the habit of dialling the code thereby making the transition to introducing a new code more simple.

    — *"What's confusing is being able to dial without the code to some people locally and not to others. If everyone gets in the habit of dialling the code, then if another code is brought in, it won't be so difficult" (Residential, Oxford)*

- A few thought that closing the local dialling feature was the best option because we could not predict what would happen to technology in the next ten years and this was the easiest first step.

Annex 1

Methodology

Qualitative

- 12 x 1 hour groups were conducted – with six respondents in each group – across four locations in the UK, as follows:

User Type	Location	No. of groups
Residential	Brighton (2), Oxford (2), Bradford (3), Whitehaven (1)	8
Business	Brighton, Oxford, Whitehaven, Bradford	4
	TOTAL	12

- Within each residential group . . .

    - All were regular users of their fixed line (i.e. they used a fixed line the same amount or more than their mobile)

    - All were the person responsible for paying the bills

    - A mix of age, gender and socio-economic grade

    - A mix of fixed line operators

- Within each business group . . .

    - All made calls regularly from their fixed line (i.e. use a fixed line the same amount or more than their mobile for business calls)

    - All had some responsibility for telecoms in the organisation and/or made calls from the office

    - A mix of sizes – from sole traders up to 25 employees

    - All traded locally, e.g. estate agent, builder, printer, web designer, event organisers, trainers, recruitment consultant, butcher, baker

- The groups followed an agreed discussion guide (see next page)

    - When assessing the proposed options, we rotated the order in which the options were presented across the groups to reduce the possibility of an order effect.

    - The options were presented as a fait accompli rather than asking respondents to comment as if it were not going to happen. This minimised the risk of outright rejections.

Quantitative

We placed six questions on a telephone omnibus survey, i.e. questions went to a sample of the adult population (n=1002) of UK residents using a fixed line telephone. The omnibus survey was conducted in October 2010.

Questions included:

- Proportion of calls made using a fixed line.

- Proportion of calls made from a fixed line using the handset's memory facility or the speed dial service.

- Importance of being able to tell the location where you are dialling from the telephone number.

- Proportion of local calls made from a fixed line without using the area dialling code.

- Importance of having the facility to leave off the area dialling code when calling from a fixed line to a local number.

- Preferences for giving out a telephone number to another person.

Annex 2

Discussion Guide / Stimulus

1.	**Pre-group questionnaire** Give each respondent a questionnaire whilst waiting for the groups [Stimulus 1].
2.	**Brief introduction / warm up** Who we are, our independence and confidentiality; Explain the group is on behalf of Ofcom and about telephone numbering; it's just an hour long and we're looking for spontaneous, brief answers. Ask respondents to introduce themselves and give a brief description of their fixed line usage (frequency of calls, to whom, how calls are dialled (with or without area code/using keypad digits or memory facility, etc) – continue until everyone is engaged.
3.	[Note: For half the groups, we will start with this section. For the other half, we'll start with section 5 and then revert to this section] **Introduction to Local Dialling** Discuss questionnaire results, using the following probes . . . - What do they generally do when calling – dial the number / use the phone memory? Does this differ between fixed and mobile handsets? - How many of them use local dialling? - How often do they use local dialling? - When is local dialling used / not used? Is it conscious or a habit? - Is there a difference when using fixed / mobile handsets? - Is the ability to local dial important / essential / nice to have? - What if local dialling no longer existed?
4.	**Introduction to Geographic Numbering** Ask respondents to shout out area codes for places that they know and write these on the flipchart. Encourage discussion around geographic numbering . . . - How aware are users of the geographic meaning of numbers? At what level of granularity? - How important is it to be able to recognise the location where you are dialling? Why is it important? Is there a difference between residential and businesses? - What are your general perceptions of geographic numbering? What do you particularly value/what information does a geographic number give you? What are the implications if geographic numbering were to disappear?

