

People & Communities



Importance of connectivity to people and communities

Mobile technology and connectivity have become a necessity to both rural and urban areas. The ability to quickly access information, work and learn remotely, use online services and stay connected with friends and family, are all part of the world we now live in.

This has never been more relevant as we see the impacts of a global pandemic on our everyday lives. Access to reliable broadband and 4G networks has transformed the way in which we live and work, and the Shared Rural Network (SRN) will allow those in rural and remote parts of the UK to connect with those that matter most in their lives.

How will people and communities benefit from the Shared Rural Network?

Consumer Choice - By offering greater connectivity in rural areas the Shared Rural Network will increase consumer choice across a range of goods and services, not just in mobile service providers. Access to online shopping and the ability to search for the best deals on products and services will ensure that those in rural areas are no longer at a disadvantage compared to those in urban areas.

Online Services - As local authorities and businesses move more services online, the need to have a reliable connection is hugely important. The increased levels of connectivity provided by the Shared Rural Network will result in better access to the likes of online banking, public services, and utility providers.

Social Connectivity - The pandemic has highlighted the need to socially connect with others, and the importance those connections can have on our mental health. Those in rural areas are already impacted with reduced opportunities for physical interactions and the need for reliable 4G connectivity is more evident than ever. The Shared Rural Network will assist the way in which friends and family stay connected by providing the networks needed to operate social media and communication apps.

Disability Inclusion - The SRN will aim to make it easier for those with impairments to engage with others by removing certain barriers to inclusion. The ability to access websites, apps and web-enabled services can assist in communication, online participation, and provide access to useful information and guidance to help improve the lives of those with disabilities.

Work and Learn Remotely - The SRN will help support the increasing uptake of home and remote working. The Coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the importance of stable and reliable access to the internet, not only for workers but also for those learning from home. Faster speeds delivered by 4G can improve access to work and educational materials, as well as facilitate more streamlined ways of working and learning through remote meetings, classes and events.

Entertainment - We live in a society that increasingly uses mobile technology for the sharing of news, TV, films, music and sees mass consumption of social media content. Fixed broadband in rural areas may not be fast, reliable, or even in place at all, therefore, the ability to connect to a 4G network will be a significant improvement to many who live in rural areas.

