



Patricia Ferguson MP  
Chair, Scottish Affairs Select Committee  
House of Commons Palace of Westminster  
London, SW1A 0AA  
[ScotAffCom@parliament.uk](mailto:ScotAffCom@parliament.uk)  
+44 (0)20 7219 1810  
Social: @houseofcommons parliament.uk

6<sup>th</sup> August 2026

Dear Patricia

Many thanks for your letter to Allison Kirkby, which has been passed to me for a reply. We are grateful for the Committee's interest in this subject and BT looks forward to providing evidence to the Committee in person later this year.

You are right that digital resilience is critical at both a national and local level. Keeping services running during a crisis is our top priority and we set out in our previous evidence to the Committee how we are investing tens of millions each year to improve security and resilience. This investment is spread across a large - and expanding - list of threats and priorities including defending against AI-enabled cyber-attacks; improving resilience in remote areas; speeding up our service restoration capabilities; and investing in better power resilience in our fixed and mobile networks. It is good to hear that witnesses highlighted the impact of the measures that were taken by BT to maintain essential services following the outage in Tiree, but of course, there is always more to do.

I thought it would be helpful to the Committee for me to set out BT's overall approach to network resilience before answering your specific questions. Key elements of this approach include:

- *Designing for resilience*: networks are architected with multiple paths, redundant components, and diverse routes to minimise single points of failure and maintain connectivity during outages;
- *Building resilient infrastructure*: BT deploys highly resilient core network architectures and strengthens critical assets against risks such as power failures, flooding, and extreme weather events;
- *Proactive monitoring and maintenance*: Continuous monitoring, analytics, inspections, and predictive technologies help identify vulnerabilities early;
- *Continuous improvement and adaptation*: BT regularly reviews risks, learns from incidents, and adopts new technologies and practices.

- *Emergency Response:* BT maintains dedicated emergency response teams and civil resilience capabilities to manage major incidents, and coordinate rapid network restoration during emergencies.

All of this means that the planned improvements in satellite back up should not be seen in isolation, but rather part of a broader strategy to build overlapping resilience.

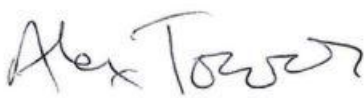
In relation to your specific questions, we will be installing resilient satellite connectivity to over 300 mobile sites across islands and remote areas of the UK. Rollout will start at the end of the year. We are still finalising specific site plans, and can share further details when we have them, but I can confirm that the majority of the proposed sites are in Scotland, including a number of Scottish islands.

We use several criteria to determine which sites will receive resilient satellite connectivity including: the extent of overlapping coverage from adjacent cell sites, or from planned future network evolution improving coverage and resilience; the extent to which any coverage outage would form a single contiguous area; our assessment of the risks of fibre break based on fibre length, fibre route, and historic prevalence; the longevity of satellite line of sight and access to satellite constellation; whether portable satellite backhaul kits are available (as these support additional recovery options). These criteria are designed to maximise the impact of this investment from a network and customer perspective, but, as you will appreciate, they don't necessarily mean that an island served by only one cable would automatically be prioritised since that island might have other sources of resilience (e.g. overlapping coverage for mobile or a radio link). Once the resilient satellite is installed, these sites will support voice, data & SMS services, however data performance may be reduced compared to normal service depending upon the number of connected users and their demands in the mast area during a resilience event.

This represents an important step in improving digital resilience in remote, rural and island communities. I can confirm that we will not treat the costs of deploying these terminals any differently to how we treat usual recovery of costs for our network investments. Of course, the Committee will appreciate that investments in network resilience do have a significant cost, and the overall threat level is increasing. Alongside resilience, we face ever greater expectations around network quality and coverage, all while the UK has some of the lowest consumer prices for telecoms in the OECD. While we will continue to invest in our network resilience, there are limits to what a highly competitive market can deliver. We are continuing to make the case as part of the ongoing UK Government Mobile Market Review for policy and regulatory changes that will help to unlock further investment for mobile. On resilience specifically, we are calling for government coordination as well as public funding where technical and commercial constraints mean that individual operators cannot address the challenges alone.

I look forward to discussing this in more detail when BT gives evidence and would be grateful for any support the Committee can give in making the case for reforms to boost market investment as well as the need for public subsidy to address the growing resilience challenges we face as a country

Yours sincerely,



Director of Policy and Public Affairs, BT



## Scottish Affairs Committee

**Allison Kirkby**  
**Chief Executive**  
**BT Group Plc**

By email only

16 July 2026

Dear Ms Kirkby

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee. The Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into digital connectivity in Scotland. As part of this inquiry, we have been examining digital resilience in Scotland's remote, rural and island communities.

Digital resilience is becoming increasingly important as our reliance on digital infrastructure grows and underpins an ever-wider range of critical services. During a recent evidence session, the Committee heard from a Tiree resident about the impact of a seven-week digital outage following damage to the island's only subsea cable during Storm Amy. Witnesses described the severe consequences for emergency communications - including the loss of the 999 service - fuel supply and day-to-day life, and noted that it was fortunate that no major life-threatening incident occurred during the outage.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee has also explored the role that Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite services can play in maintaining connectivity during incidents of this nature. Witnesses highlighted BT's deployment of LEO technology on Tiree as an effective intervention that helped essential services, including GP surgeries, to continue operating while the subsea cable was out of service.<sup>2</sup>

We note that, in written evidence to the Committee, BT has told us that it is planning to install satellite terminals in island communities to provide backup communications in the event of future connectivity failures.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Qg 2-5](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Q7](#)

<sup>3</sup> BT Group ([CISDC0019](#))



## Scottish Affairs Committee

In light of this, I would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions:

- Could you provide further details of BT's plans to install satellite terminals in island communities, including which communities are expected to receive them and the anticipated timetable for their deployment?
- As part of this rollout, what criteria has BT used to determine which communities will receive satellite backup capability? We would also be grateful if you could confirm whether all Scottish islands connected by a single subsea cable are covered under these plans.
- Once installed, what level of connectivity and coverage will these terminals provide during an outage? In particular, it would be helpful to understand the speed of connectivity, and what types of services residents would - and would not - be able to access.
- Will any costs associated with the installation or use of these terminals be passed on to customers?

I would be grateful for a response by Thursday 30 July 2026.

Yours sincerely,

**Patricia Ferguson MP**

Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee