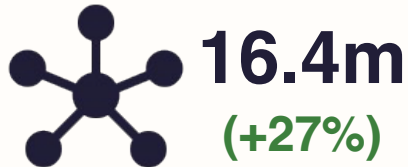# UK Altnets: Delivering Affordable, High-Speed Connectivity with Unmatched Customer Satisfaction

How Dynamic and Resilient Independent Providers are Driving Competition, Lowering Costs, and Powering the UK's Gigabit Future

Key Metrics

INCA Independent Networks Cooperative Association

16.4m **(+27%)**

Network Coverage Increased +27% year-on-year to reach 16.4m by the end of 2024

>2.7m **(+35%)**

Almost three quarters of a million customers switched to an Altnet during 2024 (35% growth year-on-year)

3.68m

3.68m million of these premises were in Ofcom's Area 3, meaning that Altnets have delivered full fibre connectivity to nearly a third of UK premises in harder to reach rural areas

+940k

BDUK awarded 35 Project Gigabit procurement contracts to 10 Altnet operators worth £1.3 billion and covering +940k premises

Altnets have scored an excellent rating of 4.3 stars out of 5 vs BT & Sky Broadband's 1.3 and Virgin Media O2's 1.4, and Altnets make up 13 of the top 20 ISP's on Trustpilot

£168.48

As network competition increases Consumers get better value, with average savings of £168.48 on speeds >800Mbps for Customers with 5+ Networks present vs Openreach Only

150Mbps+

Areas with Altnets present could benefit from cheaper prices on every speed bracket over 150Mbps across the postcodes

+£574m

Investments into the Altnet sector have continued throughout 2024 at a reserved pace with an estimated £574 million in additional funding being announced.

Forward

The UK's independent network operators – Altnets – are not just building networks, they're building the foundation of a fairer, faster and more resilient digital United Kingdom. This year's report, my first as INCA CEO, shows the continued growth of Altnets from niche innovators to national competitors.

In just a few years, Altnets have grown to reach over a third of UK premises and often provide the only fibre connection in rural and hard-to-reach areas as well as previous urban not spots. From our towns and cities to our farms and homes, Altnets have led the way in delivering faster, more affordable broadband with outstanding customer service and satisfaction.

As we approach OFCOM's Telecoms Access Review 2026 (TAR26), the decisions that are made now will shape the future of competition in UK Telecoms. We cannot allow dominance by legacy operators under the guise of market maturity. To allow for fair competition, Altnets need the space to grow, regulatory certainty and above all a level playing field on pricing and access.

The UK's digital future will be won or lost in the next regulatory cycle. INCA is fighting to guarantee the Altnets and their investors get a fair bet. INCA envisions a future where infrastructure competition thrives, and consumer choice is real. We call on the policymakers, the regulators and the investors to recognise the transformative impact of Altnets and to provide a regulatory framework that empowers them.

This report is more than a set of statistics – it's a call to action. We must ensure that the positive change and impressive gains of the last decade are not lost through policy or regulatory missteps but instead are accelerated. The UK's digital future and economic growth depend upon it.

Paddy Paddison
CEO, INCA

Contents

1. Key metrics

The following map provides a snapshot of the UK independent network operator sector at the end of 2024.

In London and Yorkshire and the Humber, more than half the premises (household and business) can now get an FTTP service from one or more alternative networks. The East Midlands, North East, Northern Ireland, South East and West Midlands are not far behind with over 40% of premises in these regions having multiple Altnet networks available.

Percentage of premises passed by UK region by fixed (native) FTTP alternative networks, end 2024:

Source: Point Topic

Consumers get better value broadband where alternative network fibre is available:
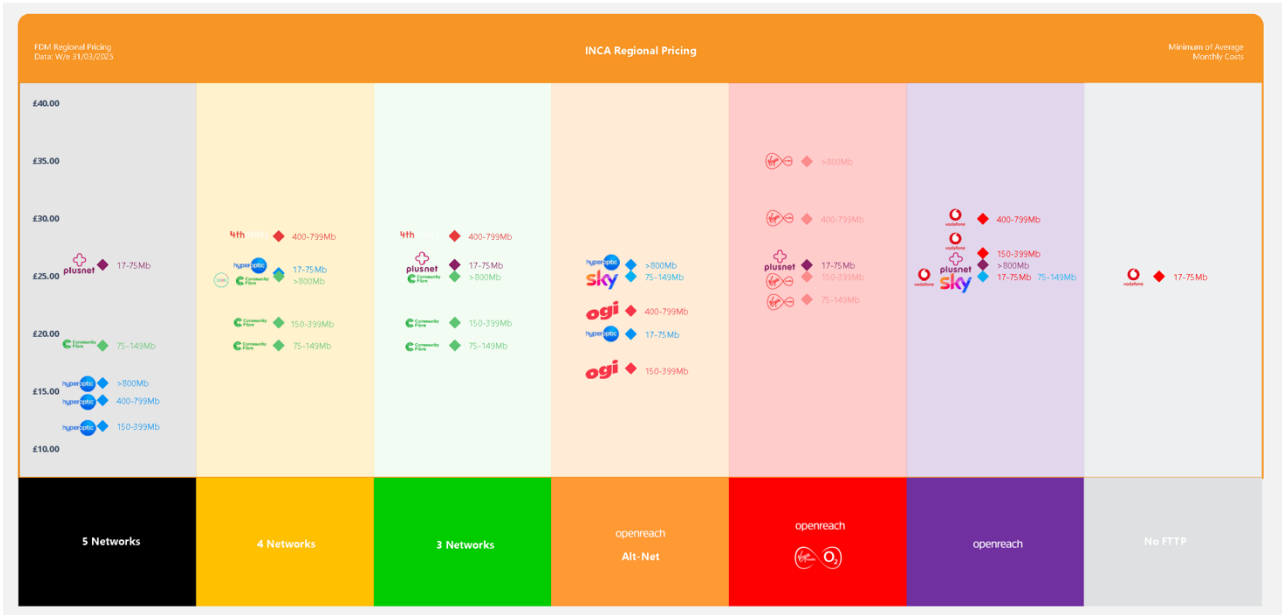
Source: FDM

2. Summary

Premises passed
- The UK's independent (Altnet) operators[1] remained resilient during the year, increasing their full network coverage by 27% year-on-year to reach 16.4 million premises at the end-2024[2].
- 3 million of these premises were in Ofcom's Area 3, meaning that Altnets have delivered full fibre connectivity to nearly a third[3] of UK premises in harder to reach rural areas. This is despite Ofcom's WFTMR assumption that Altent's would not be able to compete with BT in this area.
- BDUK has now awarded 35 Project Gigabit procurement contracts[4] to 10 Altnet operators worth £1.3 billion, aiming to cover around 940,000 premises over the next several years.
- Many INCA members have also actively engaged in BDUK's voucher programme enabling them to extend their commercial build to harder to reach properties.[5] INCA is encouraged by BDUK's recent announcement that the voucher programme had been extended to cover certain urban areas.
- CityFibre has been awarded nine[6] Project Gigabit procurements to date (~40% of contract value, compared to Openreach's 26%) worth £865 million in subsidies covering 461,000 premises.
- Despite challenging market conditions, high global inflation, soaring energy and resource costs, combined Altnet full fibre footprints covering cities, towns, and villages across the UK are keeping pace with Openreach's 17.1 million premises at the close of 2024.
- Adjusting for Altnet overbuild we estimate that around 15.2 million properties now have access to an Altnet service

Live connections
- Almost three quarters of a million customers decided to switch to an Altnet during 2024 leading to 2.7 million live connections (35% growth year-on-year) to independent fixed networks provided by full fibre gigabit capable connections.
- This is around a 16.5% take-up rate of Altnets fibre to the premises/building (FTTP/B) services in an expanding footprint, demonstrating a receptive consumer base.

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[1] Defined as an organisation deploying broadband infrastructure for wholesale and/or retail use, which is not part of either the UK's incumbent operators BT Group, and which is not Virgin Media O2 as the national cable operator.

[2] This report focuses on premises passed, not addressed, for fixed infrastructure; past years have been backdated accordingly. There remains some variation in operators' reporting. Fixed wireless access (FWA) networks are estimated to cover more than three million premises although not all will have full speed service available. The fixed wireless access (FWA) market is more difficult to assess due to line-of-sight issues and fragmented supply in the sector. See general caveat on page 7.

[3] Figure is based on c.9.5 million premises located in areas designated as Area 3 in Ofcom's Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Market Review 2021-26, Volume 2, 18 March 2021, p. 118.

[4] See Annex 1 for Project Gigabit Delivery and Procurements Pipeline for further information.

[5] BDUK reported that 150,300 premises were connected to a gigabit-capable network through the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme between April 2022 – March 2024.

[6] On 24 March 2025, CityFibre announced that it had acquired Connexin. Building Digital UK (BDUK) has agreed to a change of control of the Project Gigabit contract in Nottinghamshire and West Lincolnshire (covering 34,300 premises worth £58.6 million in subsidies) to CityFibre. CityFibre is setting out its plans for delivering the contract, which will be reviewed by BDUK.

Pricing and performance
- Independent broadband providers are providing subscribers with more affordable and faster full fibre services, with Altnets coming in around 11.7% cheaper[7] than BT for entry-level ultrafast (>100 Mbps) broadband packages.
- Altnets are trusted by consumers. They have outperformed the major national incumbent providers on independent review sites such as Trustpilot and Google Reviews, with consumers showing their preference for Altnet services where available.
- Thirteen out of the top 20 ISPs, as ranked by consumers on Trustpilot[8], are Altnets with none of the top four major ISPs making the list.
- On average, Altnets have scored an excellent rating of 4.3 stars out of 5, compared to BT and Sky Broadband's 1.3, Virgin Media O2's 1.4, and TalkTalk's 3 stars[9].
- The research shows that when an Altnet is present consumers get lower prices. Consumers in areas that have multiple networks can save on average £7.88 pcm than in Openreach only postcodes.
- AltNets compared favourably with major ISPs at all speeds over 150Mbps and customers in postcodes with 5 networks present are able to save £168.48 per year vs Openreach Only FTTP postcodes

Expectations and aspirations
- Despite the scaling back of network rollouts, Altnets are still deploying the breadth and width of the country and aim to supply full fibre infrastructure to a further two million more premises (18.6 million) by the end of 2025. with over 3 million live connections forecast, potentially giving Altnets collectively around a 10% market share of the consumer broadband market.
- Although ambitious given the current market conditions, the target is attainable as many suppliers complete builds in progress, make headway on Project Gigabit rollouts, and the larger players such as CityFibre and Netomnia expand their rollouts through continued financial backing for network expansion.
- With economic turbulence causing private investment into the sector to scale back, Altnets will require the Government's continued support to attract investment and reach the network coverage targets they have set for 2030. We expect the regulator to deliver a fair competitive marketplace, delivered via its Telecoms Access Review 2026 (TAR26)..

Investment[10] and consolidation
- Investments into the Altnet sector have continued throughout 2024 at a reserved pace with an estimated £574 million in additional funding being announced.

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[7] Broadband subscription tariffs were tracked on a quarterly basis for BT, brsk, Community Fibre, Fibrus, Gigaclear, and Hyperoptic from Q4 2023 to Q4 2024.

