



A converged regulator's perspective on the future of DTT & UHF

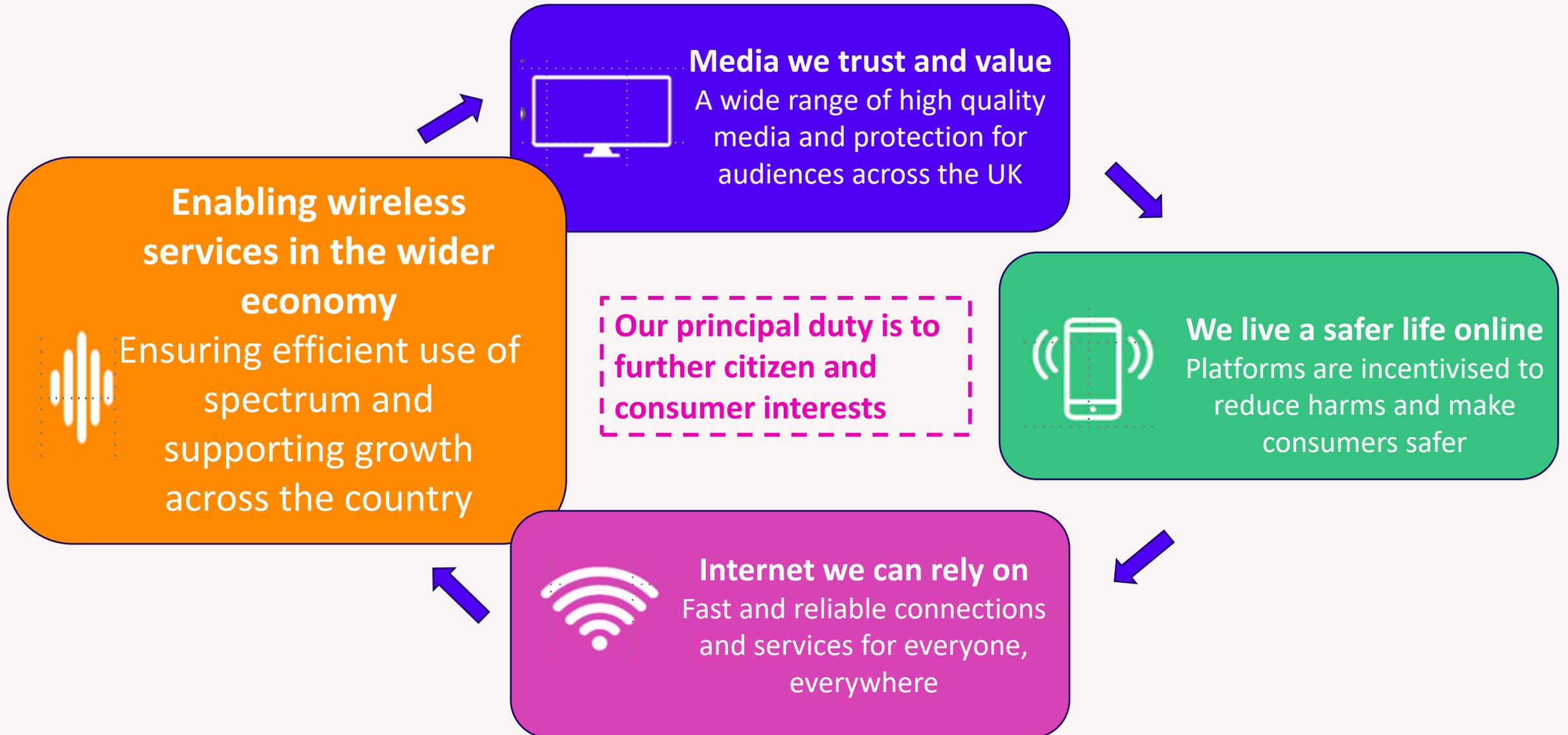
Claire Lyons

Ofcom

