

BT GROUP PLC
Form 6-K
May 21, 2015
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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 6-K

Report of Foreign Private Issuer

Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16

of the Securities Exchange Act 1934

Report on Form 6-K dated May 21, 2015

BT Group plc

(Translation of registrant's name into English)

BT Centre

81 Newgate Street

London EC1A 7AJ

England

(Address of principal executive offices)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the information contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing the information to the Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Yes No

Enclosure: BT Group plc Annual Report & Form 20-F 2015 as sent to shareholders

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SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

BT Group plc

By: /s/ Dan Fitz

Name: Dan Fitz

Title: Company Secretary

Date: May 21, 2015

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Welcome to BT Group plc's

Annual Report & Form 20-F 2015

This is the BT Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2015. It complies with UK regulations and comprises part of the Annual Report and Form 20-F for the US Securities and Exchange Commission to meet US regulations.

This is our first integrated Annual Report. We want to communicate our story in a more compelling way. We see Integrated Reporting (IR) as the best way to do that. So this year, for the first time, we are reflecting this approach in how we structure and present our Annual Report.

Integrated Reporting is an initiative led by the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC). While IR is market-led, its principles and aims are consistent with UK regulatory developments in financial and corporate reporting.

In December 2013, the IIRC issued the IR Framework to establish guiding principles and content elements for integrated reports. We have taken these principles and elements into account in preparing our Annual Report. This is most obvious in the revised representation of our business model and the new section describing our main stakeholders. We no longer report simple outputs, we consider outcomes or the impact that we have as a business. And we use a set of six icons throughout this Annual Report to provide linkage to the business model.

But this is just the start. We recognise that our move toward full IR will continue to evolve. Find out more: www.theiirc.org

Please see the cautionary statement regarding forward-looking statements on page 209.

The Purpose and strategy, Delivering our strategy, Our lines of business and Group performance sections on pages 19 to 92 form the Strategic Report. The Governance section on pages 93 to 136 forms the Report of the Directors.

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Our business
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Chairman's introduction

We are continuing to make significant investments, for the long-term benefit of both BT and the UK.

We have performed well this year, with our investments delivering for the business in challenging market conditions. We have announced a number of further major investments to support the long-term value of our business.

Investing for growth

Our most significant investment has been in superfast broadband. In 2008, when the UK was in the middle of a recession, the Board approved bold plans to take fibre broadband to 40% of the country. We then increased this target to two-thirds of the UK, a goal we hit a year ago. Today our network covers more than three-quarters of the UK. This includes premises in rural and hard-to-reach areas that we have been able to get to with the help of public funding following competitive tenders as part of the Government's Broadband Delivery UK programme.

Our fibre broadband investment has been a major achievement. It has been one of the fastest rollouts in the world. We have come in on budget and ahead of schedule. And demand for it is strong. The number of premises connected rose over 50% this year.

We have been able to make this investment by exercising strong financial discipline. Our cash flow is almost four times higher than it was when we started building our fibre network as we have significantly transformed our cost base, giving us the oxygen to invest for growth. Being part of a larger group gave Openreach the confidence in future demand to make this long-term investment. Thanks to Openreach, fibre broadband availability is ahead of all the major European countries. And broadband pricing in the UK is amongst the lowest with more than 500 providers selling services in a highly competitive market.

We will continue to work with government to help take fibre coverage to 95% of the UK. But we are not stopping there. We announced this year another major investment to make ultrafast speeds of up to 500Mbps available to most of the UK within a decade, with 1Gbps available to those who want even faster speeds. This will be another

significant investment for BT, ensuring that the UK remains at the forefront of digital communications with a vibrant internet economy.

This year we successfully launched BT Mobile into the consumer market and re-launched our business mobile propositions. We also announced the proposed acquisition of EE, the leading mobile operator in the UK. This will be a transformational deal for BT, accelerating our mobility strategy. We will combine the UK's most advanced 4G network with the UK's most extensive superfast broadband network, allowing us to provide a full range of innovative communications services.

We have secured some great content for our BT Sport channels. We extended and improved our FA Premier League and Aviva Premiership Rugby broadcast rights. And we will start to show our exclusive UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League content from this summer.

We will make sure BT Sport remains great value and widely available to UK households.

We have invested further in our customer service. We recruited 2,500 new engineers and more than 500 new people into our contact centres. And we are seeing the benefits of our investment. We have increased the speed of service delivery and repaired faults faster. But we didn't meet our customer perception targets, and in a competitive market we need to do more. This remains an absolute priority for BT and one where we are committed to invest and improve further.

Building our global presence

A significant proportion of our revenue is generated outside the UK, mainly from large multinational businesses. BT Global Services has again consolidated its position as a global leader for managed networked IT services. To best serve our customers it is critical that we have fair access to networks across the world. Other operators can use our networks in the UK on favourable terms. Yet in the US and some European countries incumbents are allowed a distinct advantage in their home markets.

We have therefore continued to work with governments around the world, and are encouraged by progress over the last year. In Europe, completing the Digital Single Market is a key policy priority of the new European Commission. And in the US, the Federal Communications Commission is making progress on its review of the wholesale access market. We have continued to engage too on the EU-US transatlantic trade talks seeking further improvements in transatlantic economic integration and in regulatory coherence.

Rewarding our people

As well as our networks and assets, we are also investing in our people to make sure they have the skills and support they need to best serve our customers. Our performance in the year reflects their expertise, hard work and commitment. I am delighted that in August 2014, over 22,000 people in our 2009 savings-related share option plan were able to buy shares at 61p, representing an average gain of around £41,000 each. Our people also give back in other ways. Twenty-six per cent of them volunteered 53,000 days of their time to help more than 3,700 charities and community groups across the globe.

Strengthening the Board

I am delighted to welcome Isabel Hudson who joined the Board on 1 November 2014. Isabel is Chair of the National House Building Council and was previously a non-executive director of The Pensions Regulator. Her insight and experience in the regulatory, pensions and financial industries will be a strong asset for BT and the Board. As I mentioned last year, Iain Conn joined the Board on 1 June 2014. Iain is chief executive of Centrica and brings a wealth of experience, making a strong contribution to the Board discussions this year. We announced in April that

Warren East will be stepping down from the Board on 31 May 2015 in light of his appointment as chief executive of Rolls-Royce. Warren has made an immense contribution during his time at BT and I congratulate him on this important appointment.

Generating value for shareholders

As a result of our progress this year, the Board is proposing a final dividend of 8.5p, up 13%. This gives a full year dividend of 12.4p, up 14%. We expect to grow our dividend per share by 10%-15% next year and to pay a progressive dividend beyond that.

Our goal is to deliver sustainable, profitable revenue growth supported by the investments we are making. Together with our cost transformation activities this will provide a powerful platform for long-term cash flow growth, and therefore value creation for our shareholders.

Sir Michael Rake

Chairman

6 May 2015

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Strategic Report

Purpose and strategy **Delivering our strategy** **Our lines of business** **Group performance** **Governance** **Financial statements** **Additional information**

Overview

Welcome to BT's first integrated Annual Report, which we have summarised in the next seven pages. Here we outline our purpose, our strategy and our business model. You can see how each of our lines of business performed this year. And how we did as a group. We will also show you where you can find more details in the main part of our integrated report.

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- 4 [Who we are and what we do](#)
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Who we are

We are one of the world's leading communications services companies.

Our business model

Our full business model, showing all the inputs, outputs and outcomes is on page

Our lines of business

For each line of business we provide a summary of what they do and how they did in the year both operationally and financially.

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Our purpose

Our purpose is to use the power of communications to make a better world. By bringing together our networks, our technology and the hard work and expertise of our people, we develop services that our customers value.

We use the power of
communications to
make a better world

Who we are and what we do

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Our goal and strategy

Our goal is to deliver sustainable, profitable revenue growth.

The three pillars of our strategy will help us achieve this goal: delivering superior customer service; transforming our costs; and investing for growth. The better our customer service, the more we will sell and the less time and money we need to spend putting things right. And the better we manage our costs, the better value for money we can offer our customers and the more we can invest in giving customers what they need, today and tomorrow.

We are investing in five strategic growth areas: fibre; TV and content; mobility and future voice services; UK business markets; and supporting leading global companies. By investing in these areas, we aim to broaden and deepen our relationships with consumers, businesses and public sector clients, increasing our relevance to them as markets and technologies evolve.

Previously, we had to depend on cost transformation to grow our cash flow. In the years ahead, revenue growth, together with continued transformation of our costs, will provide a powerful platform for long-term and sustainable cash flow growth. This will create value for our shareholders, as well as for our other stakeholders.

Our business model

Our business model creates value for shareholders, by delivering for customers, society and our people.

Our people, technology, networks and financial strength are key to our business. We invest to build and maintain communications networks in the UK and overseas. We develop products and services that run over those networks these are our key outputs; and then we sell them on a subscription basis to consumers, businesses and the public sector.

By selling services we are able to make a return on our network investments. But the outcomes of our business are more than just financial. What we do matters. We make connections, create new possibilities and deliver value to individuals, families, businesses, governments, communities, and society in general. And we contribute directly to the health of the UK by providing jobs and paying tax.

We make sure we stay in tune with market and competitive trends, so that we make the right investments and create products and services that customers want to buy. Being able to anticipate and respond to changes in our environment makes for a flexible and sustainable business model. We see more and more demand for our services because they play such an integral role in modern life. So we are confident that we will be able to deliver value today and in the future.

Find out more

Our business model
inputs
on page

Our business model
outputs
& outcomes on page

Our Governance
on page

Our Risks
on page

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Key performance indicators

We measure our progress using four key performance indicators (KPIs).

Our key measure of the group's revenue trend, underlying revenue excluding transit, was down 0.4%, in line with our outlook of broadly flat. BT Consumer revenue was up 7%, helped by strong growth in our fibre broadband and TV customer bases. This was offset by declines in our other lines of business, in part due to regulatory pricing pressures.

We grew adjusted earnings per share by 12%. Normalised free cash flow of £2,830m was up 16% and ahead of our outlook for the year of above £2.6bn. Our continued focus on cost transformation, capital expenditure efficiencies and debt reduction helped us achieve these.

Finally, we have improved our customer service, although we want to achieve more. Right First Time (RFT) is our key measure of customer service and is up 4.7% compared with a 1.5% increase last year. All lines of business contributed to this improvement. We delivered significantly better repair performance and shorter lead times for providing UK lines and broadband. BT Global Services made large gains in delivering more of its products within target times. Looking ahead, we need to improve our provision of Ethernet services and recover more quickly when we do fail to meet our promises.

Our performance for the year

This year, we delivered on our core business in globally challenging markets, achieving or beating the outlook we set at the start of the year. BT Consumer launched great value mobile propositions and we have set out our plans to deliver ultrafast broadband with G.fast to most of the UK. For our business customers, we launched a number of innovative solutions, including BT Assure Threat Defence in BT Global Services and cloud-based voice services in BT Business and BT Wholesale.

We have made further progress in transforming our costs. Despite continuing to insource jobs, net labour costs were down 8% as we increased productivity while reallocating our labour resource to be more efficient. We reorganised our business and streamlined our processes. Underlying operating costs excluding transit were down 2%, contributing to EBITDA growing 3%.

Our strong financial discipline has helped us fund investments in our five strategic growth areas. We announced the proposed acquisition of EE for £12.5bn, secured exclusive rights to FA Premier League football matches for a further three years and extended our Aviva Premiership Rugby rights. As well as growing our EBITDA and free cash flow we have reduced our net debt and made further significant contributions to the BT Pension Scheme. Our proposed full year dividend to shareholders is 12.4p, up 14%.

Find out more

Our KPIs
on page

Our financial performance
from page

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Financial highlights

^a Items presented as adjusted are stated before specific items. See page 202 for further details.

^c See definition on page 203 and summarised cash flow statement on page 84.

^b Before depreciation and amortisation.

^d Includes the impact of £1.0bn equity placing. See page 85.

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How our lines of business performed

BT Global Services

We have consolidated our position as a global market leader for managed networked IT services. We help around 6,500 large corporate and public sector customers, in more than 170 countries worldwide, to embrace the digital age, innovate and work more efficiently.

We deliver value to our customers by combining our products and services with industry-specific solutions and consulting expertise. We operate globally and deliver locally, to help our customers make connections and create new possibilities.

We put our customers at the heart of our decision-making and have made progress in improving customer service. By increasing the speed of delivery of our main products, we improved our Right First Time measure by 8.6%. We have enhanced our global capabilities by extending the reach and features of our services. And we launched new solutions including security, cloud-based and unified communications services.

We grew underlying revenue excluding transit in the high-growth regions and Continental Europe. But lower public sector revenue resulted in overall revenue declining. We focused on transforming our cost base, for instance, simplifying our organisational structure in Switzerland and Eastern Europe and improving the process for ceasing access circuits which we no longer need. This meant we grew EBITDA, despite the decline in revenue.

Our operating cash inflow of £349m was lower than we achieved last year, when we had benefited from some early customer receipts. But our EBITDA less capital expenditure measure has continued to grow. We achieved an order intake of £6.5bn, down 7% reflecting large re-signs last year.

BT Business

BT Business provides communications and IT services in the UK and Republic of Ireland. We serve around 900,000 customers.

We are focused on serving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in three main markets: fixed-voice and data; mobility; and IT services. We have a market share of around 30% in fixed-voice and data but just 1% in mobility and 6% in IT services. We expect these markets to increasingly converge over the next few years as technology and customer needs change. And as they do, we see an opportunity to grow our share of the mobility and IT services markets.

To help achieve this, we launched a number of new products in the year including BT One Phone, BT Cloud Voice and BT Cloud Phone. We relaunched BT Business Mobile, adding 4G access and unlimited wi-fi for all new and re-signing customers. Our proposed acquisition of EE will let us accelerate the sale of converged fixed-mobile services to our existing business customers as well as offer new services.

We have invested in improving our customer service. We provided 35,000 hours of training to improve the skills of our service teams. We have moved more customers onto our new UK Business Solution system, which makes it easier to serve customers with multiple products. And we have improved our online self-service capabilities. These all contributed to our Right First Time measure improving 5.1%.

Underlying revenue excluding transit was down 1% due to lower line and call volumes. But we have increased EBITDA for the third year running through our cost transformation activities, including a 10% reduction in our total labour resource, the merger of two of our IT services units and by renegotiating supplier contracts. Our order intake was broadly level for the year at £2.1bn.

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BT Consumer

We are the largest provider of consumer fixed-voice and broadband services in the UK. We are focused on top and bottom-line growth through selling broadband, TV, exclusive sports channels and mobile services to our customers.

We grew our share of the DSL and fibre broadband market for the sixth year in a row and we have added the most broadband customers of any operator for six quarters running. Customers continue to want faster broadband. 39% of our retail broadband customers are now on fibre. We also sell services through our Plusnet brand. Plusnet has won numerous awards for customer service and value, and helps us address more price-conscious customers.

As well as driving take-up of broadband, we have invested in our TV service. We launched TV Everywhere, which means customers can watch TV channels on multiple devices, and introduced Netflix and a range of new packages. And we are very pleased with the games that we won in the auction for the 2016/17 to 2018/19 FA Premier League broadcast rights. We will be showing 42 Premier League matches each season. That is four more than we currently show, including a live Saturday evening game almost every Premier League weekend.

We re-entered the consumer mobile market this year. All our mobile plans come with 4G, unlimited texts, unlimited access to BT Wi-fi hotspots in the UK and to the BT Sport app, at no extra cost. Our planned acquisition of EE will mean we can provide a full range of innovative communications services to both EE and BT customers.

We hired hundreds of new contact centre staff. We were able to resolve 20% more customer issues in a single call. Our Right First Time measure improved 1.9%. Our revenue grew 7% this year, reflecting the growth in our broadband and BT Sport customer bases. EBITDA was up 24%.

BT Wholesale

BT Wholesale provides services in Great Britain to more than 1,400 communications providers (CPs). We help them achieve their goals by offering them innovative, reliable and cost-effective products and services that complement their own capabilities. This means that we can share in their success.

The market for wholesale services is shrinking as some CPs are building more of their own network infrastructure. It is also highly competitive. But the market for next-generation services, including Ethernet, is expanding.

We have sought to stand out from the competition by providing new services and a better customer experience. We have extended our Hosted Communications Services portfolio and expanded our Ethernet network. And we launched Business Zone – a self-service portal through which CPs can manage their orders and any faults.

We improved our billing and repair processes, so we can answer calls and queries more quickly. We moved our service colleagues into fewer service centres, with a view to increasing the level of expertise available to each caller. Overall, we increased customer satisfaction significantly. And our Right First Time performance was up 4.4%. But our service performance on Ethernet was mixed and it took us longer to provide Wholesale Ethernet than we

would have liked.

Underlying revenue excluding transit fell 7%. This reflected a large contract termination, regulatory price changes following Ofcom's 2013 Narrowband Market Review and a generally tougher trading environment.

We reduced our selling and general administration costs by 20%. But this was not enough to offset the decline in revenue and EBITDA fell 9%.

Our order intake was £1.9bn, the same as last year.

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Openreach

Openreach provides the vital infrastructure that is the foundation of the UK's vibrant internet economy.

We are responsible for providing services over the local loop or local access network, sometimes referred to as 'the last mile'. This consists of the copper and fibre connections between our exchanges and homes and businesses.

We have now passed more than 22m premises with our superfast fibre broadband network. That is more than three-quarters of the UK. We achieved 1.5m fibre broadband net connections in the year. This means that around 4.2m homes and businesses in the UK are now connected – 19% of those passed.

In January 2015 we set out our ultrafast broadband vision for the UK. Using G.fast technology, we expect to offer initial speeds of a few hundred megabits per second to millions of homes and businesses by 2020. As further industry standards are secured, we expect speeds to increase to up to 500Mbps to most of the UK within a decade.

The number of physical lines increased by 215,000 in the year. The number of copper and fibre broadband users on our network rose by 851,000.

We achieved the minimum service levels set by Ofcom, exceeding all 60 measures, though our ambition and plans are to further improve customer service. To help us do this, we hired more than 2,500 new engineers. Our Right First Time measure was up 3.5%, exceeding our target.

Revenue declined 1%, with regulatory price reductions offsetting the impact of fibre revenue growth. Our operating costs were 2% lower which meant EBITDA was flat. Cost efficiencies offset increased volumes, pay increases and the additional engineering resource we recruited to support our provision and repair performance.

BT Technology, Service & Operations (BT TSO)

BT TSO is our internal service unit. It is responsible for delivering and operating our networks, platforms and IT systems.

BT TSO works closely with each of our customer-facing lines of business. We create new products for them and make sure that our existing services evolve to meet the changing needs of their customers.

This year we upgraded our core IP network to handle record volumes of data traffic in the UK. Our IT reliability has improved for the fourth consecutive year and the operational reliability of our core voice and broadband network platforms has hit a five-year high.

We are also responsible for managing the group's energy consumption and for putting strategies in place to cut the group's carbon footprint. We have reduced energy usage for six consecutive years^a

BT TSO manages most of our research and development and is also responsible for our worldwide patent portfolio of over 4,500 patents and applications.

BT has a long history of innovation and has pioneered many of the technologies that our business was built upon. In 1926 we held the world's first two-way, trans-Atlantic conversation by radio telephone from our wireless station near Rugby. And in 1943, Tommy Flowers, working in the telecommunications division of the General Post Office (as we were at the time), developed the world's first programmable electronic computer, Colossus. In 1968, we installed the world's first digital telephone exchange. And we laid the world's first, purpose-designed optical fibre submarine cable in Loch Fyne, Scotland in 1980.

^a We have restated our worldwide energy consumption and GHG emission figures for previous years following improvements to our data. Previous estimates of energy usage have been updated with measured figures.

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30 years of innovation:

finding a better way of doing things

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Purpose and strategy

This section is about our purpose and the strategy we are following to achieve it.

It explains how improving our customer service and transforming our costs go hand-in-hand. And that cost transformation gives us the oxygen to invest in five strategic growth areas, so that we can broaden and deepen our customer relationships.

Our purpose

Our purpose is to use the power of communications to make a better world.

Our goal

Our goal is to deliver sustainable profitable revenue growth. This will support cash flow growth over the long term, which we will use to reward our shareholders and other stakeholders.

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22 Deliver superior customer service

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Our culture

Becoming a healthier organisation will help us to deliver our strategy. It will ensure we can be resilient and agile in a changing world.

In last year's Annual Report, we talked about our future plans in terms of the six strategic priorities that were part of our 'better business with a better future' strategy. Since this strategy has now evolved, we no longer report against those priorities. But the line of business section does have details of our progress and the investments we have made in those areas (from page 53).

This Strategic Report was approved by the Board on 6 May 2015.

By order of the Board

Dan Fitz

Group General Counsel

& Company Secretary

6 May 2015

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Chief Executive's introduction

It's been a ground-breaking year for BT. We've announced some major investments and launched a number of innovative new services.

At BT our purpose is to use the power of communications to make a better world. We're proud our technologies have changed what's possible and allow people to do new things, and that we play a meaningful role in society through the products and services we deliver every day. Our achievements are rooted in innovation. That was true when we were formed in 1846. And it's more true than ever today, after 30 years as a listed company. That is why we are celebrating this theme in this, our first integrated Annual Report.

It's been a ground-breaking year for BT. We've made some key decisions and announced some major investments. We've delivered on the outlook we set at the start of the year and have delivered strong growth in cash flow and profits.

This year we reached an agreement to buy EE, the leading UK mobile operator. It will be a transformational deal for BT. We will combine the best fixed network with the best mobile network, offering our customers new, innovative and seamless services. And we will invest in our networks and customer service to provide them with a great experience, wherever they are. We expect to generate substantial synergies – both in terms of cost savings and additional revenue – and are confident that the combination will generate significant shareholder value.

We're delighted that the acquisition has now been approved by our shareholders. While we await regulatory clearance, we have pushed ahead with our own mobility plans, launching our BT Mobile consumer service, in addition to our successful business mobile propositions.

We also announced plans to transform the UK's fibre broadband landscape from superfast to ultrafast. Using G.fast technology, we will be able to offer speeds of up to 500Mbps to most of the UK within a decade. It is thanks to our research labs that we have developed innovative new ways to use this technology and we will start customer trials this summer. We will also be offering a 1Gbps service to those who want even faster speeds. This will be another large

and multi-year investment by Openreach that will require the right investment and regulatory environment. It will be the right thing for both BT and the UK, providing even faster speeds in an already competitive market.

Our BT Sport TV channels continue to prove popular with customers and we're pleased to have secured FA Premier League football rights for a further three years, and an extension with Aviva Premiership Rugby for a further four years. With exclusive live football from the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League, we'll be showing even more top sporting action from this summer. BT TV now offers access to Netflix, the world's largest internet TV network. We became the UK's first TV platform to offer buy-to-keep films and TV shows on multiple devices, and we've added functionality such as TV Everywhere so you can get BT TV in a second room or watch on the go with the BT TV mobile app.

For our business customers, we launched a number of innovative services such as BT Assure Threat Defence, BT One Phone and BT Cloud Voice. We are helping companies to better identify and react to sophisticated cyber security threats. Our cloud-based services give our customers even more functionality and flexibility. And we enhanced a number of our core products and services like our audio conferencing service in partnership with Dolby, which enables outstanding sound clarity.

While we expect to face continuing declines in the revenue we earn from the UK public sector due to lower levels of expenditure, we won new public sector contracts in the year and our investments overseas continued to deliver, with good growth in Asia and the Middle East as we support leading global companies.

We have continued to improve the service we provide to our customers. We recruited 2,500 new engineers and more than 500 new employees into our contact centres around the UK. Each of our lines of business made improvements. We increased the speed of service delivery, repaired faults faster and fixed more customer issues first time.

But we recognise we're not yet where we want to be and this will be a key priority for us in the years ahead. These days, life and work is built around connectivity. Through us, millions of individuals connect to friends and family, and have a wealth of information and entertainment at their fingertips. We help companies to work smarter and compete in global markets. And we enable essential public services to be delivered. Customer expectations are rising and we recognise how important it is to improve the service we provide.

By improving our service and providing the products our customers need, we can broaden and deepen relationships and deliver our goal of sustainable profitable revenue growth for the business.

We made great progress over the last year. Our results, and the investments we are making, position us well for the future and we have increased our free cash flow outlook for the coming year.

We have a strong platform to build on and a team I know will deliver. We are looking forward to the year ahead.

Gavin Patterson

Chief Executive

6 May 2015

Find out more

Watch my video online at
www.bt.com/annualreport

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Our purpose

BT's purpose is to use the power of communications to make a better world.

We are here to meet the needs of our customers, delivering the experience, products and services that matter to them. Millions of individuals connect through us to their friends and family, and have huge amounts of information and entertainment at their fingertips. The smallest companies right through to multinational corporations use our services every day to conduct their business and compete in the global marketplace. Many public services rely on our technologies, and in the UK the telecoms industry operates across our networks. Our success as a business depends on delivering value to all our customers, enabling them to fulfil their needs and aspirations.

The connectivity we provide every day plays an essential role in modern society and economies. Our core business represents a significant part of the social infrastructure in the places where we operate.

It is because we recognise how important connectivity is today that we also work to extend the value we can add to communities where we operate and to society at large by finding new ways that our products and services can bring social and economic benefits. We are committed to using our technologies to respond to the climate change challenge. And we enable our people to contribute their skills and energies to make a positive impact in areas of social need.

It is by creating value for our customers and society that we will satisfy the needs of our shareholders and deliver sustainable profitable revenue growth.

Our goal

Our goal is to deliver sustainable profitable revenue growth.

Previously, we had to depend on cost transformation to grow our cash flows. In the years ahead, revenue growth, combined with continued transformation of our costs, will provide a powerful platform for long-term and sustainable cash flow growth.

We will reinvest some of the cash we generate back into the business, to enable us to grow over the long term. A virtuous circle. And we will also use it to reward our shareholders and other stakeholders.

Our strategy

Our strategy is founded on broadening and deepening our customer relationships.

To deliver sustainable profitable revenue growth, we need stronger relationships with our customers. That means making sure we stay relevant to them as markets, lifestyles and technologies change.

The three pillars of our strategy help us do that: delivering superior customer service; transforming our costs; and

investing for growth. The better our customer service, the more we will sell and the less time and money we need to spend putting things right. And the better we manage our costs, the better value for money we can offer our customers and the more we can invest in giving customers what they need, today and tomorrow. And these principles in turn drive our business model (see page 28).

The diagram below shows how our strategy supports our goal and purpose. It sits at the centre of our business model.

Find out more

Our business
model on page

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Deliver superior customer service

Every day we touch the lives of millions, providing services that help people get the most out of their working and personal lives. We recognise how important it is to improve service as the impact when things go wrong is greater than ever before. Getting the customer experience right will not only benefit our customers, it will make our business more cost effective too. Customer service and cost transformation go hand-in-hand.

To make sure we are equipped to meet the changing and growing demands of consumers and businesses, a group-wide transformation, to put the Customer First, is underway. You can find out more on page 31.

Right First Time (RFT) is our key measure of customer service and tracks how often we keep the promises we make to our customers. Our overall improvement of 4.7% (2013/14: 1.5%) reflects positive contributions from each of our customer-facing lines of business. We achieved significantly better repair performance and delivery times for providing UK lines and broadband. Within BT Global Services, we made large improvements to our speed of delivery. But we still want to do better. You can find more details in the line of business section on operating performance.

Customer service is one of the factors used in determining the annual bonus of executives. It is made up of the RFT metric and a new customer perception measure (see page 113).

In last year's Annual Report we outlined a number of specific areas that we would focus on this year, including investment in our network, improving our online capability and changing some of the key processes relating to installations and when customers move house.

We have made some good progress in these and other areas, including:

- recruiting 2,500 new engineers;
- over 1,000 system and process changes to make it easier for our customers to deal with us and to help our people support them. This includes improving our websites so that it is more straightforward to make and track orders, and find information and help more easily;
- investing in our network to make it more resilient to extreme weather conditions (in both summer and winter);

specialist diagnostic equipment, alarms and new handheld devices to help our engineers find faults quickly, increasing their ability to get to the root of the matter and fix more issues in one go; and deploying a new appointment booking system for calling customers back and providing training in communication skills for our advisers.

But we still want to do better. Looking ahead, we are focusing on five key areas:

Acting on insight	We are using the insight of our customers, our people and other companies to guide decision-making and create products and services based on the changing demands and priorities of our customers. And as we explain below, we are developing a new way to analyse the effectiveness of our processes from the customer's perspective. We will use this insight to improve the way we do things.
Keeping our customers connected	We are making our products and networks more resilient. Monitoring our networks and ordering systems will help us identify issues sooner – in many cases before the customer is even aware there is an issue.
Creating great tools and systems	We are improving the way we keep customers informed. We continue to develop our websites, offering more self-help features and online support. Engineers are letting the customer know they are on the way before arriving at the premises. And we are trialling an app to help customers track the whereabouts of their engineer before a visit.
Working better across our organisation	We are changing the way our customer-facing teams are organised so that our people can take greater ownership when they are dealing with customers' enquiries. We have adopted a new approach to help us analyse and improve how we perform in typical customer interactions, like ordering a service from us or reporting a fault. And further analysis of our repair process is helping us to understand what we need to do to make the customer experience better.
Supporting our people	As well as redesigning processes, systems and policies, we are urging our people to put themselves in their customers' shoes, take personal ownership of issues and make it easy for our customers to order and use our products and to contact us when they need to. The wellbeing of our people is important to us and helps them deliver a good service to our customers. This is particularly true in Openreach which has experienced a rise in sickness absence rates among some of our older workers. We are focusing on early intervention to address this and we provide support services to help our people return to their roles. You can find more details on page 32.

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Transform our costs

We run large and complex cost transformation programmes which are led by a team of internal consultants. They are BT people. This makes sense because they know our business better than anyone.

Their approach is based on a methodology honed over ten years and underpinned by forensic data analysis, strong governance and the support of senior management to make change happen quickly and sustainably.

This year, our underlying operating costs excluding transit were down 2%, reflecting an 8% reduction in net labour costs and lower payments to other telecommunications operators. These were partly offset by increased programme rights charges reflecting a full year of BT Sport. We reduced our operating costs by around £600m this year. Over the last six years we have reduced our operating costs and capital expenditure by around £5.5bn.

Our largest cost transformation activities are driven top-down . They might be end-to-end programmes spanning multiple lines of business or complex changes contained within a single line of business. Continuous Improvement (CI) provides a complementary bottom-up approach. CI makes small but important changes to how we do things every day and has the added benefit of improving employee engagement.

To strengthen cost transformation (CT) and its application throughout the business we have an in-house CT Academy. The CT Academy is responsible for the continued development of our change professionals. This year alone it has trained and coached more than 1,800 people. BT is the only UK organisation currently licensed by the British Quality Foundation to certify qualifications to the most advanced levels in Lean, Six Sigma and Change Management methodologies on such a scale.

Programmes this year included:

- taking tried-and-tested methods from the UK and using them overseas to reduce cost of failure, improve efficiency, streamline organisational structure and get better value for money from suppliers;
- identifying how we can improve the utilisation of our engineering teams and standardise the way they work. We can reduce the number of engineers required at a particular location by investing in their training to make sure they are multi-skilled. This programme has identified opportunities to reduce costs while shortening delivery times on core products like Ethernet;
- tightening up our contact centre operations by closing down small, inefficient centres, standardising technology and processes and rebalancing and reprioritising activities between the UK and overseas. (Better tools, training and utilisation of our service colleagues have made them more productive and helped them answer enquiries from customers more effectively);
- reducing the cost of failure across the lifecycle of our IT systems. By designing and developing them better, they

fail less often, improving service and reducing cost; and launching our new group-wide Central Business Services capability, (effectively a shared service centre), to support contract management and accounting, procurement, financial services and HR. This simplifies the way we work and means we can share best practice to improve efficiency and service.

Looking ahead, we are focused on a number of areas including:

reviewing the effectiveness of our sales teams: to reduce administrative effort and focus people on what really matters – selling to customers; ensuring we have the right people, with the right skills, aligned to the best opportunities in the market; and by revising our incentive schemes to better align with desired outcomes; large end-to-end programmes specifically focused on improving customer experience in a number of delivery and repair journeys through reducing waste in the process and making it easier for our customers to interact with us; rationalising and standardising our products, networks, applications and platforms to remove complexity and reduce the cost of failure; and

reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of the back-office teams that support our customer-facing people.

We benchmark what it costs us to do business against other large telecommunications companies. We keep making progress but we can still see more that we can do. We also look beyond the world of communications to see what lessons we can learn from other industries. We are confident that there are plenty of opportunities to reduce costs further.

You can read about cost transformation within our lines of business from page 53. And the group's performance on operating costs is described on page 82.

Find out more

Cost transformation
within
our lines of business from
page

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Invest for growth

We are investing in five strategic areas. These are the things we believe will deliver sustainable profitable revenue growth which will deliver value for our shareholders:

Fibre

Customers are asking for faster broadband. We are delivering that with our superfast fibre broadband deployment. It covers more than three-quarters of the UK and we are working to extend its reach even further (see page 71).

We have long been at the forefront of fibre innovation and investment and we aim to keep it that way. In January, we set out our vision for ultrafast broadband. With the right regulatory and investment environment, we plan to transform the UK broadband landscape through the widespread deployment of G.fast. We expect G.fast to deliver speeds of a few hundred Mbps by 2020 and up to 500Mbps to most of the UK within a decade. We will also introduce a 1Gbps premium fibre broadband service (see page 75).

TV and content

We have improved our TV proposition this year. We redesigned its look and feel and enhanced the service adding things like TV Everywhere, buy-to-keep movies and TV shows, Netflix and the BT Sport Extra red button. We also launched Sky Sports 1 and 2 on YouView.

We won the rights to show more live FA Premier League football matches for three years from August 2016, and extended our Aviva Premiership Rugby rights to the end of the 2020/21 season.

This summer, BT Sport will become the new home of UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League football for the next three seasons.

Read more about these developments in the BT Consumer section on page 64.

**Mobility and
future voice**

2014/15 was a watershed year for us. We launched three new products in our business IP voice portfolio (see page 61), returned to the consumer mobile market (see page 65) and agreed definitive terms to acquire EE. As explained below, this deal will make us the UK's leading converged communications provider.

**UK business
markets**

There are clear opportunities for us to grow our share of the UK business market and increase the revenue we get from each customer.

So we have improved our product portfolio and are focusing on selected areas of IT services where we can grow, such as data centres, cloud, managed hosting and security (see page 61).

**Leading global
companies**

We are investing in our services, network and expertise to increase our share of spending by our large multinational customers. By extending our global network and data centre footprint (see page 58), we are expanding the reach and features of our services, making them more flexible and better at working together. We are helping our customers address their challenges in the world of digital business, from cloud and collaboration, to mobility and security. By investing in customer service and global account management capabilities, we continue to support leading global companies as they expand into new markets. And we help public sector organisations to better serve citizens.

Proposed acquisition of EE

In February 2015 we announced that we had agreed definitive terms to buy EE, the leading mobile network operator in the UK, for a purchase price of £12.5bn.

