



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

6 February 2023

Mr Clive Selley
Chief Executive, Openreach
Kelvin House
123 Judd Street
London WC1H 9NP

Dear Mr Selley

'FIBRE FIRST' ROLLOUT – ALDERSHOT GARRISON

You will recall our meeting last March to discuss the significant difficulties many local military families have historically had with internet connectivity in their homes.

I was delighted, therefore, when Openreach announced shortly after that Aldershot would soon benefit from ultrafast broadband as a result of your 'Fibre First' initiative. This will upgrade infrastructure across Aldershot to help ensure homes were capable of download speeds of up to 1,000Mbps, including hundreds of Service Family Accommodation (SFA) homes across the Garrison who currently experience woeful speeds of up to only 5Mbps.

Together with the Aldershot Garrison Commander, Lt Col Nick Burley, I have been in regular contact with Openreach over the last year and followed survey assessments closely. As we understand it, your Senior Engineering Team are in the process of completing that work and hope to have a full picture of what is required to build the network later this month.

Hardworking service families have been held back by slow broadband speeds for too long. Addressing this longstanding disparity will help ensure members of our Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged by living in army quarters, nor by their service. As we rely on the Internet now more than ever for work, to educate our children, and to stay in touch with loved ones – particularly when spouses are deployed – fast and reliable broadband connection speeds have never been more important.

As one of the country's most proactive corporate supporters of our Armed Forces – and as a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant – I would greatly appreciate your commitment that these forces families will be included in Openreach's imminent upgrades.

It's time to bring these military families' connectivity into the twenty-first century.

With very best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Leo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Leo Docherty MP