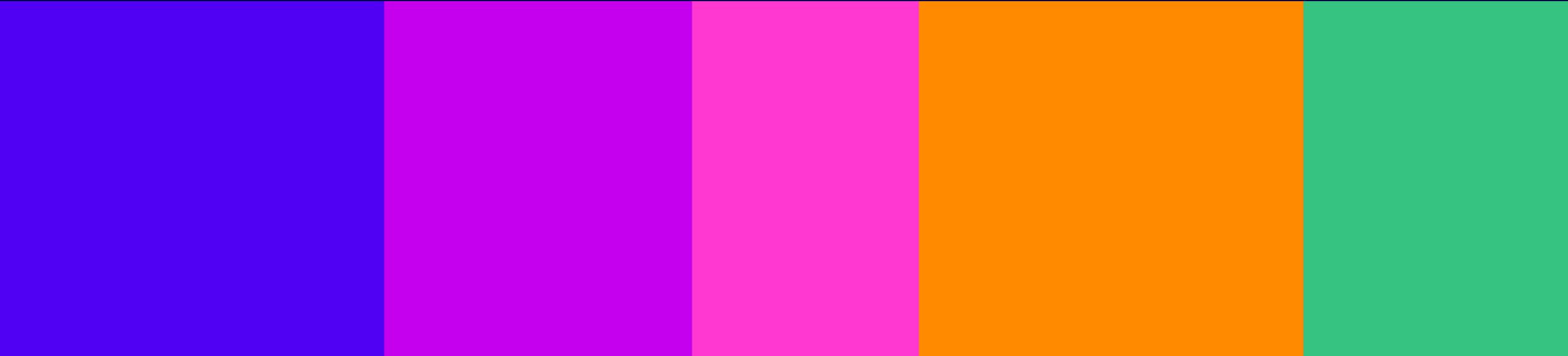
11 April 2025



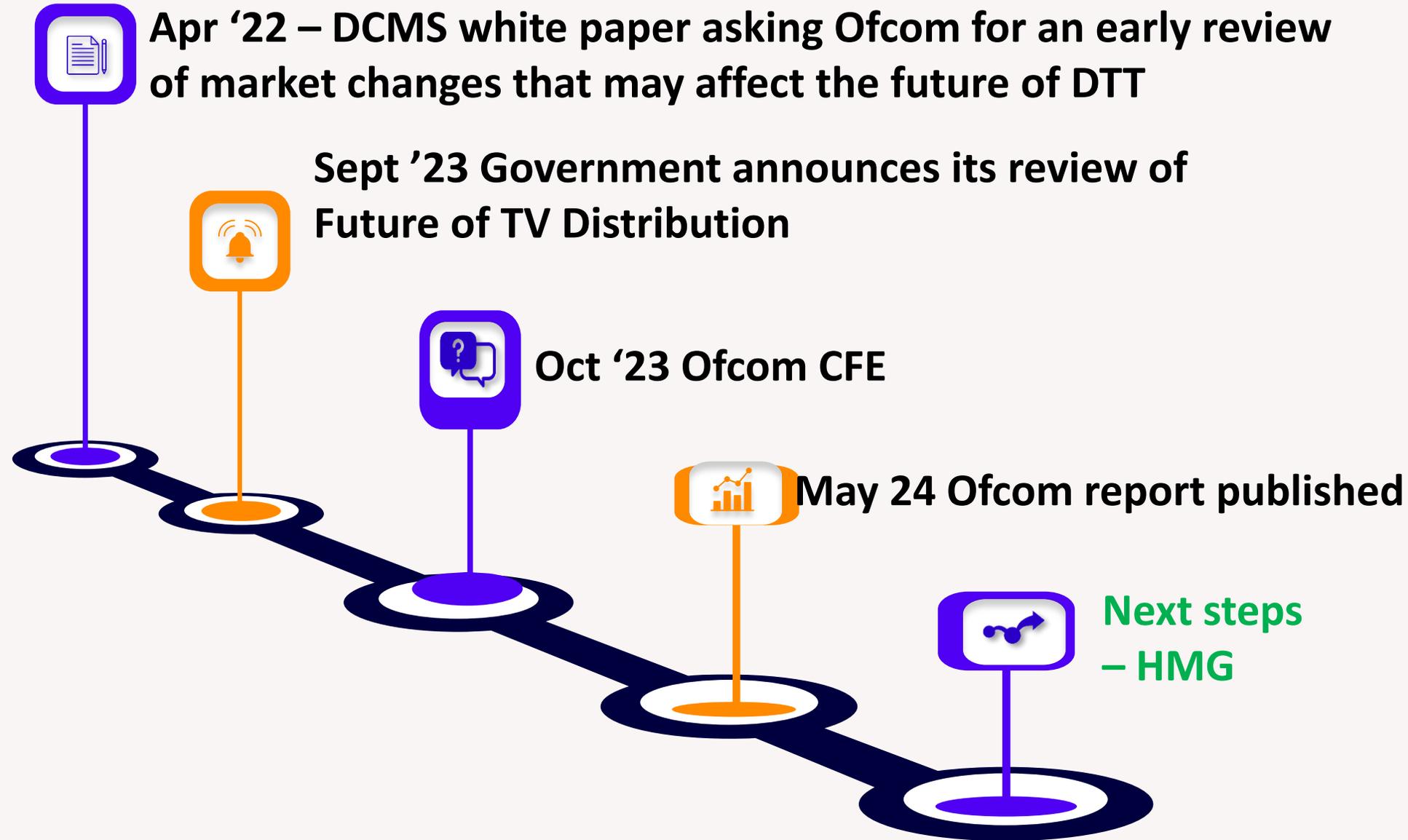
Ofcom: making communications work for everyone