The deal, which is still subject to merger clearance, will be transformational for BT. It will allow us to accelerate our mobility strategy. And it will increase our capacity for future investment and innovation in networks and services, as we continue to build world-class digital infrastructure in the UK.

We believe the deal will generate considerable value for shareholders. We expect net cost synergies to be worth £3.0bn (after integration costs) and we expect to generate revenue synergies with a total net present value of approximately £1.6bn^a.

The transaction should be accretive to free cash flow per share in the first full year post completion of the deal.

By combining EE with BT, we will be able to provide customers with innovative, seamless services that combine the power of fibre broadband with wi-fi and advanced mobile capabilities.

Our culture

To deliver strong performance we have to be healthy. A healthy organisation is made by the structures and processes that help people do their jobs effectively; and the attitudes and actions of all individuals.

We have defined our values to guide how we want to work. We have identified the changes we need to make: putting the customer first in everything we do, simplifying how we work and developing a leadership style which helps to drive change and gives people the confidence to take responsibility. We believe people want to work with a company that recognises what they have to offer, supports their ability to grow and is a positive force in wider society. By making all of this happen we will create an environment that brings the best out of our people.

Becoming a healthy organisation will enable us to deliver our strategy. It is about ensuring we can be resilient and agile in a changing world and, at the same time, make BT an exciting place where our people can all be proud to work.

^a For the assumptions underlying our synergies estimates, see Additional Information on page 222.

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Delivering our strategy

This section explains how we deliver our strategy. We describe our business model and the importance of our people, assets and the research and development we do. We report on the status of our brand and outline our relationships with our main stakeholders. We also explain our approach to human rights and describe the regulatory environment and risks that affect us.

Our people

Their commitment, expertise and diversity are key to the success of our business. Many of them do volunteer work, benefiting charities and community groups.

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Our global reach

We offer services in more than 170 countries. Our fibre broadband network in the UK is a key asset.

Our research activities

We invest extensively in R&D to find better ways of doing things and to offer new services. Innovation is an important part of our history and key to our brand and our future.

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- 38 [European Union regulation](#)
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Operating Committee

The key management committee, which meets weekly and is chaired by the Chief Executive. Brief details of its members are set out on these pages.

The *Operating Committee* has collective responsibility for running our business end to end and delivering our strategy. It monitors the group's financial, operational and customer service performance and has cross-business oversight of the lines of business. It also reviews the group's key risks and considers the potential threats to and opportunities for the business.

The Operating Committee:

- develops BT's strategy and budgets for the Board's approval;
- recommends to the Board capital expenditure and investment budgets;
- allocates resources across BT within plans agreed by the Board;
- prepares and delivers major programmes; and
- reviews the senior talent base and succession arrangements.

It can approve, up to certain limits which are set by the Board, capital expenditure, disposals of fixed assets, investments and divestments. It has delegated some of these approvals to sub-committees, such as the Design Council, and to senior executives. The Company Secretary attends all meetings.

Alison Wilcox will join the business in July 2015 as Group HR Director and an Operating Committee member, following the departure of Clare Chapman in March 2015.

Chief Executive

Appointed as Chief Executive in September 2013 and on the Board since June 2008.

Gavin was previously CEO, BT Retail and from 2004 to 2008 was Managing Director, BT Consumer, BT Retail. Before joining BT, Gavin was managing director of the consumer division of Telewest (now Virgin Media). Prior to that, he spent nine years at Procter & Gamble, rising to become European marketing director.

Group Finance Director

Appointed to the Board as Group Finance Director in December 2008.

Tony was formerly CFO, BT Retail, and Managing Director, BT Enterprises and, from 1997 to 2004, he was CFO and then Chief Operating Officer of BT Global Solutions. He qualified as a Chartered Management Accountant.

CEO, BT Global Services

Appointed CEO, BT Global Services in October 2012.

Luis was formerly president of the European, Middle East, Africa and Latin America operations of BT Global Services serving some of our biggest global customers. Luis also led BT Global Services Telecom Markets unit, managing business with carriers and operators outside the UK.

Before joining BT, Luis worked at Ericsson, IBM and Group Santander. Luis has a telecommunications engineering degree.

CEO, BT Consumer

Appointed CEO, BT Consumer in September 2013.

John was formerly Managing Director, BT Consumer, BT Retail and prior to that Chief Operating Officer in BT Consumer. John was appointed chairman of the Plusnet Board in 2008 and has overseen its development as a key part of BT's strategy.

Prior to joining BT, John held roles as marketing and commercial director at Telewest (now Virgin Media) and brand manager at Procter & Gamble. John graduated in modern history from Oxford University.

^a Directors of BT Group plc. You will find their full biographies on pages 96 and 97.

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CEO, BT Technology, Service & Operations and Group CIO

Appointed CEO, BT Technology, Service & Operations when it was formed in January 2013.

Clive was formerly CEO, BT Innovate & Design and prior to that President, BT Global Services Portfolio & Service Design where his focus was to increase profitability and increase customer satisfaction for BT Global Services.

Clive was also formerly Managing Director, BT Global Platforms in India and has also held positions as CIO BT Wholesale and Director CRM for BT Retail. Clive has an Electronic Engineering Degree.

CEO, BT Wholesale

Appointed CEO, BT Wholesale in September 2011.

Nigel was formerly Managing Director, BT Business, BT Retail and prior to that Managing Director, Customer Service, BT Retail.

Nigel was also Managing Director, BT Enterprises comprising six standalone businesses leveraging the BT brand and CEO BT Conferencing turning it into one of the top audio and video conferencing businesses globally.

Nigel has also held roles in BT as Director of Retail Product Management and General Manager of BT Consumer Products Division.

CEO, BT Business

Appointed CEO, BT Business in September 2013.

Graham was formerly Managing Director, BT Business, BT Retail responsible for the small and medium-sized enterprises unit within BT Retail and prior to that CEO of BT Ireland.

Before joining BT, Graham held a number of senior management positions including managing director of NTL in the Republic of Ireland. Graham holds an Accountancy and Finance degree and qualified as a Chartered Management Accountant.

Group HR Director (from July 2015)

Alison will join BT in July 2015 as Group HR Director.

Alison was formerly Regional HR Director for Vodafone Europe and prior to that Regional HR Director for Vodafone's Africa, Middle East and Asia Pacific footprint. Alison joined Vodafone in 2006 as Group Director of Leadership following a career in consulting.

Dan Fitz

Company Secretary

Dan is the Group General Counsel & Company Secretary of BT Group plc. He joined BT in April 2010 as its Group General Counsel and was appointed Company Secretary in November 2012. Dan previously spent six years at Misy's and 12 years at Cable & Wireless. A British and US dual national, age 55.

Joe Garner Invitee

CEO, Openreach

Appointed CEO, Openreach in February 2014. Before joining BT, Joe was head of the UK bank at HSBC. Joe has extensive experience in customer service and programme delivery. The CEO of Openreach cannot be a member of the *Operating Committee* under the provisions of the Undertakings.^b

^b You will find more information on the Undertakings on page 38.

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Our business model

Our business creates value for shareholders, by delivering for customers, society and our people.

We invest to build and maintain communications networks in the UK and overseas; we develop products and services that run over those networks; and then we sell them on a subscription basis to consumers, businesses and the public sector. By selling services, we are able to make a return on our network investments and create value for our stakeholders. This means we can reinvest in the business to keep creating value over the short, medium and long term. A virtuous circle.

The way we describe our business model is evolving. This year, for the first time, we include elements of the IIRC's Integrated Reporting (IR) Framework. In the Framework, the resources used and the relationships affected by an organisation are collectively referred to as the capitals. The IIRC defines the capitals as: financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social, and natural. We have adopted a similar approach by using a common set of icons for the inputs, outputs and outcomes of our business model, although we describe them in terms that are most meaningful to our business.

Inputs

Our business model starts with the things that set us apart from our competitors. We have a strong combination of people, technology, networks and other physical assets. Our research and development activities support innovative new ways of doing things and advancements in our technology. And we have the financial strength to invest in these areas to stay ahead of the competition.

Then there are the relationships we have with our stakeholders, such as our customers, and the natural resources we consume as part of doing business.

Find out more about the key inputs to our business via the page references in the business model graphic.

Outputs

The main output of our business is our portfolio of products and services. We make money by selling these in the UK and around the world through our customer-facing lines of business.

We sell through a range of channels including online, contact centres and desk or field-based account managers. Our revenue is mostly subscription or contract-based. People, households and SMEs pay for standalone or bundled services monthly, quarterly or annually (typically on 12 to 24 month contracts). Large corporate and public sector customers usually buy managed networked IT services on contracts spanning several years. Our wholesale customer

contracts range from one month in length for regulated products, to five years or more for major managed services deals.

Improving the skills and expertise of our people, both through on-the-job experience and our investment in their training and development, is another output of our business. We also generate intellectual property like patents. Finally, the waste and emissions produced by our operations are considered to be outputs (more details of what we are doing to minimise these can be found on page 40).

Outcomes

The financial outcome of what we do hinges on the performance of our lines of business. Together they contribute to the overall performance and key performance indicators (KPIs) of the group.

But there is more to what we do than just financial value. What we do matters. We help millions of people communicate, be entertained, do business and generally live their lives. We help our customers reduce their carbon footprint, for example by providing conferencing facilities which mean they do not have to travel as much. And we contribute directly to communities and the health of the UK by providing jobs, working with suppliers and paying tax.

All of which contribute to the strength of our brand – a key asset for us as it can influence whether a potential customer buys from us or one of our competitors.

Inputs

Financial strength

We are very focused on growing our cash flow over the long term. Together with a prudent financial policy and a strong balance sheet, we can invest in our business and in the things that set us apart from our competitors.

[Read more on page](#)

Our people

We have almost 90,000 people. Their commitment, expertise and diversity are key to the success of our business.

[Read more on page](#)

Networks & physical assets

Our networks and platforms are the foundations of the products and services that we sell. We continue to invest in these to improve the service we offer our customers.

[Read more on page](#)

Research & development

We are one of the largest investors in research and development in the UK.

[Read more on page](#)

Stakeholders & relationships

They include: customers, communities, shareholders, lenders, our pension schemes, suppliers, government and regulators.

[Read more on page](#)

[Natural resources](#)

We use some natural resources in doing business. Our energy use has declined for the sixth consecutive year.

[Read more on page](#)

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Outputs

Skills & expertise

We invest in our people so that they are better equipped to do their jobs and are more engaged. And we encourage them to volunteer to benefit the communities we serve. [Read more from page 10](#)

Products & services

Our products range from fixed and mobile telephony and broadband services for UK households through to managing the networks and communications needs of some of the world's largest multinational companies. [Read more from page 11](#)

Innovation

We have a long history of innovation. It helps us offer new and improved products and services, find better ways of doing things and can generate valuable intellectual property for us. [Read more on page 12](#)

Waste & emissions

Our operations produce waste and emissions but we are working to minimise these. [Read more on page 13](#)

Outcomes

Group performance & KPIs

The group's financial results and our progress against our KPIs demonstrate the key commercial outcomes of our activities. [Read more from page](#)

[Line of business performance](#)

Our lines of business sell our products and services and put our strategy into action. [Read more from page](#)

[Our brand strength](#)

Our brand is a key asset. Our investments in areas such as BT Sport have increased its value. [Read more on page](#)

[Societal benefits](#)

We are increasing digital inclusion and helping people get the most from being online. Our people and platforms support a number of good causes. [Read more on page](#)

[Environmental benefits](#)

We provide innovative ways for our customers and suppliers to reduce their waste and carbon emissions. [Read more on page](#)

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How we create value

Delivering a superior customer service, transforming our costs and investing for growth in our five strategic areas are central to both our strategy and business model. They are key business activities. Better customer service means that we spend less time and money putting things right. These cost savings, combined with savings from working more efficiently and the cash that we generate from sales, mean we can invest in the future of our business.

Our ability to deliver our strategy is as much about how we do things, as what we do. That is why being a healthy organisation (see page 31) and living our corporate values (below) are so important to us. Our values reflect how we work together in BT to create a healthy, high-performing business. And that is why our people are key to the success of our business.

Our sustainable business model

Communications markets are very competitive, particularly in the UK. There are both opportunities and risks. We make sure we stay in tune with market and competitive trends through teams dedicated to insight . And we undertake an annual materiality review to understand the societal and environmental issues that are important to our stakeholders.

Our Enterprise Risk Management framework (see page 41) helps us identify and mitigate the challenges and risks we face. And we use governance committees to make sure we make the right investments and deliver products and services that customers want to buy. We see more and more demand for our products and services because they play such an integral role in modern life.

Being able to anticipate and respond to changes in our environment makes for a flexible and sustainable business model. And by continuing to reinvest in the business, we are confident that we will be able to deliver value both today and in the future.

Financial strength

We have the financial strength to make bold decisions and to invest in the things that set us apart.

Our goal is to deliver sustainable profitable revenue growth. Together with further transformation of our costs, we aim to grow our EBITDA and cash flow over the long term.

We have a prudent financial policy that governs how we use the cash we generate.

We want to continue to invest in the future of our business and in particular in our five strategic growth areas (see page 24).

At the same time as investing in these areas, we intend to reduce our net debt over the medium term and are targeting a BBB+/Baa1 credit rating. We have a strong balance sheet today, but we want to make it stronger.

We will also continue to support the pension fund and to do so in a responsible way. And we will pay progressive dividends to our shareholders.

We aim to balance the interests of all stakeholders.

We have summarised our financial policy below:

We believe that this approach provides us with the financial flexibility to make long-term investments in the best interests of the company; and also in the best interests of communities where we operate.

It is this approach that means we can invest over £3bn to help take fibre broadband to 90% of the UK. And our financial strength means we can go even further. We will work with government to help take fibre broadband to 95% of the country. And with the right investment and regulatory environment, we will invest in ultrafast broadband to deliver up to 500Mbps to most of the UK within a decade with 1Gbps available to those who want even faster speeds.

Our financial strength has also underpinned the investments we have made in BT Sport both this year and last, and which we will continue to make in the years ahead. And it meant that in February 2015 we could announce the proposed acquisition of EE, the leading mobile network operator in the UK.

It also means we can support the business in other ways. For example, by making sure we continue to innovate and stay at the forefront of a rapidly-changing industry. And by investing in the training, development and support we give to our people, as we describe below.

Our people

Every day our people touch the lives of millions, providing services that help our customers get the most out of their work and personal lives. We invest in our people so they can succeed and contribute effectively to our business.

Believing in what we do

A clear purpose guides everyone's contribution in BT. By bringing together the best networks, technology and products and services for our customers, we use the power of communications to make a better world.

Living up to our values in everything we do will help build the kind of business our people are proud to be part of. Our values are:

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A global workforce

At 31 March 2015 we had 88,500 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in 60 countries, with 70,900 of them based in the UK. We are one of the largest employers in the UK, supporting its economy by providing jobs and income.

This year we recruited over 9,900 people. Of these, more than 5,300 work in the UK, including over 500 who are on our renowned apprenticeship scheme.

Across our global business we continue to simplify the way we work, for example, by transforming our HR and finance systems and services. This makes things easier for our people, so we can serve our customers better.

As our business evolves to meet the needs of our customers, we adapt our organisation, redeploying people through the BT transition centre. This helps us avoid redundancies. Last year in the UK, 2,100 people were redeployed, meaning that we retained experienced people with the skills we need for the future.

A customer-facing workforce

This year we recruited 2,500 new engineers and more than 500 new service colleagues to work in our customer management and contact centres. We created 1,100 jobs in the UK that were previously performed by agencies in the UK and overseas.

Our Customer First programme supports our business strategy by making sure our people have the support, skills and confidence to give our customers a great experience. Examples include:

- innovative apps to give engineers better access to information (see page 14);
- training in communication skills to cut out jargon and complexity; and
- reorganising teams to focus on the needs of customers at specific points in their relationship with us.

We are making use of internal social media tools to encourage colleagues to share best practice, ask each other questions and celebrate the progress we are making.

Investing for growth

Learning matters at BT. We want our people to build their skills and careers and our Academy helps them do this.

The Academy is BT's new approach to learning. It is not a physical place or building, it is home to a combination of materials, events, programmes and knowledge-sharing activities which help our people learn in different ways. The Academy is organised across four faculties: Leadership, Technical, Customer and Business. Each faculty supports a number of communities we call professions which have similar learning and career journeys.

We have made accessing a profession easy by investing in an innovative social collaboration platform helping people to develop their skills and careers together.

Around 9,600 leaders from senior executives to junior managers have learnt new ways to lead, coach and support their teams. And a global programme is giving 5,600 frontline people the skills, tools and techniques to continuously improve the way we serve customers.

We intend to recruit around 1,000 graduates and apprentices in 2015/16. And we are also offering up to 1,000 vocational and work experience placements to 18-24 year olds as part of the UK employer-led initiative, Movement to Work. This is backed by the Prince's Trust and the Government.

A healthy organisation employee engagement and involvement

We are becoming a healthier organisation. Our plans to improve organisational health have included the creation of the Academy, the implementation of Continuous Improvement initiatives throughout the business and an award-winning leadership development programme.

Find out more

To find out more about our

apprenticeship scheme visit

www.btplc.com/careercentre

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Each quarter about 35,000 people provide feedback on working for BT through our employee engagement survey. Our surveys help us develop a focused people strategy and support action planning at a local level. We have maintained engagement levels at 3.82 (out of a maximum of 5, with a telecoms benchmark of 3.90), the highest level since we started the survey in 2008.

We keep our people informed about company results, major business decisions and other things that affect them using a variety of digital channels. Leaders regularly connect with their teams through roundtable meetings, town hall debates, site visits, webcasts and blogs.

We consult with our people or their representatives on a regular basis, taking their views into account on decisions that affect them. In the UK we recognise two main trade unions. The Communication Workers Union represents people in engineering, administration and clerical positions. Prospect represents managerial and professional people.

Diversity at work

At BT we believe that we unlock the power of our people when we value their diversity. This is a priority for us because a diverse workforce fosters greater innovation, helps us better understand and serve our customers and empowers our people to deliver their best.

Business in the Community benchmarks consistently rank us in the top ten private-sector organisations for women and people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. And as a Two Tick employer, we are committed to attracting, developing and retaining people with disabilities. Applicants with disabilities or long-term health conditions and who meet the minimum criteria for a vacancy are automatically put through to the first stage of the recruitment process.

We were again named this year as one of The Times Top 50 Employers for Women. But we have the ambition to move further and faster. We are determined to drive up the number of women in our workforce. 19,655 women currently work for us many on flexible contracts, giving us a full-time equivalent of 18,457 female employees. This corresponds to 10,358 FTE (25%) of our management population and 8,099 (17%) of our team members.

At Board level, our policy is to aim to have at least 25% female representation. We were below this for part of the year, but with three out of 11 Board members, we now have 27% female representation. We are working to attract more women into BT and our sector. And we are reviewing our working practices and development opportunities to

make sure that an increasing number of women can enjoy successful careers with us.

Staying safe and well

Our people tell us wellbeing has improved by 2% across the company. We have made good progress on reducing accidents while working. The Lost Time Injury rate came down by 23% to 1.5 incidents per million working hours. However, the changing age profile of the business presents some challenges for us as mature and experienced workers are replaced by younger people who sometimes have a different attitude to risk. We have targeted our training to address this.

Sickness absence rates have increased by 6% to 2.2%. There are differences between the lines of business with a steady reduction in most of them but a sustained increase in Openreach. Here, mental ill health and musculoskeletal disorders in older workers are the main causes. The increase in sickness absence is mainly because people are having to take more time off. Extended absences (over one month) now make up two-thirds of all lost time.

Our focus is on early intervention to improve attendance. And our support services help around 93% of people return to their role on full duties.

Volunteering

It is a source of great pride to BT and our people that so many colleagues volunteer. This year, more than 22,700 (26%) of our colleagues (up 62% from last year) spent 53,000 days supporting more than 3,700 charities and community groups around the world. Our people can use up to three working days a year to support causes that matter to them. This means they can have a real impact in the communities where they live and work. Our ambition is that by 2020, two-thirds of BT people will be volunteering time to support good causes.

More than 5,300 (2013/14: 2,200) people took part in volunteering specifically as part of a team. Specialist BT teams helped charities with particular issues which needed our expert input and knowledge. Other BT teams used their energy and enthusiasm to make a practical difference in local areas.

Charities supported in this way include Place2be, a UK children's mental health charity which we helped with their communications strategy, and Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre where we helped build equipment to enable wheelchair users to access an abseil tower. In Spain, BT's human resources team helped young people facing severe financial issues prepare for work. And in Hungary, 50 BT volunteers improved the living conditions in a young people's refuge in Budapest.

In India, more than 80 BT volunteers, working with our local partner Katha, continued to support the Katha Information Technology and E-commerce School (KITES), a charity which provides ICT training for children in one of Delhi's largest slums. Over 19,000 children have already completed ICT courses. KITES also supplies more general schooling for children and teaches business skills to women. Mridul Srivastava from BT Global Services won this year's Chairman's Award for his contribution to society and the lead he has taken in encouraging volunteering at KITES.

Pay and benefits

We compare salaries with other companies in our markets to make sure our packages are competitive. In the UK, pay for the vast majority of our engineering and support people is determined by collective bargaining, with fair terms and conditions for all. Managers' pay and bonuses are linked to business performance and their personal contribution.

Our executives are offered long-term incentives to align their reward with the creation of shareholder value. The amount ultimately received depends on BT's performance over a three-year period. In accordance with our regulatory

obligations, incentives for senior leaders in Openreach are tied to its business performance rather than that of the wider group.

We also provide a range of pension and retirement plans for employees globally, either through dedicated company plans or by contributing to state retirement arrangements where applicable. You can find details of the BT Pension Scheme and other retirement plans on page 89.

Sharing in success

Around 60% of our people take part in one or more of BT's savings-related share option plans (saveshare), which operate in over 25 countries. In August 2014, over 22,000 people in our 2009 saveshare plan were able to buy shares at 61p, representing an average gain of around £41,000 each. Around 7,000 of these people, who participated at the maximum allowed, were able to buy shares worth just under £90,000 (based on the share price on 31 July 2014). We believe this was one of the largest ever payouts by a UK plc for an all-employee saveshare plan.

^a The Two Ticks is an accreditation that is given to organisations that are committed to employing disabled people.

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Our networks and physical assets

Our networks, service platforms and IT systems are the foundations of the products our customers rely on around the world.

Network platforms

Our global reach

Our global network provides service to more than 170 countries and is supported by in-country networks and infrastructure. Most of our network assets are in the UK and Europe. We continue to selectively expand the reach of our network to support multinational companies in other regions.

The scale and reach of our global multi-protocol label switching (MPLS) network is a key competitive differentiator. This single IP-based network lets our customer-facing lines of business launch and sell products and services quickly and cost-effectively, without needing to invest in dedicated infrastructure for each product.

To serve our multinational customers we offer our virtual private network (VPN) services. To provide these, we use our MPLS network and a combination of owned and leased fibre connections to interconnect our points of presence (PoPs) around the world. For the final connection into the customers' premises, we either use our own existing circuits, or rent connections from telecoms operators in that country. We also have an extensive satellite network which provides customers with connectivity around the world, including to remote and hard-to-reach locations.

Our global IP Exchange platform (GIPX) continues to do well. Around 400 service providers are connected to it globally and this year we launched a new node serving the Middle East.

In-country networks

We have extensive networks in the UK, as well as in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the Republic of Ireland and Spain.

Our UK fixed-line network is one of our most valuable assets and our investment in fibre broadband is key to delivering modern, superfast services to our customers. To meet the demand from businesses, we are continuing to expand the availability of Ethernet. And when our customers are away from their home or office, they can use one of more than 5m BT Wi-fi hotspots.

Developments this year

This year we have:

improved our UK broadband network at the same time as reducing its running costs. We have made it more resilient to faults and it can now better cater for increases in traffic. And we have continued to extend the reach of our fibre network (see page 73);
engaged with our MVNO partner, EE, to develop new mobile services that allowed BT Consumer to re-enter the mobile market;
been developing the core network systems and radio infrastructure to be able to use our own 4G spectrum. This work focuses on small-cell, in-building solutions;
built the systems that will lay the foundation for the next generation of IP-based communication and future voice services;
rationalised our voice and legacy data networks so we are using less equipment and less energy; and
simplified the technology we use to provide all of our global network services (IP Connect, Ethernet Connect and Internet Connect). By using a single network router, rather than one for each service, we are able to reduce the cost of introducing these services. This has enabled us to offer Ethernet Connect and Internet Connect in eight new countries and 38 new cities on our own network this year.

Service platforms

We run a number of service platforms that combine our network and IT resources to underpin many of the key products we offer. These include:

BT Conferencing, which we offer to our customers around the world. BT MeetMe, is our audio conferencing service. It is also available with Dolby Voice for higher quality sound and a better user experience.

BT Cloud Contact, one of our contact centre solutions. For example, this has helped Etihad Airways better serve their customers. Callers from 37 different countries are automatically directed to the right language team, in any one of three global contact centres.

Our BT TV platform, which we have invested further in to support a growing number of customers and to increase the range of services we can deliver. We have added red button interactive features. Our new Extra Box service provides multi-room viewing. And our people have implemented the technology to support our TV Everywhere service, and ensure Chromecast and Netflix services are compatible with BT TV.

IT systems

Our internal IT systems enable us to manage our processes, handle customer information and deliver our products and services. They are critical to serving our customers and running our business.

For example, our customer management systems hold our customer and billing information. They include the technology that is used when customers call a contact centre, and behind our online customer portals.

We are making our systems simpler. And we are continuing to innovate. Last year we launched a system to analyse our own Big Data . We have seen the benefits of it this year. It has provided greater insight into potential line faults which has reduced the number of unnecessary engineer visits.

We currently have around 25 petabytes of data storage infrastructure spread across several sites. (If this storage was full of MP3-encoded songs, they would take about 50,000 years to play.) We expect the amount of data that we store to grow. Despite this, we are working on reducing the number of data centres we run, removing older server technology and using fewer IT applications. We are able to do this while increasing our storage capacity by using virtualisation . This increases our data centre utilisation by running many virtual machines on each server.

We are incorporating many innovations into our data centres to improve performance and power efficiency, as well as reduce cost. Developments such as adaptive power management and hot/cold aisle isolation help us to reduce power usage. These and other programmes will help us cut our IT energy use over the coming years.

Properties

We occupy around 6,350 properties in the UK and around 1,730 in the rest of the world. Most of our UK properties are owned by and leased from Telereal Trillium, part of the William Pears group, after we entered into a sale and leaseback arrangement with them in 2001.

Our freehold sites include our main strategic buildings: BT Centre; the BT Tower; and our R&D facility, Adastral Park in Suffolk.

Of our UK properties, 95% are operational, housing telecoms and broadband equipment. The rest are offices, customer contact centres, engineering depots, data centres and our BT Sport TV studio.

Find out more

The reach of our fibre network

on page

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In the UK we continue to drive our programme of disposing of office and operational buildings we no longer need while consolidating office space in the remaining properties. This year we completed the closure of Keybridge House, a former international telephone and telex exchange in London. We sold this surplus building to Mount Anvil for £93m in February 2015 realising a profit of £67m. In addition, we have recognised a £45m charge in specific items for onerous leases as a property rationalisation cost (see page 83).

Outside the UK, 91% of our buildings are operational, housing our hosting and telecoms equipment. The remaining 9% are offices. This year we opened new offices in Gurgaon, Bangalore and Kolkata, as part of our strategy to invest in high-growth regions and support leading global companies. We also closed 25 offices around the world that we no longer need and delivered a net reduction of 14 operational sites, which helped our cost transformation.

Research and development

BT has a long history of innovation, starting from our roots as The Electric Telegraph Company (the world's oldest telecommunications company) in 1846.

For example, in 1926 we held the world's first two-way, trans-Atlantic conversation by radio telephone from our wireless station near Rugby. And in 1943, Tommy Flowers, working in the telecommunications division of the General Post Office, developed the world's first programmable electronic computer, Colossus. In 1968, we installed the world's first digital telephone exchange. And we laid the world's first purpose-designed optical fibre submarine cable in Loch Fyne, Scotland in 1980.

In the 30 years since our privatisation in December 1984, we pioneered many of the technologies that our business now relies on. For example, we were at the forefront of defining the global IP and broadband standards which mean our networks are capable of supporting the advanced video, business and internet services we have today. We were the first company to commercially launch single-mode fibre optics – the technology that underpins today's high-speed networks. And we pioneered a technology that uses compressed air to blow fibre optic cables through conduits, which speeds up network installation.

Innovation, supported by our global research and development (R&D), enables us to offer the new services that customers want, and to find ways of doing things more efficiently and at lower cost. This year we invested £502m (2013/14: £530m) in research and development. We are one of the largest investors in R&D of any company in the UK, and globally in the telecoms sector^a.

Since privatisation we have had over 13,000 patents granted and in 2014/15 we filed patent applications for 93 inventions (2013/14: 89). We routinely seek patent protection in different countries and at 31 March 2015 we had a worldwide portfolio of more than 4,500 patents and applications.

We bring together expertise and resources (both our own and third-party) at our six global development centres. Adastral Park, our technology headquarters, is home to over 65 high-tech companies. It is a world-leading innovation campus, employing around 3,700 people. This year we have continued to grow our development centres in Kuala Lumpur and Bangalore. These give us local technical expertise and spread our development more evenly around the world.

We are keen to work with people outside BT, from small start-up companies to some of the best universities around the world. We have extensive, long-standing, joint-research programmes with Cambridge University (UK), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (US), Tsinghua University (China), Khalifa University (UAE) and over 30 other universities globally. We continue to support a programme of co-innovation with start-ups in London's Tech City. And our teams work with customers and other companies in the US, Asia, Europe and the

Middle East. They help us track the very latest global developments in new technologies, business propositions and market trends.

Our people help us innovate and improve our service to customers. This year our award-winning internal New Ideas Scheme had more than 2,000 submissions. As a result, we have identified more than £30m of benefit through new revenues and lower costs, and it is helping us provide a better service to our customers.

We run innovation showcases for our major customers, where they can discuss applications and solutions with our experts. And we get to hear first-hand what they need.

Under the brand of Ingenious we are sharing BT's innovation story with thought leaders, governments and the media. You can read more about Ingenious on page 35.

Examples of our activities this year include:

Working on how to improve the future 4G mobile experience for our customers through the use of femtocells. These are low-cost, easy-to-install, low-powered devices that could be placed in customers' homes or offices and in some cases offer a viable alternative to traditional mobile masts.

Performing extensive lab evaluations and field trials in the access network. This will help us provide higher broadband speeds even further from the exchange. We have been instrumental in the ratification of the ITU G.fast standard that paves the way for the next generation of ultrafast broadband over copper.

Investigating new ways to deliver TV services over our broadband network. Our trial of Ultra HDTV, streaming the 2014 FIFA World Cup, was a world first.

Focusing on many aspects of customer service, such as increasing the number of quality of experience nodes in the network where we monitor service performance. These help us make sure that services like Netflix, BBC iPlayer and YouTube are performing well on our network.

Examining how we can use our technology in new ways. We are a major partner in MK:Smart, a UK-based Internet of Things (IoT) programme in Milton Keynes. It is addressing the challenge of supporting economic growth without exceeding the capacity of urban infrastructure. For example, by using sensors that assist city centre vehicle parking and reduce traffic congestion.

Brand and reputation

Innovation is an important part of our history and an essential ingredient for our future. It is also key to our brand – one of our most important assets and a vital source of competitive advantage. We believe that well-managed brands drive business performance because they stand out in crowded markets.

^a Comparison based on total R&D spend over 2004/05 to 2013/14. Data taken from EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard, <http://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/scoreboard.html>

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Partnerships continue to be an important part of the way we build our reputation and show our support for good causes.

We were the founding partner of the International Festival for Business which launched in Liverpool in June. A total of 68,600 delegates from 92 countries attended events over the 50-day programme.

We were the first commercial partner of the British Paralympic Association when it was founded in 1989. To celebrate its 25th anniversary we provided a grant to support grassroots disability sports clubs across the UK. We continue to support British Paralympians on their journey to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

We were also an official supporter of the Invictus Games, an international sporting event for wounded, injured or sick servicemen and women. This was held in London in September 2014 and involved over 400 competitors from 13 nations.

Ingenious

In 2014, we ran a programme of events under the theme of **Ingenious**. This included events at high profile locations such as the BT Tower and Adastral Park. We launched the UK's first National Inventors' Day in December. The event was designed to celebrate the UK's rich heritage of invention and inspire the next generation of creative thinkers. It was also a showcase of BT's long history of innovation.

We also became the lead principal sponsor of the new Information Age gallery at the Science Museum in London. The gallery explores how the modern connected world was created through different technology networks such as radio and television broadcasting, the web and mobile communications.

Stakeholders and relationships

Other than our people, our main stakeholders are: our customers; communities; shareholders; lenders; our pension schemes; suppliers; government; and regulatory authorities.

Our customers

We sell fixed-voice, broadband, mobile and TV products and services to consumers in the UK. For small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as larger businesses in the UK, we offer fixed-voice, broadband, mobility, networking and IT services. In both the UK and globally we offer managed networked IT services to multinational corporations, domestic businesses and public sector organisations.

Some of our customers are also our competitors. This is because we sell wholesale products and services to other communications providers in the UK and overseas.

You can read about our customers and the services we provide them in our lines of business section from page 53.

Communities and society as a whole

The investments we make will play a big part in benefitting society and the environment, proving that it is possible to do good and create business value at the same time.

Last year, we talked about our 2020 ambitions in three focus areas of creating a connected society, supporting charities and communities and delivering environmental benefits. This year we have introduced two additional areas developing a culture of tech literacy and inclusive growth.

Our 2020 ambitions are now:

9 out of 10 people in the UK will have access to fibre-based products and services.

10m Help 10m people overcome social disadvantage through the benefits our products and services can bring.

5m Help 5m children to receive better teaching in computing skills.

£1bn Help generate more than £1bn for good causes, using our people, their skills and our technology, whilst inspiring two-thirds of our people to volunteer.

3:1 Enable customers to reduce their carbon emissions by at least three times the end-to-end carbon impact of our business.

Creating a connected society

Digital inclusion is a key part of bringing our purpose to life. We are helping people on low incomes, with disabilities or who are elderly, to get online. An example of this is BT Basic, a product created specifically for a low income group. This low-cost product, combined with our digital skills programme (Get IT Together), helps those individuals to make the most of being online.

We share the increasing public concern about protecting children online. Through The Right Click: Internet Safety Matters, our partnership with UNICEF UK, we are delivering 600 online safety workshops across the UK, with BT volunteers providing parents and children with practical advice to keep them safe online. We have also invested in tools and resources to educate children and their families about staying safe while online.

BT Parental Controls is our free, network-based filter that lets families control internet access. In 2014/15 we contacted all our BT Broadband customers to raise awareness of this service.

Developing a culture of tech literacy

Increasingly every aspect of modern life is underpinned by technology. But even though young people grow up surrounded by technology, many of them do not understand the basic concepts of how it works. This could leave them unable to fully participate in society. We want to help build a culture of tech literacy for the nation. We want to inspire young people to move from simply being technology consumers to embracing the role technology can play in their lives, being confident with computational thinking, and aware of the way technology and data underpins our social infrastructure.

