

Dear Clerk to the Council

I am writing as the main officer contact for Shropshire Council in regard to BT payphones in your area.

We are seeking initial feedback from any interested bodies (including parish councils and town councils), after BT commenced a round of consultation with us regarding the proposed removal of 17 operational payphones across the county. This consultation runs through until 09 April 2026. Given that the Easter break falls in this period of time, the intention of the Council is to submit responses in advance of that date if at all possible.

16 of these payphones are modern style KX100 kiosks. These kiosks can only be adopted to house defibrillators. Individuals can't adopt kiosks themselves.

For your area, the KX100 payphones plus one K6 on the BT list are as follows:

7	01743241834	PCO PUBLIC TELEPHONE 10M FROM PEKING GARDEN 89 MO MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD SHREWSBURY	SY1 3EL	18 calls; coverage 3/3/4/3; at last review in 2021, retained with 26 calls on grounds of call usage and proximity to vulnerable residents
8	01743246760	JCT SUNDORNE AVE/SUNDORNE RD PCO1 SUNDORNE ROAD SHREWSBURY	SY1 4RH	18 calls; coverage 3/3/3/3; at last review in 2020, retained with 12 calls on grounds of call usage and social need. Note previous review in Dec 2019 176 calls ? current usage for helpline calls
9	01743247222	NEAR THE ABBEY PCO1 ABBEY FOREGATE SHREWSBURY	SY2 6AD	35 calls; coverage 4/4/4/4 ? current usage for helpline calls
10	01743247636	SHOPPING PARADE PCO1 MYTTON OAK ROAD SHREWSBURY	SY3 8UA	23 calls; coverage 3/3/4/4; at last review in 2020, retained with 9 calls on grounds of social need and concerns over mobile coverage. Note previous review in Dec 2019 270 calls. ? current usage for helpline calls

11	01743447025	PCO1 LANCASTER ROAD SHREWSBURY	SY1 3LE	1 call; coverage 4/3/4/4; at last review, no calls but retained due to proximity to vulnerable residents
----	-------------	--------------------------------	---------	--

Red kiosks may be adopted by town and parish councils and charitable organisations for any community use. This one is listed, meaning that the structure won't be removed should there not be any local interest in its adoption. BT have advised that in that scenario the kiosk structure would be locked by them following the removal of the operational telephony.

I would therefore like to please ask at this time if the Town Council wishes to adopt this kiosk for community use, or if it wishes the Council to make representations against its removal as an operational payphone.

Could I please also thank you in advance for your input in the responses that we're proposing to make for these payphones.

Background

The council no longer has the power of veto over removals, following changes made by Ofcom to the universal service obligation placed on BT and KCOM, which came into effect in June 2022 after a period of national consultation. Ofcom have instead replaced the local veto with a set of criteria to assess reasonable user needs prior to the removal of a 'last at a site' payphone or public call box (PCB).

The Ofcom criteria sets out to protect last at a site PCBs where:

- They don't have coverage from all four mobile network providers; or
- They're located in an area with a high frequency of accidents or suicides; or
- They've made 52 or more calls over the past 12 months (ie the equivalent of one call per week); or
- There's other evidence of a reasonable need for the PCB

Please note that PCB adoption can't be made by individuals, and can't take place if the criteria for removal isn't met. For example, BT records may indicate that mobile phone coverage isn't sufficient at a site, or that the PCB in question is the one that they've decided should remain as 'last at a site'. Ofcom advises that: "A site is defined as 400 metres walking distance from the next nearest PCB."

- For all 17 on the listing, BT advise that calls are below the threshold of 52: however, this does not account for those where there is local knowledge that the payphone may have been out of order, so we would welcome input on that.
- BT also assert that mobile phone coverage is at 3 out of 4 or 4 out of 4 for all four mobile network providers. We are carrying out a check on the mobile phone coverage data using independent research and will advise parish and town council individually if there are anomalies.
- BT also do not have details of other reasonable need, which could include the need for emergency access in areas of high flood risk or areas where there is a high frequency of accidents. We are also mindful of the need to ensure that we have local data on helpline need or helpline usage, particularly in rural and remote areas.

If you would like the Council to make representation for **retention** of the payphones as operational payphones, or indicate support for their **removal** in their entirety, please could you email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk with your views and any local knowledge and evidence around need for the payphone to either be retained or removed.

Similarly, if your town council would like to request **adoption of any of the payphone kiosks**, involving removal of the operational telephony and retention of the structure, this is an offer made by BT, and is not a requirement under Ofcom obligations. Contact needs to please be made directly with BT with reference to the following details from them, in order for this to be logged and for any queries to be resolved before the 09 April closing date. Please could we ask you to let us know for our records as well, and please do not hesitate to contact us with any queries on what is involved.

Adoption Opportunity

“Most red kiosks can be adopted by local councils, registered charities and private landowners for just £1, transforming them into defibrillator stations, mini-libraries or other creative ventures. They can also adopt modern glass boxes if they want to house a defibrillator. More information is available at bt.com/adopt.

*“Adoption requests should be registered as soon as possible with payphones@bt.com, even if BT have not yet made an initial decision. **Please Note:** kiosks identified for removal could be removed shortly after a final decision has been made. Early registration of interest could mean adoptees avoid disappointment.*

“Please send in the details of the interested body to email address payphones@bt.com detailing request to adopt, and providing contact number and postal address for the adopting party that the correspondent is representing. “[Source: BT]