

# INDUSTRY BRIEFING

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

Issued: July 2020

## Upcoming changes to transmitters in August 2020

The UHF channels used to broadcast some DTT multiplexes at certain transmitters in the Border, Granada and Wales TV regions will be changing in August 2020. These changes are part of the final 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.<sup>1</sup>
- Full details of the affected transmitters, multiplexes, frequencies and aerial group changes can be download in regionalised PDF files from the Freeview website at [freeview.co.uk/clearance2020](https://www.freeview.co.uk/clearance2020).
- Some transmitters have had multiple retune dates during the clearance programme. Past retunes are also noted in the PDFs.

### 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 which is now scheduled to complete in August 2020. The dates and details of changes to transmitters are announced as the programme progresses and published online at [freeview.co.uk/clearance](https://www.freeview.co.uk/clearance).

### 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.

<sup>1</sup> Group K or T, or equivalent, appropriate to the specific 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. 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](https://www.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/platform-management](https://www.freeview.co.uk/platform-management). This page also provides access to a full listing of the current channels on Freeview and information on general planned engineering works.

General trade information on the 700MHz clearance programme is available at [freeview.co.uk/clearance](https://www.freeview.co.uk/clearance).

## Upcoming Freeview retunes in August 2020

Transmitter Group	Area Served	Retune Date
Moel-y-Parc	north east Wales	12-Aug-2020
Winter Hill	Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire and north Staffordshire	12-Aug-2020
Pendle Forest (Trawden relay only)	parts of Trawden	12-Aug-2020
Saddleworth	the Saddleworth area	12-Aug-2020
Storeton	parts of The Wirral and Liverpool	12-Aug-2020
Lancaster (some relays only)	parts of the Lancaster area	12-Aug-2020
Caldbeck (some relays only)	parts of Gosforth and St Bees	12-Aug-2020
Caldbeck Scotland (Creetown relay only)	parts of Creetown	12-Aug-2020
Douglas	most of the Isle of Man	19-Aug-2020
Kendal	Kendal and parts of the Lake District	19-Aug-2020

Note: Clearance retunes at these transmitters were previously scheduled for April 2020. These were postponed due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

### Important notes:

The final clearance event at the Winter Hill transmitter has been carried out as a two-stage process. The first stage took place on 20 February with the BBCA multiplex moving to a new frequency. To aid viewers who may require additional support to receive this, a temporary simulcast of the multiplex is currently broadcasting on its old frequency. Simulcast services are listed from LCN 751 in the Freeview guide following a retune.

Anyone currently 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 simulcast will cease at the second stage retune on 12 August 2020.