

Tourism



Importance of connectivity to tourism

For many people, connectivity and internet access is increasingly becoming an important aspect of their visitor experience. The ability to access information on the go, make or amend bookings, share photos and memories online, or simply look up directions, means it is fast becoming a necessity for tourists to have access to the internet whilst travelling. Visitors have grown to expect reliable mobile coverage when out and about, as well as having high expectations of the digital offerings that hotels and attractions can offer.

Connectivity can offer so much more than visitors being able to share experiences on social media or keep in touch with friends and family. Tourists use their mobile devices to store travel documents, access details of bookings and reservations, keep copies of ID documents and make online payments for goods and services.

How will tourism benefit from the Shared Rural Network?

With customers looking to use their mobile devices to gain access to the internet throughout all stages of their travel experience, the Shared Rural Network will help provide the coverage necessary for this. When choosing where to visit, tourists will be more inclined to travel to areas that have good coverage and can offer them the connectivity needed to use their mobile devices. The Shared Rural Network will improve mobile service in rural areas to the point that 95% of the UK will have 4G coverage.

It's not only the individual tourist that will benefit from the Shared Rural Network, but businesses will also gain through greater connectivity. Following the impacts of the pandemic on international travel, it is likely that there will be more UK based holidays in the next few years. The potential increase in visitors to areas with good coverage will hopefully lead to increased consumer spend in the local economy via hotels, attractions, and shops.

The introduction of high-speed mobile connectivity as a result of the Shared Rural Network will help businesses in rural communities across many parts of their online operations. An improved online presence ensures that they are visible and bookable online, helping connect visitors to businesses, building meaningful relationships with customers at an early stage.

Improved connectivity from the Shared Rural Network also has the ability to positively influence visitor experiences through the use of mobile apps. This could be a virtual tour guide, or an app that shows local events, it could be the ability to scan QR codes, or even offer immersive content through augmented reality. Mobile connectivity is needed to make these digital offerings work and the Shared Rural Network will make these options previously unavailable to rural areas a reality.

