



Broadband speed victory for Which?

BROADBAND

Which? has welcomed moves to ensure that broadband customers are given accurate information about transfer speeds.

Thirty-seven internet service providers (ISPs) have agreed to a voluntary code of practice, published by Ofcom.

Under the code, ISPs will have to give an accurate estimate of the maximum speed that a line can support to people thinking of signing up. Companies must also advise potential customers that the actual speed they'll achieve is likely to be much lower and outline all factors that can affect speed.

Providers will have to resolve technical issues to improve speed and offer lower-speed packages when estimates are inaccurate. ISPs must also provide clear information on usage limits – including fair-usage policies for packages advertised as 'unlimited' – and alert customers when limits are breached.

Companies must implement these measures within six months of signing up to the code.

Last year, Which? research revealed huge gaps between advertised and actual broadband speeds (see August, p40).

Which? broadband expert Ceri Stanaway said: 'We've been in discussions with Ofcom since we published that research and we're delighted that it has taken our concerns on board and put this code of practice in place.'

'But it's worth bearing in mind that the code is voluntary. We're glad that Ofcom plans to monitor the situation and hope that it will take swift action should ISPs fail to live up to the code.'

Your privacy could be at risk through your mobile phone

Are you being tracked?

PRIVACY

Which? has discovered that people's movements can be secretly tracked due to a loophole in a code of practice on privacy.

The code drawn up by the Mobile Broadband Group (MBG) is meant to ensure that mobile phone tracking services, called 'passive location services', comply with the law. These can be used to keep tabs on children but are also used to track adults.

It's illegal for a member of the public to track someone without their consent, yet our researcher found that it was easy to track another person's mobile in secret.



A text reminder from followus.co.uk

To use these services, you must register. The company should then send a text message to the mobile owner, whether child or adult, asking for their consent to being tracked.

The code also says that companies must send alert messages reminding the owner that they're being tracked and telling them how to disable the service.

We tested several phone tracking services from three companies. The services offering to track someone else's mobile worked as they should, but it was a different story with one 'find your own mobile' service. When our researcher signed up to the service, run



We're worried that these services could be used by fraudsters

by GetMeThere.co.uk, he found that he could track someone else's mobile by sending just one text message – to GetMeThere – from that person's phone.

'Find your mobile' services are used by people in case they lose their phone or have it stolen, but we're worried that these services could be used fraudulently by people who want to trace partners, relatives or employees without their consent.

GetMeThere.co.uk is owned by Toyota GB and IS Solutions Plc and also has a standard tracking service. The company's marketing director, Jon West, told us his company complies with the code but also that it doesn't cover 'find your mobile' services, so the service isn't required to send alerts to people tracking their own mobiles.

To prevent tracking without consent, his service does send an alert within 90 days. We tested this with two mobiles. One had an alert 49 days later, and the second after 34 days. But the alert doesn't name the person tracking the phone or explain how it can be stopped. We don't think one alert in 90 days is enough to protect privacy.

MBG spokesman Hamish MacLeod admitted to us that there is a risk that people could be tracked in secret, as the code doesn't cover 'find your mobile' services. He said that the code would need to be revised and that the group would check on services run by other companies.

2.7Mbps
average speed of broadband
packages claiming 8Mbps in 2007
WHICH?

30%
of pubs and bars now serve
125ml measures of wine
BRITISH BEER AND PUB ASSOCIATION

77%
of us don't know how many
units are in a large glass of wine
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



How easy is it to buy small measures of alcohol?

Stop supersizing wine



ALCOHOL

Supersizing means that a 'small' glass of wine is now often 40% bigger.

By law, a glass of wine can be sold as 125ml or 175ml – or a multiple of these. The largest size is commonly 250ml. But our research shows that the 125ml measure has all but disappeared and many pubs describe 175ml as a 'small' rather than a 'medium' or 'standard' glass of wine.

This cuts customer choice and means that you could be unknowingly over the drink-drive limit after just one glass of wine.

Our findings coincide with calls for the 125ml measure to be reintroduced.

We asked the 10 biggest pub chains about their measures. Only some Greene King pubs stock the 125ml measure. We also checked 10 pubs randomly in London

and none served the 125ml measure. Eight described a 175ml glass as 'small' and just one described it as 'medium'. At one pub, a 187ml bottle was served.

The government has just relaunched a Know Your Limits campaign, but Liberal Democrat MP Greg Mulholland thinks it should go further. He has introduced a private member's bill calling for all licensed premises to offer 125ml measures.

He said: 'Most pubs describe the 175ml measure as small, which is dishonest. What's the problem with providing all three measures so people have a real choice?'

Which? member June Paxton-White, 72, told us she regularly eats out with friends and has noticed the 125ml glass disappear. On one occasion she could only have a 250ml glass: 'I felt a bit light-headed. I was pressured to have that amount.'

WHO SERVES A SMALL MEASURE?

Pub owner	Do you serve 125ml glasses of wine?
Greene King (Chains include Belhaven and Hungry Horse)	Sometimes – there's no standard practice. Sizes range from 125ml to 250ml.
Mitchells & Butlers (Chains include Ember, O'Neill's and Scream)	No. Only 175ml and 250ml (but sparkling wine and champagne served in 125ml glasses).
Marstons (Chains include Pitcher & Piano)	No. Only 175ml and 250ml.
JD Wetherspoon (Chains include Lloyds No1 Bar)	No. Only 175ml and 250ml.
Enterprise Inns Admiral Taverns Trust Inns	Decision up to individual landlord.

Punch Taverns, Wellington Pub Co and Frederic Robinson would not comment

One chain stocks the 125ml wine measure

The Royal College of Physicians also wants the drinks industry to be more responsible, but the British Beer and Pub Association told us: 'Customer demand dictates glass size. They want to enjoy wine in the size of glass that they have at home.'



Our testers loved punnets of premium strawberries

Organic strawberries in a jam

FOOD

As we gear up for Wimbledon and our passion for strawberries grows, Which? research shows that standard supermarket strawberries taste just as good as organic, despite being about half the price.

We challenged 120 people to taste organic, premium and standard fruit from the big four supermarkets as well as Waitrose and M&S. They found no overall difference in taste or appearance between

organic and standard strawberries. But premium supermarket strawberries were 2.5 times more likely to be voted tastier than standard versions – so paying the average of 143% more may be worth it.

There were differences between stores. Nine out of ten of tasters preferred Asda organic over its standard range. However, seven out of ten M&S tasters chose non-

organic M&S Juicy British Strawberries over the store's organic punnets.

Go to www.which.co.uk/strawberries for full results.

