



Means  
Business

# Get ready for the digital switch-on: Q&A



You asked and we answered. Here, our experts respond to the questions you submitted during our [hour-long event](#) where we explored the digital phone switchover and what it means for organisations like yours.

Remember, you have our support at every step of your digital journey. [Read our whitepaper](#) for more information and please contact your Account Manager if you'd like to know more.





## 1. **Is there a PSTN (public switched telephone network) replacement?**

We have a wide portfolio of PSTN replacements and substitutional services, dependent on what our customers use their PSTN for. We can offer fibre internet access for those who only use their lines for data, provide hosted cloud-based IP (Internet Protocol) voice services, on-premise services like SIP that connect to their existing switch equipment. We also have options that run over fibre broadband or wide area networks (WAN).

Additionally, we have collaboration and voice tools with Webex and Microsoft Teams, and can even offer more specialist solutions like MiCloud (for Mitel customers) or Hosted Cisco solutions for customers that use Cisco. Many of our services offer ATAs (analogue terminal adaptors) that will convert IP signals into analogue so that customers don't need to change out their analogue equipment all at once. We even have large scale contact centre solutions such as BT's Next Generation Contact Centre (NGCC) and for single line replacement, we have Cloud Voice Express or Cloud Work.

## 2. **What will be the fate of devices such as elevators, fire alarms, and security systems that currently rely on analogue lines? Will we need to implement digital-to-analogue devices to ensure their continued support?**

We describe any alternative use of a phone line as a special use case. Every special use case has unique needs. What makes a use case unique are the attributes it uses on the circuit. For example, is it the data bandwidth, is it drawing power, does it require a specific lag, latency, jitter?

If you're moving into an all-IP environment, take the opportunity to look at your own devices and ask the question: is it beneficial for me to replace that device now?

We have analysed the market and identified hundreds of use cases. For each use case, we have identified solutions, where available. Our migration sales specialists are fully trained, and happy to work with customers on solutions for use cases. In the examples provided (elevators, fire alarms, security systems), we recommend either replacing



equipment to an IP compatible solution, or 4G (elevator), or client-side ATA (security and fire alarms). We can also provide **IoT (Internet of Things) solutions**. The assurance for the use case is important and we provide test labs if manufacturers wish to test equipment on the IP networks.

### **3. Can we get access to those 350 use cases and associated solutions?**

Our migration specialists can share the common use cases with you. They'll work with you to understand your requirements and design the best solution to support your business needs.

### **4. Regarding alarm/lift lines that have issues with mobile coverage. Any suggestions?**

BT Redcare provide a BT Connect Service to get a wireless ethernet connection from a customer's router to an alarm panel point.

### **5. What's the easiest way to resolve edge use cases and issues with mobile coverage or devices that are not compatible with fibre? Is it best to work with the provider?**

To get the best from the IP network, we recommend that your devices are upgraded to IP. If you get in touch with your device provider, they'll be able to talk you through your options.

We have a range of solutions that may support analogue devices on the fibre network. Our Account Managers and migration specialists will be able to work with you to design the right solution for your needs.



## **6. What training and support is available to the authorities and vulnerable residents? In particular, the changes taking place could make residents the targets of scams – how will communications be centralised to ensure customers know they can trust the source of the information they receive?**

Our Consumer colleagues are working hard to support vulnerable customers. You can read the latest on their [Digital Voice plans here](#).

BT Business is working with Consumer to offer the same solutions for SoHo (small office home office) and potentially vulnerable customers.

Regarding communications, Tech UK is leading on behalf of the telecoms industry to raise public awareness. BT Group is supporting this initiative with marketing to both consumer and business customers. Regional events are happening across the UK.

BT Business engages with over 330 industry bodies to offer support, and over 300 vendors and manufacturers. On a per account level, BT Business have trained migration sales specialists, who will engage directly with customers.

## **7. What happens where we have PSTN lines installed on site but the option to upgrade to SOGEA/FTTC/FTTP is not available due to the location? Will BT's network infrastructure be upgraded to ensure these options are available prior to 2025?**

Openreach are an independent company to BT and are responsible for upgrading the network. However, in terms of the data access products which are available, this year we will be launching SOADSL (Single Order Asymmetric digital subscriber line) that will work for you if you can get a copper cable to your site today. We also offer five sizes of



fixed wireless access, which is essentially a box that has a 4G or 5G SIM in it and provides network coverage. These are typically used at temporary sites, like terrapins on building sites. So, it works somewhere you wouldn't want to put a line in permanently.

A lot of customers are starting to buy fixed wireless access coverage for their outlier buildings which don't have FTTP (Fibre to the Premises) or SOGEA (Single Order Generic Ethernet Access). That said, SOGEA has more than 95% coverage in the UK and FTTP is growing enormously, so it's becoming less and less of a challenge. We will have the access products and we've got the coverage – whether it's wireless or fixed line. By 2027 when Openreach have completed building the fibre network, we'll have high coverage of fibre.

8.

## **After the 5th of September 2023, will the stop sell prevent us from porting important numbers away from PSTN/ISDN services to new SIP trunks?**

No, porting will still be possible. We have developed a number of services to help make the porting of numbers from legacy systems as smooth as possible. Your Account Manager will be able to advise you on the options available.

9.

## **What is the life of SOGEA if they are suggesting that copper is going in 2027?**

Copper is not being removed in 2027. The purpose of all-IP is to close the legacy network elements, not necessarily all the copper. For example, SOADSL is the all-IP version of copper-to-copper broadband.

As the fibre footprint across the UK expands, the reliance on copper-based services will decrease, however copper will still be required in a decreasing number of geographies until full fibre footprint exists.



## 10. What is the plan for providing VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services to financially disadvantaged individuals who may be unable to afford internet and/or a VoIP phone, but require access to call emergency services?

BT's Home Essentials plan is a reliable and affordable way for people on specific state benefits, including Universal Credit and Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit), to have a low-cost broadband and phone package.

Customers can choose broadband with a phone line, or just the phone line by itself. Find more information about [Home Essentials here](#).

## 11. What will the digital switch mean for more remote sites, for example in the Highlands of Scotland, where existing bandwidth options are limited?

In stop-sell, WLR (Wholesale Line Rental) services can be ordered where an alternative is not available. It is important to note that copper based SOADSL will fulfil most needs.

## 12. For SAE CAV Level 4 operating across East Lothian, it will require full 5G coverage – will this be available for 2025/26? Is this IP service available now in EH32, if not when?

In summary, there is excellent 4G and good 3G & 2G coverage available, but there are currently no plans for a rollout of full 5G coverage at this stage.

Fibre build out plans are available from Openreach for [every exchange here](#).



## 13. When will training be available for the portal, for ordering and supporting the new services?

We have a full range of guides and self-help tools available via the Wholesale portal. Alternatively, please contact your Account Manager or the contact points within your service plan.

For more information on how we can support you, visit [bt.com/digitalswitchon](https://bt.com/digitalswitchon) or contact your Account Manager today.