[8] Rankings were taken from Trustpilot's Best in Internet Provider category on 1 April 2025.

[9] Overall rankings are based on the average of 79 tracked Altnet providers and the top four major ISPs that have received overall performance ratings on Trustpilot; ratings were accessed on https://uk.trustpilot.com/ on 1 April 2025.

[10] See general caveat on page 7.

- Including this additional private investment capital Altnets had committed £5.3 billion to network expansions and operations for the 2024/2025 financial year.[11]
- We have seen a trend of investors that hold investments in different Altnets toward consolidating these together into wholesale and retail entities.
- Significant mergers and acquisitions such as Netomnia and brsk, FullFibre and Zzoomm, CityFibre and Connexin have been announced throughout the year increasing their scale.
- Strategic mergers and acquisitions may become crucial for smaller players due to the economic climate, but Ofcom sees this almost as a regulatory necessity. In its TAR26 [Consultation Document](#) the regulator views smaller Altnet consolidation into larger independent players as key to its regulatory framework for them to provide the necessary level of competition to rival that of Openreach.

Concerns

- For the second consecutive year, **access to finance—combined with the broader economic outlook—remains the leading concern** among Altnet operators. With rising interest rates and ongoing inflationary pressures, many providers are finding it harder to secure the capital they need to scale networks and maintain operations.
- Unsurprisingly, **Ofcom's upcoming Telecoms Access Review (TAR26)** has surged up the list of concerns, rising five places to take the second spot. With 70% of respondents highlighting potential risks from the review's outcome, there is a risk that the resulting framework could introduce further challenges to Altnet sustainability—particularly if it weakens competitive protections or entrenches incumbent advantages.
- **Network overbuild by SMP operators—specifically Openreach and KCOM— has now become the third most pressing concern.** In previous years, overbuild was considered more generally, but this year's survey separated responses to reflect the difference between Altnet-on-Altnet build and SMP overbuild. The latter is now seen as a significant threat to investment returns, while overbuild by other Altnets and VMO2/Nexfibre is a lesser concern.
- The **longstanding challenge of securing wayleaves** has dropped to fourth place. Our assumption is that this is less about progress in regulatory processes and more a reflection of the general **slowdown in rollout activity**, which has temporarily eased the pressure on permissions.
- Rounding out the top five is a growing concern over **customer acquisition**, both on the consumer and wholesale sides. Some Altnets, particularly those in early-stage or less mature areas, are finding it harder than expected to build their subscriber base—often competing against incumbents with entrenched brand recognition and deeper marketing budgets.

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[11] Figure is based on operator responses, public announcements, and full accounts statements submitted to Companies House where available.

3. Introduction

Not long ago if you lived beyond city commercial centres, fast reliable broadband felt like a distant promise. Millions of homes and businesses thought that slow speeds, unreliable connections and limited choice was the norm.

Then came the Altnets.

Backed by private investment and driven by a mission to challenge the status quo, a wave of independent network operators began to change the story. Street by street, town by town, and city by city they brought full fibre broadband to places and people long overlooked. Often being the first to deploy fibre and in many cases still the only provider of gigabit capable internet

The scale of their achievement is remarkable. From just over a million premises in 2019, the independent network providers now pass more than 16 million homes and businesses across the entire United Kingdom. That is almost half of the premises upgraded by companies outside the old legacy incumbent operators. These new innovative independent network operators are the INCA membership. They are regional champions, community driven builders, city scale network providers and agile innovators who have done the hard work of digging streets, securing wayleaves, and earning trust in their communities.

This report tells their story in data. It shows how, despite inflation, regulatory uncertainty, and growing competition from the legacy giants, Altnets have not only held their ground,they've grown it. They offer better prices, higher satisfaction, and real choice in a market that was, for decades, anything but competitive.

As this seventh INCA/Point Topic report shows, Altnets are making the difference. But this is a chapter, not the end of the book.

The Telecoms Access Review 2026 (TAR26) will define the rules of the road for the next phase of broadband investment and competition. INCA has already put in significant work to shape the early stages of that process—highlighting the need for true infrastructure competition, calling out the risks of Openreach overbuild, and pushing for regulatory reform that reflects the realities of today's market. That work continues, with INCA now preparing a full response to the TAR26 consultation grounded in the data, insights and lived experience of our members.

The message is simple: if we want a connected country that works for everyone, we must back the networks that made it possible and get the policy framework right for the future.

General caveat

The premises passed, investment and capex projections included in this report are from a number of sources, including INCA surveys, and should be treated as indicative. Different data sources may be used for the different parameters reported, so it is not possible to directly compare them nor, for example, to divide capex projections with projected premises passed figures to reliably estimate cost per premises passed.

Definitions

- Premises passed – Point Topic defines premises passed as those from which it is possible to readily order a broadband service. In our previous reports we included premises addressed as provided to us by operators – addressable premises tend to be classed as homes or businesses located within x metres of a network. The Ofcom definition for full fibre coverage is, "where the network has been rolled out to a 'lead-in' that will serve the consumer end premises and where the consumer would expect to pay a standard installation charge for that connection".[12] We welcome the industry's move towards more consistent definitions of coverage but recognise there remain varying definitions and different terms.
- Connections – live connections we define as premises which have an active subscription/s to a broadband service. We include both residential and business, wholesale and retail but without double-counting of these figures.
- Independent operator (also known as Altnet) – we define this as an organisation deploying broadband infrastructure for wholesale and/or retail use, which is not part of either the UK's incumbent operator BT Group, and which is not Virgin Media O2 as the national cable operator.[13] This includes privately funded companies, community groups and not-for-profit organisations.
- Technologies – in terms of fixed networks, we cover full fibre-based network deployments, fibre-to-the-premises or home (FTTP/H) and fibre-to-the-building (FTTB) as well as small amounts of legacy VDSL. Fixed wireless access (FWA) deployments are included where we have been able to gain information although this is currently sparse. This report does not cover satellite, 4G, white space or leased line infrastructure.
- Bandwidth – we focus on symmetric gigabit capable networks. While there is some legacy VDSL in the portfolio of several operators it is a small and decreasing percentage as new deployments are now exclusively FTTP/B. Coverage of FWA technology does include sub-superfast bandwidths.

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[12] Ofcom's Connected Nations 2022 Annex A: Methodology
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0031/249286/connected-nations-methodology.pdf
[13] Please note that Virgin Media O2 is considered the national cable DOCSIS 3.1 incumbent and in this definition does not include Nexfibre which is a joint venture FTTP network infrastructure supplier between Virgin Media O2's parent companies Liberty Global and Telefónica along with InfraVia Capital Partners with Virgin Media O2 as the anchor wholesale client.

4. Assessing scale and ambitions of the independent network sector

Point Topic provides estimates of premises passed for the UK's fixed independent operators and live connections as at the end of December 2024. In addition, we have estimated, from available data, premises addressed or covered by fixed wireless access infrastructure of independent operators, as well as total connections for these players (see footnote 2).

We collect expectations and aspirations for some (not all) of these numbers at the end of 2024.

Estimates are based on company reports, plus survey data supplemented by Point Topic and Thinkbroadband research either reported to us by network operators or using our own estimates when actual numbers are unavailable.

Table 1 below contains estimated key metrics for the UK's independent fixed networks from end-2022 with operators expanding their full fibre footprints by 45% on average over the three-year period, keeping pace with Openreach and taking further market share from the incumbent network operators.

Table 1: Key metrics for UK independent network sector, end-2022 until end-2025

Total for fixed full fibre operators	Premises Passed	Connections
Fixed infrastructure (FTTB/H/P)	**Thousands**	**Thousands**
End-December 2022	8,224	1,520
End-December 2023	12,884	1,992
End-December 2024	16,396	2,698
Expectations and aspirations fixed gigabit-capable FTTB/H/P infrastructure		
End-December 2025	18,601	3,450

See general caveat on page 7
Source: INCA survey, Point Topic research and estimates

Premises passed and connected by fixed independent networks for end-2024

At the end of December 2024, the UK's independent network operators are estimated to have passed 16.4 million premises with their fixed broadband infrastructure. This is an increase of 3.5 million year-on-year compared to 4.6 million growth in 2023. Altnets are now in areas ranging from urban multi-dwelling units (MDUs), new build homes to those premises in remote and geographically challenging locations.

Live connections for independent operators stood at an estimated 2.7 million at the end of December 2024, up from 2 million or 35% year-on-year. In terms of penetration Altnets are seeing on average just over a 16% take-up rate which is up one percentage point from the previous year.

Larger players such as Fibrus reported take-up rates of 27%[14] over its network and CityFibre announced it had take-up of over 40% in 'mature cohorts'[15]. Ofcom's latest Connected Nations report published on 5 December 2024 noted that, "*take-up of full fibre is notably higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Of premises with full fibre access, 52% of premises in rural areas have taken full fibre, compared to 32% in urban areas.*"[16]

A large proportion of Altnets have concentrated their deployments on rural and underserved areas throughout the country and as networks continue to mature and marketing campaigns take root, penetration rates will continue to gain traction.

It is also worth noting that Altnets have the more complex task of winning new customers onto their network as opposed to the incumbents who can convert existing customers onto their full fibre services. Between December 2023 and December 2024, Openreach reported 707,000 line losses which correlates to Altnets 706,000 net additions year-on-year. Additionally, Openreach's overall market share for all connections decreased by 1.5% as the overall fixed-line broadband connections increased by 2.5%.[17] Altnets are certainly picking up some of Openreach and VMO2's losses along with gaining additional subscribers, which has slowly eroded incumbents' market shares.

Figure A below shows the progression of full fibre premises passed and live connections from the end of 2021 to end 2024 highlighting the sector's solid performance when compared to the incumbent supplier, Openreach.

Figure A: Comparison of independent network providers' and Openreach's gigabit-capable full fibre evolution, 2021 - 2024
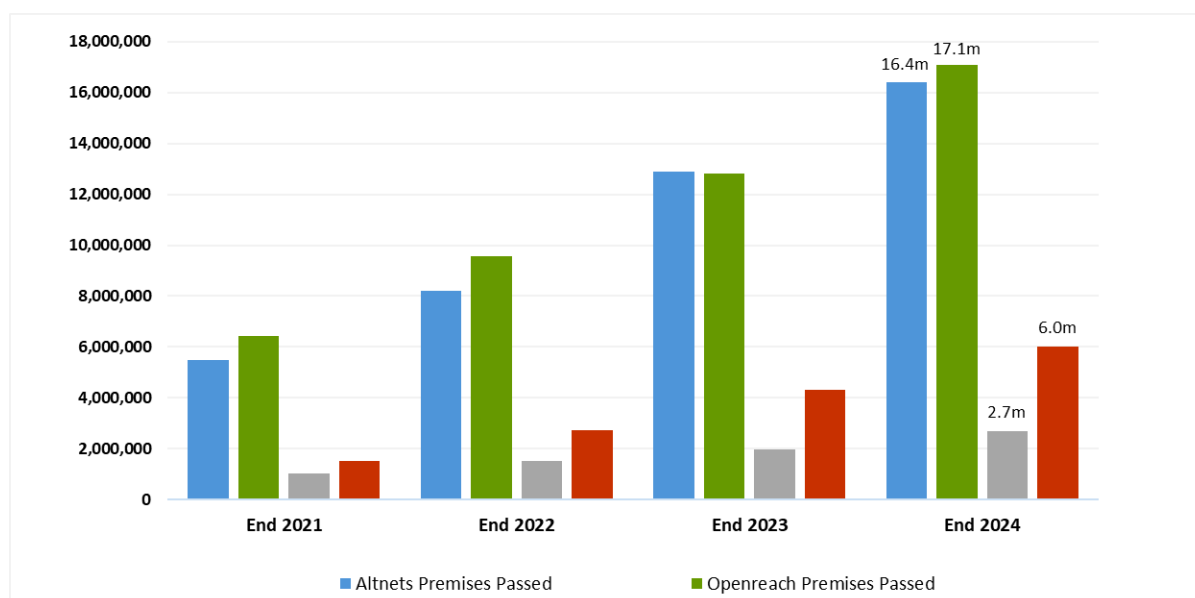
See general caveat on page 7
Source: INCA survey, Point Topic research / estimates, BT Group company reports

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[14] Fibrus, Fibrus Rollout Extended in Rural Cumbria**,** March 2025.

