

Britain's got a 5G problem. This is how to fix it.

- Britain ranks **45th out of 58 countries** for 5G rollout.
- We have the **slowest speeds in the G7**.
- The Social Market Foundation says there's an **up to £37billion investment gap** to achieve nationwide 5G by 2030

You might assume the problem is planning red tape or the removal of Huawei equipment. It isn't. **The real issue is land availability.** People are no longer incentivised to host telecoms masts.

When did it all go wrong?

In 2017, the UK Government changed the law through the Electronic Communications Code to make it cheaper and easier for telecoms operators to build masts. The idea was simple: cut rents for mast sites, reinvest the savings, and speed up rollout.

In practice, **the opposite happened:**

- **Rents for site hosts** - including schools, hospitals, churches and farmers - **were cut by up to 90 per cent.**
- **More than 1,000 legal disputes** have gone to tribunal since 2017 (compared with only 33 in the three decades prior)
- **Goodwill has collapsed.** Many landowners are now refusing to host infrastructure at all.

In one case, Hillingdon NHS Trust had to repay £300,000 to Vodafone at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In another, St Mary's Church in Wakefield had its rent cut from £14,000 a year to just £1,000 - income the parish was using to fund vital repairs.

Who benefits from the rent cuts?

Telecoms masts used to be owned by mobile operators - Vodafone, Three, EE and O2. But over the past decade, these masts have been sold off to a handful of 'middle men' tower companies.

Unlike mobile operators, these new tower companies face **no obligations to improve coverage** and have **no duty to reinvest the rent savings into new sites.**

Just two of these companies control nearly 70 per cent of UK sites, and the Competition and Markets Authority expects their share to reach 90 per cent by 2030.

It's about to get worse

The UK Government is now planning to extend this same system to another 15,000 rental agreements signed *before* 2017 by implementing Part 2 of the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2022 later this year.

That means **deeper rent cuts, more legal disputes**, and **even fewer landowners willing to host the network.**

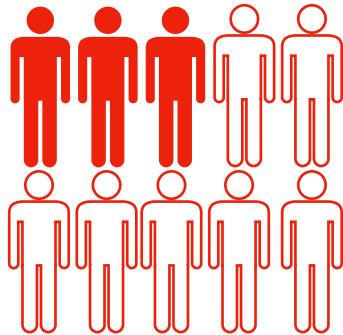
Our solution

If we want nationwide standalone 5G by 2030, we need a fairer, smarter approach.

- **Pause and review Part 2 of the Act** before making a bad system worse.
- **Check the market is working** - ensure savings are reinvested in rollout.
- **Fix how land is valued** - fair rents will restore goodwill and unlock private investment.

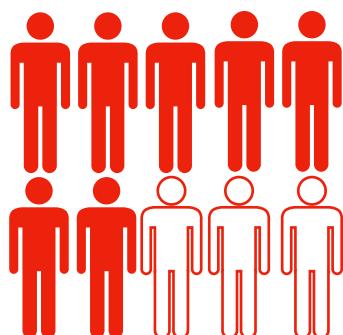
Landowners are walking away from hosting 5G masts altogether

A new national survey of 559 landowners currently hosting telecoms infrastructure reveals growing alarm over the future of the UK's 5G rollout.



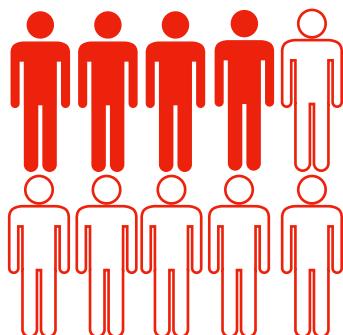
Over 35% are considering terminating their mast lease

The most common reasons were reduced rent, loss of trust, and legal threats from operators.



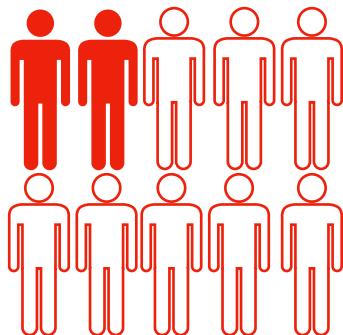
Nearly 70% have faced legal threats or pressure from mobile operators

Many site holders are small family farms, churches or community groups who can't afford to defend themselves in court.



Over 40% say they are financially dependent on mast income

Dozens of respondents show rent has dropped by up to 90% since lease renewal, a vital source of income for many.



Only 23% are willing to renew their mast lease

If landowners aren't fairly compensated, they're less likely to renew their agreements, putting Britain's 5G rollout at risk.