

MBNL InSite

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Foreword

by Juliette Wallace, Property Director

Welcome to the autumn edition of MBNL InSite.

I hope all of you have had an enjoyable summer whether you managed to get away or not. My family and I had a fantastic couple of weeks exploring all that England's South Coast has to offer. I'm glad to say that all members of the family enjoyed the activity-packed holiday, even if the sea was a little chillier than the Mediterranean!

Despite the ongoing challenging pandemic situation, life is starting to return to normal in many ways with the arrival of autumn. Many of us will have already resumed our normal daily routines when children are back at school and adults get back to work. To help our colleagues ease back into their normal routines, MBNL is adopting hybrid working where office-based staff can choose the locations to work from as they see fit.

If you/your organisation are implementing hybrid/flexible working for staff which may have implications on how we access our equipment on your property, could I ask that you kindly inform us of any changes to your "call out" procedure and ensure that it can be used at all times. Your continued support remains vital to helping us deliver the high-quality connectivity the country needs for getting life back on track.

This issue of MBNL InSite begins with a special update on how EE and Three are driving network rollout and performance to deliver stronger foundations for the UK's digital future. Continuing with the "The 5G experience" series, in this issue we look at some pioneering 5G trials that could significantly transform farming and rural life in this country. Read on to find out how our Structural Remediation Team have come up with an innovative way to put redundant wooden phone masts back to good use to benefit nature. I would also highly recommend a read of our simple step-by-step guide on how MBNL and our partners will work with you to renew your agreement with EE and/or Three in line with the Electronic Communications Code, giving you peace of mind if your current agreement is expiring soon. Lastly, we highlight some key information surrounding who you can contact in different circumstances, from site access to power issues, so you can rest assured that we are here when you need us.

Enjoy reading our newsletter. I hope you find our stories interesting and helpful. As ever, we welcome your feedback, so do get in touch if you have any requests for future topics for our newsletter and we will see what we can do!



EE and Three unveil long-term plans to drive network rollout and future growth

The UK's leading mobile operators EE and Three have unveiled long-term plans to boost network coverage and performance across the country to further strengthen the digital foundations for the UK's post-pandemic recovery and future growth. Both operators have been making good progress in 5G rollout and are investing significantly into coverage expansion and technology improvements to deliver high-performance connectivity and better customer experiences to more places. The operators are also exploring using Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) technology to supercharge 5G's capabilities and the opportunities it will open up for individuals and businesses.

EE aims to offer 5G anywhere in the UK by 2028, achieved through an extension of its permanent network and extended further through a range of "on demand" coverage solutions, such as portable cells and Low Earth Orbit satellites delivering a versatile mobile network to every part of the country. In parallel, EE continues to push 4G rollout deeper into rural areas to further extend nationwide mobile coverage. To ensure all customers can benefit from the most reliable connections, 3G services will also be retired, with customers across BT brands phased off 3G by 2023 and the radio spectrum used to enhance 5G capacity in the future.

Three continues with its network and IT infrastructure transformation to deliver better connectivity and customer experiences. Its ongoing network expansion has seen many of its 5G and 4G sites optimised to deliver improved data speeds. Three's 5G coverage currently reaches many

locations with new live sites added across the country every week. The operator is also undertaking a programme to build more new sites to deliver additional capacity and speeds to meet the ever-increasing demand for data from customers. Three is supportive of using 5G FWA to connect rural areas to the next generation broadband.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on how indisputably vital mobile connectivity is in today's world. Acknowledging that the country is unequivocally reliant on digital communications during these challenging times, the mobile industry has demonstrated an unprecedented collective effort in keeping the UK connected to help people and businesses manage the new way of life, from home-schooling/working from home to accessing critical emergency services such as the NHS.

EE and Three's long-term plans underline 5G's crucial role in levelling up the UK's post-pandemic recovery and future growth. 5G can help catalyse the digital transformation of major industries such as transport, healthcare, retail and farming, boosting productivity and efficiency, and creating new services to enhance our everyday life and future.

Read press releases by [EE](#) and [Three](#) for more information.



Giving back to nature - from old phone masts to nesting platforms for birds

by Richard Stevens, Structural Remediation Manager



At MBNL, we care a lot about the environment and always attempt to do whatever we can to minimise any impact arising from our operations. We are committed to shouldering our social responsibility as a corporate citizen whilst fulfilling our mission of bringing better connectivity to every part of the country. Richard Stevens, MBNL's Structural Remediation Manager, shares his experience of an interesting project in which he came up with an innovative idea for putting our disused phone masts to good use for the benefits of the wider public in a very sustainable way.