[15] CityFibre, CityFibre delivers first full year of profitability, with Sky to launch in 2025, 11 February 2025.

[16] Ofcom, Connected Nations 2024, 5 December 2024, p.3.

[17] Ofcom, Telecommunications Market Data Update Q3 2024, 23 January 2025, p.13.

Figure A does not include infrastructure or connections by the UK's incumbent cable broadband supplier, Virgin Media O2. It is worth noting that the Altnet figures include nexfibre, which is a joint venture between InfraVia and VMO2's parent companies Liberty Global and Telefónica. VMO2 is the anchor retail client of nexfibre's full network which is being built outside of VMO2's existing cable network coverage. At the close of 2024, we tracked nexfibre's footprint to cover just over 1.4 million premises. They have the aim of reaching 5 million premises by 2026. The deployments are separate from VMO2's Project Mustang which will see its entire DOCSIS 3.1 network (covering around 17 million premises) upgraded to full fibre.

The figures also demonstrate that since the end of 2020, when gigabit-capable network rollouts began to hit their stride, Altnets have continued to keep pace with Openreach in terms of coverage and connectivity. Yet, Openreach has successfully leveraged its wholesale full fibre incentivisation / discount Equinox 1 and 2 schemes to retain large numbers of communication providers whilst shifting their customers onto their full fibre products.

Expectations for end-2025

We asked survey respondents to provide an indication of how many premises passed and live connections they expect to have at end-December 2025. Several operators have given public indications of their future coverage aims.

Taking these into account, we estimate total plans are for 18.6 million premises passed (a 13% increase year-on-year), and just over 3 million connections (24% increase) by fixed network operators by the end-2025.

Figure B below provides an overview of suppliers' stated ambitions from past surveys versus actual achievements for premises passed and broadband connections between end-2021 to end-2024. The past two years results indicate Altnets have matured their homes passed forecasting to be more accurate. Homes connected forecasts remain variable but perhaps not unsurprising when taking into account the difficult market conditions and sector challenges (discussed in Section 8).

Figure B: Comparison of independent network providers' gigabit-capable full fibre deployment and connections ambitions versus actual, 2021 – 2024
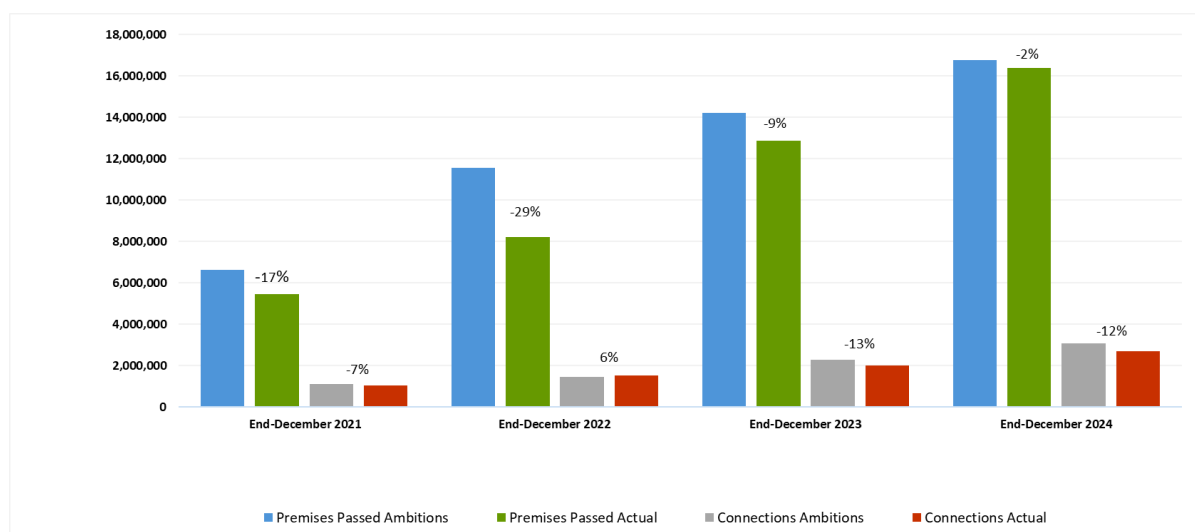
See general caveat on page 7
Source: INCA survey, Point Topic research / estimates, and company reports

The 2022 premises passed figures do stand out as a considerable shortfall. Contributing factors to the deficit were the start of the cycle of challenging economic headwinds still being felt today, along with fibre optic cable supply shortages, and record price increases in supplies and equipment. These issues were being experienced sector-wide and were not just particular to Altnet suppliers. Despite these challenges, Altnets still managed to cover 25% of UK premises with full fibre whilst surpassing stated target ambitions for connections by 6%.

The turning point for the independent telecoms sector started in 2023, as market consolidation began and some FTTP providers adjusted their strategies, slowing deployments, restructuring operations, and implementing job cuts. The shift from large-scale network expansion to prioritising consumer take-up and revenue generation has been widely reported. However, these changes should not be seen as a negative trend but rather as a sign of adaptability, with Altnets and their investors demonstrating agility in pursuit of long-term profitability and sustainability.

Major investors are now integrating infrastructure assets into larger wholesale networks[18], enabling multiple ISPs to operate on a shared platform. This marks a shift away from exclusively vertically integrated models, broadening service availability and fostering increased competition. If policy and regulation continue to support infrastructure competition, this evolution could further challenge Openreach's dominance, ultimately benefiting consumers.

While challenges faced by some Altnet providers have made headlines, they should not overshadow the sector's overall success. Growth remains steady, investment - though more measured - continues to flow (see Annex 3), and Altnets are proving their resilience across diverse regions and markets.

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[18] See the following public announcements: Fern Trading names Cuckoo and AllPoints Fibre as retail and wholesale brands for its FTTP operations 14 September 2023; Macquarie Capital, Israel Infrastructure Fund (IIF) and Tiger Infrastructure Partners merge fibre businesses SWS Broadband and Cadence Networks into Voneus 25 September 2023; Basalt Infrastructure Partners announces it is bringing FullFibre and Digital Infrastructure together in a move that will create a single wholesale platform 3 October 2023; Freedom Fibre Limited and InfraBridge-backed VX UK to combine their businesses with InfraBridge controlling the combined entity following the close of the transaction 23 December 2023, Netomnia and brsk have shared investors through Advencap and along with Digital Bridge announced the two companies merger on 15 June 2024.

5. Independent network sector coverage mapping

Point Topic [maps](#) broadband provision throughout the UK, including footprints of the country's independent network operators at postcode level with monthly updates.

As part of the INCA survey, we asked independent operators to provide their coverage details. However, given that not all independent network suppliers complete the survey we have used our own research and that of our partner Thinkbroadband to provide a view of independent network infrastructure provision today as the sector expands rapidly. Deployments continue to stretch across the UK. Most regions are seeing more choice and better broadband as a result.

Figures C provides further information about national, regional, and Ofcom Area 3 Altnet coverage.

Figure C: Fixed independent operator presence in UK, end 2024
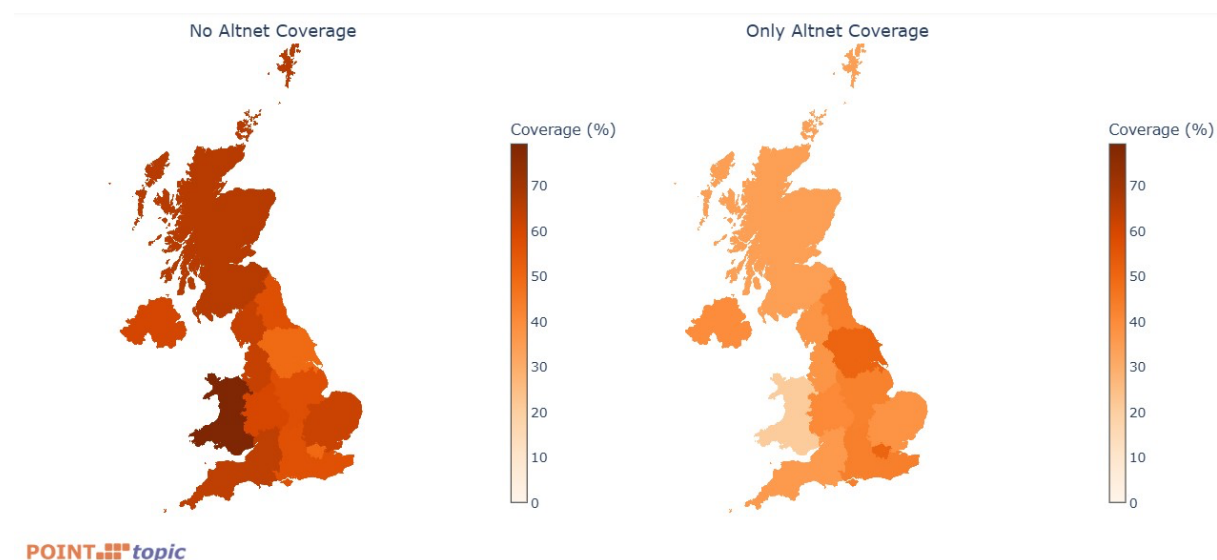
Source: Point Topic

Altnet coverage across UK regions have seen notable improvements throughout the year. Most regions maintained a consistent trend of gradually expanding alternative network infrastructure, with London and Yorkshire and The Humber now approaching an even split between traditional and alternative network coverage.

The Altnets have more than doubled their footprint and now are (as a group) on a par with Openreach across the UK. They now record, in our data, 16.4 million premises passed with 3 million in Area 3.

City, town, village, and farm

The Altnets, driven by their DNA as innovators, have provided fixed broadband coverage to almost half of premises in the UK. This means that coverage has come to some areas far

more quickly than might have otherwise been the case and while there is gigabit competition between Altnets of around 30% (in urban areas) it has proven relatively efficient so far.

