

UK Broadband Complaints Hit Record Low as Ofcom League Table Runs Out of Room

Ofcom's Q1 2026 data shows complaints at a 15 year low. New analysis finds the table can no longer rank, and calls for a UK led satisfaction standard.

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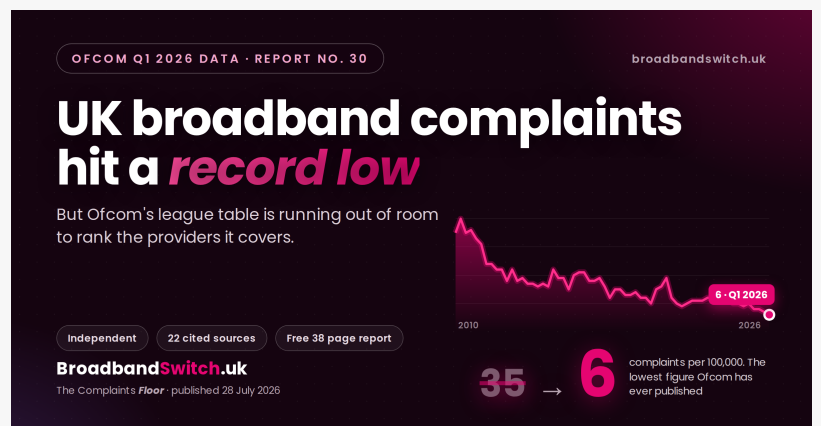
<https://broadbandswitch.uk/reports/the-complaints-floor/>

Complaints about UK fixed broadband have fallen to the lowest level Ofcom has ever recorded, and the regulator's own rules mean its league table can barely separate the providers it still ranks. That is the finding of 'The Complaints Floor', a new 38 page analysis from independent comparison site BroadbandSwitch.uk, which ends with a call for the UK to turn its complaints system into something bigger: a national satisfaction standard that other regulated sectors could adopt.

“

Flip the process on its head: capture every expression of dissatisfaction, aggregate it at national scale, and publish it as a standard the UK could set. This would create tangible, positive change.”

*Dr Alex J. Martin-Smith,
Founder, BroadbandSwitch.uk*



UK broadband complaints fell to 6 per 100,000 customers in Q1 2026, the lowest figure Ofcom has ever published. Source: Ofcom, 23 July 2026. Chart: BroadbandSwitch.uk, The Complaints Floor (Report No. 30).

Ofcom's Q1 2026 figures, published on 23 July 2026 and covering January to March, show fixed broadband complaints at 6 per 100,000 customers. That is the lowest figure in a published series that begins in Q4 2010, when the same measure stood at 35. Landline (3), pay monthly mobile (2) and pay TV (3) all equalled their lowest published levels in the same quarter.

The record is real. The report's warning is about what the record does to the league table built on top of it.

The headline findings:

> Fixed broadband complaints fell to 6 per 100,000, an outright record low. The previous low was 7, set in Q4 2025.

> TalkTalk was the most complained about broadband provider at 10 per 100,000, unchanged for a third consecutive quarter, and is the only broadband provider Ofcom does not declare statistically comparable to any other.

> Plusnet recorded both the fewest broadband complaints (4) and the most landline complaints (7) in the same quarter, under the same brand.

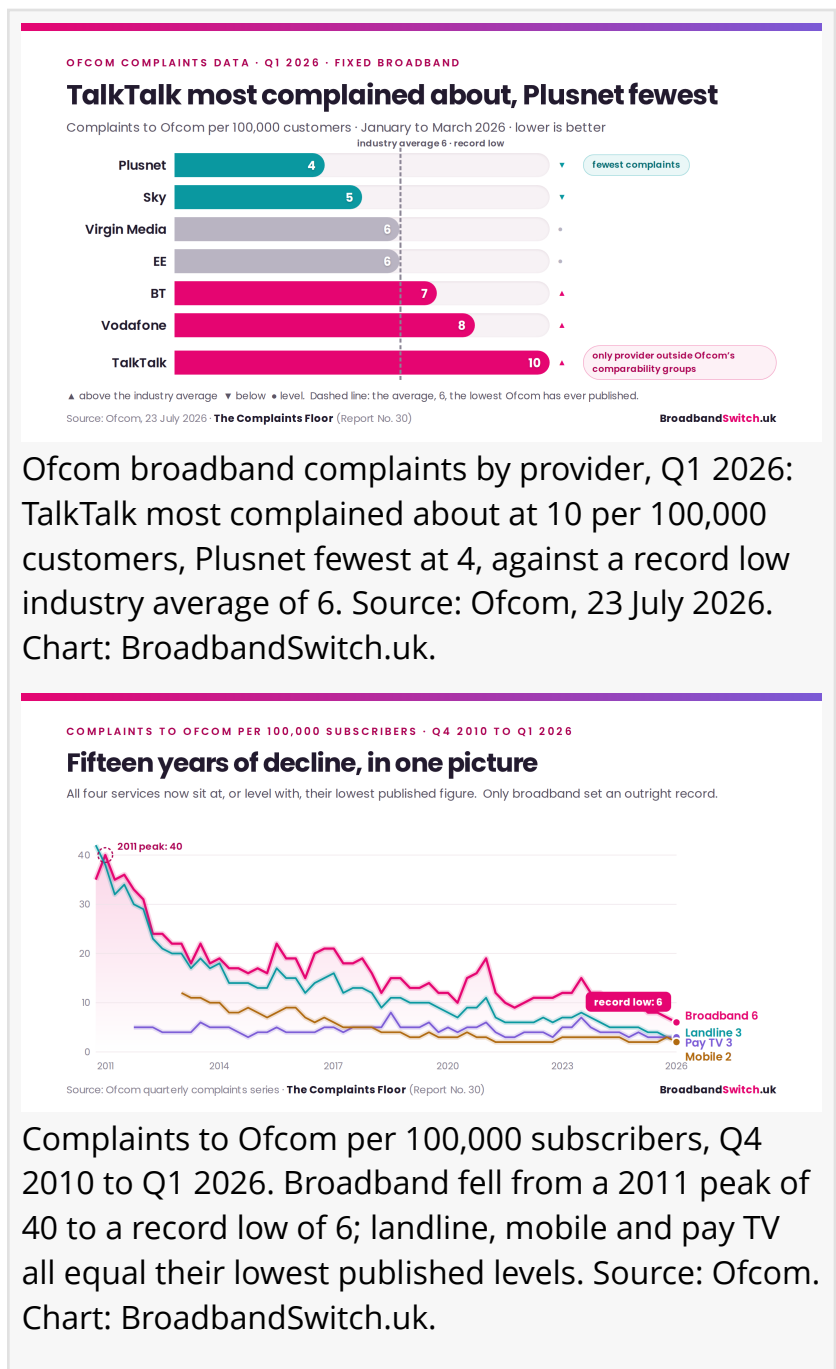
> Sky Mobile was the most complained about pay monthly mobile provider at 4 per 100,000, and the only mobile brand outside Ofcom's comparability chain.

