

# Shaw Residents' Association

For the Residents of Peatmoor, Sparcells, Nine Elms, Middleleaze, Shaw, Ramleaze, the Prinnels,  
Eastleaze and Westlea (West)

7 February 2020

Dear Ms Bates

## **Re: Consultation on BT program of intended public payphone removals**

Thank you for forwarding to the Shaw Residents' Association the Swindon Borough Council's proposed response to BT. Please find attached our initial response to the consultation, which highlighted our concerns over the accuracy of the data being used for decision making. The Borough's proposed response to BT further heightens our concerns.

We note that of the six phone boxes in West Swindon, the Borough wishes to object to the removal of three of them. The rationale for your objection is due to a 'high number of calls' and / or 'sheltered housing nearby'.

We note that you do not plan to object to the removal of the Shaw Village Centre phone box, presumably because BT is showing zero calls. However, it is located in a village centre and close to the sheltered accommodation known as George Tweed Gardens.

Attached you will find a picture of said Shaw Village Centre phone box - it is, of course, little wonder there were zero phone calls made from it. We also draw your attention (attached) to our response last December, where we highlighted the fact that the Shaw Village Centre phone box was out of order. It would seem you have ignored our response in your follow up to BT.

Whilst a check of the Halifax box indicates it is now working, we have not checked the functionality of any additional West Swindon boxes.

This consultation is deeply flawed, and your response to it is, therefore, also flawed. The root cause of the problem lies squarely with BT who have failed to provide adequate data for the consultation.

We request that your response to BT is to ask them to provide accurate data. That data should ideally show dates (in the last two years) of boxes becoming inactive (they must be able to detect that remotely) and an annual call volume that takes into account the periods in which a given box is non-functional. At the very least, their data should show the call volume in the year preceding the last call made from the box (the assumption being that after that call, the box became inoperative).

Consultations are only as good as the data that supports them; otherwise, it is a desk-based tick box exercise, which this appears to be.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Fisher  
SRA Chair

Sent via email to: [forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk)

[www.shawresidents.org.uk](http://www.shawresidents.org.uk)  
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Eastleaze and Westlea (West)

7th December 2019

Dear Ms Bates

**Re: Consultation on BT program of intended public payphone removals**

Thank you for forwarding the consultation to the Shaw Residents' Association.

Since we do not have enough data, and the information we do have appears to be flawed, we are not in a position to make any formal statements of support or objection. However, we do object to the process and data used for BT's decision making.

Of the 24 payphones listed in the consultation, one of our members has recently looked at just three of them (Shaw Village Centre, Stokesay Drive and Halifax) and all three are out of service. And, since she tried using them all on the 4th of September, we can report that they have been out of action for at least three months. Therefore, it is little wonder that they show minimal use (the Shaw village Centre call box shows zero calls).

Since BT's decision-making process appears to be based on statistical usage data, otherwise why list the number of calls, and 100 % of the sample we audited is out of action, BT's rationale for removal can only be surmised as being unsound.

Furthermore, since BT's data does not indicate the period over which the number of calls per payphone is based upon, it is difficult for anyone to judge whether a decision to remove a given payphone is sensible or not. For example, the 138 calls from the Colchester Close payphone is significant if that number is based on daily use, but less so if based on the last decade.

In addition to a decision-making process that seems to be based on flawed statistics, we also question the consultation period. In your letter, you state the consultation closes on 13th December. And yet, attached to the Halifax payphone is a note from BT saying that the consultation runs for 42 days from 26th September. We are concerned that BT has already made their decision based on their flawed statistical data and, therefore, the consultation you are running will add zero value.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Fisher  
SRA Chair

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