Growth, premises passed and the continuing importance of the Altnets

Some areas have seen significant growth over the last twelve months as the Altnet deployments are spreading around the UK. Offering more consumers the option of a full fibre connection and adding to the competitiveness of the country overall.

In many places Altnets are the best and sometimes only option. There are millions of premises today that can only get an FTTP/B service thanks to the alternative networks. Table 2 below provide a further breakdown of premises covered only by Altnet networks.

Table 2: FTTP/B premises passed only by an Altnet, by region, end-2024

GOVERNMENT REGION	PREMISES PASSED BY ALTNET FTTP NOT OPENREACH FTTP
East of England	573,735
Wales	131,795
London	1,176,195
South West	635,448
South East	1,130,622
North West	484,091
Northern Ireland	61,018
Scotland	461,770
West Midlands	501,200
East Midlands	566,798
North East	332,128
Yorkshire and The Humber	732,323
	. .
	6,787,124

Area 3 and the Altnets

In its last market review Ofcom designated rural and small-town properties in the UK as a separate market called Area 3. Ofcom assumed that there would be no material and sustainable competition to Openreach in those areas and that Openreach would require incentives to connect these properties.

Nevertheless, in Area 3 Altnets have already provided full fibre to 3.7 million premises (38%) up from 3 million at the end-2023 of the Area 3 footprint. As a point of comparison Openreach passed 4.4 million premises in Area 3 or 45% of premises. We estimate that Altnets will reach around 4.5 million premises 46% in Area 3 before the end of 2025.

The Area 3 coverage maps clearly show a different competitive landscape with notable overbuild between the Altnets and Openreach's full fibre networks.

Figure D: Area 3 FTTP Coverage by Region - Altnets vs Openreach, end-2025
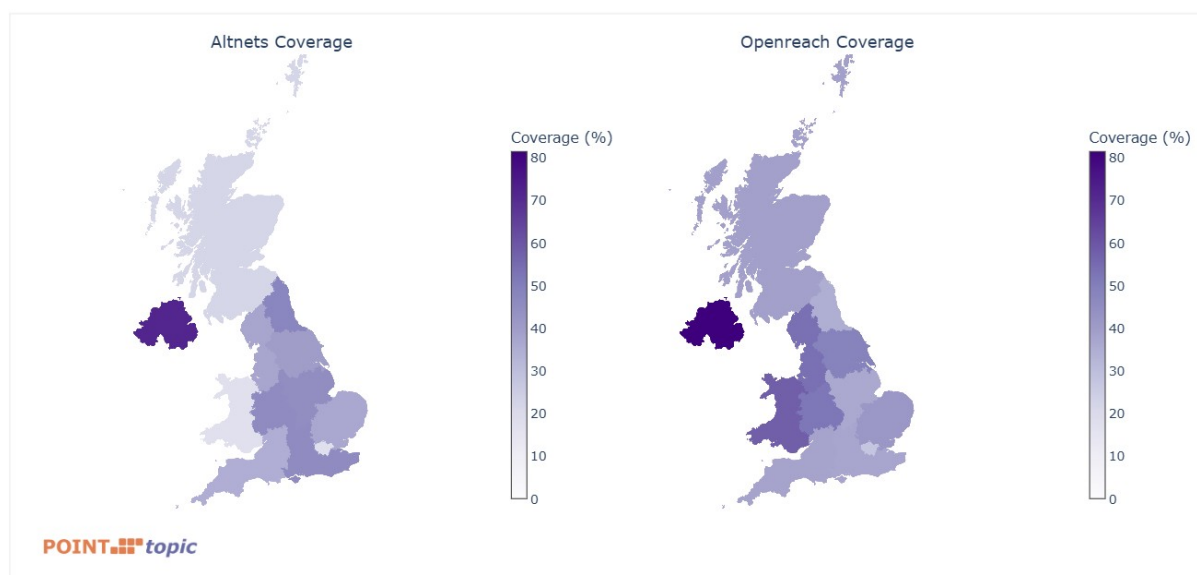
Source: Point Topic

Fixed wireless operators have also contributed to wider coverage and faster broadband speeds for consumers. As technology has advanced, they have been able to offer gigabit-range bandwidths and now contribute to gigabit coverage country wide. Ofcom noted that the number of premises without access to decent broadband either through a fixed-line or FWA connection had dropped to 58,000 and estimate around 10,000 of these premises will be connected via publicly funded schemes by December 2025, meaning that the number of premises remaining without a decent broadband from a fixed-line or FWA could be around 48,000 by the end of 2025.[19]

Satellite services are likely to be picking up the slack in terms of connecting these final very hard to reach premises to a 'high-speed' digital service. Starlink indicates that as of June 2024 there were around 87,000 connections in the UK compared to 42,000 in June 2023.[20]

For the purpose of this report, we are reporting fixed line full fibre coverage. The chart below lists in descending order Altnet coverage by Region with Area 3 premises covered within those regions.

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[19] Ofcom, Connected Nations 2024, p. 6.

[20] Ibid, p.20.

Figure E: Percentage of Area 3 premises passed by Altnets compared to percentage of Altnet premises passed within those regions, end-2024
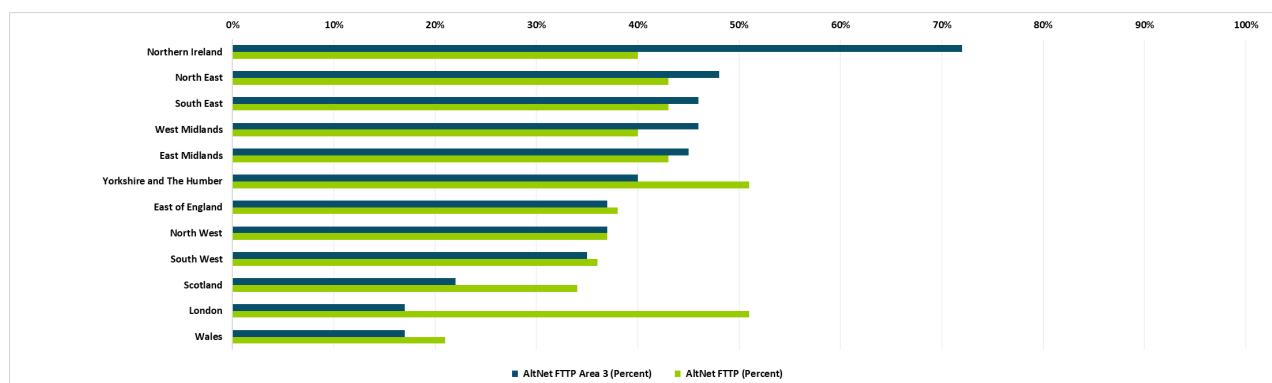
Source: Point Topic

Northern Ireland has hugely benefitted from Altnet deployments with 72% of Area 3 premises passed while 40% of the region's premises as a whole have been covered. Despite Wales coming in at the bottom of the table, it did see the largest year-on-year increase in both areas of coverage. Altnet's Area 3 premises coverage in the region increased by 11% as its overall regional coverage saw a 12% rise in FTTP premises passed.

Altnets have also been busy deploying in Scotland as its Area 3 coverage increased by 10% and overall coverage by 6%. These are considerable achievements by Altnets as both Wales and Scotland are some of the most difficult and cost-intensive areas to deploy in due to challenging geographic conditions. Both regions are also only served by a small handful of Altnets actively deploying full fibre or hybrid FWA and full fibre networks.

Despite Openreach actively deploying in Area 3, Altnets have continued to deliver deeper into those areas and for millions in those hard to reach places the Atlnets are the only full fibre choice.

Figure F Altnet FTTP/B only Area 3 – end 2023
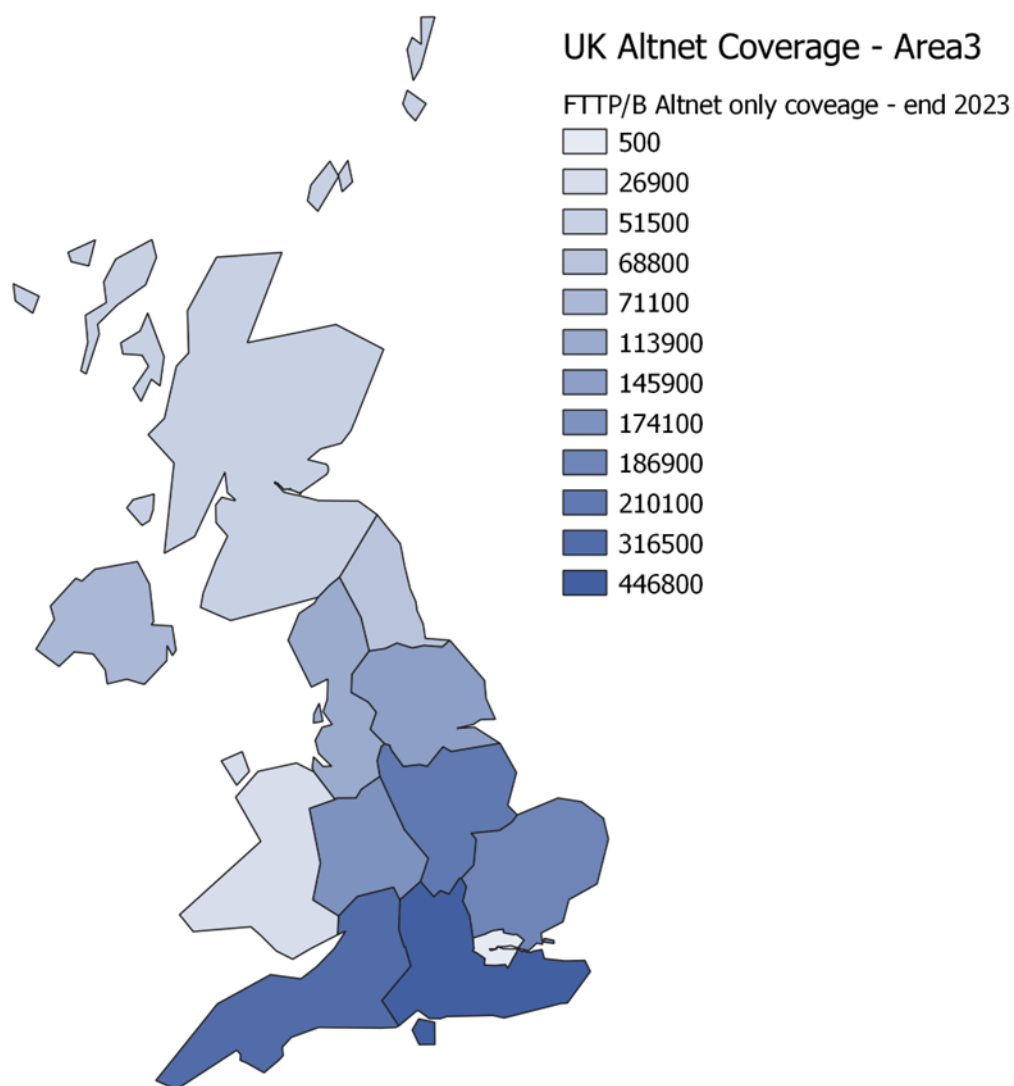
While Area 3 is still (until 2026) officially classified as non-competitive and hard to reach, both Openreach and the Altnets are deploying in the same areas, which has created the competitive landscape Ofcom sought in its original WFTMR review. Figure F above and Figure G below provide a comparison of Openreach and Altnet coverage and overbuild by region.