For more information on how we deliver both societal and business benefits, please refer to page 90, where we have outlined our progress.

Find out more

Our lines of business on page Our performance against our 2020 ambitions

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Supporting charities and communities

Our charity partners help millions of people in the UK and worldwide. Our communications technology can help them raise money quickly and function more efficiently, so they can focus on what they do best.

MyDonate is our commission-free online giving platform which underpins our fundraising and community support. We have supported various fundraising activities this year including Cancer UK's Stand Up 2 Cancer telethon, Children in Need and Red Nose Day. We have also supported Disasters Emergency Committee appeals for Syria, the Philippines, Gaza and the Ebola Crisis – all using our MyDonate fundraising platform. In total, all these activities raised £30m this year.

We do not just support large scale telethons, but also smaller charities and individual fundraisers too – with over £21m being raised using MyDonate. We are investing in new technologies and extending the reach of MyDonate, as it is key to helping us deliver our £1bn 2020 goal.

The Supporters Club is our collaboration with our long-standing charity partner, Comic Relief. It aims to build a better world by bringing people together through sport. We provide grants to support charities and community sport foundations, to use sport as a vehicle for change in young people's lives. BT Sport customers can make monthly donations of £1, £3 or £5 through their bill.

Increasing our customers' sense of connection with The Supporters Club, and increasing donations, was a key priority in the year. To encourage more people to get involved, we included short films as part of our coverage of live sporting events which showed The Supporters Club is making a difference. Customer donations have raised £1.8m this year, with over 26 projects currently being funded, both in the UK and around the world.

Delivering environmental benefits

We serve some of the biggest companies in the world, so helping them reduce carbon emissions can have a global impact. Many of them are sustainability leaders themselves. And more and more of our customers want to know how our products can contribute to their own sustainability commitments.

We lead by example as we are reducing our own environmental impact and minimising waste, and are working with our suppliers to help them do the same. We have an integrated approach to cost reduction and carbon abatement – many of our solutions directly reduce our customers' carbon emissions, save money and use fewer resources. For example, our conferencing facilities reduce the need for travel.

Our shareholders

We have around 900,000 separate shareholders. Over 20% of them have held shares since BT was privatised 30 years ago. As well as the Annual Report and Annual General Meeting, we keep our shareholders up to date with how we are doing through regular mailings. These often include offers on our products and services that are only available to shareholders. Our website includes press releases, newsletters, presentations and webcasts that can also keep our shareholders informed.

The majority of our shares are held by institutional investors. We have an extensive investor relations programme aimed at keeping existing shareholders informed and attracting new ones. This programme includes:

reporting quarterly results, accompanied by a conference call or presentation from senior management; regular teach-ins on key topics (for example this year we covered regulation and cost transformation); and meetings and conference calls with investors both in the UK and around the world.

In 2014/15, we held 369 meetings or events with institutional investors. This compares with 421 in 2013/14 and 259 in 2012/13.

We were voted the best company for investor relations in England in the Extel Survey 2014. Across Europe, we were voted the second best in the telecommunications sector.

Our lenders

Our relationships with our lenders, mainly banking institutions and bond holders, play an important role in our treasury and funding strategy. These relationships are vital for funding the business and meeting our liquidity requirements (see page 85).

Our pension schemes

We operate defined benefit and defined contribution pension schemes. The largest is the BT Pension Scheme (BTPS) which has 306,500 members. You can read more about it on page 89.

Our suppliers

Our suppliers from across the world play a vital role in helping us to provide our products and services and deliver our strategy. We spent £9.4bn with our suppliers this year (2013/14: £9.8bn). The top 100 represent around 61% of our annual spend.

The mix of our suppliers continues to evolve as we move into new markets, such as televised sport and mobility.

Our approach to procurement

We have around 320 people in 26 countries working with suppliers to deliver our procurement strategy.

We want to get the most from our suppliers especially from their diversity, skills and innovation.

As part of our cost transformation programmes, we have concentrated on making the most of our relationships with our largest suppliers to get even better value.

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This year we introduced our Purchase Order intercept programme. This involves reviewing all purchase orders to make sure that we are optimising our spend across BT. The new Central Business Services centre (see page 23) is supporting our procurement division and is growing in numbers to support this programme.

We are continuing to review our supply base and have deactivated around 3,300 suppliers from our procurement systems in the last 12 months. Our supply base now includes new categories of suppliers to support our new markets.

During the year we launched the Procurement Profession, part of the Academy (see page 31). This is helping to improve the skills of our people. Our ambition is to have all of our buyers accredited and licensed. And for a few of our expert practitioners to be recognised externally as fellows of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS). Currently we have two practitioners who are fellows of CIPS.

Choosing our suppliers

It is important to us that we know who we are doing business with and who is acting on our behalf. So we:

- choose suppliers using an established set of principles which seeks to make sure both we and the supplier act ethically and responsibly;
- check that the goods and services we buy are made, delivered and disposed of in a socially and environmentally responsible way; and
- measure factors such as a supplier's energy use, environmental impact and labour standards.

You can find out more at www.selling2bt.bt.com

Labour standards in our supply chain

We want our suppliers' employees to experience working conditions that meet the standards we have developed. We send our suppliers an ethical standards questionnaire. Based on their responses, we follow up with any suppliers identified as high or medium risk. This year we met 96% of our target to achieve 100% follow-up within three months.

We also visit supplier sites to make sure they meet our standards. This year we visited 47 sites (2013/14: 54 sites) around the world.

Number of on-site supplier assessments

Year ended 31 March

2013	49
2014	54
2015	47

To comply with the Dodd-Frank Act and our Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) obligations, we asked certain suppliers whether their products contain certain minerals which may have been sourced from conflict areas such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In June 2014 we filed the required report covering 2013 with the SEC which described our due diligence and reflected the responses we received. We will file the report for 2014 in June 2015.

Paying our suppliers

This year the average number of days between invoice date and supplier payment was 60 days (2013/14: 62 days).

Suppliers can choose to use the BT Supplier Finance scheme. It offers contracted suppliers the chance to be paid early which reduces their financing costs. We introduced it in September 2013 and it is now one of the largest supplier finance schemes in the UK, supporting over £1.2bn of spend annually.

You can find out more about the BT Supplier Finance scheme at www.selling2bt.bt.com/Payment/SupplierFinance/

It is particularly attractive for SMEs (who make up around 50% of our supply base) and it supports UK Government initiatives to encourage small business growth. We also follow the Better Payment Practice Code set up by the Government in partnership with business organisations across the UK.

You can find out more about the Better Payment Practice Code at www.payontime.co.uk

Human rights

As a provider of communications services across the world, we could impact the human rights of our employees, workers in our supply chain, customers and communities in a number of different ways.

Our statement of business practice, *The Way We Work*, sets out our commitment to respecting human rights. It gives employees, suppliers and anyone working on behalf of BT guidance on how we expect them to behave.

We believe the areas that could be most affected by our business are the human rights to privacy and freedom of expression. Our policies on privacy, security, anti-corruption and bribery, diversity, inclusion, health, safety, wellbeing, conflict minerals and sourcing with human dignity help mitigate risks in these and other relevant areas.

In last year's Annual Report we said we would carry out a Board-level review of our human rights policy and further develop our compliance framework. We have now completed this review. We assessed our operations in the UK

against stakeholder expectations on how businesses should respect human rights. We have taken advice from both a leading law firm and a global, non-profit human rights consultancy.

The review showed that we have strong processes to manage human rights impacts arising with our employees, such as highly developed diversity and wellbeing measures. We also have a clear approach to freedom of expression, based on our belief that our customers should have the choice, whenever possible, to access the services and content they want. The review did identify opportunities to strengthen our human rights policy and governance, and to be more transparent about our operations and interactions with government.

Our *Operating Committee* and Board considered the recommendations and have approved an implementation programme to further enhance our approach to human rights. This programme will begin later in 2015. We have established a human rights steering group to achieve this. It is sponsored by the *Operating Committee* and will have broad representation across our key functions and lines of business. More information can be found at www.bt.com/deliveringourpurpose

Find out more

The Academy	BT Supplier Policy www.selling2bt.bt.com	BT Supplier Finance Scheme www.selling2bt.bt.com/ Payment/SupplierFinance/	Better Payment Practice Code www.payontime.co.uk
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Our relationship with HM Government

We are the largest supplier of networked IT services to the UK public sector. We work with more than 1,300 organisations across central, local and devolved government, healthcare, police and defence to provide some of the UK's most vital services. For example, we run N3, the National Health Service's secure national network. We provide telecommunications services to the Ministry of Defence. And we have recently started working with the Welsh Government to operate the Wales-wide public sector broadband network and with Devon and Cornwall Police to provide their IT services.

We can be required by law to do certain things and provide certain services to Government. For example, under the Communications Act, we (and others) can be required to provide or restore services during disasters. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 also says that the Government can impose obligations on us (and others) at times of emergency or in connection with civil contingency planning. The Secretary of State can also require us to take certain actions in the interests of national security and international relations.

Regulation

In our markets in the UK and around the world, communications and TV services are regulated by governmental and non-governmental bodies. This is to make sure that CPs and broadcasters abide by common standards and rules, and that nobody is disadvantaged by those providers with strong positions in their markets. Below we explain the regulatory framework and some of the recent and upcoming decisions taken by regulators and how they affect us.

European Union (EU) regulation

In EU countries, electronic communications networks and services are governed by directives and regulations set by the European Commission (EC). These create a Europe-wide framework covering services such as fixed and mobile voice, broadband, cable and satellite TV.

The directives include rules covering access and interconnection, universal service obligations and a requirement for national regulators to review markets for significant market power (SMP) every three years. Companies with SMP typically have a market share of 40% or more and are able to do things such as increase prices without losing business to competitors (as would happen in a fully competitive market).

The directives also cover how regulators set price controls which can have a major impact on the companies subject to them. The rules require national regulators to consult with the EC on any price control decisions before they are finalised to make sure they are consistent with European regulations.

The EC announced its strategy for the Digital Single Market on 6 May 2015 which included a plan to review the EU Telecommunications Framework. As part of this review, the EC aims to assess how to encourage investment in infrastructure and how to make current telecoms and media rules fit for new challenges and new providers. The EC will also consider a European approach to spectrum management.

UK regulation

The telecoms and broadcasting industries are regulated primarily by Ofcom (the UK's independent regulator) within the framework set by the various European directives, the Communications Act and other UK and EU regulations and recommendations. The telecoms sector is subject to an extensive ex-ante regulatory framework set out under the European Common Regulatory Framework whereas broadcasting and pay-TV is only subject to a mixture of separate, specific regulation and general competition law.

The Communications Act and Ofcom

The Communications Act gives Ofcom legal powers and sets out how electronic communication and broadcasting services should be regulated in the UK. It includes the conditions set by the European directives.

Ofcom's main duties are:

- to further the interests of citizens in relation to communications matters; and

- to further the interests of consumers in relevant markets, where appropriate by promoting competition.

Under the powers of the Communications Act, Ofcom sets conditions that CPs must comply with. Some conditions, known as General Conditions, apply to all CPs. These mainly deal with protecting consumers' general access and interconnection, planning for emergencies, providing information to Ofcom and allocating and transferring phone numbers. Other conditions apply to certain companies that are universal service providers or that Ofcom has decided have SMP in a particular market.

We are the designated universal service provider for the UK (except for the Hull area where it is KCOM Group) and so we have certain obligations. The main one is to make sure that basic fixed-line services are available at an affordable price to all consumers in the UK. We are also obliged to provide public payphones.

We have SMP in a number of markets including Business Connectivity (eg Ethernet, backhaul), Fixed Access (eg LLU, GEA, WLR) and Wholesale Narrowband (eg Call Origination). Ofcom's market reviews are therefore very important for us. Following a market review, if Ofcom decides that a CP has SMP, it can put controls in place, typically on the prices which the CP can charge. Ofcom will generally try to set charges that are reasonably based on costs and an appropriate return on the capital invested.

Anyone can appeal against Ofcom's decisions through a number of routes, including to the Competition Appeal Tribunal (CAT) or to the High Court.

In March 2015, Ofcom announced a major review of the digital communications market. The Strategic Review of Digital Communications will examine competition, investment, innovation and the availability of products in the fixed-line, broadband and mobile markets. It will focus on three areas in particular:

- ensuring the right incentives for private-sector investment, which can help deliver availability and quality of service;

maintaining strong competition and tackling obstacles or bottlenecks that might be holding the sector back; and identifying whether there is scope for deregulation in some areas.

The first phase of the review will examine current and future market factors that may affect digital communications services, and current regulatory approaches. To inform this work, Ofcom intends to engage with a wide range of stakeholders including industry, consumer groups, the UK Government and devolved administrations through meetings and workshops. This phase of the review is expected to conclude with a discussion document in summer 2015.

BT's Undertakings

In response to Ofcom's 2005 Strategic Review of Telecommunications, we gave some legally-binding undertakings under the Enterprise Act 2002. These Undertakings (which included the creation of Openreach) began in September 2005. They aim to give clarity and certainty to the UK telecoms industry about the way we provide upstream regulated products. This in turn supports effective and fair competition in related downstream markets.

Overseas regulation

The degree of regulation in international markets varies widely. This can hinder our ability to compete. We are pressing incumbent operators around the world, and their national regulatory authorities, for fairer cost-related wholesale access to their networks.

We are in discussions with both the EC and US regulatory authorities over what we believe to be premature deregulation of parts of the US telecoms market. This has made it more difficult for non-US CPs to enter and compete in the US, while European telecoms markets remain open to competition from US operators.

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Impact of regulation

There were a number of regulatory decisions and outcomes of appeals that affected us during the year and will impact us in the future.

Fixed Access and Wholesale Broadband Access Market Reviews	<p>In June 2014, Ofcom completed its reviews of both the Fixed Access market (covering WLR, LLU, GEA, ISDN 2 and ISDN 30 products) and the Wholesale Broadband Access (WBA) market (covering IPstream, Datastream and WBC).</p> <p>Ofcom continued to impose charge controls on the markets where we have SMP. These controls cover the three years to March 2017.</p>	<p>During this period, the artificially low price of full LLU will be phased out to better reflect the actual costs of providing the service to CPs.</p> <p>Ofcom did not impose price regulation of wholesale fibre broadband (GEA).</p> <p>For WBA, Ofcom enlarged the size of the area where competition is greater and where we are free to set prices as we wish.</p>
Fibre broadband margin	<p>In May 2013, Ofcom opened an investigation following a complaint which alleged that BT has abused its dominant position, such that the margin between the prices BT Consumer charges for some of its fibre broadband products, and the wholesale price charged by Openreach for the relevant network inputs, is insufficient to allow other CPs to compete profitably.</p> <p>In October 2014, Ofcom closed the investigation having found no grounds for taking any action.</p>	<p>Separately in June 2014, Ofcom consulted on proposals for an ex-ante margin squeeze test. Ofcom issued its final statement in March 2015. Ofcom's indicative assessment was that we were likely to be making a sufficient margin to pass the test.</p> <p>We are required to submit to Ofcom a formal margin test report demonstrating compliance before the end of May 2015 and then every six months.</p> <p>We believe the design of the test is flawed and are considering our options, including an appeal.</p>
Ladder pricing	<p>Ladder pricing links the level of BT Wholesale termination charges for hosting non-geographic numbers (such as 0800, 0845 numbers) to the</p>	<p>In July 2014 we won an appeal to the Supreme Court that means that MNOs must pay BT outstanding charges for the period</p>

retail call prices charged by mobile network operators (MNOs) to their customers for calling such numbers.

Our ladder pricing policy was disputed by the MNOs. The CAT found in our favour in August 2011, but this was overturned by the Court of Appeal in July 2012.

starting prior to the CAT judgment in August 2011. BT has now reached financial settlements with all the MNOs.

We also raised ladder charges in relation to other number ranges which had also been disputed. These were heard at the CAT in February 2015. BT and all the MNOs have now reached financial settlements in relation to those charges.

Pay-TV

In June 2010, Sky appealed to the CAT against Ofcom's decision to regulate Sky Sports 1 and 2.

In August 2012, the CAT decided in Sky's favour. We successfully appealed the CAT's decision and in February 2014, the Court of Appeal published its judgment that the CAT must now reconsider the case.

Sky requested permission to appeal the Court of Appeal judgment at the Supreme Court. This was rejected by the Supreme Court in October 2014.

In November 2014, the CAT ruled that Sky must supply Sky Sports 1 and 2 to BT on IPTV on an interim basis until it has concluded its review of the case. (Sky Sports 1 and 2 continue to be provided on Digital Terrestrial TV).

This allowed us to offer Sky Sports 1 and 2 to our customers on our YouView set-top box.

In March, the CAT held a hearing about which panel should hear the case. In May, the chairman of the panel decided to recuse himself from hearing the appeal, and a new chair will need to be appointed. The CAT will also need to determine the process for reconsidering the case, as required by the Court of Appeal.

In November 2014, following a complaint by Virgin Media, Ofcom opened an investigation under the Competition Act 1998 and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union into the joint-selling arrangements of live UK broadcast rights for FA Premier League football matches.

Ofcom has consulted interested parties, including BT, and is currently in an information-gathering stage.

Ethernet dispute appeal

In December 2012, Ofcom issued final determinations on disputes over historic Ethernet pricing. Ofcom concluded that between April 2006 and March 2011 the prices we set for certain Ethernet services were too high, resulting in an overcharge of £151m over this period. We disagree with the determinations and both BT and the affected CPs appealed various points to the CAT.

In August 2014 the CAT handed down its judgment that rejected BT's appeal against the amount of the overcharge and judged that BT should also pay interest on this amount. This matter has been referred to Ofcom.

We disagree with the CAT's judgment and have applied for permission to appeal to the Court of Appeal.

<p>Business Connectivity Market Review</p>	<p>During the year Ofcom began its pre-consultation process ahead of reviewing the business connectivity markets and the associated leased line charge control.</p> <p>We expect the first round of consultations in spring 2015 with the new regulations applying from April 2016.</p>	<p>Ofcom's review will consider, amongst other things, the merits of introducing a new passive dark fibre remedy as well as the scope for further deregulation, reflecting an increasingly competitive market.</p>
<p>Wholesale Narrowband Market Review</p>	<p>In April 2015, Ofcom issued a call for inputs being the first stage in its review of the wholesale fixed call origination, termination and interconnection markets.</p>	<p>The review will consider whether regulation of call origination is still appropriate and whether further charge controls are required when the current controls end in September 2016.</p>

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Natural resources

As well as trying to minimise our use of precious natural resources, we are also maintaining our focus on reducing our waste.

We try to reduce the amount of materials we use in our operations, and to reuse them rather than dispose of them. Many of our waste materials can be turned into resources and redirected back into the supply chain.

We use a number of specialist contractors to recycle materials that we cannot reuse. These include cables, network equipment, wood and other mixed recycling such as paper and cardboard. For hazardous waste materials such as batteries, fluorescent light tubes and oil, we use specialist contractors who make sure the waste is recycled and managed according to legislation. We have around 2,000 sites which each produce more than 500kg of hazardous waste a year. They are registered with the appropriate UK environmental authority.

Water usage

Most of the water we use is used in washrooms and catering facilities at our offices. We also use water to cool equipment at our offices and telephone exchanges. This year we began a programme to install water meters at sites that together account for half of our total water use in the UK. The new meters provide half-hourly water measurements, giving us a more accurate understanding of how we use water and helping us spot leaks more quickly. This will help us identify where we can save water and we estimate this alone will help us cut our water use by 2% in 2015/16.

Energy use and carbon footprint

BT TSO is responsible for managing the group's energy consumption and for putting strategies in place to cut our carbon footprint.

We have signed long-term Power Purchase Agreements with wind and solar farms. These will provide 16% of our electricity needs in Great Britain from next year. One contract connects a large solar farm to our R&D facility at Adastral Park. We believe this is the largest arrangement of its kind in the UK and will provide up to 75% of the electricity needed by the Park on sunny days.

In Great Britain we spent around £306m on energy and fuel this year (2013/14: £296m), the increase from last year reflects higher energy prices. We estimate our energy savings programme delivered a 3.2% reduction in consumption and is expected to generate over £36m in annualised cost savings. This is the sixth consecutive year that we have achieved a reduction and takes the total savings calculated on this basis to £168m.

^a We have restated our worldwide energy consumption and GHG emission figures for previous years following improvements to our data. Previous estimates of energy usage have been updated with measured figures.

To track our carbon emissions, we report two CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) intensity measures:

Since 2008, we have had an ambitious carbon emissions reduction target linked to our economic contribution to GDP. This year we reduced our worldwide net carbon emissions per unit of value added (our contribution to GDP) by 79% compared with 1996/97.

To help benchmark our performance against other organisations, we also report our intensity as net emissions (scopes 1 & 2) per unit of revenue. Our figure of 13.6 tonnes CO₂e per £ million of revenue reflects an 84% reduction since 1996/97.

We report all of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission sources required under UK regulations. We have used the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard with UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting 2014 and International Energy Agency Conversion Factors. The chart below reports our GHG emissions and defines scopes 1, 2 and 3. We reduced our total worldwide net CO₂e emissions by 1.4% this year.

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Our risks

Like all businesses, we are affected by a number of risks and uncertainties. These may be impacted by internal and external factors, some of which we cannot control. Many of our risks are similar to those felt by comparable companies in terms of scale and operation.

Principal risks and uncertainties

In this section we explain some of the principal risks and uncertainties affecting us. These risks have the potential to impact our business, brand, people, assets, revenue, profits, liquidity or capital resources. The principal risks we described last year have evolved, and so too has our response to them.

Our Enterprise Risk Management framework provides reasonable (but cannot give absolute) assurance that significant risks are identified and addressed. There may be some risks which are unknown to us at present. And there may be some that we consider less significant now but become more important later.

External factors can present both risks and opportunities, to our business and to others. We focus our efforts on predicting and mitigating the risks, while at the same time seeking to capitalise on opportunities that may emerge.

We recognise the particular uncertainty that political and geo-political risks present, both in the UK (for example the Scottish independence referendum in 2014) and globally. We now monitor these through a separate sub-committee of our Group Risk Panel.

In the principal risks section below, we talk about what we are doing to stop our main risks materialising, or to limit their impact. Our principal risks and uncertainties should be considered along with the risk management process, the forward-looking statements in this document and the cautionary statement regarding forward-looking statements, which you can read on page 209.

How we manage risk

We need to manage risk so we can meet our objectives, build shareholder value and promote our stakeholders interests. We have a group-wide risk management process, and we show its four stages below.

Changes over the year

In 2013/14 we improved the way we manage risk through enhancing our risk management training, formalising the linkage between our investments and our principal risks and proactively assessing emerging risks. This year we made further improvements including:

Project and programme risk management

We developed an enhanced risk management policy, process and toolkit to provide guidance to colleagues managing risk in projects and programmes. This was supported by additional training for our project management community.

Risk appetite

Risk appetite (the nature and extent of the risks we are prepared to take) has been reviewed by both the Board and the *Operating Committee* this year. We have also progressed this work in our lines of business, for example using risk appetite to help determine the relative criticality of different IT systems.

Risk culture

Aligning with our organisational health programme, we have identified opportunities to build into the behaviours being embedded into our business, a culture that positively supports active and open risk management.

Enterprise Risk Management framework

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Annual Report 2015**Our principal risks**

Risk description	Impact	Link to strategy
Security and resilience		
<p>The resilience of our IT systems, networks and associated infrastructure, including our core data centres and exchanges, is essential to our short and long-term commercial success.</p>	<p>A breach of our security, or compromise of data or resilience affecting our operations, or those of our customers, could lead to an extended interruption to our services or even affect national infrastructure. The impact of such a failure could include: immediate financial losses due to fraud and theft; termination of contracts; immediate loss of revenue where orders and invoices cannot be processed; contractual penalties; lost productivity and unplanned costs of restoration and improvement; prosecution; and fines.</p>	<p>Deliver superior customer service</p>
<p>We face a variety of hazards that could cause significant interruptions to the delivery of our services. These include component failure, physical attack, theft of copper cable and equipment, fire, explosion, flood, power failure, overheating or extreme cold, problems encountered during upgrades and major changes, and the failure of key suppliers. A cyber security incident or logical attack could also trigger service interruption.</p>	<p>Additionally, reputational damage may arise, undermining market confidence and jeopardising future revenues. Ultimately the welfare of individuals might be put at risk where services cannot be provided or personal data is misappropriated.</p>	
<p>We also have a responsibility to many millions of customers, both business and consumer, to ensure their electronic information remains confidential, accurate, secure and available. The same holds true for our own data, information and intellectual property.</p>		

Major contracts

We have a number of complex and high-value national and multinational customer contracts.

The revenue arising from, and the profitability of, these contracts are subject to a number of factors including: variation in cost; achievement of cost reductions anticipated in the contract pricing, both in terms of scale and time; delays in the delivery or achievement of agreed milestones owing to factors either within or outside of our control; changes in customers requirements, their budgets, strategies or businesses; and the performance of our suppliers. Any of these factors could make a contract less profitable or even loss-making.

The degree of risk generally varies with the scope and life of the contract and is typically higher in the early stages of the contract. Some customer contracts require investment in the early stages, which is expected to be recovered over the life of the contract.

Major contracts often involve the implementation of new systems and communications networks, transformation of legacy networks and the development of new technologies.

The recoverability of these upfront costs may be impacted by delays or failure to meet milestones. Substantial performance risk exists in some of these highly complex contracts.

Failure to manage and meet our commitments under these contracts, as well as changes in customers requirements, their budgets, strategies or businesses, may lead to a reduction in our expected future revenue, profitability and cash generation. Unexpectedly high costs associated with the delivery of particular transformational contracts could also negatively impact profitability.

Earnings may be reduced or contracts may even become loss-making through loss of revenue, changes to customers businesses, business failure or contract termination. Failure to replace the revenue and earnings lost from these customers could lead to an overall reduction in group revenue, profitability and cash flow.

Deliver superior customer service

Transform our costs

Invest for growth

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Trend indicates management's perception of how the pre-mitigation risk has moved year on year	Pre-mitigation risk is increasing/worsening	Pre-mitigation risk is at a similar level	Pre-mitigation risk is lessening/improving
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Changes over the last year

In the past year we have had to deal with an unprecedented increase in the volume and intensity of cyber attacks. We recorded more top priority incidents in the last three months of 2014 than were experienced in the previous two years. The attacks were aimed not just at BT, but also at our customers, with the potential to disrupt others and cause collateral damage to BT services.

Following a comprehensive review of the resilience and disaster recovery capability of our critical systems, databases and exchanges, we have invested in enhancing site resilience based on our target levels of acceptable risk. We have also invested significantly in geo-resilience (ie cross-site recovery) for our critical systems where this did not previously exist, and have already seen a return on this investment through seamless failover and continuity of service during planned and, occasionally, unplanned outages.

Risk mitigation

We manage the risk of service interruption through a robust control framework that focuses first and foremost on prevention, supported by tried-and-tested recovery capabilities. We have also undertaken a large-scale estate resilience programme during the year, through which we have continued to invest in developing our resilience and recovery capabilities in instances where the risk has been shown to exceed acceptable levels for us. We have a rolling programme of major incident simulations to test and refine our crisis management procedures. An intensive focus on controlling the volume of network changes has also reduced the number of incidents.

The replacement of equipment that is approaching the end of its service life has provided opportunities to invest in new, more resilient facilities. We also benefit from having geographically-distributed locations that support cross-site recovery, avoiding the need to invest in new sites just for this purpose.

Our security strategy aims to prevent, deter and minimise the consequences of attacks. Our defences include physical protection of our assets, encryption of data, control of access rights, real-time analysis and sharing of intelligence, and continuous monitoring for intrusion, modifications and anomalies. We can rapidly adjust firewalls to automatically block most malicious data traffic. These measures combine to reduce the likelihood of

a major incident and help ensure that interruption or damage can be contained and dealt with promptly and effectively.

In response to the increased cyber threat, we have strengthened our defences, invested in new tools, techniques and skills to monitor threats, and increased our capacity to deal with attacks. We have also started a major programme to restructure our IT estate to make it quicker and easier to manage the incidents when they occur.

Tough market conditions and competitive pressures continue in many global regions while in some we are experiencing higher growth in volume of business due to previous investments we have made. The risk landscape changes accordingly, as does our focus of risk support and review.

Of particular note this year has been the number of broadband contracts with local authorities through the BDUK programme now entering the delivery phase of the contract lifecycle. While these contracts carry a different risk profile, we apply our established risk governance and reporting processes to ensure that risks and mitigation activities are identified and reported to management.

Our group-wide risk governance and reporting, along with line of business local governance and risk management processes, provide the visibility of key risk and mitigation activities. Assurance is provided via independent audits and at an individual contract level through an independent review programme based on multiple selection criteria or by senior management request. Progress on risks and mitigation actions agreed at these independent reviews are monitored and reported to relevant senior managers to ensure progress can be tracked. A separate, dedicated team provides assurance over our BDUK programme.

We have skills development programmes to enhance the ability of our people to identify and manage risk and to make sure learning from previous experience is included in training materials. The scope and availability of training opportunities continue to grow in line with BT-wide learning and development initiatives.

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Risk description	Impact	Link to strategy
Pensions		
<p>We have a significant funding obligation in relation to our defined benefit pension scheme in the UK, the BT Pension Scheme (BTPS or Scheme).</p> <p>The BTPS faces similar risks to other defined benefit schemes. Future low investment returns, lower interest rates, high inflation, longer life expectancy and regulatory changes may all result in the cost of funding the BTPS becoming a more significant burden on our financial resources.</p>	<p>The next valuation of the BTPS is scheduled to take place as at 30 June 2017 and an increase in the pension deficit may have an impact on the level of deficit payments we are required to make into the Scheme. Indirectly it may also have an adverse impact on our share price and credit rating.</p> <p>Any deterioration in our credit rating would increase our cost of borrowing and may limit the availability or flexibility of future funding for the group, thereby affecting our ability to invest, pay dividends or repay debt as it matures.</p>	<p>Transform our costs</p>
Growth in a competitive market		
<p>We operate in markets which are characterised by: high levels of change; strong and new competition; declining prices and, in some markets, declining revenues; technology substitution; market and product convergence; customer churn; and regulatory intervention to promote competition and reduce wholesale prices.</p>	<p>Failure to achieve sustainable, profitable revenue growth could erode our competitive position and reduce our profitability, cash flow and ability to invest for the future.</p>	<p>Invest for growth</p>

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Changes over the last year

The actuarial valuation of the Scheme as at 30 June 2014 was announced on 30 January 2015. This has provided certainty over the level of cash contributions required until the next triennial valuation is concluded. When a valuation is calculated, the funding position is affected by the financial market conditions at the valuation date.

When determining expected future returns on the Scheme assets, different factors are taken into account, including yields (or returns) on government bonds, which have fallen significantly since 30 June 2014. If a lower investment return assumption is adopted at the 30 June 2017 valuation, the liabilities would likely increase, potentially leading to a higher level of deficit payments.

The BTPS entered into longevity insurance and reinsurance arrangements on 4 July 2014 to help protect the Scheme against costs associated with potential increases in life expectancy. These arrangements covered approximately 25% of the Scheme's total exposure to increases in longevity.

On 16 July 2014 the Court of Appeal handed down its judgment on the scope and extent of the Crown Guarantee, which was granted by the Government on BT's privatisation. This judgment has provided welcome clarity although the Crown Guarantee is not taken into account for the purposes of the actuarial valuation of the Scheme and is an entirely separate

Risk mitigation

The investment performance and liability experience, as well as the associated risks and any mitigation, are regularly reviewed and monitored by both us and the BTPS Trustee. The BTPS has a well-diversified investment strategy, which reduces the impact of adverse movements in the value of individual asset classes and helps ensure that an efficient balance of risk and return is maintained.

Our financial strength and cash generation provide a level of protection against future variations in the funding position of the BTPS. The funding liabilities also include some buffer against future negative experience, as legislation requires that liabilities are calculated on a prudent basis.

matter, only being relevant in the highly unlikely event that BT became insolvent.

The UK economy grew by 3% in 2014 however, customers are cautious with their spending. Price and value for money remain the main decision drivers for many consumers and small businesses. At a global level, continuing economic uncertainty remains a factor causing corporate customers to delay or downscale infrastructure upgrades and significant investment decisions.

Competition in our markets is strong. In the UK, new providers of fibre to the premises are entering the fibre access market, offering alternatives to the Virgin Media and Openreach networks. In the TV and content markets, TV viewing habits are changing with the increasing use of on-demand viewing via over-the-top content services providers.

Fixed-mobile convergence is a trend visible in many Continental European countries and increasingly in UK markets. A number of providers are competing in this space. BT's proposed acquisition of EE may stimulate other operators to react to fixed-mobile convergence provided the UK market develops in this way.

Our mitigation of this risk centres on successfully executing our strategy. We believe that delivering this strategy, with its focus on broadening and deepening our customer relationships, delivering superior customer service, transforming our costs and investing for growth, will together help us deliver sustainable, profitable revenue growth. We are investing in our business, in areas such as fibre, TV/content, voice/mobility, UK business markets and through our focus on global companies. Our extensive cost transformation programmes continue to deliver savings and will support profitability trends.

We also believe we can mitigate this risk by seeking changes in regulation to level the playing field so that we can compete effectively in adjacent markets for the benefit of our customers.

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Risk description	Impact	Link to strategy
Communications industry regulation		
Regulation impacts our activities across all jurisdictions.	Regulatory requirements and constraints can directly impact our ability to compete effectively and earn revenues.	Deliver superior customer service
<p>In the UK, Ofcom can require us to provide specific wholesale services on specified terms following market reviews. The scope and form of that regulation is reviewed every three years and can include controls on the level of prices we can charge for regulated inputs. It has powers to investigate and enforce the regulatory rules in place and can impose fines on us for non-compliance. Ofcom also has powers to regulate the terms on which we are supplied with certain services – for instance, mobile call termination and wholesale access to certain pay-TV channels – and this impacts our costs and the scope of services we are able to provide to our customers. Ofcom can also resolve disputes between BT and other communications providers about the terms on which services are supplied.</p>	<p>Regulatory impacts are highest in the UK where BT is subject to direct regulation in a number of areas following periodic market reviews. Based on the latest Regulatory Financial Statements for 2013/14, around £5.2bn of our revenue (of which £2.8bn is to downstream parts of BT) is from wholesale markets where we have been found to have Significant Market Power following market reviews. Most of these revenues are subject to charge controls which require us to reduce our prices annually by a defined percentage in real terms. Controls are usually set for three years and will constrain revenues during that period.</p>	Transform our costs
<p>Outside the UK, general licensing requirements can restrict the extent to which we can enter markets and compete. Regulation will also define the terms on which we can purchase key wholesale services from others.</p>	<p>When other CPs ask Ofcom to resolve disputes with us, there is a risk that Ofcom may set the prices at which services must be supplied and/or require us to provide specific services. In certain circumstances, Ofcom can adjust historic prices and require us to make repayments to CPs.</p>	

Regulation outside the UK can impact (i) our revenue, by limiting our ability to compete through overly-restrictive licensing requirements or ineffective regulation of access to other networks and (ii) our costs, by defining and controlling the terms of access to necessary regulated inputs.