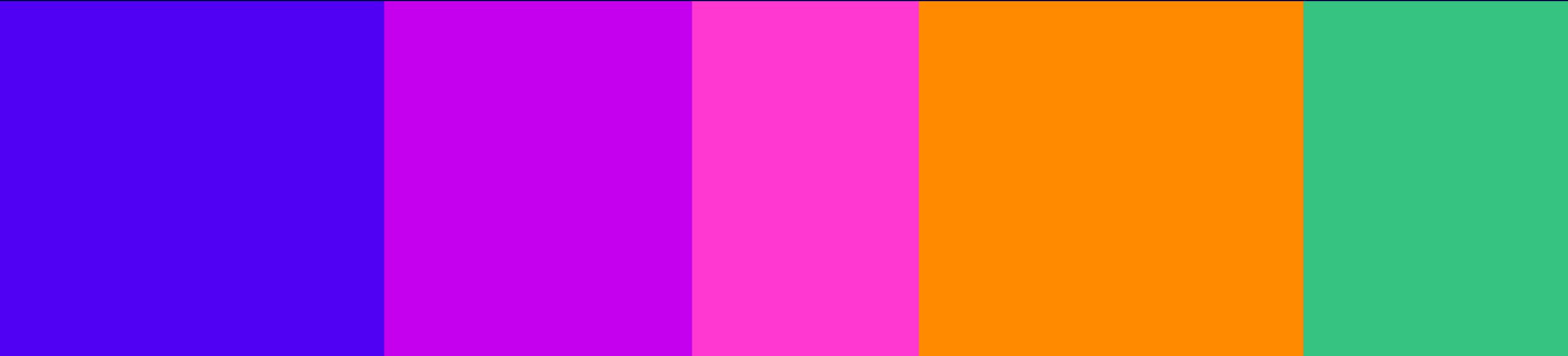
Context



Context for our report into Future of TV Distribution

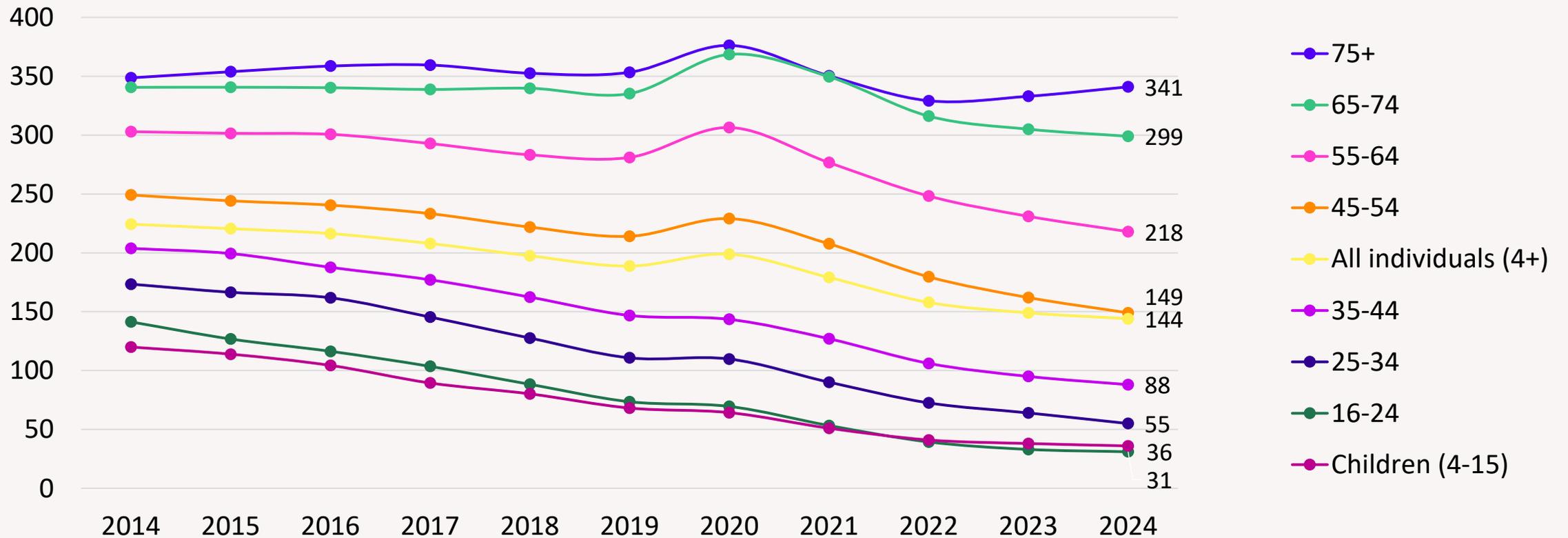


UK Media Environment



