

## Appendix 1

Housing Services  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Roycraft House  
15 Linton Road  
Barking  
IG11 8HE

Reference: Communal TV  
Aerial (intro)  
Date: 03 June 2009

Dear Resident,

### **Proposed Installation & Connection of Integrated Reception Service (IRS) Communal TV Aerial System (including Sky+ capability)**

As you may know, the government is changing the whole of the United Kingdoms (UK) TV transmission from analogue to digital TV by 2012. This will mean that in many cases across the UK, properties will suffer either a very poor or a total lack of TV reception if they do not update their current TV reception system.

To prevent these possible problems the council is proposing to install new communal TV aerial system for the blocks of flats that do not currently have a communal TV system.

This will involve the installation of a an Integrated Reception Service (IRS) system, giving one socket per flat located in the living room, which allows three user options

- (a) Digital TV reception including 'Freeview' channels via a suitable TV or set top box
- (b) Digital TV reception via a 'Freesat' box and
- (c) Access to a communal satellite dish (residents would need to take out a separate contract with Sky to receive the service) including Sky+

**The cost of this to each tenant would be £0.70pence each week.** Those tenants claiming this benefit can claim the charges under Housing Benefit rules. The charge will be applied to your rent account with effect from the first Monday of the month following the completed works.

If you would like an additional socket installed in another room there will be a one off charge of £120

All individual satellite dishes attached to our buildings will be removed and returned to the resident once the system has been installed and tested.

There are already in excess of 10,000 properties in the borough that have the benefit of these new digital communal TV aerial systems, and we are now planning to carry out similar works in your block, however prior to starting we would like to obtain your views on this matter.

Therefore, would you please complete the sheet attached with this letter and return it to me in the pre paid addressed envelope by 11<sup>th</sup> June 2009 (You do not need a stamp). **If you choose not to return the sheet at all, we will take that to mean you are happy for us to go ahead.** I would also welcome any comments that you may have regarding the proposed works.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Sean Watson  
Project Liaison Officer  
Housing Services

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[www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk](http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk)

I think this proposal to install a new digital communal aerial system within my block would be a **good idea**; please tick the box below;

I think this proposal to install a new digital communal aerial system within my block would be a **bad idea**; please tick the box below;

I would like an additional socket installed in another room for a one off charge of £120

Any additional comments;

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Name: .....

Address:  
.....



**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**  
**on the planned Digital Switchover 2012**

As you may know, the Government is changing the whole of the United Kingdoms (UK) TV transmission from analogue to digital TV by 2012. This will mean that in many cases across the UK, properties may experience either a very poor or a total lack of TV reception if they do not update their current TV reception system.

This FAQ fact sheet has been designed to help provide answers to questions concerning the digital switchover for both council owned flats and houses across Barking & Dagenham. This fact sheet has been separated into two categories flats & houses.

Category 1; is concerning flats, this looks into issues faced by Council residents or leaseholders where the Council owns the freehold.

Category 2; looks at the issues faced by houses whether they are Council residents or freeholders.

**Category 1: Flats**

To prepare flats for the switchover and to prevent the possible loss of TV reception in the future, the Council is planning to install a new communal TV aerial system to blocks of flats that do not currently have a communal digital TV system. Below are some FAQ regarding these planned works;

**1. I have my own indoor / exterior aerials for my TV, which all have perfect digital pictures?**

Whilst you may have perfect reception, other flats in the block may not be so fortunate. When the planned TV signal switchover from Analogue to Digital is completed in 2012 it is probable that some current system will not be able to pick up the Digital signal even if they have a digital TV. This is because the Digital TV signal reception can be very difficult to obtain (even with an appropriate indoor digital aerial) and is dependant on the location of the property in relation to the local transmitter. Therefore many properties may be within signal 'blind spots'.

**2. Can I choose not to be connected to the communal aerial and therefore not have to pay?**

Unfortunately, this is not an option. If the Council fit the system in your block then all residents will have to contribute for those improvements. The Council needs to ensure that its properties are suitable for current and future use and also needs to protect the fabric of its buildings.

