

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Remaining planned changes at transmitters for the 700MHz clearance programme this April have been postponed due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Clearance will resume once it is safe and operationally viable to do so.

INDUSTRY BRIEFING

From Digital UK, the organisation leading technical co-ordination of the 700MHz clearance programme

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Upcoming changes to transmitters in Q1-Q2 2020

The UHF channels used to broadcast some DTT multiplexes at certain transmitters in the Anglia, Border, Central, Granada, STV, Tyne Tees, UTV, Wales and Yorkshire TV regions will be changing between **February** and **April 2020**. These changes are part of work being carried out for the 700MHz clearance programme.

How will this affect viewers?

- Freeview viewers receiving their signal from a transmitter in one of the groups listed overleaf may need to retune to continue receiving some TV channels and radio services. Other platforms that use terrestrial TV, such as YouView, BT TV, EE, Plusnet and TalkTalk, will also be affected.
- Most aerials are expected to be capable of receiving a reliable signal following the changes. However, some grouped aerials - notably group C/D - may need to be updated. A wideband model is generally recommended.¹
- Full details of the affected transmitters, multiplexes, frequencies and aerial group changes for 2020 can be download in regionalised PDF files from the Freeview website at [freeview.co.uk/clearance](https://www.freeview.co.uk/clearance).
- Some transmitters may have multiple retune dates during the clearance programme. Where dates are confirmed, these are noted in these PDFs. Retune dates are also noted on the Freeview coverage checker at [freeview.co.uk/help](https://www.freeview.co.uk/help).

Why is clearance happening?

The 700MHz band is being cleared for future mobile broadband services, following a decision by the UK Government. Ofcom announced its plan to reallocate this spectrum in November 2014. Freeview services currently using frequencies in this band are being moved to new UHF channels. Transmitters across the UK are being updated as part of a major engineering programme being carried out between now and mid-2020. The dates and details of changes to transmitters will be announced as the programme progresses and published online at [freeview.co.uk/clearance](https://www.freeview.co.uk/clearance).

¹ Group K or T, or equivalent, appropriate to the specific transmitter.

When are the changes taking place?

Engineering work will take place on the dates shown in the table at the end of this document and services will be subject to disruption during this time. In most cases, work on main transmitters is expected to be finished by 6am. Engineering at relays will continue until late afternoon. Viewers can retune at any point once work is completed at their transmitter.

Checklist for installers

- If you work with landlords or property managers/factors in the areas listed, please advise them of these changes (including local councils and housing offices, hotels, B&Bs, hospitals and care homes).
- Channelised distribution systems receiving a signal from one of the transmitters changing may need to be adjusted.
- Viewers reliant on DTT who are unable to restore those services affected after a retune as a result of these changes may be eligible for in-home support (See below). In the first instance, all viewers should be directed to freephone **0808 100 0288**.
- Some viewers may attempt to retune early as soon as work begins overnight. Please advise any customers using main transmitters not to retune until at least 6am (10am for Winter Hill on 20 February). We generally advise retuning after 5pm for relays.



- Digital Mobile Spectrum Limited is responsible for in-home support during these clearance events.

Further support

Free information and support will be available for these retune events.

Information will be available on the Freeview website at freeview.co.uk/tvchanges and advice as well as support can be accessed from the Freeview Advice Line on freephone **0808 100 0288**.

Please direct viewers to this number for initial support.

An information campaign to help prepare viewers, including local advertising and on-screen messaging where possible, will begin in each area approximately two weeks ahead of these changes.

Technical information on transmitters is available from the detailed view of the results page of the Freeview coverage checker at freeview.co.uk/help.

You can find a full listing of the current channels on Freeview and information on general planned engineering works to keep up-to-date and check for ongoing maintenance at freeview.co.uk/platform-management.

General trade information on the 700MHz clearance programme is available at freeview.co.uk/clearance.

Upcoming Freeview retunes in Q1-Q2 2020

Transmitter Group	Area Served	Retune Date
Emley Moor	most of Yorkshire	5-Feb-2020
Chesterfield	the Chesterfield area	5-Feb-2020
Sheffield (Totley Rise relay only)	parts of Sheffield	5-Feb-2020
Belmont	Lincolnshire and east Yorkshire	5-Feb-2020
Tacolneston (Creake relay only)	parts of the Creake area	5-Feb-2020
Emley Moor (some relays only)	parts of west Yorkshire	12-Feb-2020
Keighley	the Keighley area	12-Feb-2020
Idle	the Idle area	12-Feb-2020
Oliver's Mount	the Scarborough area	12-Feb-2020
Sandy Heath	Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire	12-Feb-2020
Winter Hill	Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire and north Staffordshire	20-Feb-2020
Divis	Belfast and the surrounding area	4-Mar-2020
Belmont	Lincolnshire and east Yorkshire	4-Mar-2020
Waltham	much of the East Midlands	4-Mar-2020
Nottingham	the Nottingham area	4-Mar-2020
Darvel (Blackwaterfoot & Campbeltown relays only)	parts of Blackwaterfoot & Campbeltown	4-Mar-2020
Bilsdale	Teesside and much of North Yorkshire	12-Mar-2020
Moel-y-Parc	north east wales	Postponed TBC
Winter Hill	Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire and north Staffordshire	Postponed TBC
Pendle Forest (Trawden relay only)	parts of Trawden	Postponed TBC
Saddleworth	the Saddleworth area	Postponed TBC
Storeton	parts of The Wirral and Liverpool	Postponed TBC
Lancaster (some relays only)	parts of the Lancaster area	Postponed TBC
Caldbeck (some relays only)	parts of Gosforth and St Bees	Postponed TBC
Caldbeck Scotland (Creetown relay only)	parts of Creetown	Postponed TBC
Douglas	most of the Isle of Man	Postponed TBC
Kendal	Kendal and parts of the Lake District	Postponed TBC

Important notes:

- To help Winter Hill viewers who may require additional support to receive BBCA when this moves to a new frequency on 20 February, a temporary simulcast of this multiplex will begin broadcasting until the final changes at this transmitter on 22 April **[THIS RETUNE HAS NOW POSTPONED]**. The simulcast services will be listed from LCN 751 in the Freeview guide following a retune. Viewers will be advised to retune from 10am. Anyone unable to receive BBC One standard definition at channel 1 after retuning should be advised to contact the Freeview Advice Line on 0808 100 0288.
- The Arqiva COM 7 and COM 8 multiplexes will close at the Sheffield main transmitter on 5 February 2020. As a result, some Freeview channels will no longer be broadcast from this site. Many of the channels carried on these multiplexes are +1 or HD simulcasts and the main versions of these services will continue to broadcast as normal. Information for viewers, including any alternative ways for viewers to continue watching programming from the affected channels free, will be available ahead of clearance at freeview.co.uk/tvchanges
- The Local TV multiplex will be broadcast from two new relay stations, Grenoside (Sheffield) and Odiham (Basingstoke). Both of these stations will transmit signals horizontally polarised.

Grenoside is due on air on the 5th February and Odiham is expected to enter service at the end of April.