People are watching less linear broadcast TV

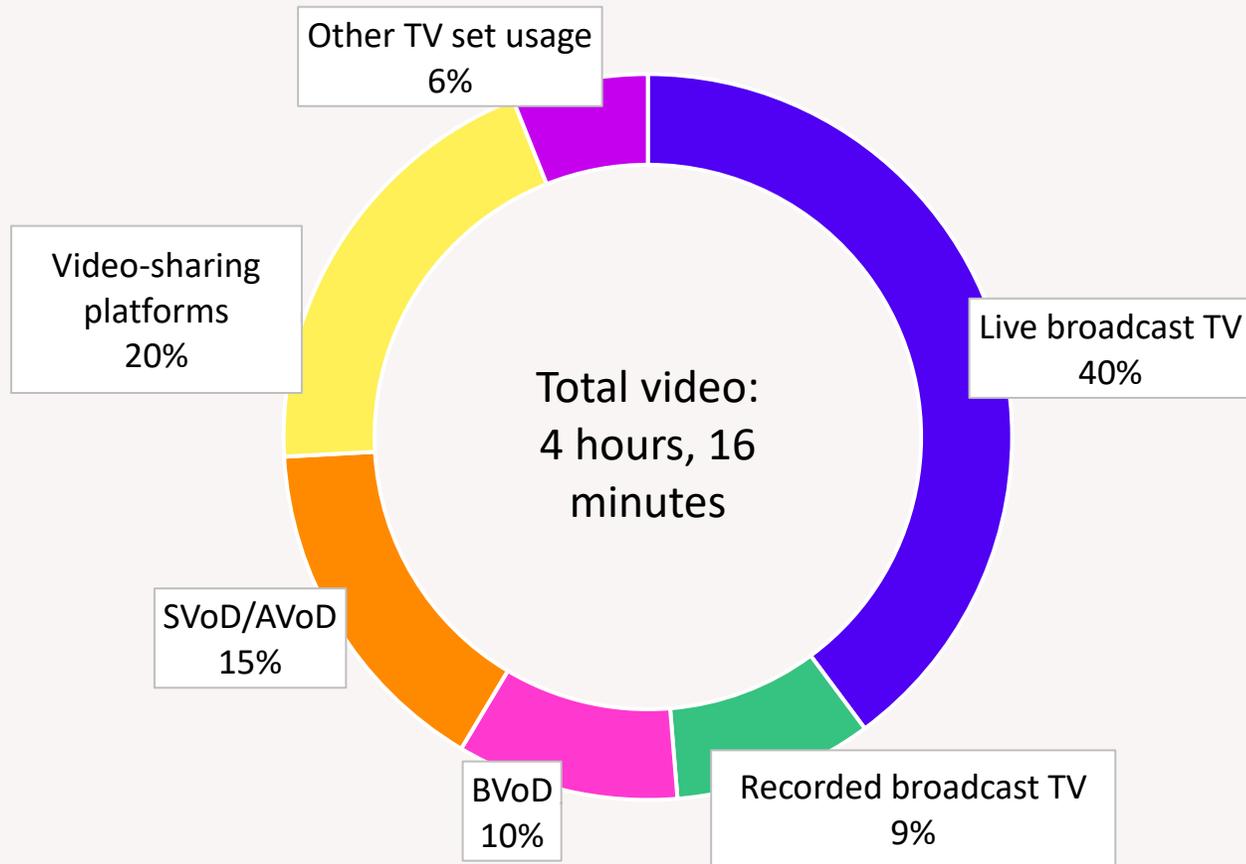
Average daily minutes of broadcast TV viewing, by age group



Source: Barb 28-day consolidated, TV sets only.