> giffgaff entered the pay monthly mobile table for the first time, at 1 per 100,000, joint fewest complaints.

> The gap between the best and worst broadband provider is now 6 points, equal narrowest on record. In Q4 2010 it was 77.

Ofcom publishes complaints as whole numbers, and states that where the measurable difference between two providers is less than one complaint per 100,000, their performance should be considered comparable. Apply both rules to Q1 2026 and the ranking hollows out: an unbroken chain of Ofcom's own comparability groups links every broadband provider from Plusnet, the best performer, to Vodafone, the second worst. Only TalkTalk stands outside it. The same pattern holds in mobile, where only Sky Mobile sits outside a single chain, and in pay TV, where all four providers are linked and there is no outlier at all.

Dr Alex J. Martin-Smith, Founder and Chief Executive of Upleashed Limited and Strategic Lead of the SearchSwitchSave Group, said: "This is a real achievement and it should be reported as one.



But a record low is also a measurement problem. When the whole market fits inside six points, and the regulator's own rules say you cannot tell most providers apart, the league table stops being a ranking and starts being a list. Use it to spot the outlier, not to split the field."

The report argues the answer is not a better complaints table but a bigger ambition. Martin-Smith said: "Flip the process on its head. Capture every expression of dissatisfaction, not just the tiny minority loud enough to reach a regulator, then aggregate it at national scale. A thousand small frustrations with one shared cause tell you more than a handful of grave complaints ever will. Build that once, publish it as a standard, and the UK has an export: energy, water and banking all need exactly the same instrument."

The data also shows what such an instrument would measure. giffgaff, Tesco Mobile, O2 and Sky Mobile all run on the same Virgin Media O2 network, and in Q1 2026 they recorded 1, 2, 3 and 4 complaints per 100,000: the entire range of the mobile table, from fewest to most, generated over identical masts. Whatever separates them, it is not the network. It is billing, contracts and how a company behaves when a customer wants to leave.

The record low also sits beside a record fine. On 8 July 2026, fifteen days before the complaints data was published, Ofcom fined Virgin Media £28 million for making it unreasonably difficult for customers to cancel, its largest ever fine under its consumer protection rules for direct consumer harm. Virgin Media's complaints to Ofcom sat at or below the industry average throughout the investigation. A low complaints figure, the report concludes, is evidence about complaints made to Ofcom, not evidence of regulatory compliance.

'The Complaints Floor' is the 30th report in the BroadbandSwitch.uk industry research series and is published free, with no registration, alongside a machine readable data set and a public verification log. Every figure is taken directly from Ofcom's Q1 2026 summary data, every source is graded, and the report closes with a forecast that will be scored in public either way. Anyone can [read The Complaints Floor in full](https://broadbandswitch.uk/reports/the-complaints-floor/) at broadbandswitch.uk/reports/the-complaints-floor/ and the report is free to quote with attribution.

Notes to editors:

1. Ofcom's data counts only complaints made directly to Ofcom. It does not include complaints made to a provider or to an Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme such as the Communications Ombudsman or CISAS.
2. Figures are expressed per 100,000 subscribers so that providers of different sizes can be compared.
3. Ofcom generally includes only providers with a stable market share of 1.5% or more.
4. Q1 2026 covers January to March 2026, published 23 July 2026.

About BroadbandSwitch.uk: BroadbandSwitch.uk is an independent UK broadband comparison and editorial site, part of the SearchSwitchSave Group, where households can [compare live broadband deals](#) from more than 30 UK providers in under a minute. The [BroadbandSwitch.uk research library](#) includes The Great Consolidation (Report No. 27) and The Last Dial Tone (Report No. 26).

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