Figure G: Overbuild - Percentage of Area 3 Premises Covered with FTTP by Openreach and Altnet/s, end-2024
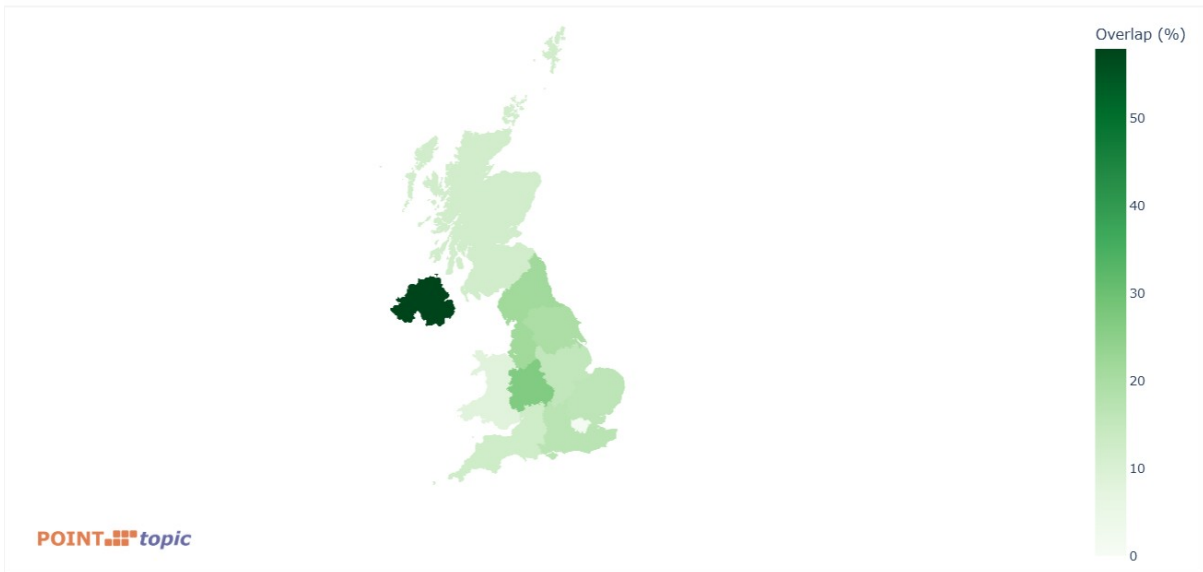
Source: Point Topic

Alternative network and Openreach Area 3 infrastructure overbuild dominated in Northern Ireland equating to around 57%. This was followed by the West Midlands at 27%, with Wales coming in at the bottom of the table at 8.2% overbuild.

Figure H: Openreach and Altnets FTTP, premises passed by region and split by total and Area 3 coverage, end-2024
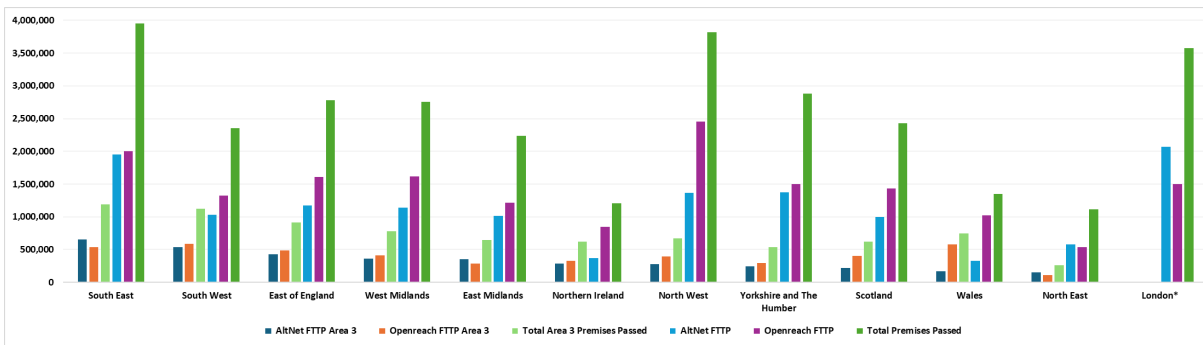
*Area 3 premises <1,000 (Altnets coverage reached 539 compared to Openreach's 855)
Source: Point Topic and supplier UPRN/postcode data where supplied

This data highlights the vital role Altnets play in increasing competition, driving broader coverage and better connectivity. By challenging established providers through innovation and flexibility, Altnets have accelerated FTTP and gigabit rollout, bringing full-fibre broadband to over a third of additional businesses and premises in rural areas - expanding access where it may not have otherwise been available.

Altnets have been so successful in driving competition since the last WFTMR, Ofcom has now proposed in its TAR26 consultation that the new Area 3 covers only 10% of the UK down from 30% in 2021, and INCA's analysis indicates this should be smaller still.

BDUK's Project Gigabit and the Altnets

Building Digital UK's (BDUK) Project Gigabit programme, which focuses on subsidising the final 20% of premises (9.5 million properties) not covered by commercial build plans, predominately in rural or hard to reach areas, has finally started to pick up pace after a slow start. BDUK has now awarded 35 procurement contracts[21] to 10 Altnet operators worth £1.3 billion and aiming to cover around 940k premises over the next several years. At the close of 2023, BDUK announced that Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales had been added to the subsidy programme. In February 2025, Borderlink (GoFibre) was awarded the first Project Gigabit contract in a devolved nation receiving the £26 million project for South Scotland - Borders, Midlothian, East Lothian with an aim to pass an additional 11,000 premises.

To date, CityFibre has secured ~40% of contract value worth £865 million in subsidies covering 461,000 premises as a consequence of being awarded some larger region wide procurements. Other successful suppliers of smaller procurements include Connect Fibre, Fibrus, Freedom Fibre, Gigaclear, Quickline, Wessex Internet, and Wildanet.

BDUK reported that 150,300 premises were connected to a gigabit-capable network through the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme between April 2022 – March 2024. BDUK announced in early 2025 that the programme had been extended to cover certain urban areas with overall deadline for gigabit vouchers extended through to March 2028. Many INCA members continue to use the voucher programme to extend their commercial network footprints to harder to reach properties.

Figure I below provides an overview of Project Gigabit's publicly funded interventions since 2022 with projected coverage outcomes to end-2025.

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[21] See Annex 1 for Project Gigabit Delivery and Procurements Pipeline for further information.

Figure I: BDUK interventions premises passed trajectory 2022 – 2025
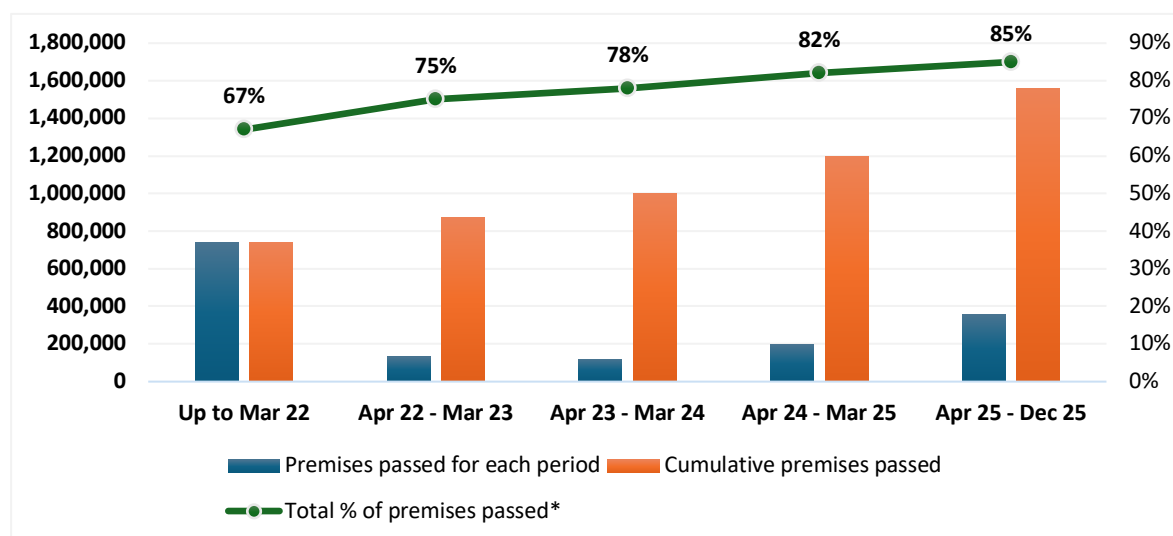
Source: DSIT, BDUK Corporate Plan 2023 – 2026
*This is the total number of premises BDUK expect to be passed by its own interventions and the wider market's commercial plans.

Telecoms Access Review 2026

Over the past few years, Altnets have proved their commitments to connecting rural and hard to reach areas whilst delivering value for money services to consumers. On 26 March 2024, Ofcom published its Telecoms Access Review 2026 (Starting work on the 2026 – 2031 review) which will replace the regulation that applies to fixed telecoms markets, set by the Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Market Review 2021.

In its latest TAR26 proposal document Ofcom has stated that it does, *"recognise the huge strides made by the industry in rolling out full-fibre networks. But there is more to do. Further investment is needed to deliver high-quality services to all parts of the UK. In addition, attracting customers from legacy networks to full fibre is key to the success of all providers. Across all providers, take-up of full fibre is increasing: as of July 2024 average take-up had risen to 35% of premises where full fibre is available. We also recognise that it takes time for new entrants to become well-established competitors and that they face considerable challenges overcoming the incumbency advantages of Openreach. New networks need to build customer bases and achieve scale in order to become sustainable competitors over the longer term."*[22]

INCA feels that it is vitally important that Altnets play an active part of this process to ensure Altnets significance in the market along with vocalising concerns about the way the market operates and addressed accordingly by the regulator.

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[22] Ofcom, Consultation: Promoting competition and investment in fibre networks: Telecoms Access Review 2026-31, 20 March 2025.

6. Pricing and Performance

New analysis conducted by FDM for INCA in March 2025 confirms a compelling pattern: as the number of full-fibre networks in a postcode increases, prices drop significantly—especially for higher-speed packages. Consumers living in areas with 3 or more networks available pay noticeably less than those in areas served only by Openreach.

In postcodes with five or more networks, average monthly costs for 800Mbps+ packages were as low as £25.45, compared to £39.49 in Openreach-only areas—a 36% saving, or £168.48 per year.

This pricing pressure is not only exerted by the Altnets themselves. The data also shows that major ISPs such as Vodafone offer lower prices in CityFibre areas, with discounts of up to £7.88/month on equivalent full-fibre packages compared to their pricing over Openreach. Where Altnets are present, they offer the lowest minimum price in every speed bracket over 150Mbps. Crucially, some consumers can now access a 150–399Mbps connection for less than a basic sub-75Mbps service in an Openreach-only area.