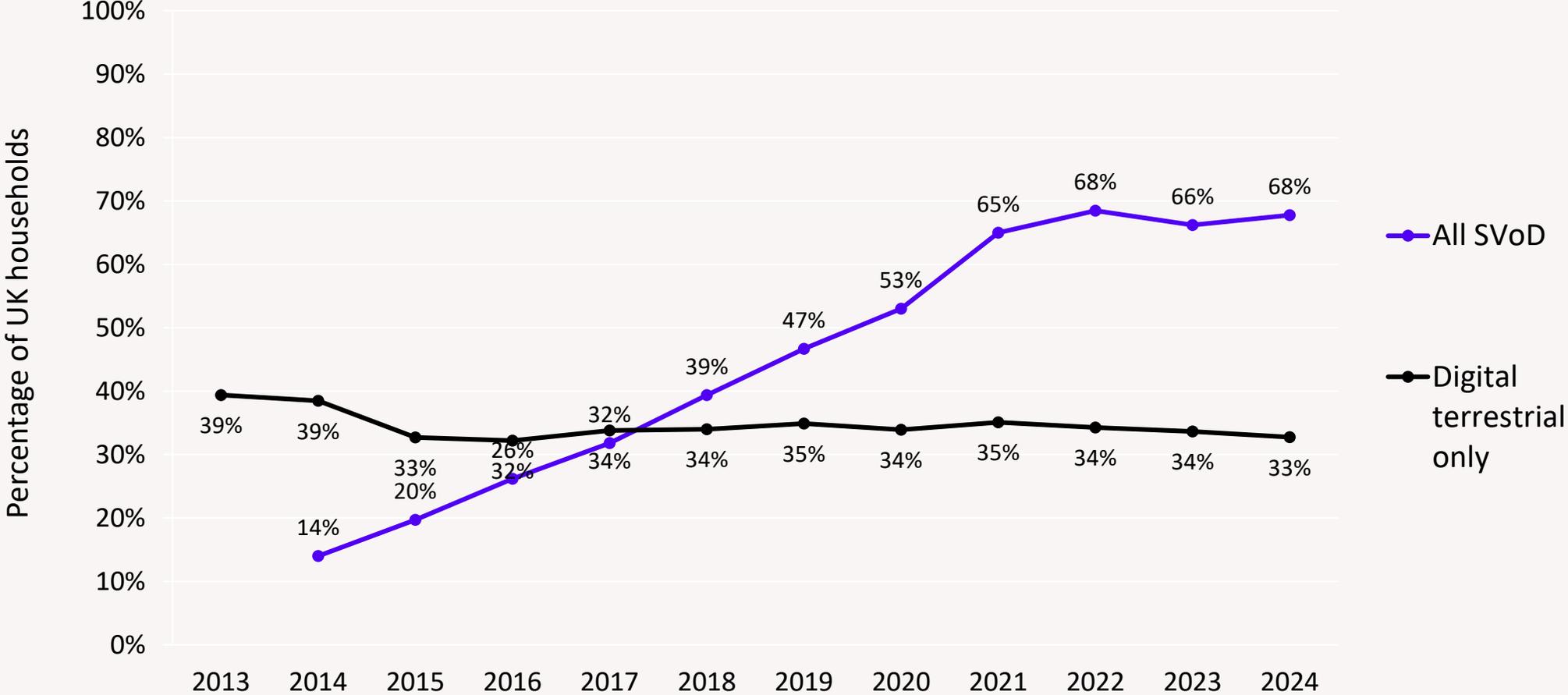
With broadcast TV substituted for online video services

Average daily minutes viewed per person, 2024



Source: Barb as-viewed, all individuals (age 4+). Average daily minutes viewed on TV sets and other devices connected to the home broadband. Excludes gaming and unidentified TV set use via a connected games console.