Business integrity and ethics

We are committed to maintaining high standards of ethical behaviour, and have a zero tolerance approach to bribery and corruption.

We have to comply with a wide range of local and international anti-corruption and bribery laws. In particular the UK Bribery Act and US Foreign and Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) provide comprehensive anti-bribery legislation. Both have extraterritorial reach and so cover our global operations. As we expand globally, we are increasingly operating in countries identified as having a higher risk of bribery and corruption. We also have to ensure compliance with trade sanctions, and import and export controls.

Failure by our employees, or associated persons such as suppliers or agents to comply with anti-corruption and bribery and sanctions legislation could result in substantial penalties, criminal prosecution and significant damage to our reputation. This could in turn impact our future revenue and cash flow, the extent of which would depend on the nature of the breach, the legislation concerned and any associated penalties. Allegations of corruption or bribery or violation of sanctions regulations could also lead to reputation and brand damage with investors, regulators and customers.

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Changes over the last year

Over the last year, we have seen regulatory activity in a number of areas which are summarised in **Regulation** on pages 38 and 39.

The importance of conducting business ethically is becoming increasingly recognised across the globe as more countries pass anti-corruption and bribery legislation. In the UK, deferred prosecution agreements are available to the UK Serious Fraud Office for fraud, bribery and other economic crime.

Risk mitigation

We have a team of regulatory specialists (including economists and accountants) who, together with legal experts and external advisers, continuously monitor and review the scope for changes in the regulatory rule set and potential disputes with other CPs. This team maintains an ongoing dialogue with regulators and other key influencers to understand the regulatory outlook and to ensure our positions are understood. We push for fair, proportionate, consistent and evidenced-based regulation across markets and jurisdictions. We actively engage in supplying evidence and analysis for all market reviews, charge controls and disputes/investigations to manage the risks arising from specific decisions in any given year.

We are also able to appeal any regulatory decisions where we believe errors have been made. We will also raise disputes and complaints under the relevant regulatory framework or competition law where we face problems gaining access to wholesale services such as access to other networks or to wholesale pay-TV channels.

We have a number of controls in place to address risk in this area. These include a comprehensive anti-corruption and bribery programme, and *The Way We Work*, which is our statement of business practice and which is available in 14 languages. We ask all BT employees to sign up to

In terms of enforcement, there are yet to be any significant cases resulting from the UK Bribery Act, but there continue to be many significant enforcement actions brought under the FCPA.

its principles and our anti-corruption and bribery policy. We have specific policies covering gifts and hospitality and charitable donations and sponsorship. We run a training programme with a particular focus on roles such as those in procurement and sales.

We regularly assess our business integrity risks to make sure that the appropriate mitigation is in place.

Speak Up is our confidential hotline, which is operated by an external third party with all reports passed to the Director of Ethics and Compliance for review and investigation. Our internal audit team regularly runs checks on our business. We also use external providers to carry out assessments in areas we believe to be higher risk, to ensure our policies are understood and the controls are functioning. We selectively conduct due diligence checks on third parties including suppliers, agents, resellers and distributors. Our procurement contracts include anti-corruption and bribery clauses.

We have implemented a policy to adhere to applicable sanctions and export control laws. The policy requires approval on all contract bids involving a country where sanctions are imposed by the EU or the US. The policy also mandates that our internal shipping system is used to arrange all international exports. The system conducts compliance checks and flags any orders which require an export licence.

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Risk description	Impact	Link to strategy
Supply chain		
<p>We operate in a global supply market. This enables us to procure third-party products and services that help us deliver to our customers wherever they are. There are often several links in the chain of supply of a product or service to us. The integrity and continuity of this supply chain is critical to our operations and therefore a significant risk to our business.</p>	<p>While the size of the impact from a supplier failure can vary, all supplier failures typically result in an increased cost to our business and have the potential to adversely impact customer service, our investments and our brand. In many cases, the costs associated with the failure of a critical supplier could be significant, particularly if this means we have to change technology. If we are unable to contract with an alternative supplier, our customer commitments could also be compromised, possibly leading to contractual breach, loss of revenue or penalties.</p>	<p>Deliver superior customer service</p> <p>Transform our costs</p>
<p>We are committed to ensuring that all dealings with suppliers, from selection and consultation through to contracting and payment, are conducted in accordance with our trading and ethical policies. See Suppliers on page 36.</p>	<p>We are continually testing the global market for new sources of supply but this brings its own challenge of suppliers becoming more geographically and culturally diverse from our customers.</p>	
<p>We have a number of suppliers that we have identified as critical. The failure of one of these suppliers to meet its obligations could cause significant harm to our business.</p>	<p>A failure in our supply chain to meet legal obligations or ethical expectations could adversely impact our reputation or possibly lead to censure, legal action and financial loss.</p>	
<p>We are committed to evaluating and responding to any associated risks where geo-political and market forces could impact our suppliers' ability to support BT.</p>		

Customer data processing

As a major data controller and processor of customer information around the world we recognise the importance of adhering to data privacy laws. Every day we process the personal data of millions of consumer and business customers and we want individuals to feel confident that when they give their personal data to us they can trust us to do the right thing with it.

Being trusted with customer data goes further than making sure it is secure. It is about ensuring the integrity of the personal data we process, only retaining the information that we need to provide customers with the services for which they have signed up. It is also about being transparent around how we use that data, making sure the personal data is processed legally, fairly and in line with customers' rights and wishes. Through embedding a robust data governance framework we have reinforced our expectations around personal data with our employees, partners and third parties.

As a telecoms and internet service provider we operate under a stringent 24-hour reporting regime to notify the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) should we become aware of a personal data security breach and to notify those individuals who may have been impacted without undue delay.

Failure to comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws could result in varying degrees of negative impact for BT. These include the possibility of regulatory enforcement action, fines, class actions, custodial sentences and a regulatory instruction to cease processing data.

We could also face reputational damage and financial loss from the failure to meet our legal requirements, as well as incurring costs resulting from termination of customer contracts and subsequent customer churn. Companies, such as Sony which has suffered high profile data incidents, have seen a significant negative impact on their share price combined with additional costs associated with non-compliance.

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Changes over the last year

We have increased our focus on category management of suppliers. Category management is a process that means our buyers can consolidate specific categories of spend across all our businesses, so we can maximise the operational and procurement synergies. It helps mitigate the risk of BT not reaching its cost transformation objectives by enabling us to leverage better deals with our suppliers; and to intercept purchase orders where better terms are available elsewhere.

Increased focus on in-life contract management of our critical suppliers is delivering benefits in terms of improved supplier contract performance and risk control.

Risk mitigation

We conduct supplier risk analysis as part of our sourcing strategy, and where possible, take actions to reduce risk, such as through dual sourcing.

We undertake on-site supplier assessments, to evaluate the risks associated with a supplier's capability, capacity and competence to meet our requirements in a predictable, ethical and sustainable manner.

BT operates a comprehensive in-life risk management process called Supplier watch that recognises the supplier's criticality to our strategy and operations; and scans for changes across a range of commercial, financial, operational and reputational risks. We check that the appropriate level of supplier governance is in place across the group; and test that appropriate business continuity arrangements are in place for the risk of supplier failure. Over 330 critical suppliers, as nominated by the operational owners of the business units that depend on them, are covered by the process.

We look for signs of supplier distress that enable us to mitigate the risk before it materialises. A small number of our critical suppliers went into administration in 2014/15, but, in each case, we were appropriately prepared with a business plan that minimised disruption to our customers.

Socio-political, economic and environmental conditions in certain markets and geographies continue to challenge some of our suppliers; and highlight the need for appropriate due diligence across our supply chain.

Protecting our brand from events in the supply chain, such as corrupt practices, the sourcing of conflict minerals or possible human rights abuse, continues to demand a high degree of focus.

National regulatory authorities have demonstrated an increasingly aggressive stance over the last 12 months with the application of financial penalties to both private and public organisations in breach of their data privacy obligations.

We have a Privacy & Data Governance team which is led by the Chief Privacy Officer and has continued to recruit individuals with the appropriate skills and experience as the remit of this team expands.

For the first time in the UK, the ICO imposed more fines than Ofcom. Outside the UK, global organisations felt the force of their domestic regulators with notably the French Information Commissioner (CNIL) and the US Federal Communications Commission's Enforcement Bureau imposing significant penalties on organisations for poor compliance practices.

The Chief Privacy Officer oversees a robust governance and monitoring framework. This defines roles and responsibilities as part of a wider approach to data assurance which utilises independent audits and reviews. We track all mitigations to resolution to ensure that senior management are aware of the risk and how it impacts respective parts of our business.

The sensitivity of this risk is expected to increase as new, more robust data privacy laws are introduced throughout the scope of our operations. The continuing debate around the future EU General Data Protection Regulation is already influencing how multinational businesses address this risk.

We have developed new online tools and awareness programmes to make sure that our people comply in their day-to-day activities where they handle personal information. In addition to raising awareness of Privacy by Design, an approach to projects that promotes privacy and data protection compliance from the start, we have also deployed Privacy Impact Assessment tools as part of the design process around new products and services.

Our focus on broader training and awareness will see a new data privacy module, which our people

will need to complete, deployed with role-specific scenarios for specific job families. As part of this bespoke approach to managing the risk, for the first time we will have a module designed specifically for the contact centre environment to highlight the diverse number of responsibilities our contact centre people have when dealing with customer data.

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Risk case-studies

Raising standards in major contracts

We describe the risks associated with our major contracts on page 42.

High-quality management of large contracts, including the thorough handling of risks, benefits us and our customers. Improved contract management, including increased focus on risks, will generate improved contract performance, in addition to improved customer experience.

How we managed the risk

One example of how we improved our contract management capability this year was the launch of the Gold Standard programme. This programme aims to standardise high-quality benchmarks – for example, around revenue assurance, cost assurance and resource allocation – that are repeatable so that all major contracts apply best practice principles including those associated with handling of risks. All major contracts will be assessed against strict gold standard criteria and those contract teams below the benchmark will be developed/coached for improvement in order to attain the standard.

Outcome and lessons learned

There is a correlation between gold standard and high-performing contracts, so as the gold standard base increases, we should experience a reduction in risk exposure and an improvement in the numbers of customers extending their contract term.

Other benefits have included a more focused contract management community who have seen that shared learning helps them manage their contracts.

Reduction in physical security incidents

For a company the size of BT, protecting our physical assets around the globe is a huge task. We have in the region of 8,000 sites globally, ranging from small rural UK telephone exchanges keeping communities supplied with vital

communications through to major Latin American data centres serving multinational companies. All areas of the physical estate are important for us to deliver services to our customers: from poles, holes and cables in the ground to high-end routers, switches and firewalls. The protection of our network assets relies on us being able to deter, delay, detect and respond to any criminal activity, in addition to our service restoration capabilities.

How we managed the risk

Having an up-to-date inventory of where our assets are is key to being able to prioritise investments in order to protect them. We are able to use our network topology, alarming and inventory systems, coupled with threat-monitoring information from law enforcement partnerships to mitigate our risks. In 2014/15 our investment and proactive initiatives led to a 30% overall reduction in reported incidents. The investment included a mix of new tools, improved risk assessment techniques, building security controls and mobile security guard patrols.

Innovation plays a key role for example our network security armoury includes the Rabbit (Rapid Assessment of Incidents within BT) alarm monitoring system, developed to give proactive notification of a cable cut by identifying loss of broadband service.

Outcome and lessons learned

While we see a downward trend in the number of incidents, we continue to develop and look for innovative security solutions to protect our physical estate. Continuous improvement of our security strategy is deemed vital to support customer service and business growth opportunities.

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EE acquisition: risks

Our proposed acquisition of EE creates additional risks for BT beyond those captured in our principal risks and uncertainties. In the section below we highlight those risks relating to the acquisition, and new risks that would be relevant to the enlarged group. We described these risks in the shareholder circular in relation to our proposed acquisition of EE and repeat them below.

Risks related to the acquisition

In the period through to completion of the acquisition there are risks relating to the deal itself, as well as business risks during this transitional phase.

Approval of the acquisition

Completion of the acquisition is conditional upon satisfaction or, where capable of being waived, waiver of various conditions. In the event that these conditions are not satisfied or, where they can be waived, waived by the long stop date (or a later date which we agree with the sellers), the Share Purchase Agreement will automatically terminate. There can be no assurance that the conditions will be fulfilled or waived, or that the acquisition will be completed.

The acquisition is subject to merger control approval from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in the UK. Approval from the CMA may take longer than expected to obtain, may not be granted, or may be granted subject to conditions or remedies, including BT's or EE's divestment of assets or businesses and/or restrictions on the conduct of the enlarged group. Any of these could delay or jeopardise completion, impose sustained additional costs for the enlarged group and/or materially reduce the anticipated benefits (including synergy benefits) of the acquisition, or result in a material adverse effect on the enlarged group's business, financial condition and results of operations.

EE's performance prior to completion of the acquisition

The anticipated benefits and synergies of the acquisition have been developed based on assumptions regarding (among other things), EE's financial and operational performance, including in the period before completion when EE's performance is outside our control. During this time, EE's performance and that of BT could be negatively impacted by one or more of the following:

- an adverse event, or events, affecting EE which would not give rise to a right of BT to terminate the acquisition;
- as a result of the planned acquisition, some of BT's or EE's customers or strategic partners may terminate or reduce their business relationships with the enlarged group, for example to avoid sourcing too great a proportion of services from a single company;
- potential customers of BT or EE may delay entering into, or decide not to enter into, a business relationship with BT or EE until completion because of perceived uncertainty over the acquisition;

EE may fail to retain key personnel and other employees; and third parties may terminate or alter existing contracts with EE as a result of the acquisition, in particular where change of control or similar clauses apply.

If any of these happen, the value of EE may be less than the consideration paid by BT and, accordingly, the net assets of the enlarged group could be reduced. This could have a material adverse effect on the enlarged group's financial position.

Realising synergies following integration

BT is targeting significant synergies from the acquisition. The financial planning for the enlarged group is based partly on realising these synergies, which include expected operating cost savings and capital expenditure savings of £360m per year, to be realised in the fourth full year following completion. Combining the respective businesses is also expected to give rise to further benefits. These include (among other things), fixed-mobile convergence, the ability to serve customers through a single, seamless platform supported by a single IP network, and being able to offer BT products to EE customers and EE products to BT customers.

The success of the enlarged group will depend, in part, on the effectiveness of the integration process and the ability to realise the anticipated benefits and synergies from combining the businesses.

Some of the potential challenges in combining the businesses may not be known until after completion. If these challenges cannot be overcome, for example because of unforeseen difficulties in implementing fixed-mobile convergence or a lack of customer demand for the offerings, the anticipated benefits of the acquisition will not be fully achieved.

Realisation of synergies will depend partly on the rapid and efficient management and co-ordination of the activities of the enlarged group's businesses. We may experience difficulties in integrating EE with our existing businesses and may not realise, or it might take longer than expected to realise, certain or all of the perceived benefits of the acquisition. There is also a risk that synergy benefits and growth opportunities from the acquisition may fail to materialise, or may be materially lower than have been estimated. In addition, the costs of generating these synergies, which are expected to be around £600m, may exceed expectations.

Failure to deliver the anticipated synergies and business opportunities could have a material adverse effect on the enlarged group's businesses, financial conditions and results of operations, including its ability to support its pension deficit.

Increased cost of debt

The enlarged group may face increased costs when it seeks to refinance or repay its debt as a result of its increased level of debt following the acquisition.

The acquisition will be funded in part by a £3.6bn debt bridge facility, which may be extended for an additional 12 months following its one year maturity.

The costs and other terms on which the enlarged group is able to refinance the debt bridge facility and other longer-term indebtedness will depend partly on market conditions; unfavourable economic conditions could impact the cost and terms on which the enlarged group is able to access capital markets to refinance its indebtedness which may increase its cost of capital.

Risks to the enlarged business

Although a number of the risks EE faces are similar in nature to those potentially impacting BT today, there are also a number of distinct risks that the enlarged group will face that we do not currently perceive to be significant threats to BT.

This section outlines some of those new risks and uncertainties, but it is not exhaustive. These risks have the potential to impact the enlarged group's business, brand, people, assets, revenue, profits, liquidity or capital resources.

Our Enterprise Risk Management framework will continue to operate in the enlarged group and provides reasonable (but cannot give absolute) assurance that significant risks are identified and addressed. There may be some risks which are unknown to us at present. And there may be some that we consider less significant now but become more important later.

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Handset and network development

The enlarged group's operations will depend partly on the successful deployment of continuously evolving telecommunications technologies.

Delays in the development of handsets and network compatibility and components may hinder the deployment of new technologies for the enlarged group.

EE uses technologies from a number of vendors and incurs significant capital expenditure deploying these technologies. There can be no assurance that common standards and specifications will be achieved, that there will be interoperability across BT's, EE's and other networks, that technologies will be developed according to anticipated schedules, that they will perform according to expectations or that they will achieve commercial acceptance. The introduction of software and other network components may also be delayed. The failure of vendor performance or technology performance to meet our expectations or the failure of a technology to achieve commercial acceptance could result in additional capital expenditure by, or a reduction in profitability of, the enlarged group.

Technological change and market acceptance

The enlarged group may not succeed in making customers sufficiently aware of existing and future services or in creating customer acceptance of these services at the prices we would want to charge. Also, the enlarged group may not identify trends correctly, or may not be able to bring new services to market as quickly or price-competitively as its competitors.

These risks exist in the mobile telecommunications area (such as mobile data services or other advanced technologies which are supported by advanced smartphone products). They also exist in the non-mobile telecommunications areas (such as mobile payment services based on contactless technology) where there is a risk that differences in the regulatory treatment of different operators based on their choice of technology could put the enlarged group at a competitive disadvantage.

Further, as a result of rapid technological progress and the trend towards technological convergence, new and established information and telecommunications technologies or products may not only fail to complement one another but in some cases, may even become a substitute for one another. An example of this is the risk that over-the-top services (being those which are provided by a third party to the end user device) develop substitutes for BT's and EE's own products and services. Another example is VoIP, a technology that is already established in the business customer market and which has now reached the consumer market. The introduction of mobile handsets with VoIP functionality may adversely affect the enlarged group's pricing structures and market share in its mobile voice telephony business. If we do not appropriately anticipate the demand for new technologies, and adapt our strategies, service offering and cost structures accordingly, the enlarged group may be unable to compete effectively, which may

have an adverse effect on our business and operations.

Supplier failure

EE has a number of suppliers identified as critical. EE is also party to a complex and critical network-sharing arrangement with Hutchison Whampoa Limited. The failure of this joint operation to fully support the enlarged group's interests and goals, or any material disruption to the operation of EE's network sharing arrangement, could cause significant harm to the enlarged group's business.

As demand for smartphone and tablet products increases around the world, there could be shortages in the volume of devices produced as a result of insufficient manufacturing capacity, lack of availability of internal components such as processors or major supply chain disruptions. This may result in delays in the supply chain which in turn may have an adverse effect on the enlarged group's business and operations.

Spectrum pricing and regulation

Regulators, including Ofcom, set annual licence fees for spectrum bands used by EE for voice calls, 3G and 4G services and EE is a party to an ongoing consultation with Ofcom in relation to this. Any significant increases in spectrum pricing applicable to the enlarged group could have a material adverse effect on its business and results of operations.

Ofcom may, after consultation, vary conditions in relation to spectrum licences. EE will monitor any developments from regulators relating to the allocation of mobile spectrum in the UK.

The scope and form of the regulation of wholesale services is reviewed every three years and can include controls on the level of prices charged for regulated inputs.

As technology and market dynamics develop and as the mobile business of EE is integrated into BT then a wider range of existing regulations will apply to the enlarged group and a broader range of new and/or modified regulations may be directed at us.

Network and licence investment

EE (as well as BT to a lesser extent), has made substantial investments in the acquisition of licences and EE has invested in its mobile networks, including modernising its 2G network, the upgrade of its 3G network and the continued expansion of its 4G network which was launched in October 2012. EE expects to continue to make significant investments in its mobile networks due to increased usage and the need to offer new services and greater functionality. It may acquire new spectrum licences with licence conditions which may include network coverage obligations or increased licence fees. Accordingly, the rate of the enlarged group's capital expenditure and costs in future years could increase and exceed those expected or experienced to date.

There can be no assurance that new services will be introduced according to anticipated schedules or that the level of demand for new services will justify the cost of setting up and providing new services (in particular, the cost of new spectrum licences and network infrastructure, eg for 4G services and subsequent evolutions). Failure or a delay in completing networks and launching new services, or increases in the associated costs, could have an adverse effect on the enlarged group's business and operations and could result in significant write downs of the value of spectrum or other licences or other network-related investments.

If the current economic climate worsens, the enlarged group may decide, or be required, to scale back capital expenditure. A lasting reduction in capital expenditure levels below certain thresholds could affect our ability to invest in our mobile telecommunications network (including additional spectrum), new technology and our other businesses

and therefore could have an adverse effect on our future growth and the value of radio spectrum.

Transmission of radio waves

Media reports have suggested that radio frequency emissions from wireless mobile devices and mobile communications sites may cause health issues, including cancer, and may interfere with some electronic medical devices, including hearing aids and pacemakers. Research and studies are ongoing. The World Health Organisation has declared that, on the basis of current scientific knowledge, there are no known adverse effects on health from emissions at levels below internationally recognised health and safety standards. However, the enlarged group cannot provide assurance that research in the future will not establish links between radio frequency emissions and health risks.

Whether or not research or studies conclude that there is a link between radio frequency emissions and health, popular concerns about radio frequency emissions may discourage the use of wireless devices, impairing the enlarged group's ability to retain customers and attract new customers, and may result in restrictions on the location and operation of mobile communications sites and the usage of the enlarged group's wireless technology. These concerns could also lead to litigation against the enlarged group. Any restrictions on use or litigation could have an adverse effect on the enlarged group's business and operations.

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Our lines of business

This section explains more about our lines of business. We provide information on the products and services we sell. We explain the different customers and markets we serve, the trends we are seeing in our markets and how each of our lines of business performed this year.

We also describe the role and responsibilities of BT TSO, our internal service unit.

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Our customers

Our customers range from UK consumers to global corporations.

Our products and services

Our lines of business offer products and services tailored to the types of customers they are targeting. We have launched a number of innovative products this year. And many of our products allow our customers to reduce their carbon footprint.

Line of business performance

We explain how each of our lines of business did this year. We describe their operational and financial performance and how they delivered against the three pillars of our strategy.

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Our lines of business

Our business is structured to best serve our customers – responding to their needs and delivering value to them.

How we are organised

We have five customer-facing lines of business: BT Global Services, BT Business, BT Consumer, BT Wholesale and Openreach. They are supported by our internal service unit, BT Technology, Service & Operations.

BT Global Services is our largest line of business by revenue, generating 38% of the group's external revenue. BT Consumer is the next largest, contributing 24%.

Around 60% of Openreach's revenue is generated from other BT lines of business so its contribution to external group revenue is the smallest, at 11%. Total Openreach revenue is equivalent to 28% of group revenue. It is the group's largest EBITDA contributor, generating 41% of the total, reflecting the return it earns on its extensive network assets. But as a capital-intensive business, Openreach incurs costs relating to depreciation, which are not reflected in this EBITDA contribution.

BT Global Services' EBITDA margins are below those of the other lines of business. At 17%, its proportion of group EBITDA is therefore below its overall revenue contribution.

Almost 40% of our people work in Openreach. Many of them are engineers, responsible for maintaining and upgrading our networks. A quarter of our people are in BT TSO and within group functions, supporting all the customer-facing lines of business. And 20% work in BT Global Services, with many supporting and serving our customers worldwide.

Internal reorganisation

With effect from 1 April 2014 BT Conferencing and BT Security were moved into BT Global Services from BT Business and our central group functions respectively. We did this to help us simplify the way we provide integrated collaboration solutions to our global customers, better compete in the market and take full advantage of global opportunities.

These organisational changes did not impact the results of BT Consumer, BT Wholesale or Openreach and had no impact on the total group results. We have restated the comparative results for BT Global Services, BT Business and Other to present them on a consistent basis. We have provided further information, including the amounts involved, in note 4 to the consolidated financial statements on page 155.

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BT Global Services

We are a global market leader for managed networked IT services. We help around 6,500 large corporate and public sector customers across more than 170 countries embrace the digital age, innovate and work more efficiently.

By combining our strengths in networks, IT and innovation, with our global reach, local delivery, industry expertise and professional services, we help our customers to make connections and create new possibilities. 62% of our people are based outside the UK, in nearly 60 countries.

We provide specific solutions and expertise to ten key industry sectors through four regional operations:

Markets and customers

We work for around 6,500 large corporate and public sector customers in more than 170 countries worldwide. We provide services for:

- 98% of the FTSE100 companies;
- 82% of the Fortune 500 companies;
- 96% of Interbrand's annual ranking of the 50 most valuable brands in the world;
- over 90% of the world's top financial institutions; and
- public sector organisations in 22 countries around the world.

Across the world, our main competitors are global telecommunications companies such as AT&T, Orange, Telefónica, Verizon and Vodafone. We also compete against IT and business process management companies, the latter particularly in the UK public sector.

We generate over two-thirds of our revenue from corporate customers. Of these, financial institutions are our largest segment, generating 18% of our revenue in the year.

The public sector generated 20% of our revenue. As a leading supplier to the UK Government's Public Services

Network (PSN), we are helping the Government to drive its digital agenda. However, we expect to face continued declines in the revenue we earn from the UK public sector due to lower levels of government expenditure.

Around 10% of our revenue comes from providing a range of services to other telecoms companies, of which half is transit revenue.

Our top 1,000 customers generate around 90% of our revenue. These companies typically allocate less than 10% of their total IT and communications spend with us. So we see an opportunity to grow our share of their spending.

The UK is our largest region by revenue. Financial institutions and government and healthcare customers are particularly important in this market. We have been ranked by Current Analysis as the number one provider in the UK public sector, as well as a leader in the UK IP telephony and unified communications market.

We have a strong presence in Continental Europe, with national networks and metropolitan fibre rings in most major markets, including Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain. In this region we serve a large number of customers in the pharmaceutical, retail, financial services and automotive industries.

The US and Canada region is important for us because of the high proportion of multinational corporations headquartered there. However our biggest challenge in the US continues to be ineffective regulation of wholesale access to incumbent operator networks. The US regulator is taking steps to analyse this market, and we are actively engaged in the process.

The high-growth regions of Asia Pacific, the Middle East and Africa (AMEA) and Latin America are increasingly important for our customers. We are helping multinationals expand into these areas and supporting local companies as they grow internationally. We continue to invest in these markets by adding products and services and improving our network and IT infrastructure.

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This year, we launched an innovative global campaign – the Art of Connecting – to help our customers address business challenges in areas such as cloud, mobility and security. To improve the way we provide integrated solutions to our global customers, BT Security and BT Conferencing moved into BT Global Services in April 2014.

Influential analyst firms recognise us in the markets for global network services and communications outsourcing and professional services. This year we were positioned as a Leader in Gartner’s 2015 Magic Quadrant for Network Services, Global for the 11th time. We have also been recognised as a Leader in Gartner’s 2014 Communications Outsourcing and Professional Services Magic Quadrant for the fifth consecutive year^a.

The markets we operate in are competitive and we continue to face pricing pressure. But we see good growth potential in the areas where we are investing. For example, Ovum predicts unified communications services will grow at a rate of 18% a year globally over the next three years^b. Gartner forecasts that cloud computing services will grow globally at a rate of 31% a year over the next three years^c. And it expects managed security services to grow at a rate of 15% a year globally over the same period^d.

Products and services

We deliver value to our customers by bringing together a broad portfolio of products and services with industry-specific solutions and consulting expertise. Our network is at the core of what we provide. We have simple product categories organised around what our customers need. These are:

^a Gartner, Magic Quadrant for Communications Outsourcing and Professional Services, Christine Tenneson, Eric Goodness, Bjarne Munch, 04 November 2014.

Gartner, Magic Quadrant for Network Services, Global, Neil Rickard, Bjarne Munch, 14 January 2015.

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^b Hosted and Managed Unified Communications Services Forecast, 2014-19 (Ovum, January 2014).

^c Forecast: IT Services, Worldwide, 2013-2019, 1Q15 Update (March 2015).

BT Connect

Our network services connect our customers to their people, to their own customers, to the cloud and to the world. We offer a range of flexible, intelligent and secure IP, Ethernet and internet virtual private network services. We deliver these in more than 170 countries over a range of access technologies including DSL, Ethernet and satellite.

BT Assure

Customers are prioritising security as cyber attacks become more common and potentially more disruptive. We provide a range of products and services to help protect organisations against these threats including firewalls, web security, intrusion prevention and threat monitoring.

BT One

Businesses communicate in a number of different ways – by phone, instant messaging, email, audio and video conferencing and data-sharing solutions. They want these channels to be integrated and work together easily and reliably. Our collaboration services help customers simplify their communication channels and transform the way they interact with their customers, colleagues, partners and suppliers.

BT Contact

Our contact centre services help our customers build stronger relationships with their customers. We offer a number of ways for them to communicate together, including email, web chat, video, social media and the phone – either via automated systems or dedicated advisers. Our cloud solutions give companies more control over their costs, allowing them to change capacity in response to demand.

BT Compute

Businesses want reliable but flexible IT platforms and services for their applications, data storage and security. We provide IT services across our network, from 46 data centres around the world. Our services range from traditional telehousing and colocation to the latest public, private and hybrid cloud solutions.

BT Advise

We have experts around the world who provide consulting, integration and managed services to our customers. They have a range of specialisms, certifications and accreditations to make sure our customers get the best out of our products and services. Our approach looks beyond technology to create solutions that work across all areas of an organisation.

Industry propositions

Our innovative sector-specific solutions help our customers overcome challenges unique to their industry. For example, our BT for Retail portfolio enables retailers to enhance shoppers' in-store experience by sending targeted messages to mobile devices and using intelligent in-store signage. And our Field Force Automation solutions provide mobile employees such as field engineers with access to corporate applications wherever they are.

^d Forecast: Information Security, Worldwide, 2013-2019, 1Q15 Update (April 2015).

The Gartner Report(s) described herein, Magic Quadrant for Network Services, Global, Neil Rickard, Bjarne Munch (Gartner, January 2015) and Magic Quadrant for Communications Outsourcing and Professional Services, Christine Tenneson, Eric Goodness, Bjarne Munch (Gartner, November 2014) and Forecast: IT Services, Worldwide, 2013-2019, 1Q15 Update (March 2015) and Forecast: Information Security, Worldwide, 2013-2019, 1Q15 Update (April 2015) represent(s) data, research opinion or viewpoints published, as part of a syndicated subscription service, by Gartner, Inc. (Gartner), and are not representations of fact. Each Gartner Report speaks as of its original publication date (and not as of the date of this Filing) and the opinions expressed in the Gartner Report(s) are subject to change without notice.

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Our customers often use our products and services to reduce their impact on the environment. For instance, our BT One unified communications and collaboration services helped Sasol achieve travel savings of more than a million kilometres, preventing 40 metric tonnes of carbon emissions, in the first six months of the contract.

Organisations also look to us to help them innovate to enhance their customers' experience and engagement. We are working with Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool to develop a patient entertainment system for their new hospital. We are also partnering with Coca-Cola in South Africa to set up wi-fi on their drinks machines, providing free internet access to impoverished communities (see page 16).

Performance in the year

We have consolidated our position as a global leader for managed networked IT services. We have improved our customer service. We grew revenue^a in the high-growth regions of the world and Continental Europe, but lower public sector revenue resulted in overall revenue declining. Despite this, we grew EBITDA driven by our cost transformation activities. Our operating cash inflow of £349m was lower than we achieved last year, when we had benefited from some early customer receipts.

Key facts:

Operating performance

We achieved an order intake of £6.5bn, down 7% after last year benefited from some large contract re-signs. In line with our strategy to grow our share of wallet, we increased our new business order intake with our top priority customers.

^a Underlying excluding transit.

Contracts we won in the year include:

Customer

Contract

Cathay Pacific

To provide the airline's global call centre infrastructure.

(BT Contact)

Genome Institute of Singapore

Cloud Compute infrastructure to create a cloud-based next generation genome sequencing environment.

(BT Compute)

Kimberly-Clark

To implement and manage cloud-based solutions for a global network of 42,000 users.

(BT One)

Procter and Gamble

Managed network and security services in more than 80 countries.

(BT Connect)

Sasol

Managed security, conferencing, collaboration and other network services connecting 118 sites across the world.

(BT Connect)

Smart DCC, subsidiary of

A security solution for the UK smart metering programme.

the Capita Group

(BT Assure)

Société Générale

Voice and data communications services across 30 countries. We will also deploy wi-fi services across 70 sites in France.

(BT Connect)

Royal Mail

Provision of 76,000 handheld devices to UK postmen and women for scanning parcels.

(mobility services)

Welsh Government

(BT Connect)

To provide the country-wide public sector broadband network, supporting more than 80 public service organisations across 4,000 sites.

Deliver superior customer service

We gather feedback from our customers in many different ways, including through our global account management teams and by using surveys.

This year we have made progress on improving customer service by enhancing our systems, processes and the way we manage our relationships with customers and suppliers. However, our customers tell us there is still more we can do to keep them better informed and further improve our speed of service delivery, particularly in the UK.

During the year we:

- improved the speed of service delivery of our main products by 25%. We will continue to act on feedback and focus on this in 2015/16;
- reduced a backlog of orders for IP Connect Global (our main global MPLS product) by more than 70%, which will mean we can deliver services more quickly in the future;
- introduced new service packages to make it easier for customers to choose the level of service support they need; and
- introduced new processes for our major accounts to make sure we deal with issues quickly.

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As a result of these improvements, we increased our Right First Time measure 8.6% this year (2013/14: 0.6%). While we saw an improvement in loyalty among our top global customers, overall customer loyalty declined 2% to 75%. Improvements in customers' likelihood to recommend BT and their perception of BT as a business partner were offset by changes in spending patterns and a greater focus on value for money among some of our customers.

We try to make a positive difference to the communities where we do business. Through our Connecting Africa project and our work with international charity SOS Children's Villages, we launched a programme to develop a healthcare management IT system. This will be deployed at seven SOS Medical Centres in six African countries in 2015/16.

We are also helping the United Nations and NetHope in Sierra Leone to tackle the Ebola crisis by quickly extending satellite capability to improve communications.

Transform our costs

We reduced our underlying operating costs excluding transit by 5%, reflecting the impact of lower revenue as well as our cost transformation programmes. We have driven costs down by applying best practice from other parts of the group and by taking our forensic UK approach overseas. In the year we continued to:

optimise our operating model. We simplified our organisational structure in Switzerland and Eastern Europe by rationalising management layers. This will save £5m a year, and has removed process failures and improved customer service;

reduce failures in our processes. For example, we have reduced the lead times for ceasing third-party access circuits that we no longer need, saving over £20m a year;

transform and optimise our global network. We are building new network infrastructure that supports our core products, increases coverage and lowers the cost of long distance access lines; and

improve third-party supplier value for money by negotiating better commercial terms. We are also directly insourcing the delivery of some of our products and services.