These findings reinforce the argument that infrastructure competition—not just retail competition—is the engine of affordability and innovation in UK broadband markets

These Regions ranged from Openreach Only FTTP, OR + Virgin Media, OR + Alt-Net through to 5+ Networks present. Pricing was captured on the same day (25.03.25) for all regions to ensure no offer rotation could skew the data, and all above the line Broadband Only and Broadband + Phone packages were captured (Broadband & TV / Triple Play packages were excluded from the case study). Prices have been compared based on Average Monthly Contract Cost, or AMC, which factors in all promotion prices and upfront fees throughout the duration of the contract (for e.g. £0 for 3 months, then £28 per month for 21 months with £0 upfront would have an AMC of £24.50). This data has then been divided into Speed Brackets per region, starting with 17-75Mbps all the way up to 800Mbps+.

Within FDM's analysis of the case study data, it found that where there is increased Network Competition Consumers can benefit from lower prices, particularly for speeds >150Mbps. Consumers in Postcodes with 3+ Networks can save on every speed tier >150Mbps vs OR Only FTTP Postcodes, whilst Consumers with 4+ Networks can save on every speed tier >75Mbps.

Figure J:

Average of minimum AMC per postcode by Speed bracket	5 Networks	4 Networks	3 Networks	Openreach + Alt Net	Openreach + Virgin Media	Openreach Only
17-74Mbps	£25.99	£25.85	£25.99	£24.59	£25.99	£25.74
75-149Mbps	£23.20	£22.40	£22.59	£26.59	£24.39	£26.49
150-399Mbps	£22.20	£24.00	£23.79	£22.48	£26.60	£27.25
400-799Mbps	£26.15	£29.90	£29.29	£25.44	£30.00	£31.00
>800Mbps	£25.45	£27.20	£30.59	£32.76	£36.79	£39.49

As Network Availability Increased, the Average Minimum AMC for 800Mbps+ reduced
Multi-Network Average Pricing vs Openreach FTTP Only Pricing

> OR FTTP Only Average   < OR FTTP Only Average

Source: FDM regional pricing analysis March 2025

As Network availability increases, the cost of 800Mbps+ reduced, dropping from an Average Minimum AMC of £39.49/month for BT Openreach Only FTTP Postcodes down to £25.45/month in Postcodes with 5+ Networks present. This represents a saving of £168.48 per year for Consumers.

Where Alt-Nets were present, they offered the lowest AMC for every speed bracket >150Mbps, although competition also drove reduction in prices for Major ISP's in areas with multiple networks, with Vodafone seen to offer an Average of £7.88/month of discount across CityFibre Postcodes vs BT Openreach FTTP Postcodes on Full Fibre 910, and discounts of £1.75/month and £2.63/month on Full Fibre 150 and Full Fibre 80 (vs Full Fibre 74 on OR) respectively.

Figure J shows that independent broadband providers are providing subscribers with more affordable and faster full fibre services, with Altnets coming in around 12% cheaper[23] than BT for entry-level ultrafast (>100 Mbps) broadband packages.

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[23] Broadband subscription tariffs were tracked on a quarterly basis for BT, brsk, Community Fibre, Fibrus, Gigaclear, and Hyperoptic from Q4 2023 to Q4 2024.

Figure K: Entry-level ultrafast (>100 Mbps) pricing (£) per month, Q4 2023 - Q4 2024
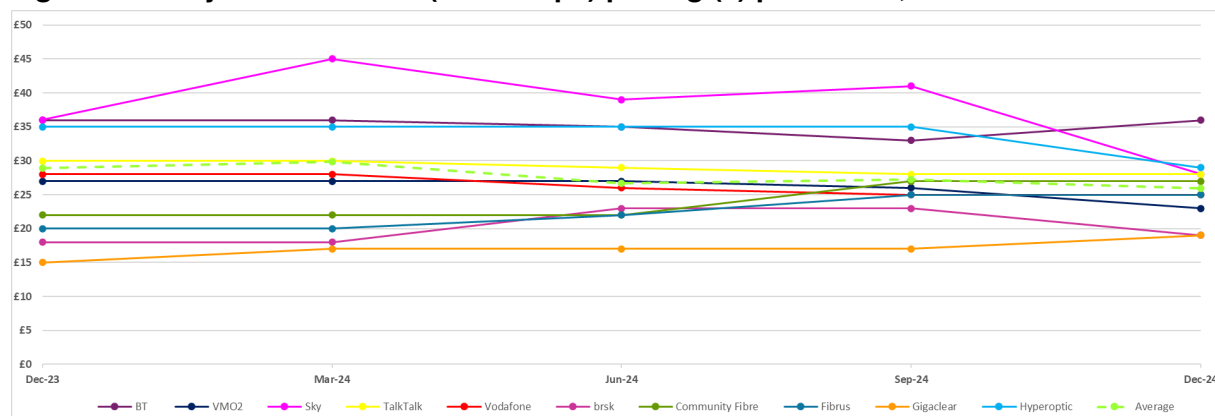
Source: Point Topic

Altnets are trusted by consumers. They have outperformed the major national incumbent providers on independent review sites such as Trustpilot and Google Reviews, with consumers showing their preference for Altnet services, where available.

Thirteen out of the top 20 ISPs as ranked by consumers on Trustpilot[24] are Altnets with none of the top four major ISPs making the list. On average, Altnets have scored an Excellent rating of 4.3 stars out of 5, compared to BT and Sky Broadband's 1.3, Virgin Media O2's 1.4, and TalkTalk's 3 stars[25].

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[24] Rankings were taken from Trustpilot's Best in Internet Provider category on 1 April 2025.

[25] Overall rankings are based on the average of 79 tracked Altnet providers and the top four major ISPs that have received overall performance ratings on Trustpilot; ratings were accessed on https://uk.trustpilot.com/ on 1 April 2025.

7. Independent network sector investment and consolidation

The telecoms sector was not immune to the challenging macroeconomic and political factors that have become commonplace since 2023. As previously stated, investors are taking a more cautious approach as Altnets have slowed their FTTP network deployments to concentrate on increasing take-up in their established or mature (2+ years presence) footprint areas.

Investments into the Altnet sector have continued throughout 2024 at a reserved pace with an estimated additional £574 million in additional funding being announced. Including this additional private investment capital Altnets had committed £5.319 billion to network expansions and operations for the 2024/2025 financial year.

Altnets have undeniably added to the UK's critical infrastructure and digital infrastructure, however the proliferation of over one hundred suppliers competing against major players and increasing threat of overbuild has raised questions over their sustainability.

Announcements from smaller players receiving further investment capital have been trickling through over the past six months, however financial institutions seem to be backing the larger players (i.e. Community Fibre, CityFibre, Hyperoptic, and Netomnia) as they are perceived as the long-term winners capable of challenging Openreach and VMO2.

Consolidation is slowly happening with CityFibre completing its integration of Lit Fibre's network and offloading its subscriber base back to Lit Fibre's founders. Network supplier, Netomnia, announced its merger with brsk on 15 June, resulting in a combined footprint of 1.5 million premises with 140,000 subscribers at the time of announcement. FullFibre and Zzoomm announced their merger in January 2025, which will result in 600,000 ready to serve properties and over 65,000 customers for the combined entity.

Five significant consolidations and restructures by private investment firms have taken place throughout the year with their outcomes outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Investment firms consolidation of full fibre assets

Investment Firm(s)	Supplier / Retail ISP	Outcome of Merger	Areas Present
Fern Trading	AllPoints Fibre, Giganet (Cuckoo), Jurassic Fibre, Swish	**AllPoints Fibre Networks** - Infrastructure/wholesale supplier. **Cuckoo Fibre** - Retail ISP	Limited nationwide availability
Macquarie Capital, Israel Infrastructure Fund (IIF) and Tiger Infrastructure Partners	Voneus, Broadway Partners, SWS Broadband, Cadence Networks	**Voneus** - Acquired Broadway Partners, SWS Broadband and Cadence Networks assets. Broadway Partners and SWS Broadband integrated into Voneus, retirement of brands. **Cadence Networks -** operating as separate retail entity.	Limited nationwide availability in hard to reach rural areas
Vauban Infrastructure Partners/Agnar UK	Trooli, Axione UK	Complete integration of Axione's fibre assets into Trooli, operating under the Trooli brand.	South East England, Scotland
Basalt Infrastructure Partners Fund	FullFibre, Digital Infrastructure	**FullFibre** - Digital Infrastructure's network integrated into FullFibre footprint with cessation of brand; scaled wholesale provider. **BeFibre** and **FibreHeros** remain part of the group as a reseller customer of the enhanced wholesale platform.	11 Counties and to over 80 towns in England; Midlands, Northwest, and East of England
Advencap/DigitalBridge	Netomnia, brsk	**Netomnia** - Integration of Brsk network into wholesale network footprint. **brsk** - brsk will become a subsidiary of Substantial Group, the holding company of Netomnia, remain as retail ISP and retain	Netomnia – 1 million premises nationwide in four nations, Brsk, Northwest England and Midlands

		branding. A new wholesale company will be created to acquire more Altnets.	

Source: Company announcements

8. Independent network sector concerns

The INCA survey asked operators to rate how concerned they are about a range of factors in terms of challenges to their network deployment and ability to offer services to and acquire customers.

The top three concerns in 2024 are:

1. Current / future economic conditions, including access to finance
2. Risk from Ofcom's Telecoms Access Review (TAR)
3. Overbuild by SMP operators (Openreach or KCOM)

Access to finance

For the second consecutive year, economic conditions have topped the list of Altnet concerns. As most operators in the sector struggle to contain costs and surging interest rates on bank debts that have increased around 3 to 4 ppts since they initially borrowed to around 7-8%, challenging economic conditions will ultimately change the telecoms landscape mostly through consolidation to create scalable and sustainable network providers.

Remarkably, however amongst survey respondents mergers and acquisitions activity ranked relatively low (13th) on the list of concerns. This can be an indication that smaller players and their investors are eyeing up opportunities to sell their fixed infrastructure assets, to receptive larger players keen on scaling up operations.

Risk from Ofcom's Telecoms Access Review (TAR)

The outcome of TAR 2026 will be crucial for the long-term sustainability of Altnets. If Ofcom introduces policies that weaken infrastructure competition, allow Openreach to dominate on pricing, or fail to create a level playing field, Altnets could face significant financial and operational challenges. However, strong regulatory support for continued competition, fair pricing, and access to passive infrastructure could help maintain a dynamic and competitive broadband market in the UK.

Overbuild by SMP Operators (Openreach and KCOM)

Network overbuild has moved up the table to third place, and more specifically, overbuild by SMP operators (i.e. Openreach or KCOM). Previous surveys covered this challenge as 'overbuild by other operators' with the questions being separated out to cover overbuild by SMP operators and overbuild by other Altnets (including VMO2/Nexfibre); the latter option ranked joint bottom of the list with wholesale network integration.

Overbuild has now firmly presented issues for Altnets as it faces the severe threat to its return on investments (ROI). It also contributes to consumer 'confusion' about ISPs and makes it more difficult for Altnets to firmly establish a strong brand recognition amongst consumers.

Openreach's scale allows it to offer more attractive wholesale deals, making it harder for Altnets to compete. Although CityFibre offers extremely competitive wholesale pricing options and signed a reselling agreement with market powerhouse Sky, other wholesale suppliers will not be in a position to offer the scale at such reduced prices.