"During my 25 years in the mobile telecoms industry, I have managed many projects and programmes of varying scales and challenges. I have built sites on mountains and in valleys, towns and swamps. Recently I have had the pleasure of leading a project tasked with replacing all of the wooden mobile phone masts in MBNL's network across the UK. The project involved erecting new replacement towers to replace the wooden masts as part of the ongoing management and modernisation of our network infrastructure. The replacement tower in all cases was a like for like tower of the same height and girth, matched in colour to the original but made of steel. We were careful in the choice of replacement as it needed not only to look the same, do the same work and provide a longer life but also to blend into the environment the same way the wooden ones did. The other requirement was to ensure it was easily installed so as to avoid

having a major construction site and causing disturbances to the local community. Many of the wooden masts were in very remote rural areas posing huge challenges for us to access and physically swap out the mast. We discovered some innovative forms of installing these masts - from a machine called a Marooka, basically a tank with a lifting arm on it, to a cherry picker that has legs and can walk. We used specialist vehicles to reduce the damage to any surfaces we crossed in order to minimise the impact on the local environment.

The national swap out was a great success. Now we were faced with one final question – what to do with the old masts? Instead of having them cut up and disposed of, I wanted to put these majestic wooden poles to a better use. After making some enquiries, the answer presented itself in the form of the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) who were very keen to have the poles. The DWT intend to use these poles as bat roosts, osprey nesting platforms, for building "feely boxes" for school children visiting their centre, and other general construction uses. We have since donated many of the poles to the DWT and also have other similar non-profit organisations showing interest. I am thrilled with the outcome of this project not only because of the operational success but also the joy our disused assets are bringing to the wider public in a way that benefits the environment."



The 5G experience – connecting rural and agricultural communities to a better future

5G can help to future-proof the rural economy by bringing better digital connectivity and new opportunities to the country's remote regions, including areas where fixed digital connectivity cannot reach. It can also open up the potential for new technologies that could have a significant impact on rural businesses and residents.

5G is already being used and tested across a number of sectors, delivering real-life benefits. For the agricultural sector, 5G is showing great potential to transform the way technology is used to improve yield, efficiency, and profitability. Here are some innovative pioneering use cases that are being tested across the country¹:

5G Collars For Cows

A smartphone app has been developed to enable farmers to track a “connected” cow and receive regular updates on the animal's health and behaviour. The cows wear 5G enabled collars that send data to the app on their day-to-day activities, from eating, sleeping, to mobility, giving farmers real-time information on the health and wellbeing of the cows, and ensuring veterinary care is obtained promptly if necessary.

Autonomous Farming

5G enabled automation technologies can help farmers produce more from less land, with fewer labourers. One 5G trial project successfully planted, tended and harvested a crop without a single human working in the field. Autonomous tractors sowed the seeds, drones scour the field using a video sensor and apply fertilisers and pesticides where they're needed, helping to save resources and boost efficiency.

Grassland Monitoring

In livestock farming, productivity is largely dependent on how well and efficiently the animals are fed. However, grass is often overlooked as the most important resource for livestock production. One trial project used 5G enabled drones, equipped with multispectral imaging, to analyse the quality and quantity of grass across a large grazing area. The information collected was then used in managing the grassland to provide high-quality and economic feed for the livestock.

Remote Animal Care

Animal care can often be difficult to access for farmers in the more remote areas. One use case trial uses Augmented Reality (AR) to offer remote veterinarian diagnostics support, enabling farmers to consult with veterinarians to get advice on caring for animals in real time.

Seeing 5G's huge potential, the Government is providing millions of pounds in backing 5G trials in rural areas. 5G-enabled technologies, such as Internet of Things (IoT), have been proven to help reduce farming costs and increase crop yield² whilst 5G-enabled remote working can help rural residents access better jobs and education, and tourism can be enhanced by new ways of engaging visitors. 5G is a promising technology that could transform the farming industry and rural life in this country.



¹ 5GRuralFirst website. <https://www.5gruralfirst.org/project/agritech/>

² IoT World Today, [Connected farming harvests data and gives agriculture a jolt](#), Feb 2020

Is your agreement with EE and/or Three coming to an end soon?