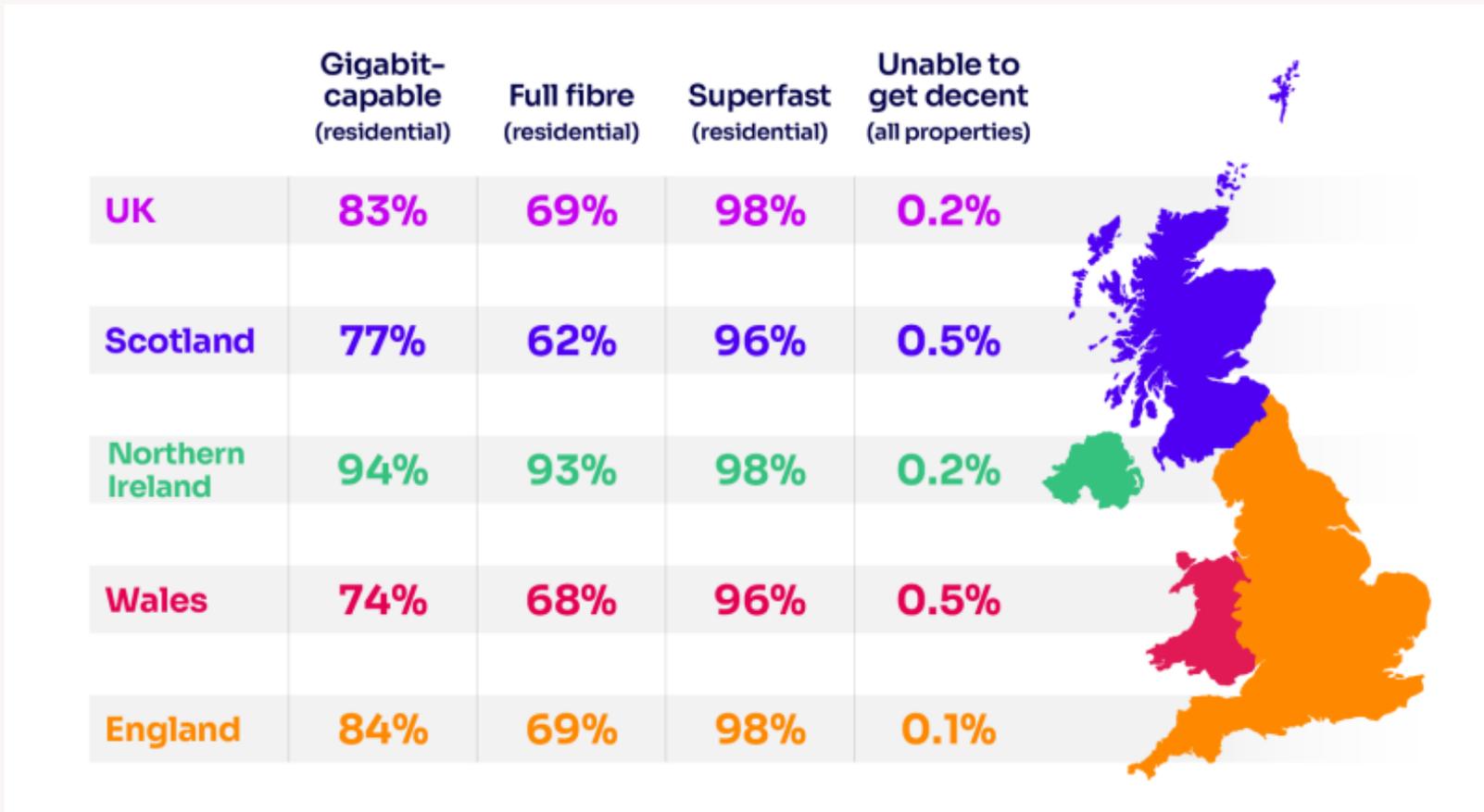
Households are split between those that have SVoD and those that are DTT only



Source: Barb Establishment Survey.

98% of homes can now get superfast broadband (and just 0.2% can't get speeds of 10Mbit/s