Telecoms sector changing priorities

Acquiring new consumer or wholesale subscribers has moved up two places from last year's survey to come in fifth. Again, this is reflective of the sector's overall challenge of securing subscribers and achieving profitability. Two new entrants in this year's survey also came in joint fifth, "Consumer confusion about 'full fibre'" along with the "Ability to remain competitive." Acquiring new subscribers while remaining competitive, along with engaging with an apathetic consumer base when it comes to broadband connectivity will remain a hurdle for the foreseeable future. The One Touch Switch / Gaining Provider Led Switching process understandably dropped six places to come in at joint eighth.

Figure L provides an overview of net responses by survey respondents of issues within the sector and Table 4 gives further information about the shift in sector concerns from 2024 – 2025.

Figure L: Challenge to independent suppliers network deployment, service offerings, customer acquisition
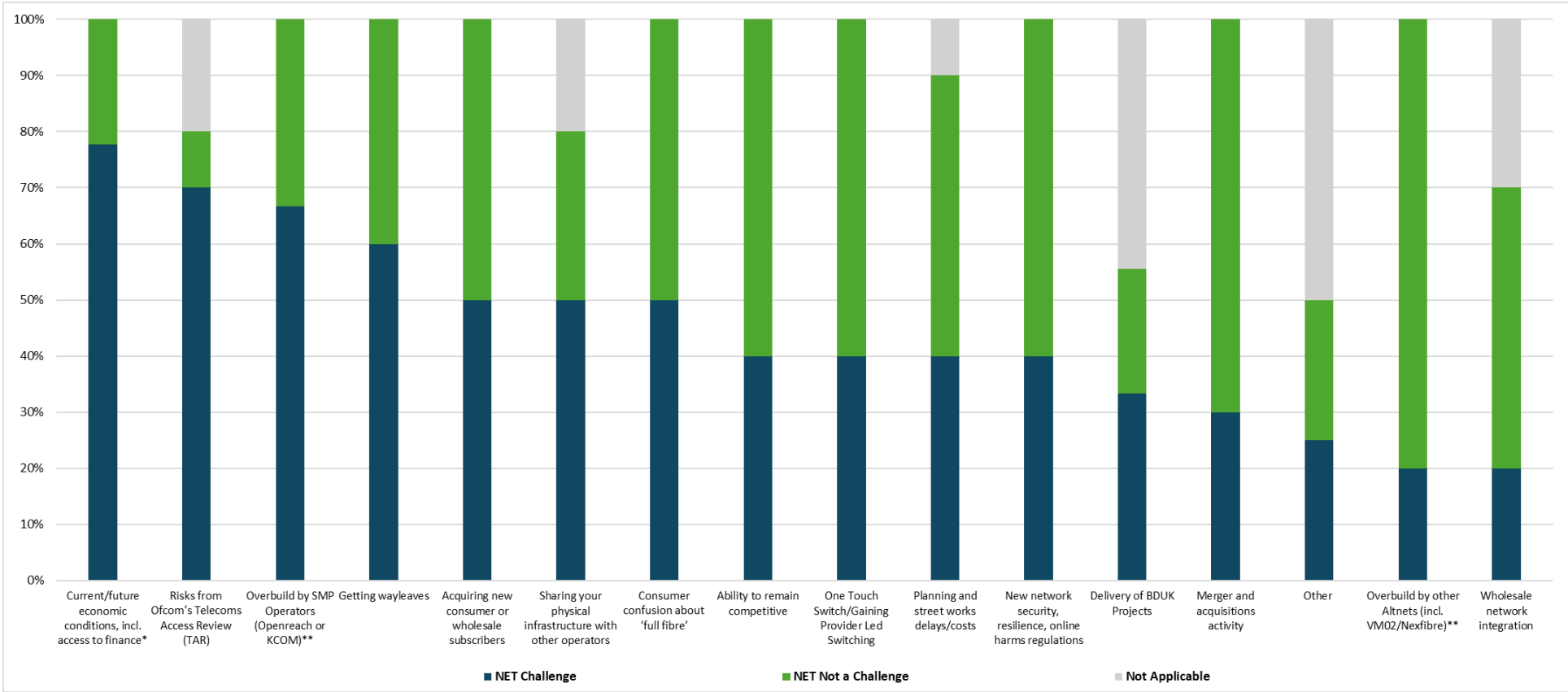
Table 4: Changing concerns 2024 to 2025

Challenges	Rank 2025	Rank delta from 2024
Current/future economic conditions, including access to finance*	1	0
Risks from Ofcom's Telecoms Access Review (TAR)	2	+5
Overbuild by SMP Operators (Openreach or KCom)**	3	
Getting wayleaves	4	-1
Acquiring new consumer or wholesale subscribers	5	+2
Sharing your physical infrastructure (ducts and poles) with other operators	5	
Consumer confusion about 'full fibre'	5	
Ability to remain competitive	8	
One Touch Switch / Gaining Provider Led Switching	8	-6
Planning and street works delays and / or costs	8	-5
New network security, resilience and online harms regulations	11	
Delivery of BDUK Projects	12	
Merger and acquisitions activity	13	-8
Other	14	
Overbuild by other Altnets (including VM02/Nexfibre)**	15	
Wholesale network integration	15	-10
*The 2025 survey was expanded to include current/future economic conditions whereas in the 2024 survey the question focused on 'access to finance'. **The question of overbuild has been separated out in the 2025 survey to assess challenges by SMP operators and Altnets. The 2024 survey question focused on 'overbuild by other providers'. **New survey question for 2024**		

We have introduced several new 'challenges' (in **bold**) compared to earlier years to reflect feedback and better represent the concerns that operators and providers face today in the market.

11. Appendix A: Basis for research and research aims

Basis for research
In compiling these statistics, Point Topic has relied heavily on self-reporting by network operators. Where numbers are unknown, we have used our own estimates including postcode data if available. We do this in conjunction with our partner Thinkbroadband.

INCA members were surveyed during February and March 2025. Survey questions can be found in Appendix B.

The report also draws on Point Topic's continuing full fibre, gigabit, superfast and ultrafast Broadband Update and Broadband Geography research programmes, which have been gathering information and datasets since June 2009. This research is used particularly in assessing expansion in recent years of the independent network operator footprint.

Research aims
By gathering information on coverage in terms of premises passed, live connection numbers, expansion plans and key concerns on an aggregated basis, the independent sector will be better able to demonstrate to policy makers, Ofcom, investors and the media, the role it is playing and the advances it is making in bringing ultrafast broadband to UK homes and businesses.

12. Appendix B: Spring 2025 Independent Networks Survey Questionnaire

POINT topic

Independent Networks Survey – Spring 2025

Help us to emphasize the essential role of independent operators in ensuring a competitive and affordable telecom sector.

Each year, INCA partners with Point Topic to survey independent operators, assessing their network coverage, take-up rates, investments, and sector challenges. With independent providers set to have invested around £25 billion in gigabit broadband by 2028, this year's survey focuses on how Altnets have reshaped competition and the current state of the independent networks sector.

The anonymized, aggregated survey data forms a vital **report** that keeps government and Ofcom informed of the independent sector's critical role in driving competition, boosting the UK economy, and advancing gigabit broadband targets. Independent operators are key to ensuring consumers benefit from high-quality, value-driven broadband services in a competitive marketplace.

We are seeking responses from **all** Altnets regardless of INCA membership.

Completing the survey should not take more than 15 minutes of your time.

It would be really helpful if you could answer as many of the questions below as possible. If you prefer, we can contact you by phone instead to cover some or all of the questions – please contact Veronica Speiser at Point Topic, direct tel: +44 (0)7508 802243, veronica.speiser@point-topic.com

If you are not the person in your organisation who can answer the survey, or different questions need to be answered by different people across your organisation, please forward the survey link (https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/IndependentNetworkSurvey2025) to those people. We will collate the data if we receive multiple responses from the same organisation.

Many thanks for your help.

Contact Information

Your Details

Name:

Company:

E-mail address:

Fixed Network Information

Please provide details of your current/planned broadband networks.

What type of fixed wired networks do you build? (tick all that apply)

Full fibre optic (FTTB / H / P)

Deploying using PON / G-PON technology

Deploying using XGS-PON technology

Deploying FWA and full fibre together in hybrid networks (please also complete the FWA section)

Other (please specify)

Do you currently offer wholesale access to your fixed network?

Yes

No, with no plans on doing so in the future

Not currently, but are considering or planning on doing so in the future

How many <u>total</u> consumer (residential *and* business) premises does your fixed networks pass?

Note: For "Homes Passed" please use Ofcom's definition of "full fibre coverage": "where the network has been rolled out to a 'lead-in' that will serve the consumer end premises and where the consumer would expect to pay a standard installation charge for that connection".

For "Ready for Service" only count those properties where a consumer can order a service installation slot from a/your retail ISP:

	Homes Passed	Ready for Service (RFS)
At end of December 2024		
Planned for end December 2025		

Planned for end of December 2030		

How many <u>total</u> end-users (residential *and* business) are connected to your fixed networks?

At the end of December 2024

Forecast by the end of 2025

Forecast by the end of 2030

Have you won a BDUK Type A and/or Type B project (excluding vouchers? Yes/No

CapEx and OpEx

What is the total Gross Book Value (excluding depreciation) of your fixed assets on you balance sheet?

As at 31st December 2023

As at 31st December 2024

Forecast as at 31st December 2025

Forecast as at 31st December 2030

How much do you spend on operating and maintaining the network/s?

For your financial year ending in 2024

For your financial year ending in 2025

For your financial year ending in 2030

Please confirm your current financial year end date: dd/mm

Challenges to Network Deployment and Service Delivery

How would you rate the following issues in terms of their challenge to your network deployment, your ongoing operation and your ability to acquire customers?

Please rate issues on a scale from 1 – 'Not an issue' to 5 – 'Very significant challenge', or 6 'Not applicable'

Overbuild by other Altnets (including VM02/Nexfibre)

Overbuild by SMP Operators (Openreach or KCOM)

Acquiring new consumer or wholesale subscribers

Ability to remain competitive

Current / future economic conditions, including access to finance

Merger and acquisitions activity

Wholesale network integration

Risks from Ofcom's Telecoms Access Review (TAR) (eg discounted wholesale prices, higher PIA costs, reduced regulation on Significant Market Player (SMP) operators)

One Touch Switch / Gaining Provider Led Switching

Getting wayleaves

Planning and street works delays and / or costs

Sharing your physical infrastructure (ducts and poles) with other operators

Consumer confusion about 'full fibre'

Delivery of BDUK Projects

New network security, resilience and online harms regulations

Other (please specify)

Fixed Wireless Access Networks

ONLY COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU ARE DEPLOYING FWA NETWORKS

Please provide further information about your current and planned fixed wireless access network coverage and end-users. Please skip to the next section if you do not deploy or use FWA technology in your infrastructure rollout.