As a valued member of MBNL's site provider community, we want to give you the best support for renewing your telecommunications agreement with EE and/or Three. We wish to work with you to reach an agreement in line with the Electronic Communications Code (Code), the legislation that regulates the installation, operation and maintenance of telecommunications apparatus on land and property in the UK.

Our agreement renewal procedure involves 4 simple steps:

- 1 MBNL appoints an agent who will contact you with the aim of having a preliminary discussion about the continued occupation of your property for hosting telecommunications apparatus. As a Site Provider, you should consider at this point whether you would like to deal with our agent directly or instruct an agent to act on your behalf. Of course, if you would like to make contact first, you can do this by contacting landlords@mbnl.co.uk
- 2 Our agent will respond to any questions you may have regarding the telecommunications apparatus installed at your property and will provide a copy of the proposed terms of a new Code agreement.
- 3 Once you are provided with a draft copy of the new Code agreement, we would encourage you or your appointed agent to engage fully with our agent in negotiating any amendments to the proposed terms.
- 4 When the terms are agreed, we will both instruct our respective solicitors to complete the relevant legal documentation.

As part of the telecoms industry, we are committed to delivering better mobile connectivity to build the UK's digital future for the benefit of all. The efficient rollout of connectivity infrastructure, particularly for 5G, is crucial to the country's post-pandemic recovery and future growth. The Code was introduced by the Government to support faster and more collaborative negotiations for the use of private and public land for telecommunications deployment. MBNL uphold these principles by working closely with our site providers to agree on balanced and reasonable terms for the use of their land. This approach has led us to make good progress in agreeing many renewal contracts with our site providers. We have successfully negotiated new Code agreements on a wide variety of site types, with a variety of owners, including private individuals, farmers, charities, local authorities, housing associations and institutional investors to name a few.

It is MBNL's intention that we and our partners work closely with you and your advisors to complete an agreement renewal in a mutually practicable way.

See our [Site Provider Guide to Code Agreement Renewal](#) for more information.

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) to see our latest Code renewal agreement completions and other updates.



We are here when you need us – key information on how to contact us

At MBNL, we manage and operate over 20,000 sites across the country on behalf of EE and Three to help connect communities and businesses. That would not be possible without our site providers and our neighbours who are at the heart of everything that we do. Our site provider community in particular plays an instrumental role in helping us to deliver on our mission and we are committed to making our combined journey a smooth and constructive one. All successful collaborations start with great interactions which is why our operational teams are made up of dynamic and passionate people who strive to deliver quality service and care for our site providers. We aim to treat all our site providers through a customer service lens and ensure all communication is handled professionally, following closely the guidance of the [ECC Code of Practice](#). First and foremost, we want to ensure that when you need us, you're able to contact the right person/team at the right time, first time.

Below highlights some key contact information surrounding who you can contact in different circumstances, from site access to rental payment. It is also helpful when contacting us to quote the site address, postcode and cell reference number, whenever possible.

Site Access including day to day queries

For queries relating to site access, reporting on-site issues and incidents or if you have any questions concerning our apparatus at your property, please contact:

Email: C3.estates@ericsson.com

Telephone: 0118 902 4662 – Option 3 then Option 1

Power Queries & Power Outages

For queries relating to power taken from a site provider's supply including any power consumption issues, please contact:

Email: mbnl@sms-plc.com

For queries relating to any power disruption or if you require us to temporarily turn off our equipment for works to take place, please contact:

Email: change@mbnl.co.uk and

c3.estates@ericsson.com

Suspicious radio equipment on your property

For reporting any unknown/suspicious radio equipment on your rooftop/premises, please contact:

Email: mbnlshqe@turntown.com.

Rental Payments

For rental payment queries, including questions about a rent payment that is due or that has been received, please contact the MBNL Help Desk:

Email: mbnl.uk@avisonyoung.com

Telephone: 0844 902 3003

*Please note, if you are VAT registered, you will need to send us a VAT invoice by using the above email address.

Redeveloping your Land or Property

If you are considering any construction activity which you feel may impact our telecoms installations, please let us know by contacting propertyadmin@mbnl.co.uk. The earlier we are made aware of any plans, the quicker and easier it is to establish a mutually agreeable solution, which supports your construction timetable.

If you wish to contact MBNL directly, our address is as follows:

Mobile Broadband Network Limited
Sixth Floor, Thames Tower
Station Road, Reading, RG1 1LX
Email: landlords@mbnl.co.uk

All of the contact information here can be found on [MBNL's website](#)