Invest for growth

We have continued to invest to enhance our global capabilities in line with the plans we shared last year. For example, we have invested in our global account management capabilities and made our products and services more flexible and better at working together.

We have also invested in:

the high-growth regions. We have extended the reach and features of our services. We launched new, cloud-based, unified communications and collaboration services in AMEA, and added cloud-enabled data centres in countries including Argentina, Colombia and South Africa;

our network. By building acceleration and security features into the network we are increasing application performance, reducing bandwidth costs and improving security for our customers. We extended Ethernet Connect to ten new countries, bringing the total to 60. We launched Internet Connect Reach to expand internet coverage in more than 190 countries and territories. And we added ten new IP Connect points of presence (PoPs) in countries including Iceland and Malaysia;

our core products and services. We added an innovative new service to our BT Contact portfolio which allows businesses to send short, personalised videos to their customers. We introduced BT Assure Threat Defence to help our customers better identify and react to sophisticated cyber security threats. We also made BT MeetMe with Dolby Voice available in more countries, integrated it with Cisco WebEx and Microsoft Lync and launched the Dolby Conference Phone;

industry-specific solutions. We launched BT Netrix HiTouch, a new touchscreen device for financial markets. It allows traders to tap into hundreds of applications, market data feeds and communications services, all delivered by the BT Radianz Cloud. We also opened two retail experience showcases, one in New York and one in Milan; and

BT Advise. We have simplified our offers, improved our consulting methodologies and are better at aligning our advisory services with our products and industry sectors.

Financial performance

Year ended 31 March	2015 £m	2014 ^a £m	2013 ^a £m
Revenue	6,779	7,269	7,392
Underlying revenue excluding transit	(4)%	(1)%	(6)%
Net operating costs	5,732	6,228	6,442
EBITDA	1,047	1,041	950
Depreciation and amortisation	519	616	634
Operating profit	528	425	316
Capital expenditure	468	516	535

Operating cash flow	349	499	314
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^a Restated, see notes 1 and 4 to the consolidated financial statements.

Revenue decreased 7% (2013/14: 2%) including a £206m negative impact from foreign exchange movements and a £9m decline in transit revenue. Our key revenue measure, underlying revenue excluding transit, decreased 4% (2013/14: 1%), primarily reflecting lower UK public sector revenue.

We generated growth in underlying revenue excluding transit of 9% in the high-growth regions (2013/14: 16%) reflecting the signing of key deals and the benefit of newly-launched capabilities, products and services. Continental Europe generated 2% growth in underlying revenue excluding transit (2013/14: 2% decline) reflecting higher spending by our existing customers.

UK revenue decreased 11% (2013/14: 4%) mainly reflecting continued declines in public sector trading. Underlying revenue excluding transit in the US and Canada declined 3% (2013/14: 2%).

Operating costs decreased 8% (2013/14: 3%). Underlying operating costs excluding transit decreased 5% (2013/14: 2%) reflecting the impact of lower revenue and our cost transformation programmes.

EBITDA increased 1% (2013/14: 10%) and was up 3% excluding foreign exchange movements. Depreciation and amortisation decreased 16% (2013/14: 3%) as a result of lower depreciation on some UK public sector contracts and the impact of some assets becoming fully depreciated. Operating profit increased by £103m or 24% (2013/14: £109m or 35%).

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Capital expenditure decreased 9% (2013/14: 4%). EBITDA less capital expenditure increased by £54m to £579m compared with an increase of £110m last year.

Our operating cash inflow of £349m was £150m lower than last year. This was largely driven by a year-on-year impact of around £120m from early customer receipts in the fourth quarter of last year.

Key priorities

We are focused on strengthening our position as a global leader. Our future priorities include:

- building broader and deeper relationships with our major customers;
- improving our award-winning products and services with a particular focus on security, mobility and cloud-based services;
- transforming our customer service through improving customer journeys end to end, increasing automation and launching new service propositions; and
- driving down cost to become a more efficient organisation, letting us invest in the things that set us apart from our competitors.

BT Business

BT Business provides communications and IT services in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (RoI). We serve around 900,000 customers, with a leading position in fixed-voice, networking and broadband services.

BT Business has four customer-facing divisions:

UK SME

UK SME supplies small businesses in Great Britain (typically up to 100 employees) with fixed-voice, broadband, mobility, networking and IT services. It also has three specialist businesses:

Business

Providing:

BT Redcare

Fire and security alarm signalling services, surveillance networks and control room services.

BT Directories

Directory Enquiries, The Phone Book, website services, operator services and call handling for the emergency services.

BT Payphones

Public, private and managed payphone services.

UK Corporate

UK Corporate supplies larger businesses in Great Britain (typically 100-1,000 employees) with fixed-voice, broadband, mobility, networking and IT services. We offer bespoke solutions in addition to our core portfolio of products.

BT Fleet also sits within this division. It is one of the UK's leading providers of fleet management, vehicle maintenance and accident management services.

BT Ireland

In Northern Ireland, we are the largest provider of communications services for SMEs and a leading supplier of networked IT services for public sector and corporate customers.

In the Republic of Ireland, we provide networked IT services for the public sector and large businesses and we provide wholesale services to other communications providers.

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We have four specialist IT services businesses:

Business	Providing:
BT IT Services	IT equipment and networked IT solutions, managed and support services, and consulting services.
BT Business Direct	IT and communications hardware and software, including computing and networking equipment, sold online.
BT Expedite	IT services for the retail sector.
BT Tikit	IT products and services for legal and accountancy firms.

BT IT Services was created from the former BT iNet and BT Engage IT, which were integrated into one unit and rebranded this year. For BT Business customers, it sells its products through the UK SME and UK Corporate channels (mainly the latter). It also sells to customers of BT Global Services and BT Wholesale. BT Business Direct, BT Expedite and BT Tikit have their own direct sales functions.

Markets and customers

There are 5.2m businesses in the UK with up to 1,000 employees (the main market addressed by BT Business). This is higher than last year, mainly reflecting growth in the number of small companies and sole traders. Excluding sole traders (many of whom buy from consumer-focused suppliers such as BT Consumer), there are 1.3m businesses.

The types of services that companies buy from us depend on their size, number of locations, maturity and the industry in which they operate. Small businesses typically buy fixed-lines, mobile and broadband. Larger customers buy a broader range of products and services from our portfolio, which is the widest on offer in the UK.

We have around 900,000 customers including more than half of FTSE350 companies. Major customers include:

retailers like Fat Face, WHSmith and Pets at Home;

charities like Barnardo's and Oxfam;

service organisations like ghh Hotels and Odeon Cinemas;

financial organisations like International Currency Exchange; and

educational institutions like University College London.

We are focused on three main markets: fixed-voice and data; mobility; and IT services. We expect these markets to increasingly converge over the next few years as technology and customer needs change.

Fixed-voice and data

The fixed-voice and data market for businesses with up to 1,000 employees is worth around £4.0bn. Our share is around 30%^d. We compete against more than 300 resellers and fixed network operators. Our main competitors are Alternative Networks, Azzurri, Colt Group, Daisy Group, KCOM Group, TalkTalk, Virgin Media, Vodafone and XLN.

Fixed-lines

There are 7.7m (2013/14: 8.3m) business lines in the UK, including those used by both SMEs and large corporate businesses. Some of these lines are provided by BT Global Services. There are more lines than individual businesses as many customers buy more than one line.

The number of business fixed-lines has gone down over the last few years. Companies have replaced some of them with VoIP or mobiles. Businesses have also made fewer calls over their fixed-lines because of the growth in email and other online communication such as instant messaging. Call volumes in the market are 12% lower than a year earlier.

BT has a 43% market share of business lines (excluding VoIP), down two percentage points in the year.

Broadband

The market for broadband continues to grow, but more slowly now that most businesses already have it. In contrast, demand for fibre broadband is growing strongly, as customers migrate from copper-based broadband to benefit from the higher speeds.

We are the largest business broadband provider in the UK, with over a third of the market for businesses with one or more employees (ie excluding sole traders who mostly buy from consumer providers).

Networking

We are the leading provider of fixed networking services in the UK with around a quarter of the market. The overall market continues to grow but the mix within it is changing. Ethernet and dedicated internet access services are growing most strongly, while the market for leased lines continues to decline.

^d This is lower than we reported last year because we now include a broader definition of unified communications services in the total market size and we exclude revenue from customers with more than 1,000 employees in our

market share calculations.

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Mobility

This market is growing in importance for us. Customers increasingly want to bring their fixed and mobile services together for more flexible ways of working. Around 70% of SMEs use both fixed and mobile services.

The part of the mobility market that we target is worth around £7.2bn. We have just a 1% share of this. This small share gives us a sizeable opportunity for growth.

The overall business mobile market continues to grow, driven by sales of tablets and 4G smartphones. Market revenue from the sale of voice and data services is fairly flat. Small but growing areas include mobile device management solutions (for companies to manage their mobile estate), applications that let companies give employees mobile access to their enterprise systems, and communication between networked-devices (machine-to-machine) such as cash machines and vending machines.

Our main competitors are O2 and Vodafone. They offer fixed products as well as mobile and are increasingly targeting opportunities for converged services. Our proposed acquisition of EE will allow us to accelerate the sale of converged fixed-mobile services to business customers and offer new services, using both companies' product portfolios, skills and networks.

IT services

The IT services market is very diverse, ranging from off-the-shelf hardware sales to large outsourced solutions. Competition is fragmented with providers often focusing on specific customer-types, industry sectors or technologies. Our main competitors are Computacenter, Dimension Data, Kelway, Logicalis, Phoenix, SCC and Softcat.

We focus on those products and services which best fit our capabilities or have the potential to drive cross-selling opportunities. We typically target businesses with 250 to 5,000 employees. For the larger ones, BT Global Services sometimes sells our IT services on our behalf.

We estimate that the parts of the market we serve are worth around £8.4bn, of which we have around 6% share. Those areas of the market that are growing include cloud services, hosting, infrastructure and security. We see these as attractive opportunities for us to grow our share of the overall market.

Products and services

We offer a wide choice of fixed, mobile and IT services. These range from standalone products to managed services and customised solutions in order to suit the needs of customers from small start-ups to large enterprises.

Fixed-voice

Our fixed-voice services range from standard calls and lines, to fully-managed office phone systems and contact

centre solutions. This year we launched BT Cloud Voice and BT Cloud Phone to add to our growing portfolio of VoIP services.

BT Cloud Voice provides cloud-based unified communications capabilities (such as call-routing, conferencing, call-recording, online management and mobile and desktop applications) delivered over a BT internet connection.

BT Cloud Phone is also a hosted communications service delivered over a BT internet connection, but it is tailored for those smaller SMEs with simpler needs, delivered through an easy-to-use suite of portals and mobile and desktop applications.

Broadband and internet

We provide a range of internet access options including BT Business Broadband (over copper connections), BT Business Infinity over fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) and fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) and BTnet dedicated internet access.

We refreshed our broadband portfolio this year, introducing three simplified pricing tiers for BT Business Broadband and BT Business Infinity. For the latter we launched the Business Hub 5, which uses the latest wireless technology to deliver faster wi-fi. We now include Microsoft Office 365 for free with higher-tier broadband options.

Networking services

Our voice and data networking services support customers who need to connect more than one site. Products include Ethernet, IP Virtual Private Network services (which connect sites using IP connections), SIP trunking (which transports voice calls over IP networks), leased lines, cabling infrastructure and local area networking solutions. This year we launched an integrated proposition that offers BTnet dedicated internet access together with a managed firewall.

IT services

Our specialist IT services offer design, delivery, management and support, and are built around seven key portfolio practices:

These services are supported by partnerships with vendors such as Cisco, HP and Microsoft.

Mobility

We sell mobile voice and data services through a mobile virtual network operator (MVNO) agreement. We offer a range of handsets and tablets and a choice of tariffs to suit different customer segments.

This year we relaunched BT Business Mobile, adding 4G access and unlimited wi-fi for all new and re-signing customers. We launched BT One Phone and we added the Apple iPhone to our range of handsets.

BT One Phone

This year we launched a number of innovative products aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises in the UK.

One of these products is BT One Phone. It brings together all of a company's office phone system and mobile phone needs into a single service, hosted in the cloud and delivered on a mobile phone.

All of an individual's numbers are linked to their work mobile phone, so whether somebody calls their fixed-line, extension or mobile number, all calls go to one phone. This helps businesses be more responsive to their customers and less likely to miss calls.

As the system is cloud-based, all the feature-rich call management services of a phone system (such as call forwarding and hunt groups), which are typically available on a desk phone, are now available on an employee's mobile, wherever they are.

BT One Phone works with a full range of mobile phones. Combined with 4G and unlimited access to over 5m BT Wi-fi hotspots, our customers' employees now have both the data and voice connectivity to be as productive outside the office as they are at their desk.

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Underlying revenue excluding transit was down 1% due to lower line and call volumes. But we have increased EBITDA for the third year running through our continued focus on cost transformation. Our fibre broadband base has increased 61% and we have launched a new range of IP voice products. And we have improved our customer service.

Key facts:

Operating performance

Our order intake of £2.1bn was broadly level. We achieved a number of customer wins and re-signs this year including:

Customer**Contract**

Leigh Academies Trust
(UK SME)

Providing the parents of learners, across the 11 schools in the Trust, the opportunity to purchase tablets or laptops in school and at home via a dedicated parental engagement portal.

Morgan Sindall Group
(UK Corporate)

A new three-year IT managed service contract to support all of the Morgan Sindall Group companies.

National Trust
(UK Corporate)

Telephony and networking services plus public wi-fi services in their historic sites.

Kerry Group (BT Ireland)	Contract for a global SIP voice solution.
NI Direct (Northern Ireland)	To deliver a contact centre service for the Northern Ireland public sector and to drive digital transformation in the provision of government services in Northern Ireland.
Go Outdoors (BT Expedite)	Rollout of a full retail technology solution to all 52 stores and 350 tills to replace the customer's current estate.

The number of business lines we provide reduced 7% as customers continue to migrate to VoIP. But the net line loss in the year slowed, down 14%. The number of IP lines we provide has increased 26% and take-up of our new BT Cloud Voice and BT Cloud Phone services is growing.

New broadband pricing and a free Business Hub with BT Business Infinity have helped drive fibre sales and encouraged customers to migrate from copper to fibre broadband for higher speeds. Our business fibre broadband base has increased by 61%.

In Northern Ireland we have now passed 91% of premises with fibre broadband and at 25%, take-up is the highest of any major region in the UK.

Our mobile customer base has decreased 6% (2013/14: 3%). During the year we started migrating customers from Vodafone's network to EE after we changed MVNO provider. This resulted in some additional churn and we were also less focused on acquiring new customers during this process. But we are now starting to drive sales of BT One Phone following its launch this year.

Deliver superior customer service

We have made progress on the plans we outlined last year to become the market leader for customer service. We have improved service through a range of group-led programmes and specific BT Business initiatives. We have:

- moved more customers onto our new UK Business Solution system. This brings all the core products and services that we sell in large volumes onto a single system, making it easier to serve customers who buy multiple products from us;
- created a new dedicated team and improved processes to help businesses when they move premises;
- invested in 35,000 hours of training to improve the skills of our service teams; and
- improved our online self-service capabilities for customers who prefer to deal this way with any issues they encounter.

We have improved the percentage of faults repaired within target timescales by 5%, weighted across all products. We have introduced new messaging to ensure customers are aware of and are ready for their appointment, which has helped reduce the number of missed appointments for installations. And we have improved our process for providing Ethernet services, but we still need to do better on this.

Complaints are down 11%. Our transactional customer net promoter score measured from customer feedback has increased 7.5 percentage points and satisfaction with our advisers has increased 3.5 percentage points.

Our Right First Time measure was up 5.1% (2013/14: 1.5%) driven by faster repair and provision times and 4.4% more customer calls resolved at the first point of contact.

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Transform our costs

Operating costs were down 5%. Underlying operating costs excluding transit were down 4% due to savings from our cost transformation activities. The main reason for the lower costs is a 10% reduction in our total labour resource. Some of this resulted from the creation of BT Business last year, with benefits flowing through to this year.

We have also reduced our headcount through specific initiatives. For example we have reduced the number of operational sites across BT Business. And we merged BT iNet and BT Engage IT which eliminated some duplicated activities.

We have also continued to make savings by renegotiating supplier contracts.

Invest for growth

We have continued to invest in our product portfolio, with VoIP a key focus for us. BT One Phone, BT Cloud Voice and BT Cloud Phone were all launched in the year.

BT Tikit launched Carpe Diem Mobile, a mobile time-recording application aimed at the legal profession.

In Northern Ireland, we have completed the first three phases of the DETI-funded Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project. We are continuing to invest further. We have improved the speed, reach and quality of broadband services in many rural areas by investing in both copper and fibre infrastructure. In the Republic of Ireland, we have continued to invest in network infrastructure for business and wholesale customers, including national fibre backhaul and cloud services.

We have replaced a large number of vehicles in BT Fleet. This will improve reliability, reduce maintenance costs and deliver greater fuel efficiency. We have also purchased a number of more environmentally-friendly electric vehicles, mainly to support Openreach.

We have invested in improving our internal IT systems. The largest investment was in our UK Business Solution system mentioned above. We will continue to invest in it next year and migrate more customers and products onto it.

Financial performance

	2015	2014 ^a	2013 ^a
Year ended 31 March	£m	£m	£m

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Revenue	3,145	3,213	3,220
Underlying revenue excluding transit	(1)%	(1)%	(2)%
Operating costs	2,104	2,211	2,280
EBITDA	1,041	1,002	940
Depreciation and amortisation	180	197	233
Operating profit	861	805	707
Capital expenditure	187	127	142
Operating cash flow	874	799	816

^a Restated, see notes 1 and 4 to the consolidated financial statements.

Revenue declined 2% (2013/14: flat) including a £24m negative impact from foreign exchange movements arising from our business in the Republic of Ireland. Underlying revenue excluding transit decreased 1% (2013/14: 1%).

UK SME & Corporate voice revenue declined 5% (2013/14: 2%). This reflects the ongoing reduction in business call and line volumes, as customers move to data and VoIP services. We have responded to this shift through the launch of BT One Phone, BT Cloud Voice and BT Cloud Phone this year.

UK SME & Corporate data and networking revenue increased 2% (2013/14: 1%), with continued growth in our networking products including fibre broadband.

BT Ireland underlying revenue excluding transit increased 2% (2013/14: 1%) driven by software sales and fibre broadband.

IT services revenue declined 1% (2013/14: up 8%) with a decrease in lower margin hardware sales as we continue to focus our strategy towards providing higher-margin managed services.

Operating costs decreased 5% (2013/14: 3%). Underlying operating costs excluding transit decreased 4% (2013/14: 4%) reflecting the impact of our cost transformation programmes.

EBITDA increased 4% (2013/14: 7%). Excluding foreign exchange movements, underlying EBITDA was also up 4% (2013/14: 6%). Depreciation and amortisation decreased 9% (2013/14: 15%) as a result of lower capital expenditure in

recent years. Operating profit increased 7% (2013/14: 14%).

Capital expenditure increased by £60m (2013/14: £15m decrease) as we replaced a number of BT Fleet vehicles to support Openreach.

Operating cashflow was an inflow of £874m (2013/14: £799m). This was higher than last year driven by the growth in EBITDA and the timing of working capital movements which offset the higher capital expenditure.

Key priorities

Our future plans include:

- developing our portfolio to add new converged services, enhancements to our VoIP products and more IT service capabilities;
- driving sales of hosted VoIP, converged fixed-mobile services and fibre broadband services to attract new customers and reduce losses to competitors;
- developing more bundles and integrated solutions to increase cross-selling, helped by improvements in our systems and sales organisations;
- improving our managed services capabilities to help us win more major deals; and
- transforming customer service to give customers a better experience and differentiate ourselves from competitors.

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BT Consumer

We are the largest provider of consumer fixed-voice and broadband services in the UK. We are focused on top and bottom-line growth through selling broadband, TV, sports channels and mobile services to our customers.

We supply BT-branded services directly to UK homes. We also sell devices like telephones, baby monitors and set-top boxes through third-party high street retailers. Commercial premises, such as pubs and hotels, can buy BT Sport and BT Wi-fi from us too.

We also sell services through our Plusnet brand. This helps us grow our market share across the UK by addressing more price-conscious fixed-voice and broadband consumers.

Markets and customers

There are around 26m households and around 64m people in the UK. Our products are available to almost all of them. The market is very competitive, with over 12 major bundled product suppliers, 113 fixed-line operators, four major TV providers and four mobile network operators. Our main competitors for fixed-line, broadband and TV services are Sky, Virgin Media and TalkTalk.

Fixed-lines

The number of fixed residential lines in the UK increased by 524,000 in the year to December 2014, to 25.5m, as more people took fixed-lines to get broadband. Our share of the consumer market for fixed-lines is 38%, the same as last year.

Residential fixed-line call volumes in the UK fell by 13% in 2014, as more people used mobiles, VoIP, instant messaging and social media to keep in touch.

Broadband

There were around 24m DSL, fibre and cable broadband connections to homes and small businesses in the UK, as at 31 March 2015. This is up 4% from last year. We have a 32% share of the fixed broadband market.

Average broadband download speeds have continued to get faster, reaching 22.8Mbps in November 2014. This is 28% above a year earlier. Demand for superfast broadband continues to grow as more people consume media online through over-the-top services such as Netflix, ITV Player and BBC iPlayer. 59% of UK adults used video streaming services in 2014. And 32% of all broadband connections in the UK are now superfast.

TV

The pay-TV market has continued to grow. 61% of UK households take a pay-TV service, compared with 58% a year earlier, while 34% watch only free-to-air digital TV (Freeview). Live channels (as opposed to catch-up or on-demand) are still the most popular way for people to watch television.

People can take pay-TV services over:

satellite (Sky);

cable (Virgin Media); or

DSL or fibre (mainly BT and TalkTalk), with their TV service provided over both broadband and Freeview.

People can also take services from online or over-the-top content providers, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, although these services typically do not offer live channels.

For many years Sky has had exclusivity over much of the UK's premium content. We continue to pursue commercial, legal and regulatory avenues to obtain access to Sky's sports channels on a fair basis, to increase competition and consumer choice.

Mobile

Around 95% of households in the UK have mobile phones, and 16% of households are mobile-only. Of the more than 83m active mobile subscriptions in the UK, an increasing number are post-pay and make up 59% of the total. Three out of four adults in the UK use a smartphone, and nearly half of mobile owners also have a tablet.

While SMS/MMS volumes have continued to decline, over 137bn minutes of outgoing calls were made on mobiles in 2014, up 2% from the year before. More people are also using their mobiles to surf the web, listen to radio and watch TV.

Products and services

We sell four types of product: fixed-voice, broadband, TV and mobile. We win and keep customers by offering differentiated packages. And we have a range of add-ons customers can choose from, offering flexibility and extra value for money.

Fixed-voice

We provide a range of fixed-line products and calling plans. Our customers can choose from different options and ways to pay, depending on what suits them best. For example:

Line Rental Saver gives customers a discount on their line rental if they pay for a year upfront;

Line Rental Plus comes with priority phone line fault fixes, Call Barring and Choose to Refuse, and gives customers the choice of paying bills when they arrive instead of by Direct Debit;

Home Phone Saver offers line rental, inclusive calls and extra calling features in one simple package at a discounted price that is guaranteed until 2017;

BT Basic offers discounted line rental and inclusive calls to those on low incomes and in receipt of certain state benefits (such as income support). We are the only company to offer a service like this;

Right Plan is a free service our customers can use to find out whether they are on the right calling plan for the kinds of calls they make; and

BT SmartTalk is a free app that allows our customers to use their home calling plan on a range of mobile devices. For example, they can use it to make inclusive or low-cost calls when overseas. Calls appear on their BT bill as if they had been made from their fixed-line.

Our unlimited call packages let customers choose from inclusive evening, weekend or anytime calls to fixed-lines, and discounted calls to mobiles.

We offer products and services that help our customers avoid nuisance calls. Our BT8500 phone uses award-winning technology to help customers block unwanted calls. We also offer calling features such as Caller Display, Anonymous Call Reject and Choose to Refuse.

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Broadband

We are the UK's largest broadband provider. BT Broadband, our DSL service, is delivered over copper lines. BT Infinity, our superfast broadband service, uses fibre to deliver enhanced speed and performance.

To suit our customers' diverse needs and interests, we offer a range of broadband options, with different usage limits and speeds. These are usually bundled with fixed-voice call plans and typically come with free or discounted add-ons, like:

BT Sport, providing premium sports content;

BT Wi-fi, offering free and unlimited access to more than 5m wi-fi hotspots in the UK and 7m abroad;

BT Cloud, providing secure online storage and on-the-go access to data and photos; and

BT Family Protection, BT NetProtect Plus and BT Parental Controls, to help keep our customers and their families safe online.

In August 2014, we introduced a broadband package specifically for BT Basic customers, providing them with low-cost internet access.

TV

Our TV business consists of our TV service (BT TV) and our live sports channels (BT Sport).

BT TV

BT TV is available exclusively to our broadband customers. It brings together free-to-air channels, extra paid-for channels, BT Sport, Netflix, catch-up content and on-demand TV shows and movies. Customers with BT TV can watch standard definition (SD) and high definition (HD) channels. They can also use the programme guide to scroll back seven days for easy access to catch-up TV from BBC iPlayer, ITV Player, All 4 (formerly 4oD) and Demand 5.

Customers can choose from the following BT TV viewing packs:

TV Starter. This is our entry-level offering. With our YouView box, customers can pause and rewind live TV and receive up to 70 Freeview TV and radio channels.

TV Essential. This provides everything that comes with TV Starter, but with our YouView+ box instead which can record up to 300 hours of live TV.

TV Entertainment. This is made up of TV Essential plus 20 extra channels not available on Freeview (such as Comedy Central, Discovery and Gold). It is only available to BT Infinity customers.

BT TV customers can add extra channel packs such as Kids Extra (which also includes on-demand content), BT

Sport, Sky Sports 1 and 2, and Sky Movies. We also offer on-demand only content, including Netflix, Curzon Home Cinema, Music and Kids. Customers can also rent or buy other TV shows and films.

BT Sport

Our live sports channels, BT Sport 1, BT Sport 2 and ESPN are available in both SD and HD. BT Sport is broadcast on BT TV, the BT Sport app, the btsport.com website and the Sky Digital Satellite Platform. The channels are also available through wholesale agreements to Virgin Media customers, and in the Republic of Ireland with Setanta.

BT Sport is free for customers who renew or take out a new BT broadband contract. Customers who are out of contract can get the channels for half price. Sky TV customers without BT broadband can subscribe to the SD or HD channels for full price.

BT Mobile

BT Mobile offers SIM-only plans to UK consumers. Anyone who lives in a home with BT Broadband can get the best price on BT Mobile.

Customers can choose from one of three plans, with different combinations of data and minutes to suit their needs. With customers able to take up to five SIMs per account, BT Mobile is a convenient option for families wanting to consolidate their mobile services with one provider and to add attractively priced 4G services.

All our mobile plans come with 4G, unlimited texts, and unlimited access to BT Wi-fi hotspots in the UK and to the BT Sport app, at no extra cost. Customers can use the BT Mobile app to monitor their account.

Mobile is a key strategic focus for us, and we will continue to build our mobile offering in the coming years.

FA Premier League football broadcast rights

The auction for the 2016/17 to 2018/19 FA Premier League broadcast rights took place in February 2015.

We were very pleased with the rights that we won. We will be showing 42 Premier League matches in each season, four more than we currently show.

The new rights will see BT Sport show a live Saturday evening game almost every Premier League weekend. This will allow us to build on our current Saturday programming and appeal to an even larger audience, having secured the prime evening TV viewing slot.

These new Premier League games will be added to the 350 exclusive live matches from the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League that BT Sport will show from both tournaments, for three seasons starting in the summer of 2015. We also have live rights to the FA Cup for the next three years.

BT Sport currently shows around 50 live matches each season featuring Premier League clubs. We expect this to more than double to around 115 from the 2015/16 season onwards when all competitions featuring Premier League clubs are taken into account.

Performance in the year

Our revenue grew 7%, reflecting the growth in our broadband and BT Sport customer bases, while EBITDA increased 24%. We grew our share of the DSL and fibre broadband market for the sixth year in a row and we have added the most broadband customers of any operator for six quarters running. We are delivering on our commitment to improve customer service and continue to invest in this area.

Key facts:

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Operating performance

At 31 March 2015 we had around 9.6m consumer fixed-lines (2013/14: 9.9m), with around 9.4m active voice lines (where a customer buys calls from us as well as paying for the line). Our total number of fixed-line customers is down 275,000 from last year (2013/14: 314,000). We lost 203,000 net active lines, compared with 196,000 last year.

We achieved 432,000 broadband net additions this year, 51% of the DSL and fibre broadband market net additions. This took our overall market share to 40%, up from 39% a year ago.

We have continued to grow our fibre base, and now have 3m fibre broadband customers (including business lines), a 43% increase from last year. 39% of our retail broadband customers are now on fibre, compared with 29% last year.

We achieved 140,000 BT TV net additions and now have 1.14m BT TV customers. And 3.3m households have access to BT Sport, a number that rises to 5.2m when wholesale deals are taken into account. We are the biggest supplier of sports channels to UK pubs. More than 25,000 commercial premises, including 30% of all UK pubs, have access to BT Sport.

BT Sport's average daily audience figures increased 15% year on year, from the start of the football season in August to the end of March. More than half the FA Premier League matches we showed this season reached over 1m viewers.

Our ARPU this year was £415, up £24 from last year, driven mainly by take-up of fibre broadband, upselling of BT TV and changes in our pricing.

Deliver superior customer service

We are delivering on the commitments we made in last year's Annual Report. We hired hundreds of new contact centre staff. We are improving our processes so that a single adviser can more efficiently diagnose a problem and make sure it gets fixed. We are introducing dedicated case management for complex issues. And we were able to resolve 20%

more customer issues in a single call.

These improvements contributed to our Right First Time performance increasing 1.9% this year (2013/14: 5.4%). This improvement was despite a different mix of products sold, which impacted our average speed of delivery compared with last year.

Ofcom's latest UK fixed-line broadband performance report shows BT Broadband's overall performance was better than Sky and TalkTalk. However, our copper customers' relative perceptions of speed were affected by the increased promotion of fibre broadband in the market. Increasingly aggressive pricing by competitors also affected customers' perceptions of value for money, contributing to a decline in our overall customer advocacy score to 34% at the end of Q4 (Q4 2013/14: 39%).

Our strategy to have more of our customers taking fibre, TV and mobile services from us is reinforced by the customer advocacy when they do. BT Infinity has had a positive effect on loyalty with lower churn relative to copper broadband. Customers with BT Infinity and BT TV are more than twice as likely to recommend us than our customers who take only fixed-line and copper broadband. And customers with BT Sport are around 60% more likely to recommend us than those without.

We are continuing to invest in our customer service capabilities, systems and processes, with key investments in:

insight, to help make sure we can see the customer's full experience and work to improve it;

online and new mobile/tablet apps (such as BT Mobile), so we can serve more customers through their channel of choice;

better diagnostics, to help us detect and resolve faults proactively and more quickly;

UK support, so we can answer more calls in the UK, supporting local jobs across the country; and

empowering our people to support our customers, by investing in better training and job redesign, better aligning skilled people to customer needs.

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Transform our costs

Operating costs increased 2% reflecting the first full financial year of BT Sport programme rights charges.

This year, we particularly focused on:

- reducing the number of engineer visits to install fibre broadband for our customers, by launching our self-install proposition;
- continued efficiencies across our sales, service and commercial functions; and
- launching a lower-cost BT TV set-top box without a Personal Video Recorder (PVR).

Invest for growth

In March we moved back into the consumer mobile market with the launch of BT Mobile using our MVNO agreement with EE.

Our proposed acquisition of EE will bring together the UK's most advanced 4G network and most extensive superfast broadband network. This will help create the UK's leading converged communications provider and allow us to provide a full range of innovative communications services to both EE and BT customers.

We have continued to invest in our BT TV platform and content, including BT Sport, reflecting the importance of providing high quality bundled offerings that appeal to a wide customer base. We have strengthened our content and channel distribution deals and built new capabilities that mean our customers can watch in ways that best suit them.

In November, we introduced Netflix on BT TV. Customers can subscribe to Netflix directly with BT and pay for it alongside their other BT products, on a single BT bill.

We have redesigned the look and feel of our TV service, and launched two new set-top boxes, for a more responsive, better viewing experience.

We have made it easier for our customers to watch what they want, when they want, around the home and on-the-go. BT TV customers with BT Infinity can get a second YouView box with an Extra Box subscription. In addition, films and TV shows purchased on our set-top boxes are now automatically available for customers on their smartphone, tablet or PC, at no extra cost. And with our new TV Everywhere service, customers can watch a selection of channels on up to two devices at the same time.

In December we launched Sky Sports 1 and 2 on YouView, adding to our existing offering of BT Sport, ESPN and Eurosport. In February, we won rights to show even more FA Premier League matches, as discussed on page 65.

We also extended our deal with Aviva Premiership Rugby. The top flight of English club rugby will be live on BT

Sport until at least the end of the 2020/21 season. We now have broadcast rights for up to 80 live matches each season starting from 2017/18. This is 11 matches more per season than under our current deal.

Financial performance

Year ended 31 March	2015 £m	2014 £m	2013 £m
Revenue	4,285	4,019	3,846
Operating costs	3,254	3,186	2,878
EBITDA	1,031	833	968
Depreciation and amortisation	218	219	248
Operating profit	813	614	720
Capital expenditure	207	211	241
Operating cash flow	813	472	655

Revenue increased 7% (2013/14: 4%), mainly driven by broadband and TV.

Broadband and TV revenue was up 16% (2013/14: 18%) as a result of a higher broadband ARPU, as customers migrated from copper to fibre products, and a full year of BT Sport revenue (BT Sport launched in August 2013).

Calls and lines revenue increased 1% (2013/14: 2% decrease) reflecting changes to some of our prices.

Other revenue increased 6% (2013/14: 4%). This growth reflects strong sales of the BT8500 phone, our most sophisticated nuisance call blocking phone to date.

Operating costs were up 2% (2013/14: 11%) reflecting the first full financial year of BT Sport programme rights charges.

EBITDA increased 24% (2013/14: 14% decrease). Depreciation and amortisation was flat (2013/14: 12% down), leading to an operating profit increase of 32% (2013/14: 15% decrease).

Capital expenditure was down 2% (2013/14: 12%) and operating cash flow increased 72% (2013/14: 28% decrease) mainly reflecting the stronger EBITDA and last year's deposit of around £60m for the UEFA broadcast rights.

Key priorities

Over the coming year we plan to broaden and deepen our customer relationships by:

- driving BT Infinity and BT TV deeper into our customer base;
- increasing penetration of BT Mobile amongst our customers;
- launching our exclusively live UEFA Champions League coverage on BT Sport; and
- driving improvements in customer service.