5.	**Assessment of Close Dialling Options and Overlay Options** [Rotate the order of presentation for each group – Stimulus 2]
	Ask respondents to read each option and to write down their first impressions, individually, before beginning the discussion. For each option, spontaneous discussion and probe on
	▪ Spontaneous reactions
	▪ Comprehension / possible areas of misunderstanding
	▪ Key strengths and weaknesses
	▪ Implications relative to attitudes from Section 2 and 3 – i.e. degree of impact
	▪ Level of acceptance / tolerance
	– Is acceptability affected by understanding? In what way?
	– Listen and explore any sense of 'unfairness'
	– Assess the extent to which this is seen as a change
6.	**Final review**
	▪ Which of the options do they prefer? Why?
	▪ Which of the options do they think will have the most impact? In what way?
	▪ Any other comments
	Thank and close

Stimulus 1:

Please think of 3 telephone numbers that you ring regularly and write down the buttons you would press when dialling them on your telephone handsets. Try to include at least 1 telephone number that is local to where you live (that is, has the same area code as your own telephone number). Please note this is your piece of paper to take away with you. We are not interested in keeping records of the numbers your write down. The information is for discussion purposes only

	Dialling from a home or work landline	Dialling from a mobile
1.		
2.		
3.		

Stimulus 2:

A. Close Local Dialling Option

This option means that local dialling will no longer operate in your local area. *[note: after testing reactions to local, we will then ask about national]*

What would this mean to me?

◊ You will always have to dial the full code and telephone number whenever you are telephoning anywhere in the UK, including when you dial a local number with the same area code as your own telephone number
◊ Your area code and telephone number can remain the same for years to come.

B. Overlay Codes (adding new codes to existing codes)

This option means that, as existing codes run out in some areas, new codes are introduced in these areas. For example, current Oxford users have 01865 numbers, but if new codes were introduced in Oxford, new users could be given a number from the new 01XXX or 02XXX overlay code.

What would this mean to me?

◊ Your existing code and number will stay the same
◊ Only new numbers will have the new code
◊ Local dialling (i.e. dialling the number without the area code) would not be possible between old and new codes

Annex 3

Questionnaire

Q1. Roughly, what proportion of your telephone calls do you make from a fixed line?

1. None of them
2. <20%
3. 20-39%
4. 40-59%
5. 60-79%
6. 80+%
7. All of them
8. Don't know

Q2. Roughly, what proportion of your fixed line calls is made using the handset's memory facility?

1. None of them
2. <20%
3. 20-39%
4. 40-59%
5. 60-79%
6. 80+%
7. All of them
8. Don't know

Q3. UK telephone numbers currently have area codes that indicate the location of the telephone number. For example, phone numbers in the Brighton area all begin with 01273 and numbers in the Manchester area all begin with 0161. How important is it to you to be able to tell from the telephone number whereabouts you are phoning?

1. Very important
2. Fairly important
3. Neither important nor unimportant
4. Fairly unimportant
5. Not at all important
6. Don't know

Q4. When dialling a local number (i.e. a number with the same area code) from your fixed line, roughly what proportion of these calls are made by leaving off the area dialling code and just dialling the local number (often just 6 digits)?

1. None of them
2. <20%
3. 20-39%
4. 40-59%
5. 60-79%
6. 80+%
7. All of them
8. Don't know

Q5. How important is it to you that you are able to leave off the area dialling code when you dial a local number from your fixed line phone (i.e. a number with the same area code)?

1. Very important
2. Fairly important
3. Neither important nor unimportant
4. Fairly unimportant
5. Not at all important
6. Don't know

Q6. When you give out your landline telephone number to someone (and you don't know where they live), do you generally:

1. Give the area code and the telephone number as digits (i.e. 01865 234567)
2. Give the area code name and the telephone number (i.e. 'Oxford' 234567)
3. Give just the telephone number (i.e. 234567)
4. All of them
5. None of them
6. Don't know