



**HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA**

13 November 2015

Dear Colleague,

**Re: New Broadband Universal Service Obligation and update on superfast broadband roll-out**

As you will be aware the Prime Minister recently announced the Government's intention to introduce a new broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) by 2020.

The USO will be demand-led and will give people a legal right to request an affordable connection to broadband of a minimum specified speed, from a designated provider, no matter where they live, up to a reasonable cost threshold. This reflects that many people now see broadband as a basic service similar to the post and telephone.

As the country makes great strides towards better connectivity a USO will help to ensure that people in harder to reach areas are not left behind - it will be targeted at these hard to reach areas.

Over the coming months we will consult on what should be the appropriate speed for the USO. However, Ofcom believes that 10Mbps is sufficient at present for typical UK households and small businesses. Once the obligation has been implemented, we can look to increase the speed in line with increased take-up across the country.

It will take around two years to implement the USO. The next step will be the launch of the public consultation in early 2016. We will be working closely with Ofcom on the design of the USO and on the detail of the consultation. I will write again to update you on progress.

I would also like to update you on the progress that has been made with the roll-out of superfast broadband. An additional 3,311,843 premises had a superfast broadband service made available by the end of September 2015 as a result of BDUK-supported projects;

I will update you again on constituency coverage in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Whittingdale". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**RT HON JOHN WHITTINGDALE MP  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**