Find out more

Our FA Premier League

broadcast rights on page

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BT Wholesale

BT Wholesale provides services in Great Britain to more than 1,400 CPs. Each one has its own ambitions, strategy and strengths. Our role is to help them achieve their goals by offering them innovative, reliable and cost-effective products and services that complement their own capabilities. This means that we can share in their success.

We are organised around our main customer groups:

We also have teams that develop and run our products and provide customer service.

Outside Great Britain, BT serves CPs in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland through BT Ireland and elsewhere through BT Global Services. BT is Europe's largest wholesale telecoms provider.

Markets and customers

BT Wholesale is Great Britain's leading provider of wholesale telecommunications services. We are recognised for our innovation as well as for our scale. For example, according to Current Analysis (December 2014), BT Wholesale is maintaining a firm grip on its leadership status in the UK wholesale segment with aggressive development of new services and a strong IPX story.

Our customers include: broadband and TV providers such as Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media; the mobile operators EE, O2, Three and Vodafone; and other service providers such as Daisy Group, Gamma Telecom and KCOM Group. Major overseas operators use our services to provide solutions in Great Britain too.

Customers of our Media & Broadcast unit, which operates a specialist fibre and satellite media network worldwide, include the BBC, ITV and Star TV.

We operate in a dynamic and challenging market. The key market trends are as follows:

The market for wholesale services is shrinking. This is because some CPs are building more of their own network infrastructure, or are sharing what they already have. For example, Sky and TalkTalk continue to use local loop unbundling (buying directly from Openreach) to extend their networks. And Vodafone is expanding its own national network. The impact of this trend is magnified where operators decide, as Virgin Media did this year, only to serve customers within their own network footprint. This means CPs need less help from us to support their customers.

The market remains very competitive. TalkTalk, Virgin Media and Vodafone are our biggest competitors for connectivity products. Gamma Telecom competes with us for IP voice services. While our customers value the performance and reliability we can provide, we continue to see price pressure in the Ethernet market in particular. We expect this trend to continue.

But the market for next-generation services is expanding. Ethernet is now the de facto choice for networks that serve businesses and demand is growing. And the market for hosted IP voice services grew by more than 20% this year. This is a young and exciting area and one which we expect to grow strongly next year.

Regulation is an important part of our environment. Around two-thirds of our revenue comes from products that are regulated or have substantial regulated components. Regulatory decisions can have a major impact on both our short-term trading performance and our longer-term business model. As we explain below, Ofcom's Narrowband Market Review had a significant effect on our financial results this year.

Products and services

By using our portfolio, CPs can serve their customers without having to invest in their own assets and capabilities. We offer connectivity, voice and hosted communications services, and a range of bespoke managed solutions. We also offer industry-specific services to media companies and broadcasters.

Broadband

We provide CPs with broadband connections between their network and their customers. With Wholesale Broadband Connect, CPs can serve 92% of all premises with copper-based broadband, and more than three-quarters of premises with fibre broadband. Our older broadband network brings our total copper-based coverage to over 99%.

For CPs without any network, our Managed Broadband option provides everything they need to offer a broadband service, including internet access and IP addressing.

Ethernet

We supply Ethernet connections between CPs' own networks and their customers. For example, this helps major overseas operators to provide services wherever they need to.

We can provide Wholesale Ethernet to 81% of business premises over existing copper circuits (2013/14: 55%), and to over 99% with fibre. An increasing number of the UK's major data centres and telehouses are also on our network.

Customers can choose Ethernet speeds ranging from 2Mbps to 10Gbps. Those needing higher bandwidths are now able to order our Wholesale Optical product, which offers speeds of 10Gbps to 100Gbps and is due to be fully launched next year.

We supply a Managed Ethernet Access Service (MEAS) specifically for mobile operators to connect their cell sites to their core networks.

Ethernet services are gradually replacing Partial Private Circuits, a legacy connectivity service which we also offer.

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Voice

We provide a wide range of wholesale voice products. The most basic, Transit, carries calls across our network from one CP's network to another. Direct Conveyance carries calls from a CP's network to BT's own end customers, while International Direct Dial carries calls from Great Britain to end users overseas.

CPs without their own voice network, but wanting to offer voice calls, can use our Wholesale Calls product. It provides everything they need, on a 'white-label' basis.

IP Exchange (IPX)

All the voice products above use traditional Time Division Multiplexing (TDM) technology. By contrast, CPs can use our IPX platform to deliver voice calls over Internet Protocol (IP). IPX ensures that calls get to their destination, at the correct level of quality, whatever the network technologies used along the way. BT Wholesale sells IPX in Great Britain. BT Global Services sells it elsewhere around the world. This year BT's work on IPX won the Queen's Award for Innovation.

Hosted Communications Services

We provide a set of IP voice, contact centre and unified communications services for CPs to offer to their business customers. It includes IP Centrex, SIP Trunking, Hosted Contact Centres and Inbound Call Services. These services, which we host and manage end to end on CPs' behalf, are intended to help businesses increase their productivity and improve their customer service while reducing their investment costs.

This year we launched new versions of our IP Centrex and SIP Trunking propositions. And we formed a new partnership with Avaya Inc. to sell its Avaya Cloud Solutions portfolio through systems integrators and other service providers.

Managed solutions

We combine our products with third-party components and our own professional services to create managed solutions that solve specific customer or industry problems.

We design, plan and build transmission networks. We provide white-label solutions, combining broadband, calls and lines products with billing and customer support. We also provide more tactical project management services, or bespoke capabilities, to fill a particular need. By using our expertise and economies of scale we aim to reduce customers' deployment risk, operating cost, capital expenditure and/or time to market.

Media and Broadcast services

Our media network can carry every kind of content, from live-to-air television through to very large media production

or post-production files. It handles all of the UK's digital terrestrial TV (including Freeview). It also provides outside broadcast services from more than 150 sports and news locations across the UK.

Our new wireless Media Live service means news crews can send live content straight from their cameras to the BT Tower for onward distribution, without needing an outside broadcast vehicle. This service is currently available in London and more cities will be added soon.

Our media network also links the main locations around the world where broadcast or film content is created or distributed. And, through local partnerships, it links TV stations to major sports venues worldwide.

Performance in the year

Underlying revenue excluding transit fell 7% and EBITDA fell 9%. This reflects the impacts of a large contract termination, regulatory price reductions following Ofcom's 2013 Narrowband Market Review and a generally tougher trading environment. However, we have strengthened our position for the future. Customer satisfaction is higher and our cost base is lower. Our order book was stable and we enriched our portfolio of Hosted Communications Services.

Key facts:

Operating performance

This year we signed orders worth £1.9bn (2013/14: £1.9bn). The biggest deal we signed was a multi-year extension to a contract to provide fixed broadband, calls and lines as a white-labelled managed service. We also signed major deals to provide:

- network planning, field engineering and colocation services for a number of mobile network operators;
- managed data solutions (incorporating leased lines and Ethernet) for a major US telecoms provider. This followed similar contracts with two other US-based customers last year;
- broadband, Ethernet, calls and Hosted Communications Services for a major reseller;
- IPX for two mobile network operators;
- global broadcast distribution for the BBC World Service, our new Media Live news gathering service for ITN and transmission of the ICC Cricket World Cup for Star TV in India; and
- Hosted Communications Services to a range of CPs such as Claranet and Maintel. We signed dozens of contracts for CPs to resell our IP voice portfolio (IP Centrex and SIP Trunking) and dozens more to resell Avaya Cloud Solutions.

We also extended our partnership contract with KCOM Group to include the management and maintenance of its fibre-to-the-premises network in Hull and East Yorkshire.

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The number of Ethernet circuits we provide grew by 28%. We achieved this by improving our order-taking process, simplifying our pricing and expanding our network. However, we saw less demand from mobile operators for Ethernet services this year and it took us longer to deliver new orders. We connected fewer MEAS circuits as a result.

IPX carried 19bn UK-originated voice minutes, up by two-thirds on last year. While these minutes partly replace calls previously carried over our non-IP network, the service is now used by almost all of the UK's biggest CPs. This is testament to our ability to support our customers in an IP world.

In the broadband market, the number of lines we provide on a wholesale basis fell by 1%. This reflected some larger CPs' preference to use their own networks instead of ours. But our smaller customers bought more copper broadband from us, as they won business from other wholesale providers with our help. And our fibre broadband base grew by over 80%.

Deliver superior customer service

This year we revised our customer satisfaction measures to align them more closely with our customers' priorities. Despite setting more stretching targets, customer satisfaction rose from 72% in the first quarter to 80% in the fourth quarter. And our Right First Time performance was up 4.4% (2013/14: 3.3%).

These improvements were driven by three areas of innovation in particular:

Business Zone. We launched a self-service portal through which CPs can manage their orders and any faults. Customers who used this portal were a lot more satisfied than those who did not. For those customers who prefer their systems to deal with ours directly, without human intervention, we introduced a new gateway for placing Ethernet orders;

process improvements. We improved our repair and billing processes, so we could answer repair calls and sort out billing queries more quickly; and

colocation. We moved our service colleagues into fewer service centres, with a view to increasing the level of expertise available to each caller.

Our service performance on Ethernet was mixed. It took us longer to provide Wholesale Ethernet and MEAS circuits than we would have liked. But their in-life failure rates fell by 9% and 24% respectively. And greater automation

enabled us to improve our response times to the faults that did arise.

Transform our costs

Operating costs fell 12% (2013/14: 9%) or 7% excluding transit (2013/14: 3%). We achieved this primarily by:

reducing selling and general administration costs which were 20% lower year on year;
improving our diagnostic tools for identifying broadband faults. This meant we did not need as much help from Openreach to understand the cause of the faults. This saved us time and money and meant we could resolve faults more quickly;
limiting third-party costs by rationalising our supplier base and renegotiating our supplier contracts; and
removing unnecessary capacity from our network.

Invest for growth

Given the increasing price pressure in the market, we have sought to stand out from the competition by providing new services and a better customer experience. This year we invested in:

a broader product portfolio. We are developing new connectivity products, using optical fibre and small-cell technologies, which we will start offering next year. We are adding new capabilities to IPX (including 4G and wi-fi roaming, which we are now launching next year), and are extending our Hosted Communications Services portfolio. We have also started rolling out new fibre cabinets to major sports grounds around the country, giving a low-cost option for event broadcasts;

our network. We have been extending our Ethernet network. This improves its unit cost as well as its availability. We intend to extend that coverage even further next year.

our media capabilities. We have carried out trials of 4K Ultra-High Definition TV for a number of broadcasters over our global media network. One of those trials has already led to a contract for the live 4K transmission of seven ICC Cricket World Cup matches; and

better service. Launching Business Zone had a noticeable and immediate impact on customer satisfaction.

Financial performance

	2015	2014	2013
Year ended 31 March	£m	£m	£m
Revenue	2,157	2,422	2,608
Underlying revenue excluding transit	(7)%	(3)%	(3)%
Operating costs	1,596	1,808	1,988
	561	614	620

EBITDA			
Depreciation and amortisation	224	245	254
Operating profit	337	369	366
Capital expenditure	210	244	233
Operating cash flow	278	372	348

Revenue fell 11% (2013/14: 7%). This included £113m or 41% less transit revenue (2013/14: £119m or 30%), as network operators sent fewer voice calls over TDM and exchanged more of those calls directly rather than via our network.

We billed and partially collected the payments due from mobile operators following the Supreme Court judgment on ladder pricing in July 2014. As a result, we recognised around £30m of trading revenue for this year in addition to the revenue treated as a specific item relating to prior years, as explained on page 39. We expect to recognise additional trading revenue relating to ladder pricing of around half this amount in the income statement next year.

Underlying revenue excluding transit was down 7% (2013/14: 3%). This was primarily due to lower revenue from traditional calls, lines and circuits, including the regulatory price changes as a result of Ofcom's last Narrowband Market Review (NBMR).

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The NBMR greatly reduced the price that CPs can charge each other to deliver calls made to their fixed-line customers. This meant we had to charge less for Direct Conveyance, which (as explained earlier) delivers other CPs calls to BT's own customers.

Broadband revenue declined 17% (2013/14: 15%) as the major retail broadband providers continued to make more use of their own networks instead of ours.

Managed solutions revenue fell 11% (2013/14: 7% growth) as the Post Office completed the migration of services off our white-labelled broadband, calls and lines solution. And mobile network operators bought fewer new MEAS circuits, generating lower connection revenue. Managed solutions revenue accounted for 37% of total revenue, in line with last year.

We continued to see strong growth in IP services, with revenue up 42%. IPX and Ethernet showed double-digit growth, following continued investment in these expanding markets. We expect our new Hosted Communications Services to contribute good growth in the year ahead.

EBITDA declined 9% (2013/14: 1%), driven by lower revenue (including the impact of the NBMR) and a changing product mix. These effects were partly offset by our cost transformation activities, and the ladder pricing revenue recognised in the year. Depreciation and amortisation was down 9% (2013/14: 4%) and operating profit fell 9% (2013/14: 1%).

Capital expenditure was 14% below last year (2013/14: 5% higher) partly driven by lower spend on our Wholesale Broadband Connect rollout programme.

Operating cash flow decreased 25% (2013/14: 7% increase) largely driven by working capital movements as last year benefited from the timing of customer receipts.

Key priorities

Our future plans include:

- launching new connectivity products, using optical fibre and small-cell technologies;
- further extending our Ethernet and Wholesale Broadband Connect coverage;
- offering new access options for our Mobile Ethernet Access Service;
- adding new features to our Hosted Communications Services;
- launching new IPX features; and
- adding new capabilities to Business Zone.

Openreach

Openreach provides the vital infrastructure that is the foundation of the UK's vibrant internet economy. We are responsible for providing services over the local loop or local access network, sometimes referred to as the last mile. This consists of the copper and fibre connections between our exchanges and homes and businesses.

Openreach is firmly focused on building Britain's connected future, playing our part in creating the infrastructure needed to underpin growth. During the year we took our fibre broadband network coverage beyond 75% of UK premises over 22nd

We have extended fibre coverage to rural communities. We have been working in partnership and co-investing with the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme. Being part of a larger group gives Openreach the confidence in future demand to make long-term investments.

According to European Commission data, the UK has the highest coverage of next generation access (NGA) broadband of the five largest countries in Western Europe. Coverage of 82%, including Virgin Media's network, is above the European Union average of 62%.

We keep the UK connected through a network which links more than 5,500 exchanges, around 98,000 street cabinets (primary connection points, or PCPs) and around 4.7m distribution points. Our network is used by nearly 80% of UK homes and businesses.

^a This includes around 790,000 premises in Northern Ireland, provided by BT Ireland.

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We do not sell our products directly to the public. We work on behalf of communications providers. Our network and services are available to all of them, and in turn, they compete to provide phone and internet services to consumers and businesses. A recent European Union report stated that The UK now offers the most affordable broadband in Europe .

We offer our main products on the same terms to all CPs, including other BT lines of business, in line with our commitments under BT's Undertakings (more on page 38). As a result, Openreach's operational, engineering and systems capabilities are separate from the rest of BT. More than 99% of Openreach revenue is subject to these Undertakings.

Markets and customers

Openreach, along with BT Wholesale, serves wholesale telecoms customers in Great Britain. Wholesale customers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are served by BT Ireland.

We have around 540 CP customers, the largest of which are Sky and TalkTalk and other BT lines of business (particularly BT Consumer and BT Business).

We are seeing continued demand for data and bandwidth which is driving growth in take-up of our products.

The overall number of fixed-lines in the UK is growing, helped by new homes being built, as well as the trend for customers to connect their mobile devices to fixed broadband lines via wi-fi.

Our main competitor for consumer services is Virgin Media. Its proprietary cable network covers around half of UK homes, although it announced this year significant expansion plans to reach an additional 4m premises by 2020.

We also saw other companies investing in their own fibre access networks, reflecting the competitive nature of the market. CityFibre, Hyperoptic and IFNL all expanded their footprint deploying fibre to the building to address different market demands for superfast broadband. CityFibre's joint venture project with TalkTalk and Sky is at an early stage of development, but has the potential to pose a competitive threat going forward.

The market for Ethernet and optical service products, providing business-quality connectivity, is particularly buoyant, more than doubling in size between 2011 and 2014. This is due to businesses' need for greater speeds, capacity and reliability, and also the migration from old style private circuits.

Our many competitors in the business market include Virgin Media, Colt Group and Vodafone. Pricing, service delivery and product innovation have been the key competitive themes over the past year. The price per Gbit is being driven down by intense competition, particularly in metro areas. Buoyant market demand for Ethernet has placed

pressure on the delivery of circuits for all those competing in this market.

Products and services

We offer four principal products and services: fibre broadband, copper-based services, infrastructure and Ethernet.

Fibre broadband

Our wholesale fibre broadband product is called Generic Ethernet Access. We offer a number of different services:

Fibre-to-the-Cabinet (FTTC) takes fibre from the exchange to the street cabinet and uses the existing copper network for the final link to the customer. It provides speeds of up to 80Mbps and has proved to be a highly effective way of rolling out superfast broadband at scale and pace. When CPs connect a new customer, they can either choose to have an Openreach engineer visit a home or business site or use a self-install option. FTTC is our most widely-used service.

Fibre-to-the-Premises (FTTP) provides faster speeds of up to 330Mbps. This is achieved by laying fibre all the way to the customer premises. CPs can offer voice services over FTTP which are similar in functionality to copper-based voice services.

FTTP-on-Demand lets end customers in areas served by FTTC obtain an FTTP connection if they are prepared to pay for the cost of installation. This is in the process of being rolled out and is currently available to nearly 9m premises.

Our fibre broadband network can carry broadcast and on-demand internet protocol television (IPTV) services. We provide a multicast service which cuts the cost of delivering broadcast TV over our network and means CPs can choose to prioritise TV over other web traffic.

Copper-based services

Wholesale Line Rental (WLR) lets CPs offer own-brand phone services (with their own pricing and billing) using our equipment and network. They pay to use the copper lines between our exchanges and the customer premises but do not need to invest in their own network equipment or infrastructure. During the year we improved our premium WLR product aimed at businesses. We added new features including: a new service level providing prioritised repair; a dedicated UK-based specialist helpdesk; and call diversion to an alternative number. CPs can also choose from a range of options such as shorter appointment windows and visits by a named engineer, which is helpful when secure or sensitive sites are involved.

Local Loop Unbundling (LLU) gives CPs a choice of ways to invest in a broadband network. LLU involves CPs installing their own equipment in our exchanges and renting the copper line to the customer premises. CPs can use our shared metallic path facility (SMPF) product to offer broadband over a WLR line or our metallic path facility (MPF) product to offer both phone and broadband services using just their equipment.

Infrastructure

Passive Infrastructure Access (PIA) products offer all CPs access to Openreach's basic infrastructure. For example, they can rent space in our ducts or on our telephone poles. CPs can use PIA to help them build their own fibre networks instead of buying fibre broadband services directly from us.

Mobile Infill Infrastructure Solution (MiiS) enables MNOs to improve localised mobile coverage. We install antennas on selected telephone poles linked to a special street cabinet to which we provide power and backhaul. Mobile operators can then install their radio equipment and use their spectrum to help reduce mobile signal black spots.

We also offer specialist products to connect CPs' networks to our exchanges.

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Ethernet

Our Ethernet products offer dedicated fibre connections with speeds of up to 100Gbps. CPs use them in their own networks and to provide high-quality, high-bandwidth services to businesses and the public sector.

During the year we launched a number of new products which are available nationwide and offer flexible pricing and routing options.

Performance in the year

We have expanded our superfast fibre broadband network, making it available to a further 3m premises. We began testing G.fast technology which will be able to provide ultrafast broadband speeds. We achieved all the minimum service levels set by Ofcom, though our ambition and plans are to further improve customer service. To help us do this, we hired more than 2,500 new engineers. Revenue declined 1% and EBITDA was flat with regulatory price reductions offsetting the impact of fibre broadband revenue growth.

Key facts:

Operating performance

The UK DSL and fibre broadband market grew by 851,000 and the number of Ethernet circuits we provide grew 3% in the year. We have now passed more than 22m premises with our fibre broadband network, over three-quarters of the UK and ahead of our original schedule.

We achieved 1.5m fibre broadband net connections in the year. This means that around 4.2m homes and businesses in the UK are now connected, 19% of those passed. Of the net additions in the year, 40% were provided to our external CP customers, an increase from 31% last year, demonstrating the market-wide demand for fibre.

Under the BDUK programme we are co-investing alongside public funding to bring fibre broadband to rural communities. We cannot use this funding in urban areas as there are a number of EU state-aid rules that restrict the group's ability to use funding for superfast services in cities.

We are also bidding for further contracts, known as the Superfast Extension Programme (SEP). This aims to make superfast broadband available to 95% of the country.

Deliver superior customer service

Openreach serves end customers on behalf of CPs, managing installations and repairs for their consumer and business customers.

As the internet becomes an increasingly important part of daily life, customer demand for our products continues to rise, as do customer expectations of our service performance.

Over the last 12 months we have hired more than 2,500 engineers, including over 300 apprentices, to help us deliver improved levels of service.

In February 2015 we changed the way we are organised so that we are better aligned with our customers. While field engineers will continue to be based close to customers, our dispersed office-based support roles will be transferred to regional Centres of Excellence, with our people equipped with better tools, systems and career opportunities.

Find out more

BT's Undertakings

on page

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We are providing more information on our service and performance, to both our CP customers and their end customers. We have launched a website where CP customers can see detailed performance information for each UK region. We have also introduced an incident checker to help consumers identify problems with our network in their area. And we have upgraded our fibre broadband website so that people can see when fibre is coming to their area.

The table to the right shows Openreach's service performance, on a number of key measures. We publish this data, with additional levels of detail, on a quarterly basis, as part of our move towards greater transparency and visibility. It can be found here www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/our-responsibilities

To help us improve further, we launched a new customer survey in December, gathering data from some of our largest CPs. The survey is designed to gauge end-customer perception about their experience of an Openreach engineer's installation or repair visit. This will help us better understand what opportunities for improvement exist.

We are making significant progress. We have improved our response times, fixing faults on average 14% faster than last year. Despite rising demand for our services, we improved our installation lead-times for copper services by four days. We have reduced the number of complaints by 25% and reduced the number of appointments missed by our engineers by 28%.

During the year we exceeded all of the 60 new minimum service levels for copper products (for the installation of new lines and repairs to existing services) introduced by Ofcom. They become more stretching in 2015/16.

Our focus on service helped us manage volatility in demand. Thanks to improved planning, work allocation, resource deployment and increased capacity as a result of our recruitment programme, we were able to deal with more repairs and deliver a better level of service to our customers.

We were also better able to cope with extreme weather conditions, including severe storms in the South West and Wales in October and Storm Rachel, which particularly affected Scotland.

On our key customer service measure of Right First Time, we exceeded our target by improving 3.5% (2013/14: down 1.9%).

Although we made progress on improving our service this year, we recognise that there is still more we need to do. For example, we have been unable to install lines on new sites as fast as we would have liked. We are now working with house builders and developers to make sure that our processes are as good as they can be and that people can get our service in their new homes promptly.

We are not satisfied with how quickly and reliably we provide new Ethernet circuits, but we are pleased with our performance on repairing them. We are hiring more people to help us improve this. We are also working with our CP

customers on a new process which recognises that different customers have different needs. For example, some prioritise certainty of delivery timing, others care more about speed of provision.

Openreach performance against service responsibilities

	Q4 2014/15	Q4 2013/14
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Movement		
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Home and work users

New lines installed on time	92.98%	93.11%
Average time to install with an engineer (working days)	13.46	16.87
Average time to install without an engineer (working days)	9.77	9.44
Installation requiring an engineer where wait is 22 days or longer for appointment	0.00%	11.96%
Average time for first available appointment date for new installation (working days)	6.70	11.18
New lines requiring an engineer visit not installed after 31 days past target date	1.23%	0.66%
Average time to fix faults Maintenance level 1 (working days)	2.67	2.78

Average time to fix faults Maintenance level 2 (working days)	1.79	2.12
Faults fixed within agreed time Maintenance level 1	75.10%	67.78%
Faults fixed within agreed time Maintenance level 2	75.66%	64.63%
Faults not cleared after 31 days or more Maintenance level 1	0.86%	0.46%
Faults not cleared after 31 days or more Maintenance level 2	0.84%	0.49%
Business users		
Average time to install on-net services (working days)	33.49	40.37
Average time to install where new build is required (working days)	69.95	68.74
Faults fixed within agreed time	92.79%	96.21%

Note: this compares the performance in the quarter and is not an annual measure.

Improvement

Steady performance maintaining focus

Further improvement needed plans in place to get back on track

Find out more

Openreach's service performance

www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/

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Transform our costs

Operating costs reduced 2% (2013/14: 1%) as cost efficiencies offset an increase in volumes, pay inflation and the additional engineering resource we recruited.

We have increased our efficiency by proactive investment in process improvements and new systems and tools that will reduce the number of engineering jobs and unnecessary customer contacts. We have recruited additional engineers using new terms and conditions which offer greater operational flexibility. Where possible we have also progressed insourcing activities.

This year we:

- created innovative apps that improve engineer efficiency and have a direct impact on our costs. These apps also give us better data about engineer visits and direct feedback from customers, which should help reduce customer complaints and avoid repeat visits;
- trials the 'View my Engineer' app which allows CPs and end customers to see the engineer's progress towards their job. It means they can contact the engineer if they need to change the appointment, avoiding wasted visits and costs and customer dissatisfaction; and
- invested in proactive maintenance of our copper network to reduce faults in key trouble hotspots, saving engineer interventions. We prevented more than 100,000 faults during the year thanks to improved targeting and increasing our financial investment by 10%. This helped stabilise our network, although we were also helped by the kinder weather.

Invest for growth

Our plans to invest over £3bn in fibre broadband infrastructure is a critical part of our investment for growth, but we know we must continue to innovate to meet customers' changing needs. We announced large-scale trials this summer of ultrafast broadband with G.fast technology (see below).

Since we launched our superfast programme we have introduced nearly 250 innovations and improvements as we continually try to expand the reach of our network or make it easier to build.

We also invested in our copper network, which grew by 215,000 lines this year, and continues to underpin the services we provide. And we continue to develop our Ethernet portfolio and offer competitive pricing.

Ultrafast broadband vision

In January 2015 we set out our ultrafast broadband vision for the UK.

Using G.fast technology, we expect to offer initial speeds of a few hundred megabits per second to millions of homes and businesses by 2020. Speeds are expected to increase to up to 500Mbps to most of the UK within a decade from now, as further industry standards are secured and new kit is developed, subject to there continuing to be a stable regulatory environment that supports investment. We also plan to offer a 1Gbps product for those who want ever faster speeds.

G.fast is an innovative technology that uses higher frequencies than FTTC to provide faster broadband speeds over copper. We will test it in two trial locations (Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire and Gosforth, Newcastle) this summer.

The trials will build on tests at our innovation centre at Adastral Park. These have shown that G.fast has the potential to deliver significant speed increases from existing and new fibre street cabinets as well as from other points closer to the customer. This is an important development as it means the technology can be deployed in a more efficient and rapid manner than previously thought.

If the trials are successful, we will start to deploy G.fast across the network in the 2016/17 financial year.

Financial performance

Year ended 31 March	2015 £m	2014 £m	2013 £m
Revenue	5,011	5,061	5,115
Operating costs	2,411	2,460	2,473
EBITDA	2,600	2,601	2,642
Depreciation and amortisation	1,348	1,406	1,428
Operating profit	1,252	1,195	1,214
Capital expenditure	1,082	1,049	1,144
Operating cash flow	1,502	1,492	1,475

Revenue declined 1% (2013/14: 1%). Regulatory price changes had a negative impact of around £180m, the equivalent of around 4% of our revenue. This was partly offset by 41% growth in fibre broadband revenue due to strong market demand.

Revenue from fibre broadband accounted for 10% of total revenue this year compared to 7% last year.

Operating costs reduced 2% (2013/14: 1%). Cost efficiencies from improving engineer efficiency and reducing the number of tasks and customer contacts were partly offset by a smaller benefit from the sale of redundant copper. In the year the sale of redundant copper generated net income of £29m, and we expect no benefit from this in 2015/16.

EBITDA was flat (2013/14: 2% down), and with depreciation and amortisation down 4% (2013/14: 2%) driven by a lower depreciation charge on core network assets, operating profit was up 5% (2013/14: 2% decrease).

Capital expenditure of £1,082m increased £33m or 3% (2013/14: £95m or 8% decrease) driven by higher volumes of Ethernet provision, the expansion of our network to new homes and an increase in BDUK fibre rollout. Capital expenditure is net of £378m grant funding (2013/14: £126m).

Operating cash flow increased 1% (2013/14: 1%).

Key priorities

Our future plans include:

continuing to improve our customer service, through ongoing investment and innovation;
progressing our G.fast trials and continuing to roll out fibre in BDUK and hard-to-reach areas; and
reshaping Openreach around our customers to be ready for their future needs.

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BT Technology, Service & Operations (BT TSO)

BT TSO is our internal service unit that is responsible for delivering and operating our networks, platforms and IT systems.

BT TSO works closely with each of our customer-facing lines of business. We create new products for them and make sure that existing services evolve with the changing needs of their customers.

We are responsible for the whole lifecycle of BT's global networks and systems – from design, test and build through to operational management. And we make sure that they are reliable and resilient.

We manage most of BT's research and development and look at ways to differentiate BT through innovation. And we manage our worldwide patent portfolio. These are covered further on page 34.

Products and services

We manage the voice, data and TV platforms and the IT applications which make up the core infrastructure for BT's products, services and internal systems. Through technology refresh and proactive maintenance we are improving the reliability of our networks and IT systems so that our customers do not suffer loss of service. Our people also design and deliver the large-scale global managed network services which are sold to many of the top companies in the world.

We are replacing costly and inefficient legacy systems with newer ones. This saves us money and can free up capacity in the network. And it often reduces the amount of energy we use.

We deliver and manage BT's internal IT systems, such as our customer management and HR systems. Our investments in these have simplified our processes and improved the way our people interact with them. Our service colleagues now have the information available to provide a better service for customers.

Given the rapid pace of change in the technology that BT TSO people work on, we have developed comprehensive training and re-skilling programmes. We are also a major recruiter of UK graduates and modern apprentices. This is covered further on page 31.

Performance in the year

We have improved the reliability of our IT systems. We have also continued to reduce our costs and the group's energy consumption.

Key facts:

We have continued to develop our networks and platforms. This has resulted in new features being added, improvements in reliability and older technology being removed. You can read more about this on page 33.

Driving Continuous Improvement has been critical to transforming our costs. By adopting lean tools and techniques our global design teams have been able to improve productivity. This has led to a reduction in the cost and the amount of time it takes to create product designs. We have further reduced our reliance on third-party vendors as we have continued to build our own IT development centres. You can read more about our global development centres on page 34.

Key priorities

Our future plans include:

- developing new capabilities and processes to improve customers' experiences;
- working with Openreach to deliver the first ultrafast broadband trials (see page 75);
- conducting technical trials of the voice and data capabilities of our IP core network to enable the migration to all-IP services;
- continuing to invest in our TV platform, adding new channels and launching the first season of our exclusive UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League coverage;
- continuing to expand our global network to key cloud data centres to offer our corporate customers enhanced security and performance when using cloud services such as Microsoft Azure and Amazon Web Services; and
- running trials with enterprise customers so that they can control network functions such as firewalls and WAN optimisation from IT servers on their sites. This could lead to a reduction in the amount of specialist network hardware customers require.

Find out more

Our research and development activities on page Recruitment of graduates and apprentices on page

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Group performance

In this section we explain how we have done this year against our key performance indicators. We set out the financial results of the whole group and we look at our performance as a sustainable and responsible business.

Our progress against our KPIs

We have again delivered strong financial results this year and improved aspects of customer service.

Our financial performance

Our financial strength gives us the ability to invest in the things that set us apart.

Delivering societal and environmental benefits

Our goal is to benefit society, our customers and our own business through what we do and how we do it.

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Alternative performance measures

We judge and explain our performance using certain alternative performance measures. These include trends in underlying revenue and operating costs excluding transit, adjusted and reported EBITDA, adjusted earnings per share, normalised and reported free cash flow and net debt. Adjusted means that a measure is before specific items. We describe on page 202 what we mean by specific items and we have disclosed specific items for this year and the last two years in note 8 to the consolidated financial statements.

These alternative performance measures are not defined under IFRS so they are termed non-GAAP measures. But they are consistent with how management measures the group's financial performance. We have defined each of these measures on pages 202 to 204, where we have provided more detail, including reconciliations to the nearest measure under IFRS.

You can find a review of the performance of our lines of business this year, from page

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Group Finance Director's introduction

This year we've made some key investment decisions. We've been able to do that because of our financial strength. And we've delivered our financial results, in line with or ahead of our outlook.

Our financial performance

This year, we have again delivered EBITDA and free cash flow growth. Underlying revenue excluding transit was down 0.4%, broadly level with last year, as the strong growth in BT Consumer was offset by the impact of challenging markets and regulatory pricing pressures. Our results were in line with or ahead of the outlook that we announced at the start of the year.

Our balance sheet remains strong and has enabled us to make some key moves in the market this year, with our planned acquisition of EE and securing further exclusive sports content in our BT Consumer business. We agreed the triennial valuation of the BT Pension Scheme, giving certainty to the required deficit payments for the following three years.

Over the past six years we have reduced our operating costs and capital expenditure, in aggregate, by around £5.5bn. This year we continued the good progress already made in transforming our costs. In BT Global Services, we replicated the forensic approach applied in the UK to the international business and across the lines of business we increased productivity, while reallocating our labour resource to be more efficient. This contributed to growth in adjusted EBITDA of 3% to £6.3bn.

Adjusted profit before tax was £3.2bn, up 12%, and adjusted EPS of 31.5p was also up 12%. The benefit of our focus in recent years on capital expenditure efficiencies and debt reduction have flowed through to these metrics.

Normalised free cash flow was up £380m at £2,830m, ahead of our outlook for the year of above £2.6bn. Strong cash generation across the group has enabled us to invest in our five strategic growth areas.

Our capital expenditure was £2.3bn. We have now passed more than 22m premises with our superfast fibre broadband network, over three-quarters of the UK. This includes premises within BDUK areas as we continue to make progress

with extending the reach of fibre beyond our commercial footprint.

In February we announced our proposed acquisition of EE from Deutsche Telekom and Orange. The integration of BT with EE will accelerate our mobility strategy and increase our capacity for future investment and product innovation, and is an exciting prospect.

Our financial objectives are to reduce net debt while investing in the business, supporting the pension fund and paying progressive dividends.

2014/15 performance against our outlook

	Outlook	Result
Underlying revenue excluding transit^a	Broadly level	Down 0.4%
Adjusted EBITDA^b	£6.2bn £6.3bn	£6.27bn
Normalised free cash flow^b	Above £2.6bn	£2.83bn
Dividend per share	Up 10% 15%	Up 14%
Share buyback programme	c£ 300m	£320m

^a Underlying revenue excluding transit is defined on page 202.

