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**Press release**

**digitaluk**

## **ANALOGUE SWITCH-OFF REACHES MILLIONTH HOME**

**The switch to digital TV reaches its millionth home this week as analogue channels are turned off for good in two areas of the UK.**

On 9 September, more than 300,000 homes in Wales and the West Country will be the latest to switch since the five-year campaign to upgrade the terrestrial TV system started in November 2008. Latest research<sup>†</sup> indicates around 10 per cent of homes in areas of the UK yet to switch are still watching analogue TV on their main set.

David Scott, Chief Executive of Digital UK, said: 'This week marks a significant milestone for our campaign. As we prepare to switch our millionth home, we are confident that most viewers are well prepared for the end of the analogue era.'

'I'm pleased that our information campaign and support for viewers is working well but we've also learned important lessons which will help refine our approach as switchover moves across the UK.'

So far in 2009, Digital UK and its partner organisation, the Switchover Help Scheme, have:

- Provided advice to more than 180,000 callers to the Digital UK helpline
- Helped more than 100,000 older and disabled people switch to digital
- Provided two million postcode checks which tell viewers when they switch
- Advised a million visitors to digital switchover roadshows across the UK

Switchover has been completed in the Border TV region and will conclude in the West Country TV region this week, extending Freeview coverage to more than 400,000 homes for the first time.

**- ends; notes follow -**

## Notes to editors

1. By the end of 2012 when switchover is complete, 98.5 per cent of homes will be able to access Freeview channels, up from 73 per cent in 2008.
2. To continue watching TV via an aerial after switchover, viewers will need to convert analogue televisions using a digital box or upgrade to a fully digital model. Subscription and non-subscription digital TV services are also available via satellite and cable. A postcode checker on the Digital UK website ([www.digitaluk.co.uk](http://www.digitaluk.co.uk)) tells viewers when they switch and which options are available in their area now and after switchover. Advice is also available from the helpline on 08456 505050.
3. After switchover, virtually all UK households will be able to receive Freeview channels and text services. These will include the public service channels BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, Channel 4 and Five, plus associated digital channels such as ITV2, E4 and BBC Three. Viewers who receive their television signal from a main transmitter will receive more than 40 channels, including optional subscription services. Those who receive their television from a local relay transmitter will receive around 20 channels. Viewers can use the postcode checker at [digitaluk.co.uk](http://digitaluk.co.uk) to check which channels are available in their area.
4. The Switchover Help Scheme helps older and disabled people in the UK with digital equipment, installation and aftercare. For press queries please contact the Help Scheme press line on 0207 492 0972.

† Digital UK Tracker Survey (to July 2009)

**Digital TV switchover** is the process of converting the UK's terrestrial television system to digital. Between now and 2012, analogue channels are being switched off region by region 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. Digital services are also available via broadband, cable and satellite.

**Digital UK** is the independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2005 to lead the implementation of 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.

**The Switchover Help Scheme** is run by the BBC under an agreement with the Government to help older and disabled people make the change to digital TV. Every eligible person will be offered practical help to convert one of their TV sets to digital in the run-up to switchover in each region. People are eligible if they are aged 75 years or more, have lived in a care home for six months or more, get (or could get) certain disability benefits, or are registered blind or partially sighted. Most people will be asked to contribute £40 towards the help but for those on certain income-related benefits, it's free.

**Images and video clips** are available to media free of charge from [vismedia.co.uk](http://vismedia.co.uk).

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