

## What is the PSTN and ISDN Switch Off?

The traditional telephony network, the Public Switch Telephone Network (PSTN), will reach the end of life in December 2025, meaning the network will be switched off and services will no longer be supported. The PSTN also supports the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) which is the network that supports broadband, allowing both voice and data services to be delivered over digital lines simultaneously. This will also be switched off, meaning you will need to look into alternative broadband services as well as voice.

## Why is Openreach withdrawing the PSTN and ISDN network in December 2025?

As broadband services have increased in reliability and quality over the past 10 years, the PSTN has evolved to support this change to an almost completely digital network using digital technology. This means most fixed line telephony users will no longer need fixed-analogue services in the coming years so traditional fixed lines and calls will cease to exist.

The priority for Openreach moving forward, is to maintain a high availability, fibre-first network. As a result, their legacy infrastructure and equipment serving the PSTN is now aging and becoming more difficult to maintain.

## What other services are impacted by the 2025 closure?

In addition to the telephony products affected by the withdrawal of the PSTN, a number of connectivity services will also be withdrawn, including Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Lines (ADSL) and Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) broadband. This is because the underlying line product is being withdrawn, therefore there is no underlying telephone service to support the broadband.

## Will Openreach provide the PSTN replacement products and services?

Openreach are working on a number of alternative solutions to replace the connectivity products that currently use the PSTN. These products will be a Single Order (SO) variant of ADSL or Fibre broadband services.

When these SO broadband products are provided, there will be no voice on the telephone line and no dial tone, this means you will need to implement a Voice over IP (VoIP) solution, which carries voice over an internet connection. Hosted PBX License or Session Initiation Protocol (SIP Trunking) services are transitional products that can help you move into the world of VoIP. They provide the voice telephony element which would replace the traditional telephone line.

## How and when will Openreach start withdrawing service?

Openreach's strategy for UK-wide withdrawal is still undefined, however, they have begun trailing the withdrawal in two areas, with the first, in Salisbury, starting in September 2019. This exchange is the Openreach Full Fibre Trial, which will see full withdrawal of PSTN and ISDN by December 2022.

The second exchange is the Mildenhall Exchange which will see the first Single Order (SO) trial begin in early 2020. This exchange will also focus on a complete withdrawal of services by December 2022, even if no fibre is available in the area. Premises serviced by the Mildenhall Exchange will be replaced with SO products that will support VoIP.

### **What is the 2023 Stop Sell date?**

From September 2023, Openreach will issue a full “Stop Sell” of new supply WLR. This means that from there will be no new line installations for either WLR or ISDN. It’s important that consumer rights during this period are still upheld therefore, line transfers will still be accepted, providing there is no change to the installation when the line moves from one provider to another. All calling and network features, such as caller display, presentation number and features to prevent nuisance calls such as anonymous call rejection, will be allowed, with the exception of the two trial exchanges, where restrictions will apply, subject to the availability of the replacement fibre technology.

### **Will Openreach meet the December 2025 Deadline?**

Openreach are adamant that the December 2025 deadline is set in stone. Public Switch Telephone Network (PSTN) Lines that have not migrated to alternative services in April 2025 will be deemed as Orphaned Assets and Openreach intend to work to identify and migrate these customer to alternative products by the December 2025 deadline so they do not lose service.