



Labour urged to rule out Freeview switch-off as poll shows 79% of Scots want it kept to 2044

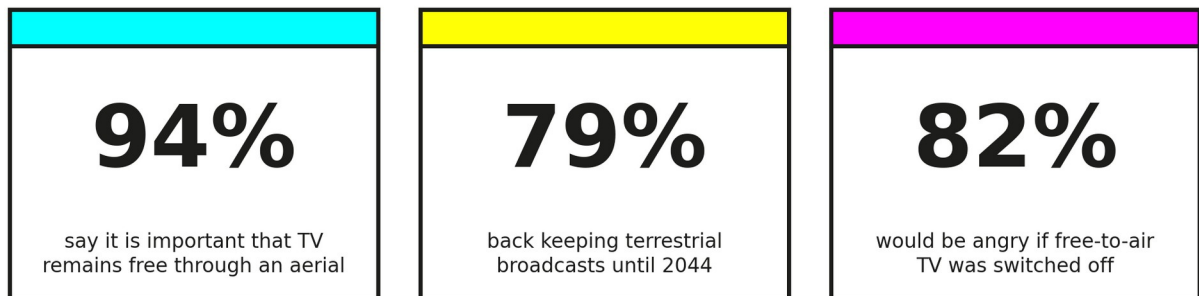
- **New Scottish polling finds 94 per cent say it is important that television remains available free through an aerial, while 79 per cent back keeping terrestrial broadcasts until 2044**

The UK Government is encouraged to protect Scottish viewers, as new polling shows overwhelming public opposition to an early terrestrial TV switch-off.

The UK Government has launched a consultation offering a choice between ending traditional broadcasts in 2034 or extending them to 2044. Broadcasting is reserved to Westminster, so the decision will apply in every Scottish home.

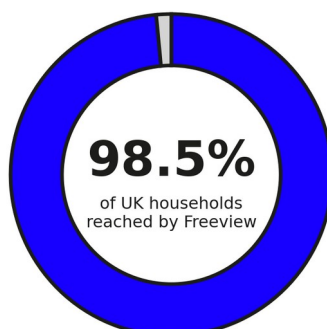
Polling of 1,210 Scottish adults, conducted for the Broadcast 2040+ campaign, finds that 94 per cent say it is important that television remains available free through an aerial. Seventy-nine per cent support keeping terrestrial broadcasts until 2044, while 82 per cent say they would be angry with a government that switched off free-to-air television.

What Scottish adults told us



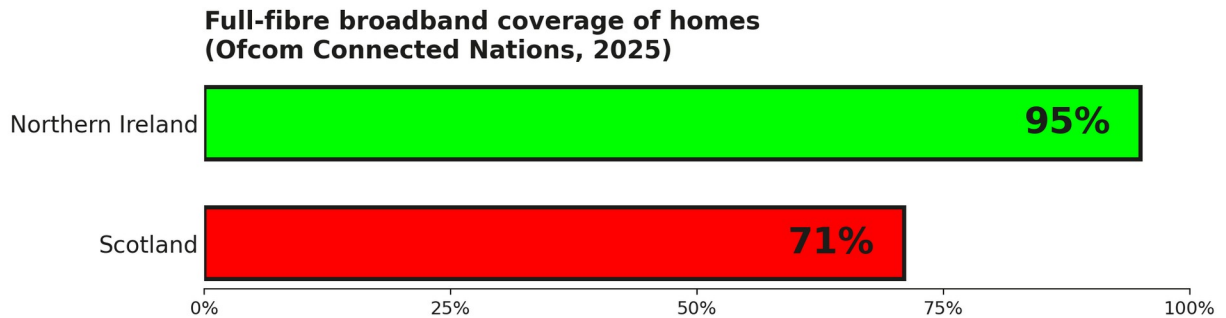
A 2034 switch-off would mean households could no longer receive programmes through an aerial on Freeview and would instead need to use an internet-based service. That means a suitable broadband subscription, compatible equipment and the confidence to use streaming apps.

Freeview currently reaches around 98.5 per cent of UK households and carries BBC, STV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 without requiring a monthly broadband subscription.





Ofcom's Connected Nations report for 2025 found that Scotland has the lowest full-fibre coverage of the four UK nations, at 71 per cent of homes compared with 95 per cent in Northern Ireland. Scotland's rural superfast broadband coverage lags behind the rest of the country. Remote and island communities can face fewer providers, higher installation costs and less resilient connections.



The Commons Scottish Affairs Committee in the last Parliament called for a commitment to maintain Freeview beyond 2034 because of its importance to rural Scottish households.

A spokesperson for the Broadcast 2040+ campaign said:

“Nobody should be forced to buy high-speed broadband simply to keep watching television they currently receive through an aerial. In a country with Scotland's geography, that risk falls hardest on rural and island households.

“The UK Government should support Scottish viewers who rely on Freeview and commit to a 2044 extension to Freeview.”

The consultation closes on 31 August. No final decision has been taken.

Notes to editors:

Polling conducted by Strand Partners, a member of the British Polling Council, among 1,210 Scottish adults between 26.06.26 and 30.06.26.