

GET SET FOR CHANNEL ISLANDS SWITCHOVER

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The Channel Islands will switch to digital television in **November 2010**, it was announced today (20 January).

The switchover will make digital TV through an aerial (Freeview) available in the Channel Islands for the first time. The new signal will reach virtually all households in the Islands. Digital UK, the independent switchover body for the UK, is to lead the process, working with the governments of Jersey and Guernsey.

Terrestrial television in the Channel Islands is provided by the Fremont Point transmitter in Jersey and seven 'relay' masts in Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney. All of these transmitters will switch from analogue to digital TV in a two-stage process starting in November 2010. The exact dates will be announced nearer the time.

At the start of switchover, BBC Two will cease broadcasting in analogue and the first group of Freeview digital channels will become available. Around two weeks later, the remaining analogue channels will be permanently switched off and replaced by additional digital services.

Around 20 of the most-watched Freeview channels will then be available via an aerial to virtually every Channel Islands viewer. ¹

Bill Taylor, Digital UK Regional Manager, said: "Today's announcement is great news for the Channel Islands. Switchover will mean virtually all Islanders have a choice of ways to receive digital TV for the first time."

Senator Alan Maclean, Minister for Economic Development in Jersey said: "The fact that switchover will happen within two years is great news, giving greater choice and quality of reception than ever before."

Deputy Geoff Mahy, Minister for the Home Department in Guernsey said: "I am pleased that digital TV is soon to be available in the Islands. It will substantially enhance the ability for all Islanders to enjoy a much wider variety of channels than previously available."

Digital UK will send leaflets to every home in the Channel Islands explaining switchover and the options available for going digital. These will be backed up by radio and television advertising. Six months before switchover, on-screen captions reminding viewers to get ready will appear on the television sets of those still watching analogue broadcasts.

Digital UK will work in partnership with Channel Islands governments and local organisations to provide advice and assistance for those who may need extra help.

A help scheme will be available to those who need most assistance. You will be eligible if you are over 75 or entitled to certain disability benefits. The help scheme will be in touch in plenty of time to ask if you want help.

- ends; notes follow -

Notes to editors

1. **Freeview channels** After switchover, virtually all Channel Islands households will receive approximately 20 of the most watched Freeview channels and text services. These will include the public service channels BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, C4 and Five, plus associated digital channels such as ITV2, E4 and BBC Three. Viewers can use the postcode checker at digitaluk.co.uk to check their digital options. The Digital UK helpline is on 08456 50 50 50.
2. To continue watching TV via an aerial after switchover, viewers will need to convert their television using a digital box or make sure they have an integrated digital set. Subscription and non-subscription digital TV services are also available via satellite (Sky and freesat) and cable (Newtel).

Digital television switchover is the process of converting the terrestrial television system to digital. Between now and 2012, analogue channels are being switched off region by region in the UK, and replaced with free-to-air digital TV and radio services (Freeview). Switchover will extend Freeview coverage to the whole of the UK and free up airwaves for new services such as ultra-fast wireless broadband and mobile television. The same process will happen for the Channel Islands in **November 2010**, it was announced today.

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2005 to implement digital switchover. It is jointly owned and funded by the public-service broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five, S4C and Teletext), and the digital multiplex operators.

Images and video clips are available to media free of charge from vismedia.co.uk

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