UK fixed broadband availability, July 2024



Alternative Broadband solutions can be examined such as FWA & Satellite

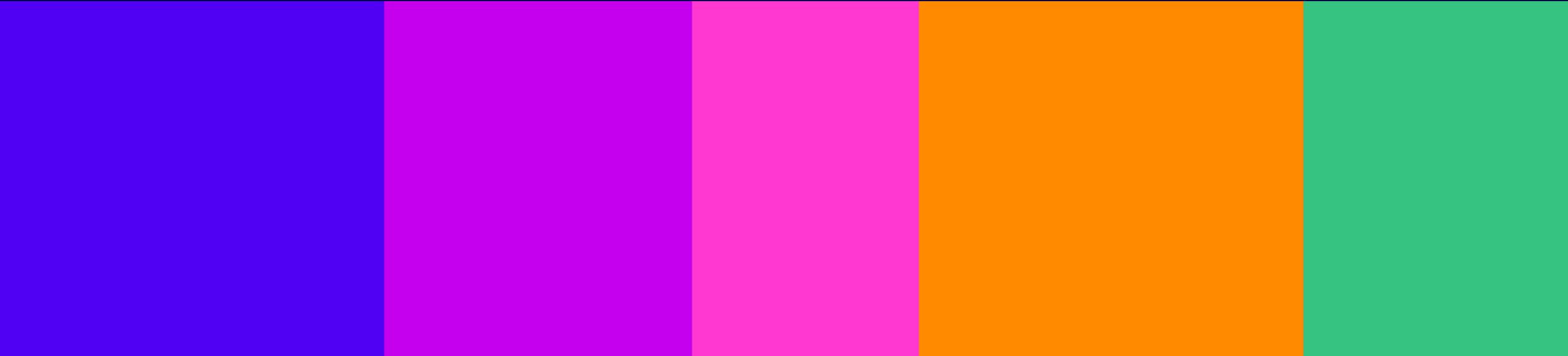
All this occurring with increased demand for spectrum to support wireless connectivity