^b Adjusted EBITDA and normalised free cash flow are defined on page 203.

Outlook for 2015/16

We continue to expect growth in underlying revenue excluding transit in 2015/16. We expect modest growth in adjusted EBITDA. This is despite a year-on-year impact of around £170m due to lower income from both ladder pricing and the sale of redundant copper, a higher pensions operating charge and higher leaver costs. We will also incur costs relating to the launch of our UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League content in the year.

We expect normalised free cash flow to be around £2.8bn. This compares with £2,830m in 2014/15 and is despite an increase of around £90m in ordinary pension contributions. We are making no change to our expected dividend and share buyback outlook.

Outlook for 2015/16

Underlying revenue excluding transit^a	Growth
Adjusted EBITDA^b	Modest growth
Normalised free cash flow^b	c£2.8bn
Dividend per share	Up 10% 15%
Share buyback	c£300m

^a Defined on page 202.

^b Defined on page 203.

It remains essential that we stay focused on our core business while we move into new areas. I expect the coming year to be both exciting and rewarding for our business. We have laid the foundations that position us well for growth.

Tony Chanmugam

Group Finance Director

6 May 2015

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Group financial results

We have made good progress and again delivered strong financial results for the year.

We have made key decisions and are investing in the things that set us apart.

^a Items presented as adjusted are stated before specific items. See page 202 for further details.

^b Before depreciation and amortisation.

^c Before purchases of telecommunications licences.

^d See definition on page 203 and summarised cash flow statement on page 84.

^e Includes the impact of our £1.0bn equity placing. See page 85.

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Group performance

Our progress against our KPIs

We have again delivered on our three financial KPIs with strong growth in adjusted EPS and cash flow. Our customer service performance is up 4.7% but we still want to do better.

We use four key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure how we are doing against our strategy. Our financial KPIs measure: the trend in underlying revenue excluding transit; our adjusted earnings per share; and normalised free cash flow. Customer service improvement is also a vital non-financial KPI for us. These KPIs are used to measure the variable elements of our senior executives' pay each year as set out in the **Report on Directors' Remuneration** (see page 111).

We have outlined our performance against each KPI here, together with an explanation in italics of how we define each measure. You can find reconciliations of the financial measures to the closest IFRS measure in the **Additional information** section on pages 202 to 204.

Outlook

Our goal is to deliver sustainable, profitable revenue growth. We aim to achieve this through making strategic investments and delivering on our underlying business. And we are still focusing on cost transformation activities to drive out inefficiency, improve our processes and reduce our cost base.

Outlook for 2015/16

We continue to expect growth in underlying revenue excluding transit in 2015/16. We expect modest growth in adjusted EBITDA. This is despite a year-on-year impact of around £170m due to lower income from both ladder pricing and the sale of redundant copper, a higher pensions operating charge, and higher leaver costs. We will also incur costs relating to the launch of our UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League content in the year.

Normalised free cash flow is expected to be around £2.8bn in 2015/16. This compares with £2,830m in 2014/15 and is despite an increase of around £90m in ordinary pension contributions.

We are targeting a BBB+/Baa1 credit rating over the medium term. For 2015/16, we continue to expect to grow our dividend per share by 10%-15% and to undertake a c£300m share buyback to help offset the dilutive effect of maturing all-employee share plans.

Profit estimate and profit forecast considered within the shareholder circular

On 1 April 2015 we published a shareholder circular in relation to our proposed acquisition of EE. In this, we provided information relating to our 2014/15 profit estimate and our 2015/16 profit forecast. This information confirmed our outlook as stated on 30 January 2015, when we published our unaudited results for the third quarter and nine months to 31 December 2014.

In this we included the following statement:

We expect adjusted EBITDA of £6.2 billion – £6.3 billion in 2014/15 with further growth in 2015/16.

Our actual adjusted EBITDA for 2014/15 was £6,271m, at the upper end of the range, and we continue to expect modest growth in 2015/16. This is consistent with the statement of further growth that we made in the shareholder circular.

The 2014/15 profit estimate and the 2015/16 profit forecast do not take into account any impact of the proposed acquisition of EE. The basis of preparation and assumptions for these are set out in the **Additional information** on page 222.

Shareholders approved the transaction on 30 April 2015 and we are now awaiting approval from the Competition and Markets Authority.

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BT Consumer revenue was up 7%, with strong growth in the broadband and TV customer bases helped by BT Sport. This growth was offset by declines in our other lines of business, mainly reflecting regulatory price changes and lower UK public sector revenues. We explain more about the performance of our lines of business from page 53.

Underlying revenue reflects the overall performance of the group that will contribute to long-term profitable revenue growth. We exclude the impact of acquisitions and disposals, foreign exchange movements and specific items from this measure. We focus on the trend in underlying revenue excluding transit because transit traffic is low margin and affected by reductions in mobile termination rates, which are outside our control.

Adjusted profit after tax grew 15% this year reflecting the impact of our cost transformation activities, a lower interest expense and a lower depreciation and amortisation charge together with a reduction in the effective tax rate from 21.7% to 19.9%.

Adjusted earnings per share grew 12% to 31.5p. The weighted average number of shares in the market increased 3% as a result of a large all-employee share plan which matured in the summer and an equity placing to support our planned acquisition of EE.

Adjusted earnings per share is the adjusted profit after tax attributable to our shareholders, divided by the weighted average number of shares in issue. Being an adjusted measure, it excludes the impact of specific items and as such it is a consistent way to measure the performance of our business over time.

The increase in our normalised free cash flow reflects favourable working capital movements, including the timing of BT Sport programme rights payments in the prior year, growth in EBITDA, lower ordinary pension contributions and lower tax and interest payments. These were partly offset by higher net cash capital expenditure due to the timing of grant funding cash receipts.

Free cash flow is the cash we generate from our operations, less capital expenditure and finance costs. It represents the cash available to invest in the business, repay debt, support the pension scheme and pay dividends to our shareholders.

Normalised free cash flow excludes significant non-operational payments and receipts that would distort the measure year on year. So in calculating normalised free cash flow we take out the impact of specific items, purchases of telecommunications licences, pension deficit payments and the tax benefit from pension deficit payments.

We have improved our customer service this year, but we are not satisfied and still want to do better. All of our lines of business contributed to this improvement. We delivered significantly better repair performance and shorter lead times for providing UK lines and broadband. BT Global Services made large gains in delivering more of its products within target times. Looking forward, we need to improve our provision of Ethernet services and recover more quickly when we do fail to meet our promises.

Right First Time is our key measure of customer service. This tracks how often we keep the promises we make to our customers. This could be about keeping to appointment times, fixing faults within an agreed period or answering calls promptly and dealing with queries or orders efficiently. As well as improving service and the customer experience, keeping our promises should mean that there is less work to do in correcting our mistakes, and so reduces our costs.

^a Cumulative improvement from 1 April 2009.

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Annual Report 2015**Income statement****Summarised income statement**

Year ended 31 March	2015	2014	2013
Before specific items	£m	£m	£m
Revenue	17,851	18,287	18,339
Operating costs ^a	(11,580)	(12,171)	(12,196)
EBITDA	6,271	6,116	6,143
Depreciation and amortisation	(2,538)	(2,695)	(2,843)
Operating profit	3,733	3,421	3,300
Net finance expense	(560)	(591)	(653)
Associates and joint ventures	(1)	(3)	9
Profit before taxation	3,172	2,827	2,656
Taxation	(631)	(613)	(597)

Profit for the year	2,541	2,214	2,059
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^a Excluding depreciation and amortisation.

Revenue

Our key revenue measure, underlying revenue excluding transit, was down 0.4% which is in line with our outlook for the year of being broadly flat.

Reported revenue, which includes specific items, was down 2%. Adjusted revenue was also down 2% at £17,851m.

Underlying revenue excluding transit was down 0.4% compared with a 0.5% increase in the prior year. We had a £231m negative impact from foreign exchange movements, a £119m reduction in transit revenue and an £8m negative impact from disposals.

Growth in BT Consumer was offset by declines in our other lines of business. BT Consumer revenue was up 7%, with strong growth in the broadband and TV customer bases. We are very pleased with the performance of BT Sport which has contributed to both top and bottom-line growth. Openreach revenue was down 1%, driven by regulatory price changes which were partly offset by the benefit of fibre broadband growth. BT Business underlying revenue excluding transit declined marginally with lower call and line volumes reflecting the migration of customers to broadband and IP services. BT Wholesale underlying revenue excluding transit was down 7%. The impact of regulatory price changes and a large contract termination were partly offset by the recognition of ladder pricing revenue. In BT Global Services, UK public sector revenue was lower, with this partly offset by our high-growth regions.

You can see a full breakdown of reported revenue by major product and service category in note 4 to the consolidated financial statements.

EBITDA

Adjusted EBITDA increased 3% to £6,271m (2013/14: flat), at the upper end of our outlook of £6.2bn £6.3bn.

This shows how our cost transformation activities are benefiting our bottom line. We have reduced costs, and have still been able to invest while increasing our profitability.

Through the group-wide restructuring programme that we completed this year, we have made investments to reduce costs in the longer term. The incremental costs associated with this restructuring have been treated as specific items.

We have disclosed adjusted EBITDA for each of our customer-facing lines of business in note 4 to the consolidated financial statements.

Operating costs

We reduced operating costs before depreciation and amortisation by 5%.

Our total operating costs before depreciation and amortisation were down £591m (2013/14: flat) at £11,580m. Our ability to reduce costs while investing reflects our focus on cost control. Underlying operating costs before

depreciation and amortisation and excluding transit decreased 2%. In aggregate, we have reduced operating costs and capital expenditure by around £5.5bn over the last six years despite significant investment across the business.

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Payments to telecommunications operators (POLOs) were down 13% primarily reflecting lower transit volumes, a negative foreign exchange movement and lower call volumes in BT Consumer. Net labour costs were down 8% as we increased productivity while reallocating our labour resource to be more efficient. Total labour costs including capitalised labour were down by less, at 4%, as a result of using more indirect labour in capital projects, primarily in Openreach due to the BDUK programme. BT Sport programme rights charges were £330m (2013/14: £203m), up 63% reflecting a full 12 months of sports rights charges. Property and energy costs were 1% higher while other operating costs were down 1%. Other operating costs include sales of redundant copper which generated net income of £29m, and we expect no benefit from this in 2015/16.

You can see a detailed breakdown of our operating costs in note 5 to the consolidated financial statements.

Specific items

As we have said on page 77, our commentary in this performance review focuses on the results before specific items as this is how management measures the ongoing performance of the business.

Specific items resulted in a net charge after tax of £406m (2013/14: £196m).

We recognised revenue and EBITDA of £128m being the prior year impacts of ladder pricing agreements with the UK mobile operators following the Supreme Court judgment in July 2014.

Specific items charged against operating costs include £315m (2013/14: £276m) relating to the group-wide restructuring programme that started in 2012/13. These costs primarily relate to leavers and property and network rationalisation.

Regulatory judgments on Ethernet product pricing in prior years and an assessment of certain other historical regulatory matters led to a charge of £75m in the year.

We had a property rationalisation net benefit of £22m being a profit of £67m on the disposal of a surplus building in London, Keybridge House, partly offset by a £45m increase in onerous lease provisions. We incurred costs of £36m relating to the proposed acquisition of EE. Of these, £19m have been recognised in operating costs, £10m were directly related to the share placing we made in February 2015 and so have been recognised in equity, and £7m relate to financing costs.

Net interest on pensions of £292m (2013/14: £235m) was charged as a specific item. The increase mainly reflects the

higher deficit at 31 March 2014 of £7.0bn compared to the deficit of £5.9bn at 31 March 2013.

Specific items also include a tax credit of £121m (2013/14: £111m) reflecting the tax on specific items charged within profit before tax. The prior year included a tax credit of £208m on the re-measurement of deferred tax balances from a rate of 23% to 20%. There is no credit this year as the rate of tax for 2015/16 is unchanged at 20%.

You can see details of all specific items charged to the income statement in the last three years in note 8 to the consolidated financial statements.

Profit before tax

Adjusted profit before tax was up 12% at £3,172m.

The increase in adjusted profit before tax reflects our EBITDA performance and our focus in recent years on capital expenditure efficiencies and debt reduction, which has resulted in lower depreciation and amortisation and a lower net finance expense.

Reported profit before tax (which includes specific items) was up 14% to £2,645m.

We discuss depreciation, net finance expense and tax in later sections of this performance review.

Earnings per share

Adjusted earnings per share increased 12% to 31.5p.

Adjusted earnings per share is one of our key performance indicators (see pages 80 and 81) and has increased 20% over the last two years. The graph below shows the drivers of the rise in adjusted earnings per share over this period.

Reported earnings per share, which includes specific items, was 26.5p, up 3%.

Our earnings per share in future years will be impacted by share options maturing and share awards vesting under our employee share plans. It will also be affected by the additional shares we intend to issue as part of the planned acquisition of EE. See page 217 for more details.

Find out more

Our cost
transformation
focus on page

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Annual Report 2015**Dividends**

The Board is proposing a final dividend to shareholders of 8.5p, up 13%. This brings the full year dividend to 12.4p, up 14%, and compares with an increase in the 2013/14 full year dividend of 15%.

This year's dividend is at the upper end of our outlook range, reflecting our strong financial performance this year. It will be paid, subject to shareholder approval, on 7 September 2015 to shareholders on the register on 14 August 2015.

Our policy is to pay a progressive dividend.

We have set out our dividend expectations for 2015/16 in our Outlook on page 80.

Cash flow

We generated normalised free cash flow of £2,830m, up £380m or 16%, and higher than our outlook of above £2.6bn.

Free cash flow

The increase in normalised free cash flow reflects favourable working capital movements, including the timing of BT Sport programme rights payments in the prior year, growth in EBITDA, lower ordinary pension contributions and lower tax and interest payments. These were partly offset by higher net cash capital expenditure due to the timing of grant funding cash receipts. BT Consumer delivered a particularly strong cash flow performance this year.

We secured FA Premier League football rights for a further three years and we paid a deposit of £29m. We also paid a further £240m for our existing FA Premier League football broadcast rights.

Summarised cash flow statement

Year ended 31 March	2015	2014	2013
Before specific items	£m	£m	£m

EBITDA	6,271	6,116	6,143
Capital expenditure ^a	(2,411)	(2,346)	(2,438)
Interest	(573)	(608)	(692)
Taxation ^b	(415)	(424)	(624)
Working capital movements	(220)	(380)	(81)
Other non-cash and non-current liabilities movements	178	92	(8)
Normalised free cash flow	2,830	2,450	2,300
Purchases of telecommunications licences			(202)
Cash tax benefit of pension deficit payments	106	77	560
Specific items	(154)	(356)	(366)
Reported free cash flow	2,782	2,171	2,292
Pension deficit payments	(876)	(325)	(325)
Dividends	(924)	(778)	(683)
Disposals and acquisitions	10	(22)	222
Share buyback programme	(320)	(302)	(302)
Proceeds from issue of own shares	1,201	75	109
Reduction in net debt from cash flows	1,873	819	1,313
Net debt at 1 April	(7,028)	(7,797)	(9,082)
Reduction in net debt from cash flows	1,873	819	1,313
Non-cash movements	36	(50)	(28)
Net debt at 31 March	(5,119)	(7,028)	(7,797)

^a Excluding purchases of telecommunications licences and net of government grants.

^b Excluding cash tax benefit of pension deficit payments.

The net cash cost of specific items was £154m (2013/14: £356m) mainly comprising restructuring costs of £267m (2013/14: £267m), ladder pricing receipts of £88m (2013/14: £nil), and a net property rationalisation benefit of £51m (2013/14: cost of £55m).

Last year the cash cost of specific items included payments of £19m relating to the acquisition of ESPN's UK and Ireland TV channels business and £16m relating to claims against which we have provisions.

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Reported free cash flow, which includes specific items and a £106m (2013/14: £77m) tax benefit from pension deficit payments, was £2,782m (2013/14: £2,171m).

We spent £320m (2013/14: £302m) on our share buyback programme to help counteract the dilutive effect of our all-employee share option plans maturing. Exercises of share options generated proceeds of £201m (2013/14: £75m).

You can see a reconciliation from the net cash inflow from operating activities, the most directly comparable IFRS measure, to normalised free cash flow, on page 204.

Net debt

We have reduced net debt to £5,119m, down £1,909m, reflecting £1.0bn raised from the equity placing supporting our planned acquisition of EE as well as the strong cash generation of the business.

We have achieved this while making investments for the future of our business including in research and development and sports content, supporting our pension fund and funding our share buyback programme. And we have paid progressive dividends to our shareholders.

We continue to target a BBB+/Baa1 credit rating over the medium term. We regularly review the liquidity of the group and our funding strategy takes account of medium-term requirements including the pension

deficit and share buyback. This year we have also taken into account the funding requirements for the planned acquisition of EE.

Gross debt, translated at swap rates, at 31 March 2015 was £9,074m. This comprised term debt of £8,371m, finance leases of £238m and other loans of £465m.

We issued £812m of term debt in the capital markets. The effective Sterling interest rate on this five year bond was 2.71%. This issuance was partly to refinance maturing debt and also to make sure we have liquidity to refinance term debt of £1,271m maturing in early 2015/16.

In June and July 2014 our £750m and £600m bonds matured resulting in a cash outflow of £1,151m.

We have increased the level of our investments held in liquidity funds and term deposits by £1,534m, reflecting the cash generation of the business, the issuance of term debt and the £1.0bn raised from the equity placement.

The impact of foreign exchange on net debt includes the impact of translation on finance leases, short-term borrowings, investments and cash balances. It also includes the benefit of translating our debt balances to Sterling at swap rates.

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The adjustment to net debt to remove the impact of fair value hedge accounting increased by £82m. The adjustment for the use of the effective interest method decreased by £39m. These were principally due to higher Sterling interest rates.

The table below shows the key components of our net debt and of the reduction this year of £1,909m.

£m	At 1 April 2014	Term debt issuance/ (maturities)	Other cash Fair value flowmovements	Foreign exchange	Transfer to within one year	Other	At 31 March 2015
Debt due within one year ^a	1,873	(1,151)	(39)	(15)	1,272	(40)	1,900
Debt due after one year	7,941	812		82	294	(1,272)	7,868
Impact of cross-currency swaps ^b	(24)			(333)			(357)
Removal of accrued interest and fair value adjustments ^c	(294)			(82)		39	(337)
Gross debt	9,496	(339)	(39)	(54)	10	10	9,074
Less:							
Cash equivalents	(695)		281	(20)			(434)
Current assets investments	(1,774)		(1,776)	28		(1)	(3,523)
Removal of accrued interest ^c	1					1	2
Net debt	7,028	(339)	(1,534)	(46)	10	10	5,119

^a Including accrued interest and bank overdrafts.

^b Retranslation of debt balances at swap rates where hedged by cross-currency swaps.

^c Removal of accrued interest applied to reflect the effective interest rate method and removal of fair value adjustments.

Over the last two years we have reduced net debt by £2.7bn, as shown in the graph below.

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The maturity profile of our term debt and the applicable average coupon rate is shown in the graph below.

Financing and debt maturity

The major source of our cash inflow in recent years has been the cash generated from our operations.

Together with our committed bank facilities of £1.5bn, these are expected to remain our liquidity sources for the foreseeable future. Our committed bank facilities are available until September 2019, with the option to extend the five-year term at the end of the first and second years. If agreed this provides a seven-year term, maturing in September 2021.

In February 2015 we signed a new £3.6bn facility agreement in relation to financing the proposed acquisition of EE. This facility will be available until the earlier of 31 August 2016 and the completion of the acquisition.

None of these facilities had been drawn down at 31 March 2015.

We raised term debt in the capital markets to re-finance maturing debt. Debt due within one year, at hedged rates, is £1,748m.

Net finance expense

Adjusted net finance expense of £560m decreased by £31m as we have reduced our net debt.

We have shown below an overview of our average gross debt, investments and cash balances, and net debt and the related weighted average interest rates over the past three years.

This shows an increase in the weighted average interest rate on net debt to 8.1%. This is due to the effect of carrying higher investment balances in advance of debt maturities and pension funding in 2015/16. The weighted average interest rate on gross debt was broadly unchanged at 6.0%.

You can see a reconciliation of net finance expense to net interest cash outflow in note 25 to the consolidated financial statements.

	2015	2014	2013
Year ended 31 March	£m	£m	£m
Average gross debt	9,012	9,336	10,599
Weighted average interest rate on gross debt	6.0%	6.1%	6.1%
Average investments and cash balances	2,446	1,467	1,611
Weighted average interest rate on investments	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%
Average net debt	6,566	7,869	8,988
Weighted average interest rate on net debt ^a	8.1%	7.2%	7.1%

^a Excludes interest relating to unwinding of discount on provisions and derivatives not in a designated hedge relationship.

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Taxation

Our effective corporation tax rate was 19.9% compared with 21.7% in 2013/14. This is slightly lower in both years than the UK corporation tax rate of 21% (2013/14: 23%).

Our tax contribution

We are proud to be a major contributor to the UK economy and have paid over £16bn of UK corporation tax since privatisation in 1984.

This year we paid UK corporation tax of £225m (2013/14: £299m). Our UK corporation tax liabilities for the year were reduced by tax deductions on our all-employee share option plan maturities in the summer of 2014, as well as the tax deductible pension deficit payments. Both these factors will also affect our UK corporation tax payments in 2015/16. We paid non-UK corporate income taxes of £84m (2013/14: £48m).

In addition to paying UK corporation tax, we pay other taxes, such as Employer's National Insurance and Business Rates, that represent a significant cost to our business each year. We are also a major collector of taxes, directly paying income tax and National Insurance due on our people's wages, and VAT, to the UK Exchequer. We describe the total of the taxes that are a true cost to our business and those that we collect and pay on behalf of our people and customers as our Total Tax Contribution.

This year our Total Tax Contribution for the UK was £3.0bn (2013/14: £3.0bn). The Hundred Group Total Tax Contribution Survey for 2014 ranked us as the sixth highest UK contributor. We also contributed £0.4bn (2013/14: £0.4bn) in our largest non-UK jurisdictions.

Our approach to tax

The way we approach tax is set centrally at a group level and is agreed by the Board. Our main focus is to comply with the tax laws and regulations in each of the countries in which we do business. Our group tax team supports regional management to meet local tax regulations and reviews potential tax exposures regularly. We take the benefit of widely claimed tax incentives, reliefs and exemptions in order to reduce the tax cost to our business. Transactions between group companies are paid for as if between unconnected companies, applying OECD principles.

We have an open and effective working relationship with HM Revenue & Customs and are committed to this approach with local tax authorities around the world. This includes discussing the tax impact of major business decisions with the tax authorities when they happen.

Tax expense

Our total tax expense before specific items was £631m (2013/14: £613m). This is not the same as the total corporation

tax we paid in the year because of differences between tax accounting rules and those for making corporation tax payments.

Our effective tax rate on profit before taxation and specific items is slightly lower than the UK statutory corporation tax rate. As we have shown below, this is due to the use of non-UK losses, prior year adjustments and other tax adjustments, which include tax savings from claiming incentives and reliefs. In the absence of any other factors, we would expect our effective tax rate to be around the UK corporation tax rate, as the majority of our business occurs in the UK.

Year ended 31 March	2015	2014	2013
Before specific items	£m	£m	£m
Profit before taxation	3,172	2,827	2,656
Tax at UK statutory rate of 21% (2013/14: 23%, 2012/13: 24%)	666	650	638
Non-UK losses utilised	(36)	(13)	(14)
Prior year adjustments	(35)	(17)	(57)
Non-deductible items	16	16	30
Other tax adjustments	20	(23)	
Effective tax charge	631	613	597
Effective tax rate	19.9%	21.7%	22.5%

The UK corporation tax rate has been falling annually since 1 April 2011. It changed from 23% to 21% on 1 April 2014 and from 21% to 20% on 1 April 2015. This has had a major influence on our effective tax rate in recent years.

We have shown a reconciliation of reported profit before taxation, which includes specific items, to total tax expense in note 9 to the consolidated financial statements.

Tax losses

We have £20.8bn of tax losses (2013/14: £21.3bn) that we have not given any value to on our balance sheet.

Of these, £17.1bn are capital losses arising in the UK. Of the remaining tax losses of £3.2bn, most arose in our non-UK companies in earlier financial years. We might be able to use the non-UK losses to offset tax liabilities in the future, but this will depend on us making profits in countries where we have previously made losses. We have given more details in note 9 to the consolidated financial statements.

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Capital expenditure

We are making significant investments in our strategic growth areas and to improve our customer service. By continuing to transform and drive efficiencies within our capital programmes we have been able to invest in our growth strategy without increasing our overall capital expenditure.

Our capital expenditure net of grant funding was £2,326m (2013/14: £2,346m). We have shown below how this was applied across our major capital programmes.

Our capital expenditure in recent years has focused on underpinning our growth strategy, and in particular on expanding and enhancing our next generation access network, which includes both fibre and Ethernet. Ongoing investments this year to support our strategy include:

- increasing the footprint of our fibre broadband network, including extending the reach of fibre to rural areas under the BDUK programme. We have now passed more than 22m homes and businesses representing over three-quarters of UK premises;
- continuing to build our TV capabilities, including Ultra-High Definition and TV Everywhere, as well as enhancing our content distribution network;
- developing our capabilities and propositions for Mobility and Future Voice to exploit the convergence of fixed and mobile services;
- expansion of our next generation networks, including expanding capacity on our IP Exchange platform;
- continued development of customer contract-specific infrastructure for our global clients; and
- improving customer experience by developing new systems and replacing elements of our network to reduce faults and speed up repair times.

We recognised grant funding of £392m (2013/14: £126m), mainly relating to our capital activity on the BDUK programme.

Of our total capital expenditure, £231m (2013/14: £239m) arose outside the UK. Capital expenditure contracted but not yet incurred was £507m at 31 March 2015 (2013/14: £400m).

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation and amortisation reduced 6% to £2,538m, due to lower capital expenditure in recent years as we have become more efficient in delivering our capital investment programmes. Our software development costs have reduced historically, and some of our previous network investments became fully depreciated in 2013/14, both of which added to the overall reduction in depreciation and amortisation.

Balance sheet

Summarised balance sheet

Our balance sheet reflects our significant investment in the network infrastructure assets that are the foundation of our business, as well as the working capital with which we manage our business day by day. It also reflects the longer-term funding strategy with which we finance our investments, and our obligation to the pension fund.

	2015	2014	Movement
At 31 March	£m	£m	£m
Property, plant & equipment, software and telecoms licences	15,216	15,525	(309)
Goodwill & other acquisition related intangible assets	1,459	1,402	57
Other non-current & current assets	1,754	1,000	754
Trade & other receivables	3,324	3,121	203
Investments, cash & cash equivalents	3,957	2,469	1,488
Total assets^a	25,710	23,517	2,193
Loans & other borrowings	(9,768)	(9,814)	46
Trade & other payables	(5,276)	(5,261)	(15)
Other current & non-current liabilities	(2,244)	(2,031)	(213)
Provisions	(564)	(533)	(31)
Deferred tax liability	(948)	(829)	(119)
Pensions, net of deferred tax	(6,102)	(5,641)	(461)
Total liabilities	(24,902)	(24,109)	(793)
Total equity (deficit)	808	(592)	1,400

^a Excluding deferred tax asset relating to the BT Pension Scheme.

Our core network infrastructure is included within property, plant and equipment, software and telecommunications licences. This is the backbone of the UK telecoms industry and a significant core asset for our business. These assets were held at a net book value of £15.2bn at 31 March 2015. The net reduction of £309m in the year primarily reflects the related depreciation and amortisation charge of £2,538m exceeding capital expenditure of £2,326m.

Goodwill and other acquisition-related intangible assets increased by £57m, primarily reflecting the impact of foreign exchange translation of overseas non-current assets. We review the recoverable amounts of goodwill annually across BT Global Services, BT Business and BT Consumer, the three cash generating units which hold goodwill, and are satisfied that these support its carrying value (see note 12).

Other non-current and current assets and liabilities relate primarily to our financial instruments, which we have described in note 26 to the consolidated financial statements.

Trade and other receivables increased by £203m to £3,324m while trade and other payables of £5,276m were £15m higher, contributing to the working capital outflow in the year. For more details, see our cash flow section on page 84.

Investments, cash and cash equivalents, loans and other borrowings are reconciled to net debt of £5,119m in note 24 to the consolidated financial statements. We have discussed net debt on page 85.

Provisions increased by £31m to £564m. We have a significant property portfolio which includes both office buildings and former telephone exchanges (see page 33). Onerous lease provisions amounted to £217m.

We have shown deferred tax movements in note 9 to the consolidated financial statements. Pensions, net of deferred tax, increased by £0.5bn to £6.1bn and are discussed below.

In February 2015, the company issued 222m ordinary shares for £1.0bn in contemplation of our proposed acquisition of EE. This is reflected in the improvement in equity of the group at 31 March 2015 compared with the prior year.

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Pensions

Overview

We provide a number of retirement plans for our employees. The largest of these plans is the BT Pension Scheme (BTPS), a defined benefit plan in the UK. Although closed to new members, the BTPS still has around 38,000 active members, 196,000 pensioners and 72,500 deferred members. The BT Retirement Saving Scheme (BTRSS) is the current arrangement for UK employees who joined the group after 1 April 2001. It has around 29,000 active members.

The BTPS and BTRSS are not controlled by the Board. The BTPS is managed by a separate and independent Trustee. Details of the governance of the BTPS, its financial position, the performance of its investments and a summary of member benefits are available in the BTPS Annual Report published by the Trustee in December 2014, on the BTPS Trustee website (www.btpensions.net).

The BTRSS is a contract-based, defined contribution arrangement provided by Standard Life under which members choose their own investments and receive benefits at retirement that are linked to the performance of those investments.

We maintain retirement arrangements in most other countries with a focus on these being appropriate for the local market and culture.

We have given more information on our pension arrangements and on the funding and accounting valuations in note 19 to the consolidated financial statements.

BTPS funding valuation and future funding obligations

The funding of our main defined benefit pension plan, the BTPS, is subject to legal agreement between BT and the Trustee of the BTPS and is determined at the conclusion of each triennial valuation. The most recent triennial funding valuation at 30 June 2014 and the associated deficit contribution plan was agreed with the Trustee and certified by the Scheme Actuary in January 2015.

At 30 June 2014, the market value of assets was £40.2bn and the funding deficit was £7.0bn. There are a wide range of assumptions that could be adopted for measuring pension liabilities and legislation requires that this deficit is based on a prudent view – for example, assuming a lower future investment return than might be expected in practice.

A 16-year deficit contribution plan was agreed reflecting BT's long-term and sustainable cash flow generation. Under this plan, we made deficit payments of £875m in March 2015 and £625m in April 2015. Further payments of £250m will be made in each of 2015/16 and 2016/17, bringing the total for the three years to 31 March 2017 to £2.0bn.

Accounting position under IAS 19

The accounting deficit, net of tax, has increased in the year from £5.6bn to £6.1bn. The movements in the deficit are shown below.

Actuarial gains on plan assets for 2014/15 reflect actual investment returns in the BTPS over the year of around 12% which were above the IAS 19 discount rate of 4.25%.

A fall in the real discount rate for the BTPS, from 0.97% to 0.39%, led to an increase in the liabilities which is shown as an actuarial loss on liabilities. This was partially offset by a fall in liabilities reflecting scheme and membership experience over the year following the use of updated membership data.

Find out more

The BT Pension Scheme at

www.btpensions.net

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Annual Report 2015**Contractual obligations and commitments**

We have set out below our principal contractual financial obligations and commitments at 31 March 2015. You can see further details on these items in notes 19, 24 and 29 to the consolidated financial statements; note 29 includes details relating to our financial commitments and contingent liabilities.

	Total £m	Less than 1 year £m	Payments due by period		More than 5 years £m
			Between 1 and 3 years £m	Between 3 and 5 years £m	
Loans and other borrowings ^a	9,387	1,886 ^b	2,660	1,560	3,281
Finance lease obligations	238	14	23	22	179
Operating lease obligations	6,524	427	793	742	4,562
Capital commitments	507	496	4	4	3
Programme rights commitments	2,512	644	1,432	396	40
Pension deficit obligations	8,721	875 ^c	938	1,410	5,498
Total	27,889	4,342	5,850	4,134	13,563

^a Excludes fair value adjustments for hedged risks.

^b Includes £194m of accrued interest due within less than one year.

^c £625m of the £875m was paid in April 2015.

At 31 March 2015 our cash, cash equivalents and current asset investments were £3,957m. We have an unused committed borrowing facility of £1.5bn and an unused £3.6bn committed acquisition facility which can be accessed to fund our planned acquisition of EE.

These resources and our future cash generation are expected to allow us to settle our obligations as they fall due.

Delivering societal and environmental benefits

We want to move beyond just being a sustainable and responsible business leader to completely integrating our purpose into all that we say, do and deliver. This should not only improve our business performance, but make us more healthy and resilient overall.

Our goal is sustainable profitable revenue growth; and we are able to demonstrate tangible progress in benefitting society and our own business. We have set out below some innovations and new developments from this year, which show that sustainability and revenue generation can be mutually reinforcing.

Societal benefit

Connecting Africa project provided satellite broadband to up to 73,000 people

30,000 people trained through Get IT Together over 25% expected to experience a reduction in social isolation as a result

7.1Mt of customer CO₂ emissions abated, 11% more than last year, increased influence on climate policy

Business benefit

Connecting Africa project has paved the way for the launch of additional commercial VSAT offerings in South Africa

24% of people go on to buy broadband. Regional digital skills projects reinforce local government relationships

£3.4bn of revenues contributing to carbon abatement. Over £36m of cost savings from energy reduction (£168m over the past six years)

Many of our social and environmental programmes are underpinned by our proactive approach to volunteering. We have given an update on our progress on page 32.

Supporting charities and communities

We continue to make an additional investment in society each year. In 2014/15, this totalled £32.5m. This was made up of a mixture of cash, time volunteered and in-kind contributions; equating to 1.15% of our previous year's adjusted profit before tax. This brings our total investment to around £197.5m over the past seven years (an average of 1.2% of adjusted profit before tax each year).

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This year we helped generate £83.7m towards good causes, meaning we have achieved £231.4m cumulatively towards our target of £1bn by 2020. We continue to build on our long-term partnerships with our strategic charity partners. We have supported Comic Relief since its launch 30 years ago. On the appeal night this year, all 230,000 telethon calls were handled over our network, peaking at 84 calls per second. Our MyDonate platform handled over £7.4m of donations. Red Nose Day 2015 had a very high level of employee engagement from across the business, with over 3,300 volunteers participating in a variety of fundraising activities – equivalent to £1.4m of benefit-in-kind.

Developing a culture of tech literacy

We are helping to fund the Barefoot Computing project to help primary school teachers get to grips with the new schools computing curriculum. BT volunteers are delivering teacher training workshops at scale. Since March 2014, the project has provided computer science resources and training to over 5,500 primary school teachers. This enables teachers with little previous computer science knowledge to integrate algorithms, abstraction and data structures into their lessons with children from the age of five. From the 2015 academic year, we will develop a more comprehensive schools programme across the UK, to help support our ambition to help 5m children by 2020.

