

Reference: 02148895

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

3 March 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about longitudinal broadband infrastructure analysis.

We received this request on 5 February 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request & our response

While I have extensively reviewed your public reports, the aggregation of post-2020 data into generic "Gigabit" metrics makes it difficult to trace the actual physical rollout path of the network. Therefore, I respectfully request access to the following disaggregated and longitudinal datasets to construct a precise model.

1. Specific Data Request (Time-Series Metrics)

To track the diffusion of "cutting-edge" infrastructure across different eras, I require the following breakdown:

- *Phase 1: Backbone & Early Diffusion (Pre-2010 – 2015)*
 - *Since FTTP was scarce during this period, I request availability data for NGA (Next Generation Access) and SFBB (Superfast Broadband) to identify the physical nodes of the early network (e.g., FTTC).*
 - *Ideally, I would like annual data starting from 2010 (or the earliest available dataset, e.g., 2012).*
- *Phase 2: Intensification & Full Fibre Transition (2015 – 2026) [Crucial]*
 - *For this period, it is essential to distinguish Native FTTP (Full Fibre) from Cable (DOCSIS) upgrades.*
 - *I strictly request disaggregated FTTP data, rather than the combined "Gigabit" indicator.*

2. Format & Granularity

For GIS mapping and time-series analysis, I earnestly request the data in the following format:

- *Geographic Level:*
 - *My primary preference is Postcode-level raw data to capture micro-level diffusion patterns.*

- *However, if sharing raw postcode data is restricted due to security regulations, I am fully willing to accept data aggregated at the Census Output Area (OA) level as an alternative.*
- **Identifiers & Coordinates:**
 - *For accurate mapping and joining, the dataset must include:*
 1. *Unique Identifier Column: (e.g., Postcode string 'SW1A 1AA' OR OA Code 'E00xxxxxx')*
 2. *Geographic Coordinates Column: (Easting/Northing).*
- **File Format:**
 - *I request flat CSV files ready for immediate use in QGIS.*
- **Metrics [Important]:**
 - *For accurate interpretation, please include columns for BOTH the Raw Counts and Availability %.*
 - *Example Requirement: Columns for Total Premises, FTTP Count (Number of premises connected), and FTTP Availability % should all be present.*
- **Annual Snapshots:**
 - *A single current dataset cannot demonstrate the "pre-emption" effect. I require annual snapshots (e.g., data as of January for each year) from as early as possible (e.g., 2010) to 2026 to visualize the changing network state.*

Regarding your request for data on NGA and SFBB availability from pre-2010 until 2015

(Specific Data Request – Phase 1)

Our data retention period is 10 years, therefore we do not hold data from before 2016.

However, we have published postcode-level data on NGA and SFBB availability since 2014. This is available from [our Connected Nations website](#) for publications since 2018 and from [Ofcom Research and Data Archive](#) for older reports.

Regarding your request for data on full fibre availability for postcodes or census output areas from 2015 onwards

(Specific Data Request – Phase 2 and Format and Granularity – Geographic Level)

We published data on full fibre availability at postcode and local authority level for the first time in 2017 and have provided fixed broadband coverage data for census output areas since our Spring 2018 update. All data sets are available from the links provided above.

However, since we introduced gigabit-capable coverage in the main Connected Nations 2020 report, we no longer report on full fibre availability at the more granular levels, i.e. postcodes and census output areas, due to commercial confidentiality. This is mentioned in the 'About this data' documents provided with the data files. For example, [About this data – fixed coverage postcode unit](#) from Connected Nations 2021 mentions:

“Gigabit capable coverage was introduced in the Connected Nations 2020 report, which includes all Full Fibre coverage, and all Coaxial coverage using Docsis 3.1 that has been identified

as delivering download speeds up to 1 Gbit/s. However, due to commercial confidentiality, Full Fibre coverage has now been removed.”

To summarise, we hold the data you have requested however we are unable to provide you with the data at the requested granularity as we consider it is exempt under section 44(1) of the FOI Act. Section 44(1) of the FOI Act provides that information is exempt from disclosure if its disclosure is prohibited by or under any enactment. The enactment that prohibits the disclosure of this information is section 393(1) of the Communications Act 2003 (“the Communications Act”). Under this section, we are prohibited from disclosing information with respect to a particular business that has been obtained in the exercise of our regulatory functions, unless that business consents or one of the statutory gateways under section 393(2) of the Communications Act is met, neither of which apply here. Section 44 of the FOI Act is an absolute exemption and therefore is not subject to the public interest test.

If it is of any help to you, we do publish data on full fibre availability for local authorities and parliamentary constituencies.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).