DTT 224 MHz of spectrum in the highly valuable range of 470 to 694 MHz



Ofcom's Future of TV Distribution report 2024



We drew up three **possible scenarios** of the future that Government could consider in its policy deliberations



Each of these options would take 8-10 years of planning

A vision is needed in the next 2 years

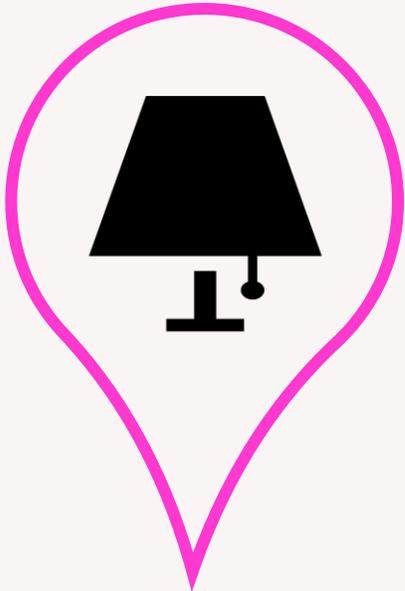
Option 1 is investment in a more efficient DTT service



**Invest in
upgrading DTT**

- If it is considered that the DTT platform will deliver sufficient scale of audiences over the 2030s, or a managed transition away is undesirable, then a more efficient but full DTT service could be considered if ongoing investment or funding could be sustained.
- Upgrading multiplexes to DVB-T2 would significantly increase the overall capacity of the DTT platform, while requiring significantly less spectrum.

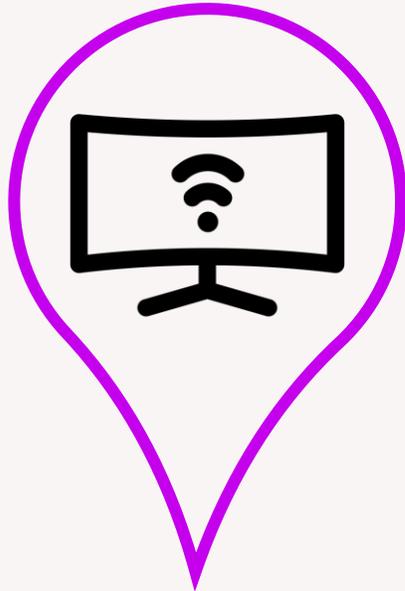
Option 2 is to slim DTT down to a lower cost core service to serve as a 'nightlight'



**Slim down to DTT
nightlight**

- The DTT service could maintain a minimum number of core channels (for example, the main public service channels). This could be done as a temporary transition to a fuller switch off, or remain indefinitely as a provider of last resort.
- This would make running the infrastructure cheaper overall but spread across fewer users. Co-users such as FM/DAB radio could remain, which also then provide power-resilient broadcasts in emergency situations.

Option 3 is to move towards DTT switch-off over the 2030s



**Full DTT
switch off**

- A planned campaign to support people in getting connected and confident with internet TV services could facilitate a DTT switch off.
- This would take careful planning to ensure universality of public service broadcasting and that no one was left behind, but would also have wider benefits for digital inclusion.

Next steps...

- UK Government continues to analyse our report and conduct work of their own on best possible policy outcomes for the UK in its decisions on the future of DTT & Public Service Media. Depending on the decision these could lead to Ofcom considering
 - Consideration of the effects on cross border interference and network replanning, including any potential switchover
 - Consideration of the effect on PMSE usage in UK
- Ofcom continues to conduct research based on our findings from our Call for Evidence
 - Barriers to take up and how to overcome them; FWA / Satellite
 - Ensuring usability and accessibility of connected TVs;
 - Examine the rationale for greater spectrum compression in DTT;





Thank you

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[Report: Future of TV distribution - Ofcom](#)

