

I apologise for not being able to answer any of your twenty-five high-powered questions.

Here from an average consumer are five points that I hope Ofcom would be interested in:

- 1 I find odd the widespread fixation with faster and faster broadband speed. A reliable and stable service is often more important.
- 2 Similarly, I don't understand why people in towns (like me) are constantly being offered faster speeds while many who live in rural areas are still making do with broadband connections that are little better than dial-up.
- 3 Customer service experience ranges from good to terrible. Is this a consequence of under-pricing services? With two different organisations, BT Openreach (to do with a telegraph pole) and TalkTalk (on behalf of someone else), I've had relatively straightforward issues resolved only after contacting the Chief Executive directly.
- 4 Human communication between a communication provider (even BT Retail) and BT Openreach and an 'end user' can be the stuff of comedy (though it doesn't always feel like that at the time). This will not be improved simply by making Openreach independent of BT. (I note that Joe Garner is at least trying to persuade his Openreach staff that 'end users' are still customers, albeit indirectly for them.)
- 5 The Openreach engineers I've dealt with on the ground are almost invariably excellent. But they're let down by inefficient back office processes. To quote Joe Garner in August 2014: "At the moment, customers chase their CPs, their CPs chase us, and we chase ourselves, and so on. We need to change that so we've got the customer in control of the experience." A splendid aspiration! I suspect Ofcom, if it tried, could usefully assist with getting the customer in control of the experience.

PDM