**3. What do I get for £36.40 of my money?**

The annual cost of £36.40 per year (or 70p a week) includes the cost of leasing the equipment, the continued repair and maintenance of the system and any customer services which may be involved in maintaining the equipment

**4. What happens if I do not have a television set?**

Residents who do not use a TV set may wish to use the socket to provide a DAB digital radio signal. However, you will still need to contribute to the costs as described above.

**5. Can't I just get a digital set-top box to get digital TV?**

The Council needs to ensure that its residents receive good TV reception, and this relies upon a good communal aerial and new cabling to provide the best signals possible. In many cases, a set-top box which relies on an existing aerial and existing cabling may not provide good reception and residents may struggle to receive a good TV picture.

**6. Where will they locate the aerial / dish on my block?**

This will vary from block to block. The contractors have already conducted a survey to find where the best location is to pick up a digital signal. Our contractors do not tend to install aerials or dishes at the back of blocks due to the future access for repairs and maintenance.

**7. I am on housing benefit will this cover the cost of these extra charges to my rent?**

These additional charges are covered under housing benefit rules.

**8. For leaseholders; will my service charge cover these extra costs?**

These costs will be included in your annual service charge.

**9. What about residents who have already installed a satellite system such as a sky dish or already have free view and their own aerial?**

Many residents across the borough have had TV aerials and satellite dishes installed on the exterior of the council buildings. In many instances, planning permission and Council permission to install independent aerials and dishes have not been obtained and the result affects the external appearance of the blocks. The Council (as the property owner or freeholder), has a right to remove such items and enforce the appropriate condition of tenancy or Lease on residents who have breached these conditions. The council understands however that it would be inappropriate to remove those existing aerials and dishes without any alternative being offered, therefore the Council are proposing to install a communal aerial / dish for all residents in the block to use, should they wish to.

**10. What works will be carried out in my home and how long it will take?**

In most cases our contractors will drill from outside into the living room wall near to your current TV. The cables will be run externally thereby reducing the amount of cabling in your home. Our contractors should only require access to your home for approximately 1 hour. This new aerial socket will have all the requirements needed to obtain digital picture quality once they have left your home.

**11. I have Sky+ / Sky Multi-room; will I still have these services with the new communal system?**

Where the contractor is installing the system at your property they will replace your existing Sky+ / multi-room system in a way that ensures you will continue to receive you

current services. Please could you contact the liaison team as soon as possible so that we can arrange for extra cabling to be fitted to your home prior to any works starting.

## **12. I still have unanswered questions/concerns on this matter, what can I do now?**

Firstly, you can contact the liaison team at the Council on the contact details below and they will be happy to help. If you prefer to you can look at the local government guide to the digital switchover website, which can provide more information, which may be helpful at [http://www.digitaluk.co.uk/localgov/get\\_informed](http://www.digitaluk.co.uk/localgov/get_informed)

## **Category 2: Houses**

### **1. Am I eligible for help with the switchover?**

You are eligible for the Switchover Help Scheme if:

- You are aged 75 or over, or
- You have lived in a care home for 6 months or more, or
- You are registered blind or partially sighted, or
- You get (or could get):
  - Disability living allowance, or
  - Attendance or constant attendance allowance, or
  - Mobility supplement

### **2. What is the Switchover Help Scheme?**

The Switchover Help Scheme has been set up to help people to switch one of their TV sets to digital. If you are eligible for help, they will explain digital TV to you clearly and simply, install what you need in your home and make sure you're happy with how it all works.

The Help Scheme will ask you to contribute £40 towards:

- Providing easy-to-use equipment that suits your needs
- Help with installing equipment in your home
- Fitting a new dish or aerial, where we can, if it is needed to make the new equipment work
- An easy-to-understand demonstration of how everything works
- Someone you can call for help while you're getting used to things, so we will take the worry out of getting ready for digital.

