

# Free wifi in the TRA halls and faster mobile access

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## What is this initiative about?

By allowing providers to install mobile and superfast wifi masts and boxes on 50+ tall council buildings we propose to extend previous work to make Camden more connected (300+ free computers in libraries, free public wifi on high streets). This will:

- Enhance connectivity and network capacity in the borough through:
  - Better mobile signal
  - New generation of superfast Wifi boxes to increase offer to businesses
- Raise a potential £600k per annum rooftop rental income for the Housing Revenue Account
- Fund free Wifi for 74 Tenant's Halls and digital skills training, including use of Camden Account.

## Why is Camden doing this now?

There is an explosion in mobile devices and demand for broadband is leading to greater demand for capacity, also known as 'connectivity'.

All mobile companies are aggressively seeking new locations and there are already 370 masts in Camden. Only 12 of these are currently providing income to residents via the Housing Revenue Account.

Camden is taking the initiative to maximise the benefits for our residents and businesses.

### **What are the implications for Health and Safety?**

All equipment has to be compliant with International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection guidelines.

<http://www.icnirp.org/en/applications/base-stations/index.html>

The World Health Organisation, Public Health England (and other reports) conclude there is no evidence to support claims that telecoms equipment can cause harm if guidelines are followed.

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs193/en/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phone-base-stations-radio-waves-and-health/mobile-phone-base-stations-radio-waves-and-health>

### **What if I live close to one of the masts – will this damage my health?**

There have been numerous reports done since the advent of mobile phones and the associated infrastructure of base stations (masts) and antennas and according to the UK Health and Safety Executive “The balance of evidence indicates that there is no general risk to the health of people living near to base stations on the basis that exposures are expected to be small fractions of international guidelines.”

Cancer UK concludes that “Mobile phone masts and base stations are unlikely to increase your cancer risk. They were included in the 2012 review, which found no convincing evidence that the radiation they gave off could affect your health. The exposure you would get from a base station is usually at least a hundred times below international guidelines. And it is much less than the exposure you would get from a phone.”

More details in the link below

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/cancer-controversies/mobile-phones-wifi-and-power-lines>

### **Will there be additional cabling needed for the telecom equipment?**

There will be additional cabling to connect masts to the operator's main networks. Where cabling is required, operators will have to work with Camden's Major Projects Team to ensure that most suitable cable routes are chosen and they that do not lead to unsightly cable runs on the sides of buildings.

### **What is a base station?**

A base station is a fixed communications location and is part of a network's wireless telephone system. It relays information to and from a transmitting/receiving unit, such as a mobile phone. Often referred to as a cell site, a base station allows mobile phones to work within a local area, as long as it is linked to a mobile or wireless service provider. It also provides connections to the internet via 3G or 4G (see the glossary for an explanation of these terms).

### **Who pays for the maintenance and running costs of the installations?**

The costs for the installation and maintenance of the telecoms equipment will be paid for by the operators. The annual running costs for things such as electricity and business rates is also the responsibility of the operators. None of the costs will fall to Camden .

### **How many base stations are located in Camden?**

There are currently 370 base stations in Camden.

### **How big are the base stations?**

Telecoms equipment is becoming much smaller and less obtrusive, rather than the 15m towers that are constructed in rural areas or the 10m poles on the streets, antennas are typically 2-3m tall, sometimes mounted on poles.

In conservation areas the masts are always shrouded to look like part of the building, e.g. behind a fake chimney stack.

### **What is superfast Broadband?**

Superfast broadband is a connection that provides download speeds in excess of 24Mbps. This compares a standard broadband package that has a connection speed of up to 8Mbps, or ADSL2 which has speeds from 8-24Mbps.

### **What is wireless broadband?**

Wireless broadband connects a home or business to the Internet using a radio link between the customer's location and the service provider's facility. Wireless broadband can be mobile or fixed.

Small receivers are connected to your premises (each about the size of a briefcase) which receive signals from a base station or wireless transmitter.

The best part is that you do not need a landline telephone in your home (which you do for a standard wired broadband connection).

### **How do I find out the location of mobile phone masts in my area?**

The Sitefinder (<http://www.sitefinder.ofcom.org.uk/>) website, set up as a result of recommendations of the Stewart Report (see above), provides information on mobile phone base stations and masts.