What type of fixed wireless network do you build? (tick all that apply)

Fixed Wireless Access using unlicensed or lightly licensed spectrum

Fixed Wireless Access using licensed spectrum

FWA – Point to Point and/or Point to Multipoint

Currently offering wholesale access to your network

Planning on future wholesale access to your network

Other (please specify)

How many <u>total</u> consumer (residential *and* business) premises do your fixed wireless networks pass?

	Within coverage range	Ready for service
At the end of December 2024		
Planned for end December 2025		
Planned for end of December 2030		

Please provide your definition of "within coverage range"

How many <u>total</u> end-users (residential *and* business) are connected to your fixed wireless networks?

At the end December 2024

Planned for end of December 2025

Planned for end of December 2030

INCA Services

Are there any services that INCA are not providing to operators that you think we should put resources into?

How likely are you to recommend INCA to an industry colleague on a scale from 1 'Very unlikely' – 10 'Very likely?

Postcodes/UPRN Data

In line with our approach to providing clear, up to date and accurate data, it is very important to gather robust information that can be aggregated to influence Ofcom's and the government's understanding of the sector.

Do you hold your network plan at postcode and/or UPRN level? Please tick the relevant box below.

Postcode

UPRN

Please provide existing coverage and intended build postcodes/UPRN premises data, ideally up to April 2028. These will be used by INCA on an aggregated basis in its response to Ofcom.

The preferred format is an Excel sheet listing coverage data split by present and future (by year if available), if possible noting maximum speeds available to end-users in each location if this varies – email to surveys@inca.coop or tick the option below to be contacted by us.

If you have submitted a file to the BDUK OMR then your latest submission data would be acceptable.

In addition, Point Topic would like to use the aforementioned data in order to map the coverage of broadband networks. It works with thinkbroadband to do this and therefore shares this data with its partner accordingly, tick here if you are happy for your data to be shared.

Please contact me to discuss further

I agree for my network coverage to be shared with Point Topic and thinkbroadband for network forecasting and mapping purposes

13. Annex 1: Project Gigabit Rural Intervention and Procurements Pipeline

Phase 1a											
Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
4	Durham, South Tyneside and Tees Valley areas extending into Northumberland	Regional	40 to 60	70	07-Nov-22	May-23		53,200	£82.7m		
4.01	Teesdale	Local			11-Jan-22	22-Sep-22	Borderlink (GoFibre)	4,000	£6.7m	Spring 2023	TBA
5	Cambridgeshire and adjacent areas	Regional	60 to 80	60	07-Jan-22	23-Mar-23	CityFibre	44,400	£69m	Early 2024†	2029
14	Dorset and South Somerset	Regional	30 to 50	40	30-May-23	10-Apr-24	Wessex Internet	21,400	£33.5m	End 2024	TBA
14.01	North Dorset	Local			01-May-22	25-Aug-22	Wessex Internet	7,000	£6.3m	Autumn 2022	Sep-25

Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
21	Essex	Regional	50 to 70	50	Jul-Sep-23	Apr-Jun-24		78,400	£79-£135m		
28	Cumbria, including the Lake District National Park	Regional	40 to 60	20	20-Oct-21	29-Nov-22	Fibrus	59,000	£108.5m	Spring 2023†	2026
32	West of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly		40 to 60	0	23-Jun-23	10-Apr-24	Wildanet	16,800	£41.2m	Autumn 2024	2025
32.02	Central Cornwall	Local			28-Apr-22	19-Jan-23	Wildanet	9,200	£18m	2023	Dec-25
32.03	South West Cornwall	Local			23-Mar-22	19-Jan-23	Wildanet	9,500	£18m	2023	Dec-25
34	North and West Northumberland and East Cumbria		20 to 40	10							

| 34.01 | North Northumberland | Local | | | 11-Jan-22 | 14-Oct-22 | Borderlink (GoFibre) | 3,700 | £7.4m | Autumn 2023† | 2025 |

Phase 1b											
Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
2	Suffolk	Regional	80 to 100	20	28-Apr-22	28-Jun-23	CityFibre	79,500	£100.5m	Summer 2024†	2029
7	Norfolk	Regional	120 to 140	40	28-Apr-22	28-Jun-23	CityFibre	62,200	£114.2m	Summer 2024†	2029
24	Worcestershire	Regional	30 to 50	30	06/10/2022	Jul-Sep-23		40,300	£58.8m		
25	Shropshire**	Regional	40 to 60	20	TBC	TBC		20,700	£30-£40m		
25.01	Mid West Shropshire	Local			18-May-23	TBC		6,000	£12m		
25.02	North Shropshire	Local			15-Jul-22	19-Apr-23	Freedom Fibre	12,000	£24m	Feb-24	TBA
27	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Regional	80 to 100	80	25-Jul-22	28-Jun-23	CityFibre	75,500	£104.2m	Summer 2024†	2029
27.01	New Forest	Local			07-Jul-22	27-Mar-23	Wessex Interet	10,400	£13.8m	2023	2026

Phase 2

Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
1	West Sussex	Regional	50 to 70	40	13-Jan-23	15-Jan-24	CityFibre	26,000	£50.3m	Summer 2024	2029
3	Derbyshire	Regional	30 to 50	50	28-Feb-23	25-Nov-23	Connect Fibre	18,200	£33.4m	Mid-2024	TBA
3.01	Peak District	Local			09-Aug-23	10-Apr-24	FullFibre	4,400	£10.7m	TBA	TBA
8	West Yorkshire and parts of North Yorkshire	Regional	50 to 70	100	27-Apr-23	22-Feb-24	Quickline	28,000	£60m	Spring 2024	TBA
Call-off 1	Lancashire, North Wiltshire and South Gloucestershire, West and Mid-Surrey, Staffordshire, West Berkshire, Hertfordshire	Cross Regional	10 to 30	80	27-Jul-23	13-Aug-24	Openreach	54,300	£149.7m	Summer 2024	Early 2025†

Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
Call-off 2	West and North Devon, North West, Mid and South East Wales	Cross Regional			27-Jul-23	13-Aug-24	Openreach	42,200	£139.1m	Summer 2024	Early 2025†
Call-off 3	North Wales, South West Wales, North Somerset, South West Devon	Cross Regional			Jul 24-Sep 24	7-Jan-25	Openreach	55,900	£108.9m	TBC	TBC
10	Nottinghamshire and West of Lincolnshire	Regional	40 to 60	70	24-Mar-23	15-Jan-24	Connexin — as of March 2025 to be overtaken by CityFibre	34,300	£58.6m	Summer 2024	TBA
11	Leicestershire and Warwickshire	Regional	50 to 70	80	23-Mar-23	15-Jan-24	CityFibre	38,000	£71.5m	Summer 2024	2029
12	Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes	Regional	30 to 50	60	28-Feb-23	15-Jan-24	CityFibre	25,000	£51.4m	Summer 2024	2029
13	Oxfordshire and West Berkshire	Regional	40 to 60	30	Sep-Nov-22	Jul-Sep-23		67,000	£67-£114m		

Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement			Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier			Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
13.01	South Oxfordshire	Local			30-Mar-23	25-Nov-23	Gigaclear	5,500	£17m	Spring 2024	Sep-26

Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
13.02	North Oxfordshire	Local			31-Mar-23	25-Nov-23	Gigaclear	4,300	£9.4m	Summer 2024	Sep-26
16	East Sussex	Regional	30 to 50	30	13-Jan-23	15-Jan-24	CityFibre	26,000	£50.3m	Summer 2024	2029
19	Staffordshire**	Regional	30 to 50	50	TBC	TBC		70,800	£72-£123m		
19.01	North East Staffordshire	Local			04-Apr-23	31-Oct-23	Connect Fibre	5,900	£16.5m	Apr-24	TBA
20	South Yorkshire	Regional	10 to 30	50	27-Apr-23	10-Apr-24	Quickline	32,100	£44m	TBA	TBA
22	Surrey	Regional	10 to 30	100	Dec-22-Feb-23	Oct-Dec-23		99,400	£101-£171m		
26	Buckinghamshire, (part of) Hertfordshire and East Berkshire	Regional	40 to 60	110	28-Nov-22	15-Jan-24	CityFibre	34,000	£58.8m	Summer 2024	2029
29	Kent	Regional	60 to 80	70	13-Dec-22	15-Jan-24	CityFibre	50,000	£112.3m	Summer 2024	2029

| 30 | South Wiltshire | Regional | 50 to 70 | 50 | 17-Feb-23 | 22-Mar-24 | Wessex Internet | 14,500 | £18.8m | Sep-24 | TBA |

Phase 3											
Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
6	Mid/East Devon and West Somerset	Local	170 to 190	100	Sep-23	Mar-May-24		6,300	£18.4m		
15	West Herefordshire and Forest of Dean	Local	20 to 40	0	01-Aug-23	10-Apr-24	FullFibre	7,900	£23.4m	TBA	TBA
17	Cheshire	Regional	30 to 50	70	06-Jul-23	23-May-24	Freedom Fibre	1500	£43m	TBA	TBA
18	East Gloucestershire	Local	20 to 40	20	01-Aug-23	22-Feb-24	Gigaclear	4,900	£16m	Spring 2024	TBA
23	Lincolnshire (including NE Lincolnshire and N Lincolnshire) and East Riding	Regional	110 to 130	40	25-Jul-23	Jun-24	Quickline	71,900	£118.9m	Jul-24	TBA

Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
31	Northern North Yorkshire	Regional	30 to 50	0	03-Jul-23	May-24	Quickline	36,300	£73.4m	Jul-24	TBA
33	East of Cornwall		20 to 40	10							
35	Birmingham and the Black Country		0	40							
36	Merseyside and Greater Manchester		0	100							
Lot	Area	Local or Regional Procurement	Estimated F20 premises - early drawdowns (,000)	Estimated further F20 premises - later drawdowns (,000)	Procurement Start Date	Estimated contract award date	Supplier	Estimated number of uncommercial premises in the procurement area subject to change	Indicative Contract Value subject to change	Expected Build Start Date	Expected Build Finish
37	Greater London		0	100							
38	Newcastle and North Tyneside		0	10							
	South Scotland - Borders, Midlothian, East Lothian	Local			TBC	20-Feb-25	Borderlink (GoFibre)	10,700	£26m	Summer 2025	TBA

	Dumfries & Galloway - East	Local			TBC	TBC		7,700	£15.5m		
	Dumfries & Galloway - West	Local			TBC	TBC		8,000	£13.1m		
	Fife, Perth & Kinross	Local			TBC	TBC		11,400	21.9m		
	Orkney & Shetland	Local			TBC	TBC		11,300	£23.7m		
	Dundee, Aberdeenshire & Moray Coast	Regional			TBC	TBC		57,700	£95.5m		
	Northern Ireland	Regional			TBC	TBC		59,000	TBC		

Source: DCMS and BDUK Project Gigabit Delivery Plans, March 2025

*These procurements have now been completed. At the time of publication, BDUK is finalising the contract with the preferred supplier.

**Following significant soft market testing/pre-procurement market engagement with suppliers in Shropshire and Staffordshire BDUK established there's not enough interest from the market in responding to their proposed regional procurements in these areas. Similar feedback has also been received in areas in the eastern part of Hertfordshire. In July, BDUK launched two local procurements in Shropshire which will deliver coverage to up to 19,500 premises, with regional procurements being deferred to a later date. †Expected first premises to go live date.