Over seven million households in the UK will be eligible to receive help. If you are eligible for the Help Scheme, they will be in touch personally in plenty of time to ask if you want our help.

If you are still unsure? Please call 0800 408 5900

### **3. Can I test my aerial before the digital switchover?**

You can test your current aerial through analogue Teletext. This test is designed to check if your current aerial will need to be replaced or upgraded to receive digital TV through your aerial after the switchover.

The test pattern is broadcast on Teletext page 284 on BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel 4 and S4C. You should carry out the test on all channels and under different weather conditions (fog, rain, fine dry weather, etc) to achieve a more accurate and objective result. If there are more than 4 squares missing (randomly spaced – complete lines missing are fine) then your aerial needs checked or replaced. Ideally, the screen should display a full grid of vertical/horizontal white boxes.

If you need to upgrade your current aerial we recommend that you use a Registered Digital Installer (RDI) identified by the "digital tick" logo. To find a RDI in your area please visit: <http://www.rdi-lb.tv/installers.html>

If there is no RDI available in your area at present you can look for an aerial installer in the Yellow Pages who is a member of the Confederation of Aerial Industries (CAI).

#### **4. How much should a new roof aerial cost?**

Most aerials should work after digital switchover, but a few may require an upgrade or new cable connections if you decide to get Freeview. If you do need a new aerial, installation is likely to cost between £100 -£200, and an additional socket costs around £85.

If you need to upgrade your aerial, look for an installer belonging to the Registered Digital Installer Scheme (RDI), identified by the 'digital tick' logo. Registered Digital Installers are security checked and aerial experts. To find one in your local area visit the RDI website at [www.rdi-lb.tv](http://www.rdi-lb.tv) or call Digital UK on 08456 50 50 50.

If there is not a Registered Digital Installer near you, then you can look in the Yellow Pages for an installer with CAI+ or IDSC trade association qualifications. Alternatively ask at your local electrical retailer. If you are visited by an installer who isn't from the RDI scheme, we recommend you check to see that they are qualified.

#### **5. Will set-top aerials work after switchover?**

Set-top aerials are more susceptible to interference than a good roof-top aerial. General rule of thumb is that, if you currently get a good, clear analogue picture with a set-top aerial, you stand a fairly good chance of doing so after the switchover. But you may have to upgrade that indoor aerial. If you don't currently get a good clear signal, you're unlikely to with digital TV.

To test the performance of your set-top aerial please visit analogue Teletext page 284. BERR has commissioned independent consumer testing of digital TV products which are undertaken and published by Ricability, and have identified five set-top aerials that had good digital reception. A recommended model costs from only £9.99. More information can be found at: [www.ricability-digitaltv.co.uk](http://www.ricability-digitaltv.co.uk). Still unsure then call on 08456 50 50 50.

#### **6. Will I need a new TV aerial?**

Most households won't require a new TV aerial. As a rule of thumb, if you get a good analogue signal now, you should be able to get a good signal after the switchover.

You can test your current aerial through analogue Teletext. This test is designed to check if your current aerial will need to be replaced or upgraded to receive digital TV through your aerial after the switchover. The test pattern is broadcast on Teletext page 284 on

BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel 4 and S4C. You should carry out the test on all channels and under different weather conditions (fog, rain, fine dry weather, etc) to achieve a more accurate and objective result. Ideally the screen should display a full grid of vertical/horizontal white boxes. Ignoring the top and bottom rows if there are squares missing (complete lines missing are fine) or if you currently have reception problems i.e. snowy picture or severe ghosting, then your aerial needs checked or replaced.

If you need to upgrade your aerial we recommend that you use a Registered Digital Installer (RDI) identified by the 'digital tick' logo or an Associate RDI. To find a RDI in your area please visit: [www.rdi-lb.tv](http://www.rdi-lb.tv) or call Digital UK on 08456 50 50 50.

If there is no RDI available in your area at present you can look for an aerial installer in the Yellow Pages with CAI+ or IDSC trade association qualifications. Alternatively ask at your local electrical retailer.