

## **Mobile Phone Reception in South Perrott.**

### **A Report Commissioned by the Parrett and Axe Parish Council, Dorset.**

#### **Summary:**

- There is a consistently poor signal indoors throughout the village;
- The centre of the village (post codes: DT8 3HA, DT8 3HZ and DT8 3PQ), which sits at the lowest geographical point, is a 'not-spot' with no indoor signal at all;
- The signal improves somewhat with height in all directions, but is still at best one or two bars.
- There is no significant difference between providers in terms of signal quality.
- The web sites of Vodafone, O2 and '3' make it clear no signal is available in South Perrott. EE claims<sup>1</sup> to provide a limited service, but there is no evidence of that, at least indoors.
- The outdoor signal is adequate only on the outskirts of the village. The signal along the main road is weak and non-existent in the village centre.

#### **Recommendations:**

- That this report and a covering letter be sent to OfCom, with copies to the local MP, Oliver Letwin and County and District Councillors. The combined submission should request, as a matter of urgency, that OfCom take up the issue of essentially non-existent coverage and pursue it in accordance with Briefing Paper (07069, 9 June 2015) *Mobile Coverage in the UK: Government plans to tackle 'mobile not spots'*.
- That the report should be posted on the village's web site, its Facebook page and reported in *The Pump and Pound*.
- Since it is highly unlikely that the village will benefit from a strong mobile signal in the immediate future, that the Parish Council takes responsibility for informing households of the alternative method of receiving good mobile coverage, namely via the Internet. This may require a degree of education and support within some sections of the community.

Professor David Lines  
November 2015

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<sup>1</sup> The EE website states: "This area (DT8) has coverage for internet and calls and texts for phones." My parentheses.  
<http://ee.co.uk/ee-and-me/network/why-ee/mobile-coverage#theCoverageContainer> Accessed 5/11/15

### Methodology and research ethics

- A simple, five part questionnaire was circulated via the village newsletter, *The Pump and Pound*, in the Summer of 2015. The response rate to this was low;
- Subsequently, the same questionnaire was distributed by hand to all households. This resulted in a much improved response rate;
- The questionnaire offered respondents anonymity. In the event, no one exercised that right, but names have in any case been removed from the final report.
- Responses were collated and presented at the Parish Council meeting on Thursday 10 September. Since that meeting a further two have been received.
- The 'notes' column in the collated responses (see appended sheets) are taken verbatim from the returned questionnaires, with some editing for the sake of brevity.

### Results

- 50 written and 2 verbal replies were received. This gives a return rate of approximately 51% from the 102 households in the village.
- The mobile phone operator distribution was as follows:

Operator	Numbers
EE	16
Vodafone	14
O2	13
Tesco	5
Orange	4
3	3
BT	3
Talk Talk	2
Utlility Warehouse	1
Sainsbury's	1

- Several households had more than one operator, hence the sum is more than 52.
- Not all respondents knew who their operator was and were often appeared to be unaware of 'piggy-backing' i.e. where a commercial supplier uses one of the four main networks (EE, Vodafone, O2 and '3'), but under its own name. Tesco, for example, uses the O2 network.
- There was no discernible difference in the quality of the signal depending on the operator.

### Mapping the results

The collated responses were grouped into seven distinct areas, shown under column three. These areas were then plotted (see separate map) as follows:

- Area 1: The western (Crewkerne) end of the village, centred on Hill Farm;
- Area 2: The western central end, centred on Church Hill;
- Area 3: The northern side centred on Schoolhill;
- Area 4: The village centre, including Parrett Mead;
- Area 5: The village centre, including Manor Close;
- Area 6: The village centre along the A356;
- Area 7.: The western (Dorchester) end.

The average reception values of each area, shown in Bars and indicated on the map, are subjective assessments and are not arithmetically calculated.

The map describes the approximate 80 metre contour lines. Between them is lower ground, which is where the central part of the village sits. It is at the lowest point where reception is reported to be at its poorest.