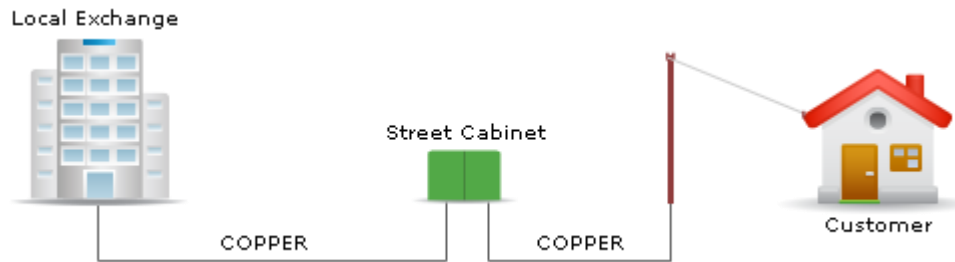
It is a voluntary scheme under which mobile network operators make information available on the location and operating characteristics of individual base stations, so that people who wish to inform themselves about this can do so.

Ofcom (the telecoms regulator) hosts the Sitefinder database on behalf of the Government, which is responsible for planning and health issues relating to mobile phone base stations and masts, and for policy on the scope of the Sitefinder scheme.

### **What is the difference between Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC) and Fibre To The Premises (FTTP)?**

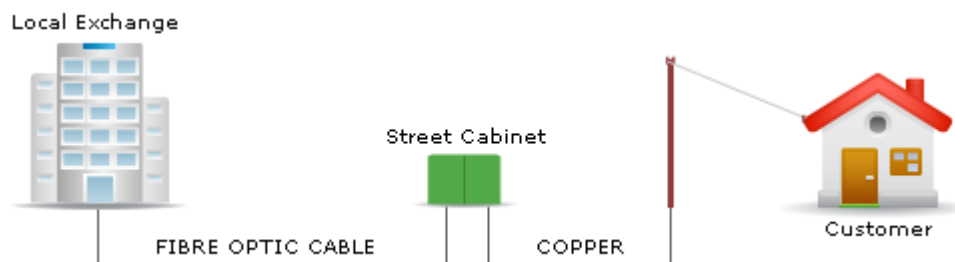
#### Traditional Broadband setup

This has copper running from the local Exchange (generally a British Telecom exchanges) to a street cabinet, then copper from the street cabinet to the home.



### Fibre To The Cabinet

FTTC has a fibre cable running from the exchange to the street cabinet and copper running from the street cabinet to the home.



### Fibre To The Premises

FTTP has fibre running directly from the exchange to the home



### **Do base stations need to have planning permission?**

Most mobile phone base station developments require planning permission.

However, some forms of development are permitted under Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 ("the GPDO") as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2001 and the Communications Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2003.

The consequence of this is that an application for planning permission may not be required, though, in many circumstances the electronic communications operator must still make an application for 'prior approval' to the local planning authority. One example is a ground-based mast less than 15 metres in height with cabins less than 90 cubic metres in volume. In line with the Code of Best Practice, mobile operators will notify the local planning authority of these developments.

### **What is the Mobile Operators Code of Best Practice?**

Code of Best practice includes consultations with communities and with local planners, compliance with the International Committee on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (see above What are the implications for Health and Safety?), and supporting research into health and mobile phones.

A summary of the code can be found at

<http://www.mobilemastinfo.com/best-practice/mobile-operators-code-of-best-practice-article.html>

A full version of the code can be found at

[http://www.mobilemastinfo.com/images/stories/2013\\_Code\\_of\\_best\\_practice/Code\\_of\\_Best\\_Practice\\_on\\_Mobile\\_Network\\_Development\\_-\\_Published\\_24-07-2013.pdf](http://www.mobilemastinfo.com/images/stories/2013_Code_of_best_practice/Code_of_Best_Practice_on_Mobile_Network_Development_-_Published_24-07-2013.pdf)

### **What is the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)?**

There is a statutory duty to account separately for local authority housing provision. The HRA Income and Expenditure Account shows in detail the income and expenditure on HRA services. The HRA includes the major elements of Council housing expenditure on maintenance, administration and capital financing costs and major income sources such as rents, subsidy and other income.