

CONNECTIVITY MADE CLEAR



Connectivity is an essential element of any relocation. It not only informs access to internet services, but also how we watch TV and use phones. The UK, and London in particular, benefits from great choice and available solutions. Unfortunately variety often leads to confusion for consumers in this area. **R3Location** summarises the main elements of connectivity and provides clarity to enable a better choice for assignees and their families.

What do we mean by connectivity?

When settling into a new home environment, there are several areas – increasingly inter-related – where assignees require connectivity:



Broadband

Most significant element

By far the most significant element to get right is broadband as it informs how internet access and TV (increasingly often) operate. **Broadband** is a way of connecting your desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or mobile phone to the internet. The vast majority of UK homes now have broadband – but which one should you get?

Broadband choices

There are five types of connection available and **Table 1** explains each in turn. The table overleaf goes into more detail about each option and the providers available in the UK.

TABLE 1 – Types of Broadband

What is available depends on infrastructure in and near your home

Type	Description
ADSL	Uses traditional phone wire already in place via a landline (99% of homes in the UK have this option).
Cable	Using cable (mostly Virgin in the UK) though you do need to live in a cable-enabled area with cable presentation on your street.
Fibre-Optic	Coverage is not Nationwide nor London wide – even if you have it in your road, it may not go all the way to your house.
Mobile	Using mobile networks for internet connection – not dependent on having a mobile. 4G coverage often available in London.
“Hot-spot”	Connecting to an extensive, ever increasing high-speed public wireless network – with several providers offering this service.

Options available

These options very much **depend on the cabling infrastructure both within and outside your house**. E.g. even if your house is cable-enabled, if cable presentation does not arrive at your door from the road, then cable will not be an option.

Choice of provider

When considering broadband packages there are a few things you need to bear in mind:

- **Location** – The main providers such as BT, Sky and Virgin operate throughout the UK, but London often benefits from other providers. It is worth shopping around.
- **Phone lines** - In many cases you'll also need to activate a working phone line (the only real exception being Virgin Media's broadband but this is not available in all areas).
- **Speed** - home broadband, as opposed to mobile broadband, is often the fastest type of broadband
- **TV** – several providers offer good deals on bundled packages offering both broadband and TV options on the same infrastructure;
- **Contracts** - There are no pay as you go home broadband deals – these tend to be at least 12 months in duration. Mobile deals yield more choice.

Television

The UK benefits from a collection of free-to-view and subscription services over a variety of distribution media, through which there are over 400 channels for consumers as well as on-demand content. The main providers of subscription packages remain **Virgin, BT** and **Sky**.

TV Licence - £145.50 p.a.

You will need to be covered by a TV Licence to watch or record live TV programmes on any channel (including BBC). In addition, **the law changed on 1st September 2016** and you will now need a TV license to download or watch any BBC programmes on iPlayer – live, catch up or on demand.

This applies to any provider you use and any device, including a TV, desktop computer, laptop, mobile phone, tablet, games console, digital box or DVD/VHS recorder.

Mobile Phones

There is a great variety of subscriptions available for mobile phones but most fall into three main categories:

- **Contract deals:** depending on the type of phone and data usage, package deals range from as little as £7.50 a month upwards. Contract lengths vary and are at least 12 months in duration.
- **Pay As You Go deals:** If you need a UK number quickly, this is often a good bridging option and enables you to pick up a phone from an outlet for as little as £10 depending on deals available (and quality of phone – smartphones tend to cost more under this type of package).
- **SIM only deals:** if you are happy to use your current handset, and it is compatible with UK SIMs, then this option can also fast-track you to having a UK phone at your disposal.

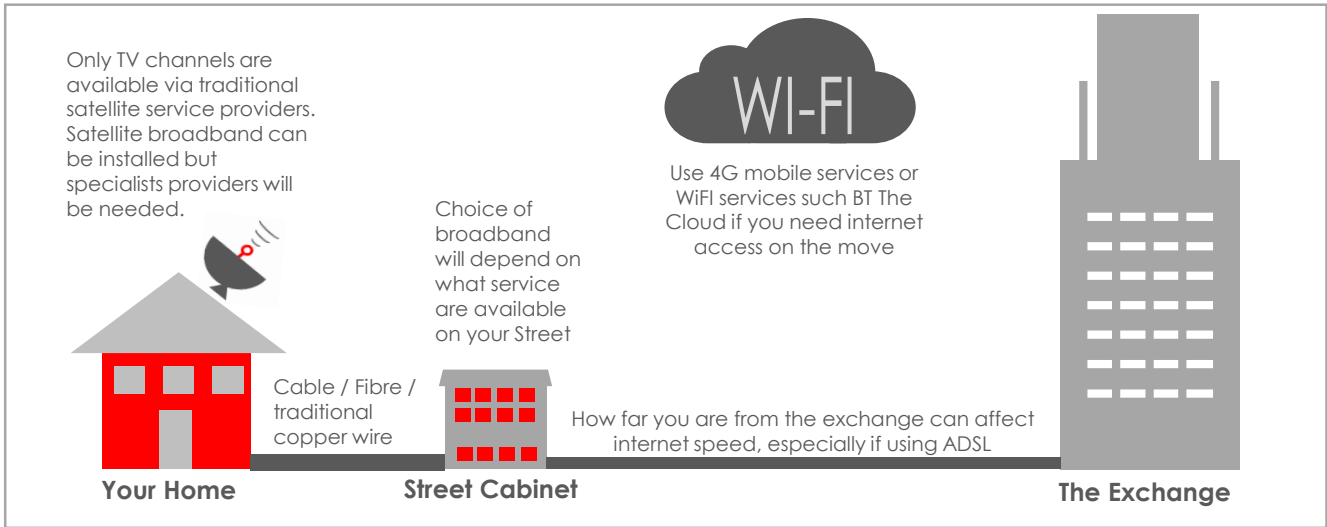
And Finally

R3Location can help with all these areas – and we have included a summary overleaf to give a high level view of all options and packages associated with Connectivity.

SUMMARY

Connectivity Made Clear

Choice and options available depend on several factors including your house's infrastructure, cable presentation in your street and proximity to Exchange building



Broadband and TV package choices

Options	ADSL	Cable (Virgin)	Fibre (BT)	Mobile (4G)	Hot-spots
Features					
Speed (Download)	Up to 17Mbps	Up to 200Mbps	Up to 76Mbps	Up to 40Mbps	Up to 50Mbps
Installation	Self	Survey / Engineer	Self	Self	Self
Lead time (to install)	14 days	14 days	14 days	1 day	1 day
Landline required	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Set-up costs	£0-£50	£15	£60	Variable	Variable
Average mthly cost	£20-£30	£20-£50	£25-£35	Variable	Variable
Main providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BT ■ Sky ■ Plus Net ■ EE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Virgin Media ■ Sky 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ O2 ■ 3 ■ Vodafone ■ Virgin ■ EE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BT ■ O2 ■ Sky ■ Virgin

This table is purely indicative. We recommend you visit specific providers' website before making a decision on broadband