Creating a connected society

We are building on our existing ambition to deliver access to fibre-based products and services to nine out of ten people in the UK. Our new 2020 ambition is Helping 10m people overcome social disadvantage through the benefits our products and services can bring. This is a clear opportunity to show how our products and services can deliver social benefit and make a real difference to people all over the world. We can show how communications technology and the services we deliver can positively address key social issues such as poverty, social mobility, an ageing population and disability.

This year we published the Social Return on Investment analysis of our UK digital inclusion. This is helping private, public and voluntary sector organisations to measure the impact of being online. We have focused on material outcomes to individuals, BT and the UK economy. For the first time this has enabled us to measure the social impact of our digital skills programmes and feed this insight back into the product development cycle. Using this methodology, we have calculated that the benefit of getting online is worth £1,064 per person, per year rising to £3,568 for an advanced user.

Delivering environmental benefits

This year we helped our customers reduce their carbon emissions by 1.5 times the end-to-end carbon impact of our business, from 7.1Mt to 4.6Mt. This was an improvement on last year of 1.3:1, but we still have some way to go to achieve our 2020 goal of a 3:1 ratio. We are continuing to develop new products and solutions that can help our suppliers and customers reduce their carbon emissions. This year we generated revenues of £3.4bn globally from these products.

We are using our research capabilities to explore ways to improve the sustainability credentials of our products and services, as we have done with our latest Home Hub 5. Our research includes investigating how our products can reduce carbon impact through improved energy efficiency or the use of more sustainable materials. We also aim to extend the life of our products by refurbishment and reuse. We proactively apply design specifications to our new products and services to help us identify improvement opportunities, such as removing the installation CDs from our new hub.

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Update on how we are delivering our purpose 2014/15

We continue to demonstrate our leadership in delivering societal and environmental benefits and we have evolved our existing 2020 ambitions to give focus to two other key areas: Tech Literacy and the Social Impact of our products and services. Out of our seven foundation performance indicators below, we have made progress against five, but failed to meet two, our sickness absence rate and our ethical trading.

	Our 2020 ambitions	2013/14 performance	2014/15 performance	Status	Target for 2015/16	Page
Supporting charities and communities	Use our skills and technology to help generate more than £1bn for good causes	£87m raised for good causes Cumulative total since 2012: £148m	£84m raised for good causes Cumulative total since 2012: £232m		Continue to improve upon total of £232m	
	Inspire two-thirds of our people to volunteer by 2020 ^a	16% of BT people volunteering	26% of BT people volunteering		Improve upon 26% of BT people volunteering	
Creating a connected society	More than 9 out of 10 people in the UK will have access to fibre-based products and services	6 out of 10 people can access fibre-based products and services	7.5 out of 10 people can access fibre-based products and services		Continue to improve against 2014/15 performance	
	Helping 10m people overcome social	n/a new target	n/a new target		Start to deliver against 2020 target of 10m people	

disadvantage through the benefits our products and services can bring^a

Building a culture of Tech Literacy	Help 5m children receive better teaching in tech skills ^a	n/a	new target	n/a	new target	Start to deliver against 2020 target of 5m children
Delivering environmental benefits	Help our customers reduce carbon emissions by at least 3 times the end-to-end carbon impact of our business	1.3:1	achieved	1.5:1	achieved	Improve upon 1.5:1

Our foundations for being a sustainable and responsible business

	Our foundations	2013/14 performance	2014/15 performance	Status	Target for 2015/16	Page
Our investment	Investment in responsible and sustainable business practices; to be more than 1% of adjusted profit before tax (PBT)	1.01% of PBT invested	1.15% of PBT invested		Maintain 1% of PBT invested	
Our customers	Customer service: a measure across our entire customer base. Target is to consistently improve RFT	1.5% improvement	4.7% improvement		Continue to improve RFT from 2014/15 level	
Our employees	Employee engagement index: a measure of our relationship with our employees	3.82/5 achieved	3.82/5 achieved		Maintain or improve from 2014/15 performance	

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	Sickness absence rate: % of calendar days lost to sickness absence	2.10% calendar days lost in sickness	2.23% calendar days lost in sickness	Maintain or improve from 2014/15 performance
	Ethical performance a measure of our employees awareness and training	4.29/5 achieved	4.33/5 achieved	Maintain or improve from 2014/15 performance
Our suppliers	Ethical trading: a measure of our supply chain review; with specific focus on Human Rights	97% follow-up within three months	96% follow-up within three months	100% follow-up within three months, for all those suppliers identified as high/ medium risk
Our environmental impact	CO₂e emissions: a measure of our climate change impact	79% reduction in net CO ₂ e emission intensity against 1996/97 levels	79% reduction in net CO ₂ e emission intensity against 1996/97 levels	Continue to deliver against 80% target by December 2020

^aNew 2020 ambition

Target met	Target failed	Ongoing	To find out more about our 2020 ambitions, our methodologies and how our results are calculated, take a look at www.bt.com/deliveringourpurpose
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Governance

In this section we give details of our governance structure. We explain who sits on the Board, how it operates and the areas it focused on during the year. We also report on the work of our Board committees.

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Our directors

Our directors' skills and experience together with their diverse backgrounds enable the Board to challenge management constructively and further develop our strategy.

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Our committees

The Board has delegated certain responsibilities and authorities to its committees.

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Our governance framework

Our governance and internal control framework supports the Board's ability to exercise proper oversight.

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Corporate governance statement

We are committed to operating in accordance with best practice in business integrity and ethics and maintaining the highest standards of financial reporting and corporate governance. The directors consider that BT has applied the main principles of the UK Corporate Governance Code (the Code) as described on pages 93 to 136 of this Report of the Directors. The directors also consider that BT has complied with the Code provisions as currently in effect throughout the year, other than for five weeks (23 March – 30 April 2014) when the *Remuneration Committee* comprised two (not three) members (Code provision D.2.1). Please see page 121 for further details of the *Remuneration Committee* membership.

You can read about our position on external audit tender on page 103.

The directors submit their report and the audited financial statements of the company, BT Group plc, and the

group, which includes its subsidiary undertakings, for 2014/15. BT Group plc is the listed holding company for the BT group of companies. Its shares are listed on the London Stock Exchange, and on the New York Stock Exchange in the form of American Depositary Shares.

The Code and associated guidance are available on the Financial Reporting Council website at www.frc.org.uk

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Chairman's governance report

BT has made some key investment decisions this year and I would like to thank all the Board for the role they have played in shaping our strategy.

Firstly, I am delighted to welcome Isabel Hudson who joined the Board on 1 November 2014. Isabel's insight and experience in the regulatory, pensions and financial industries will be a strong asset for BT and the Board. I led the recruitment process with the full support of the *Nominating & Governance Committee* as we explain in more detail on page 105. Isabel will become chair of the *Equality of Access Board* and the *BT Pensions Committee* from 1 February 2016 as Phil Hodgkinson steps down after ten years on the Board at the end of January. As I mentioned last year, Iain Conn, chief executive of Centrica, joined the Board on 1 June 2014.

We announced in April that Warren East will be stepping down from the Board on 31 May 2015 in light of his appointment as chief executive of Rolls-Royce with effect from 2 July 2015. Warren has made an immense contribution during his time at BT and I congratulate him on this important appointment.

I continually review the membership of the Board, and the range of skills it has. We look to appoint outstanding candidates with a diverse mix of experience, as we recognise the importance of diversity in its widest sense in Board effectiveness. Currently we have 27% female representation on the Board.

We are delighted that Alison Wilcox will join the company in July 2015 as our new Group HR Director and a member of the *Operating Committee*. Alison brings a wealth of international senior management experience. She replaces Clare Chapman who has helped us transform our culture and modernise our HR service. I would like to thank Clare and wish her continuing success in the future.

This has been a very full year for BT with a number of major developments and decisions. It has therefore been a very busy year for Board members who have made themselves available to support and engage with the management team, as and when needed. The Board has played an active role in the year's major decisions, particularly in relation to the acquisition of FA Premier League rights and the proposed acquisition of EE; a significant transaction in strategic and

scale terms, and which we have progressed at pace.

As well as our forward programme of key items, and updates from each line of business CEO, this year we had in-depth discussions on our mobility and TV content strategy, Customer First Programme and the pension scheme. You can read more about what we have done on pages 98 to 100.

We engaged Lintstock to undertake our triennial external Board evaluation to assess our effectiveness as a Board. The composition of the Board was rated highly and Lintstock commented that overall the knowledge of Board members was seen to be well drawn upon for the benefit of the company. We discussed the report in May 2014 and agreed some areas of improvement. We set out the progress we have made on a number of these areas on page 100. Our focus this year has included: analysis of competitor activity; further discussion on succession planning; continued insight into customer service including a visit to Openreach to see our service operations in action; and a visit to BT's business in Italy.

We keep our governance framework under review to ensure it enhances the Board's ability to exercise proper oversight. We have implemented some changes which include: establishing a new *Technology Committee* of the Board and, with effect from 1 April 2015, transferring oversight of certain non-financial risks, including our compliance programmes, from the *Nominating & Governance Committee* to the *Audit & Risk Committee*. You can read more about these changes on page 108.

The Financial Reporting Council updated the UK Corporate Governance Code in September 2014, with the changes effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 October 2014. We have taken these changes into account and will be reviewing our processes with a view to complying with, and reporting against, these new requirements in 2016.

We also engage in relevant consultations as they take place as part of the wider governance debate.

I would like to thank all members of the Board for their support this year and I believe the Board has the right mix of skills and experience to continue to deliver and further develop our strategy.

Sir Michael Rake

Chairman

6 May 2015

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Our governance structure

Find out more

You can view a formal statement of the Board's role at www.bt.com/board

You can view the committees terms of reference at www.bt.com/committees

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Board of Directors

Chairman

Appointed to the Board as Chairman in September 2007. A British national, age 67.

Skills and experience

Sir Michael has financial, risk, and international business and professional services expertise gained during his time at KPMG from 1974 to 2007 where he was senior partner in the UK from 1998 and international chairman from 2002. He was knighted in 2007.

Other appointments include

Deputy chairman of Barclays, chairman of Majid Al Futtaim Holdings and a director of McGraw Hill. He is also President of the Confederation of British Industry.

Chief Executive

Appointed as Chief Executive in September 2013 and on the Board since June 2008. A British national, age 47.

Skills and experience

Gavin has experience in sales, marketing and operations. He was previously CEO, BT Retail and from 2004 to 2008 was Managing Director, BT Consumer, BT Retail. Before joining BT, Gavin was managing director of the consumer

division of Telewest (now Virgin Media). Prior to that, he spent nine years at Procter & Gamble, rising to become European marketing director.

Other appointments include

Non-executive director of British Airways.

Dan Fitz

Company Secretary

Dan is the Group General Counsel & Company Secretary of BT Group plc. He joined BT in April 2010 as its Group General Counsel and was appointed Company Secretary in November 2012. Dan previously spent six years at Misys and 12 years at Cable & Wireless. A British and US dual national, age 55.

Group Finance Director

Appointed to the Board as Group Finance Director in December 2008. A British national, age 61.

Skills and experience

Tony has experience in finance, risk and the management and delivery of large contracts. He was formerly CFO, BT Retail, and Managing Director, BT Enterprises and, from 1997 to 2004, he was CFO and then Chief Operating Officer of BT Global Solutions. He qualified as a Chartered Management Accountant.

Other appointments

Race for Opportunity advisory board member.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in July 2009. A British national, age 59.

Skills and experience

Tony brings international business expertise in addition to financial, operational, sales and marketing experience. From 1999 to 2003 Tony was chief executive of BSkyB and then chairman of Germany's largest cable operator, Kabel Deutschland GmbH until 2013. He has held a number of senior executive positions in broadcasting and telecoms businesses in the UK, US and Continental Europe.

Other appointments include

Senior adviser to Providence Equity Partners, chairman of the advisory council of Portland PR and a director of PureGym.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in June 2014. A British national, age 52.

Skills and experience

Iain has significant international experience, and understanding of technology and energy markets. Iain joined Centrica as chief executive in January 2015 having been with BP since 1986, where he held a number of executive positions in the BP group worldwide. From 2004 to 2014 Iain was executive director of BP and chief executive downstream from 2007 to 2014. Until May 2014, Iain was a non-executive director of Rolls-Royce for nine years, and senior independent director.

Other appointments include

Member of the Presidents Committee, CBI, chairman of the advisory board of the Imperial College Business School and member of the Imperial College Council.

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Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in February 2014. A British national, age 53.

Skills and experience

Warren has experience in technology and engineering. From 2001 to 2013, Warren was chief executive of ARM Holdings having joined the company in 1994 as a general manager. Prior to that, he spent 11 years at Texas Instruments in a variety of roles.

Other appointments include

Senior independent director and audit committee chairman of De La Rue. Non-executive director of Rolls-Royce, Dyson and Micron Technology, director of digital catapult and chair of ESCO, the sector council for electronic systems for BIS.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in February 2006. A British national, age 57.

Skills and experience

Phil has experience in the financial sector as well as risk, control, governance and sustainable business. Phil's previous roles include senior independent director at Resolution, non-executive director of HMRC and Travelex, group finance director of HBOS, chairman of Insight Investment and Clerical Medical and chief executive of Zurich Financial Services UK Life.

Other appointments include

Non-executive director of Business in the Community. Chair of Action Medial Research and trustee of BBC Children in Need. Chair of the Community Mark Independent Approvals Panel and an adviser to the finance and fundraising committee of Christian Aid.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in November 2014. A British national, age 55.

Skills and experience

Isabel has experience in the financial sector as well as pensions, risk, control, governance and international business. Isabel was previously a non-executive director of The Pensions Regulator, MGM Advantage QBE Insurance and an executive director of Prudential Assurance Company in the UK.

Other appointments include

Chair of National House Building Council. Director Phoenix Group Holdings and Standard Life. Isabel is an ambassador for the disability charity, SCOPE.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in November 2011. A US national, age 52.

Skills and experience

With a 30-year career in the technology and software industry, Karen brings experience in technology to the Board having held a number of senior operating roles in both the public and private technology sector. She is a former adviser to Silver Lake Partners, was with the NASDAQ-listed software company Epiphany Inc, latterly as chief executive and has served on a number of corporate boards including VirtuOz, Proofpoint and Hi5 Networks.

Other appointments include

Director of Exponent, AYASDI and the San Francisco Opera. An advisory board member of Stanford University Technology Venture Program and Khosla Ventures.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in January 2011. Nick became Senior Independent Director in March 2014. A British national, age 57.

Skills and experience

Nick brings experience in finance, risk, control, governance and international business expertise. He was chief financial officer of Diageo prior to his retirement in December 2010, having joined the board in 1999.

Other appointments include

Chairman of Williams Grand Prix Holdings, senior independent director of BAE Systems and non-executive chairman of Loch Lomond Scotch Whisky. Adviser to CCMP Capital.

Non-executive director

Appointed to the Board in January 2011. A British and Swiss dual national, age 51.

Skills and experience

Jasmine has experience in UK and international businesses, corporate social responsibility and sustainable business with particular expertise in building high-performing teams. She has a background in technology marketing and is currently chief executive of Save the Children International.

Other appointments include

Non-executive director of Standard Chartered.

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The Board

Who we are

You can read about the Board directors and the skills and experience they each bring to the Board on pages 96 and 97.

The Board consists of: the Chairman, the Chief Executive, the Group Finance Director and eight non-executive directors, including the Senior Independent Director. It is supported by the Company Secretary.

The roles of the Chairman and the Chief Executive are separate. They are set out in written job descriptions which provide clear distinct responsibilities for each role.

As mentioned in the Annual Report & Form 20-F 2014, Iain Conn joined the Board on 1 June 2014. We also appointed Iain as a member of the *Audit & Risk Committee* and of the *Nominating & Governance Committee*.

And on 3 September 2014, we announced Isabel Hudson's appointment as a non-executive director and a member of the *BT Pension Committee* with effect from 1 November 2014.

Following the *Nominating & Governance Committee's* recommendation, we approved the extension of the appointment of Karen Richardson on the expiry of her first three-year term. Phil Hodgkinson completed nine years service in January 2015 and, in accordance with the Code, the Board assessed whether Phil is independent of management and any business or other relationship that could materially interfere with the exercise of objective or independent judgement or his ability to act in the group's best interests. The Board considered the recommendations of the *Nominating & Governance Committee* and concluded that Phil remains a valuable and effective independent non-executive director who demonstrates the highest commitment to the role. We extended Phil's appointment for a further year, and announced on 1 April 2015 that he will step down from the Board in January 2016.

The Board included a majority of independent non-executive directors throughout the year. We viewed the Chairman as independent at the time of his appointment, and consider all of the other non-executive directors to be independent under the terms of the Code.

You can read about the roles of the Board members and the Company Secretary below.

The Chairman

The Chairman's role is to:

lead the Board with a culture of openness, debate and appropriate challenge;
promote the highest standards of corporate governance;
ensure that the Board determines the nature and extent of the significant risks BT is willing to take in implementing its strategy;
make sure that the Board receives accurate, timely and clear information and is consulted on all matters important to it;
monitor the contributions and performance of the Board members;
make sure that BT maintains effective communication with shareholders and communicate their views and concerns to the Board; and
be a key contact for important stakeholders and, together with the Chief Executive and Senior Independent Director, represent BT in key strategic and government relationships.

The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive's role is to:

lead the group's performance and management;
propose strategies, business plans and policies to the Board;
implement Board decisions, policies and strategy;
develop and promote compliance with BT's policies on conducting business globally;
maintain an effective framework of internal controls and risk management;
lead the *Operating Committee* in the day-to-day running of the business end to end; and
lead, motivate and monitor the performance of BT's senior management team, and focus on succession planning for roles on the *Operating Committee*.

The Non-Executive Directors

A non-executive director's role is to:

bring experience and independent judgement to the Board; and
challenge constructively and help develop proposals on strategy.

The Senior Independent Director

The Senior Independent Director is an independent non-executive director whose role is to:

meet with BT's major institutional shareholders and shareholder representative bodies when requested and, if necessary, to discuss matters with them where it would be inappropriate for those discussions to be with either the Chairman or the Chief Executive;
act as a sounding board for the Chairman and as an intermediary between the other directors and the Chairman when necessary; and
review the Chairman's performance during the year taking account of feedback from other Board members.

The Company Secretary

The Company Secretary's role is to:

manage the provision of timely, accurate and considered information to the Board;
recommend corporate governance policies and practices to the Chairman and the Chief Executive;
implement and communicate corporate governance policies across the group; and
advise the Board and its committees on corporate governance and compliance in the group, and appropriate procedures for managing their meetings and duties.

The Company Secretary's appointment and removal is a matter for the whole Board.

What we have done

The Board is responsible for the group's strategy and for overseeing the group's performance, but delegates day-to-day responsibility to executive management. But there are a number of matters reserved to the Board. These include matters relating to the group's strategy, approving major acquisitions (for example, this year the proposed acquisition of EE), oversight and control, growing shareholder value and corporate governance.

The chart below shows how the Board allocated its time. A number of these areas are also considered by the Board committees.

The Board has a forward programme of business (see page 99) to ensure that it allocates sufficient time to key areas and that the programme is flexible enough for items to be added to any particular agenda as necessary.

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The Board's annual programme includes:

Chief Executive's reports	Succession planning
Financial reports	Board evaluation
Strategy	Security updates
Line of business updates	Governance and compliance
Risk management	Approach to tax
Dividend policy	Annual Report & Form 20-F
Investor relations	Group communications overview
Health, safety and well-being	Customer service

During 2014/15, we also had in-depth discussions on external technology and market trends, UK mobile market and mobility, BT TV and BT Sport, the pension scheme and human rights.

We visited our Italy business, and while there we reviewed operational matters with senior managers, met with employees as well as customers, government officials and opinion leaders. We also visited Openreach to see customer service in action and spent time on site visits with our engineers.

Mobility Strategy

The Board has particularly focused on BT's mobility strategy and the proposed acquisition of EE playing an active role in reviewing the synergies of the acquisition and the financial elements underpinning the deal.

In order to improve the Board's oversight of technological developments (both in BT and across the wider industry) and how the group manages technology strategy and risk, we created a new *Technology Committee* in November 2014 following the *Nominating & Governance Committee's* recommendation.

Technology Committee

The *Technology Committee* is primarily responsible for:

agreeing the development and implementation of BT's major technology innovation strategies to provide assurance regarding ongoing business growth; and
overseeing risk management in relation to BT's major operations and technologies.

The Chief Executive chairs the committee and Tony Ball, Warren East, Karen Richardson and Clive Selley (CEO, BT Technology, Service & Operations and Group CIO) are members. As we announced on 22 April, Warren East will step down from the Board on 31 May 2015.

The committee met for the first time in January 2015, when it discussed NGA, competitive landscape and technology options. The committee will meet at least three times a year.

We considered our Board committee structure and agreed that, with effect from 1 April 2015, the oversight of certain non-financial risks would move from the *Nominating & Governance Committee* to the *Audit & Risk Committee*. We also considered and approved changes to the Board's and some committees' terms of reference.

Director election and re-election

We appointed Isabel Hudson as a director after the last AGM, so Isabel will retire at the 2015 AGM and be proposed for election as required by BT's Articles of Association. All of the other directors (apart from Warren East) will be proposed for re-election by shareholders at the AGM in accordance with the Code.

We include details of all directors' contracts/letters of appointment in the **Report on Directors' Remuneration**.

Attendance at Board meetings

The following table shows each director's attendance at meetings of the Board during the financial year. The Chairman meets privately with the non-executive directors before each scheduled Board meeting. We encourage directors who are unable to attend a meeting to give the Chairman their views and comments on matters to be discussed, in advance.

Board members

Member	Meetings	
	Eligible to attend	Attended
Sir Michael Rake (Chairman)	10	10

Gavin Patterson	10	10
Tony Chanmugam	10	10
Tony Ball	10	10
Iain Conn ^a	8	8
Warren East	10	10
Phil Hodgkinson	10	10
Isabel Hudson ^b	4	4
Karen Richardson	10	10
Nick Rose	10	10
Jasmine Whitbread	10	10

^a Iain Conn joined the Board on 1 June 2014.

^b Isabel Hudson joined the Board on 1 November 2014.

The Chairman keeps under review the level of attendance and contribution by directors at Board meetings, as well as their performance. During the year, he met with each director individually to review their performance and considers that each of them continues to make an effective contribution to the Board debate across a wide range of issues and demonstrates commitment to the role.

Find out more

You can see our
Board
members on page

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Board induction

On appointment, directors take part in an induction programme to increase their knowledge and understanding of the business. They receive information about BT including financial data and the key policies supporting BT's business practices. We also give new directors details on: the role of the Board, its terms of reference, membership of the main Board committees and the matters reserved for decision by the Board, the Board committees or BT's most senior executives. Below is a summary of what Isabel Hudson's induction programme involved.

Induction for Isabel Hudson

Isabel's comprehensive induction programme has included:

- meeting the Chief Executive and each line of business CEO to gain a good understanding of the business and challenges;
- briefings with the Group Finance Director, Company Secretary and other senior executives across a range of functions, such as finance, pensions, governance, investor and media relations and group strategy;
- a visit to BT's Newcastle and Openreach contact centres to see customer service operations first-hand; and
- briefings on BT policies on anti-corruption and bribery, gifts and hospitality, charitable donations, corporate sponsorship and The Way We Work.

Isabel will continue to have opportunities to gain a greater understanding of BT's business including visiting BT's research laboratories at Adastral Park, Ipswich.

The induction programme put together by BT has been very thorough, with plenty of opportunity to ask questions, and has been the basis of an excellent introduction to the group. BT has a very open approach to non-executive directors and there is plenty of opportunity to gain greater insight into areas of particular interest. Isabel Hudson.

Training and information

We encourage all directors to update their skills and knowledge and the Board and individual directors receive ongoing training as required. The Chairman also reviews with each director any training or development they need to help them in performing their role. And directors receive briefings to enhance their awareness of the different aspects of the business. The Chief Executive regularly provides information on the business in his report to the Board which can include: updates on operational matters, the competitive and regulatory environment and other changes affecting the group and the wider communications industry, group and line of business performance, strategy, investor relations

and corporate responsibility. The Chairman also provides a weekly written update to the non-executive directors on key business activities, high level meetings, regulation and relevant sector highlights.

The Company Secretary provides briefings during the year on any significant developments in legal, governance and compliance areas. We also hold Board seminars during the year covering accounting, governance and compliance and reporting developments.

Board evaluation

Following a tender exercise we appointed Lintstock, an independent external organisation, to conduct the Board evaluation for 2014/15. Lintstock also supplies BT with a database application which BT uses to meet the insider list requirements under the Disclosure and Transparency Rules.

After interviewing each of the directors, seeking their views on how the Board and its committees work, Lintstock produced a report which we discussed at the Board meeting in May 2014. We agreed actions and enhancements based on the information Lintstock provided and the conclusions we derived from it.

The table below shows progress against the main actions:

Areas of focus

Actions

Competitor awareness

Competitor analyses

Addressed through independent external presentations to the Board.

Succession planning and exposure to management priorities to include:

More discussion of succession for the positions of Chief Executive, Group Finance Director and potential future other executive directors as well as OC members and other key roles

Discussions at the *Nominating & Governance Committee*, taking account of thoughts and views from the Chief Executive.

Succession planning for the Chairman and non-executive directors

The *Nominating & Governance Committee* regularly reviews succession planning and the composition of the Board. We have strengthened the Board during the year with the appointment of Isabel Hudson.

The Board to identify collectively the individuals over whom it would like to maintain an oversight

Non-executive directors have attended the Chairman's talent meetings which include a wide breadth of people from across the business. There is now a smaller pool of invitees to the Talent Breakfasts to allow the non-executive directors to get better acquainted with potential successors to OC and other key posts.

Customer service

Focus on customer service

The Board continued to focus on customer service throughout the year both in and outside of the Board meetings.

Site visits

Consider further site visits

The Board visited BT's operations in Italy and the Openreach customer contact team. Isabel Hudson and Warren East have both spent time at BT's Newcastle contact centre.

Improving strategic planning and challenge

Maintaining careful governance including at Board level on future investments

The Board spent considerable time reviewing BT's investment in the FA Premier League rights auction and BT Sport.

Nick Rose, as the Senior Independent Director, reviewed and discussed the Chairman's performance during the year, taking into account feedback from the other Board members, including from the external evaluation exercise conducted by Lintstock, which included a separate questionnaire on the role of the Chairman.

We have begun the Board's evaluation for 2015/16. This is being conducted internally by electronic questionnaires. You will find further details on this evaluation process on page 107.

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Reports of the Board committees

Audit & Risk Committee Chairman's report

This year the committee has paid particular attention to two aspects of our IT environment, namely data security and cyber security. We reviewed in considerable depth the actions being taken to protect our data and our customers' data. We have also discussed in detail the resources and capabilities that we are applying to protect our infrastructure from outside threats. Many of these capabilities can in turn be offered to our customers to help them protect their networks and infrastructure. This will be an area of continuing focus.

Who we are

I chair the *Audit & Risk Committee*. Our membership and meeting attendance during the year are set out opposite. The diverse backgrounds of the committee members and their combined skills and experience enable us to fulfil the committee's remit, as set out in its terms of reference.

We regularly meet with external experts to keep ourselves fully aware of market best practices.

Although not members of the committee, the Company Secretary, Group Finance Director, Deputy Finance Director, Director Group Financial Control and Director Internal Audit attend each meeting, as does the lead audit partner and representatives from our external auditors. I meet with this group ahead of the meetings to review key areas for discussion with the committee. The external auditors are not present when we discuss their performance and/or remuneration.

We are keen to interact with senior managers below executive level and representatives from finance and internal audit attend meetings at our invitation.

The Board has agreed that I have recent and relevant financial experience as required by the provisions of the Code and that I constitute an audit committee financial expert for the purposes of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

After each meeting, I report to the Board on the main issues that we discussed.

Committee members

Member	Meetings	
	Eligible to attend ^a	Attended
Nick Rose (chairman)	8	8
Iain Conn ^b	6	6
Warren East ^c	6	6
Karen Richardson	8	8
Jasmine Whitbread	8	8

^a Includes a joint meeting with the *Nominating & Governance Committee* in December 2014.

^b Iain Conn joined the committee on 1 June 2014.

^c Warren East joined the committee on 1 May 2014.

What we have done

We met eight times during the year. This included a meeting at which we focused on the proposed acquisition of EE and we held a joint meeting with the *Nominating & Governance Committee*. You can read about what we discussed at this joint meeting in the **Nominating & Governance Committee Chairman's report** on page 107. The chart below shows how we allocated our time, including at the joint meeting.

We set time aside at each meeting to seek the views of the internal and external auditors in the absence of management.

The committee has an annual work plan. This includes standing items that we consider regularly, in addition to any specific matters that need the committee's attention and topical items on which we chose to focus. For example, in 2014/15 we asked management to provide us with greater detail on the governance and control in relation to the

BDUK regional fibre deployment programme, the finance transformation programme, operations in Italy and Latin America and reports on customer data handling, data security and cyber security.

Additional meetings of the committee are scheduled as needed and we met in March 2015 to consider the proposed acquisition of EE which required the approval of BT's shareholders. To give shareholders sufficient information on which to form their view, the UK Listing Rules require the publication of a circular to shareholders. The circular had to include three years of audited consolidated financial information on EE as a standalone group, prepared under BT's accounting policies, as well as statements from the Board regarding profit forecasts, working capital and other matters. We reviewed each of the significant financial workstreams, governance followed and key matters arising in support of the Board's assertions and approval of the circular.

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We noted the new UK Corporate Governance Code and Guidance on Risk Management, Internal Control and Related Financial and Business Reporting which the FRC issued in September 2014 and noted the proposed programme of activity around: changes to risk management methodology; material controls; risk culture; and Board-level governance and review which will enhance our current processes. We will report against these new disclosure requirements in 2016.

In addition, some of the other more significant matters we discussed during the year are set out below.

Financial reporting

We:

- reviewed the Annual Report & Form 20-F, together with annual, half-year and quarterly results announcements for recommendation to the Board;
- considered the appropriateness of the group's accounting policies and critical accounting estimates and key judgements; and
- considered the Annual Report in the context of advising the Board that the Annual Report presents a fair, balanced and understandable view of the business and its performance. Processes and procedures that underpin our consideration include: appropriate senior managers across the business provide the content, having been fully briefed on the fair, balanced and understandable requirement; a dedicated core team of senior managers is responsible for overall co-ordination, consistency, and detailed review and challenge of content submissions; the internal auditors test the verification of all facts; the line of business CEOs, CFOs and key functional heads confirm that they consider the content in respect of their area of responsibility to be fair, balanced and understandable; and the Disclosure Committee reviews and assesses the Annual Report as a whole. We also received an early draft of the report to enable us to provide a timely review and considered comment. All of this allowed us to provide positive assurance to the Board.

The significant issues we considered in relation to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2015 are set out below. We discussed these issues, as well as the areas of particular audit focus as described in the **Independent auditors' report** on pages 138 to 142, with the external auditors during the year.

Group accounting policies, critical accounting estimates and key judgements

We reviewed the accounting policies, including a paper from management and the disclosures in note 2 to the consolidated financial statements that relate to critical accounting estimates and key judgements, and re-confirmed they remained appropriate for the group.

Going concern

We considered management's forecasts of group cash flows and net debt as well as the financing facilities available to the group. Following this review and a discussion of the sensitivities, we confirmed that it continues to be appropriate to follow the going concern basis of accounting in the financial statements. Further detail on the basis of the going concern assessment by the directors is set out on page 130.

Goodwill impairment

We reviewed management's process and methodology for assessing the carrying value of goodwill. This included consideration of the impact of the re-organisation of BT Conferencing and BT Security into BT Global Services. We also considered the cash flow forecasts for the group's cash generating units (CGUs) that hold goodwill, being BT Global Services, BT Business and BT Consumer. We considered the key assumptions, resulting headroom and the sensitivities applied by management in forming its assessment that no goodwill impairment charges were required. We agreed with management's assessment that there was no impairment of goodwill this year. We also discussed and agreed with management's disclosures in respect of the headroom in BT Global Services in note 12 to the financial statements.

BT Pension Scheme (BTPS)

We reviewed the assumptions underlying the IAS 19 accounting valuation of the pension liabilities in the financial statements and considered the financial assumptions including the discount rate, future inflation, salary increase expectations and pension increases as summarised in note 19 to the financial statements. We also considered sensitivities around the assumptions and reviewed the accounting impacts, as well as the impact of the assumptions on the 2014/15 liabilities and 2015/16 income statement and the related disclosures. We were satisfied that these were appropriate.

Revenue, including major contracts

In addition to our review of the appropriateness of accounting policies, management provided regular updates on the performance of major contracts in BT Global Services. This included an overview of the trading and operational performance of the contracts, assessing the recoverability of dedicated contract assets, assessing the future performance of the contracts and any requirement for loss provisions. We agreed with management's assessment that no significant additional provision for loss or impairment of assets was required this year. The business continues to focus on improving the governance, risk management and assurance of major contracts and we considered a report from management on work undertaken to put in place earlier risk identification, reporting and tracking, whilst maintaining a level of assurance via independent reviews and audits.

Asset verification and asset lives

We considered the results of management's annual review of asset lives, verification of assets and fully depreciated assets. We considered the judgements taken in relation to asset lives and the methodology applied to consider asset verification and we were satisfied that any proposed revisions were appropriate.

Other matters

Each quarter, as part of our review of the quarterly results, we are provided with a summary of specific items and management's view of the quality of earnings and of the effective tax rate. We considered whether specific items are appropriately categorised. At the half-year and full-year, a detailed assessment of provisions is also provided and discussed. In each quarter and for the full year, the committee was satisfied with the information, analysis and explanations provided in relation to the results.

Regulatory reporting

We reviewed the Regulatory Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2014 including key financial results, implications and risks of regulatory action and related financial reporting issues.

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External audit

We:

considered and approved the auditors' group audit plan – this followed discussion with the auditors on the scope of the work to be undertaken as well as their consideration of risk informing their plan;
reviewed reports on external audit findings;
considered the independence of the auditors and their effectiveness taking account of responses from a questionnaire targeted at specific stakeholders as well as our own assessment – we concluded they were independent and recommended they be re-appointed by the Board; and
considered and approved the letter of representation issued to the external auditors.

We discussed these areas of focus with the auditors when they presented their audit plan, again at the time of their review of the half-year results and at the conclusion of their audit of the financial statements for the year. As they concluded their audit, they explained:

the results of their testing of the controls and other procedures carried out in the relevant overseas locations and any other issues they had found there;
they had reviewed the appropriateness and application of the group's accounting policies; and
the work they had done to test management's assumptions and estimates, in particular in relation to the identified areas of audit focus set out above.

Management reported to the committee that it was not aware of any material misstatement and the auditors also reported the misstatements they had found in the course of their work. The committee confirmed that these unadjusted misstatements were not material to the financial statements.

Audit tender

PricewaterhouseCoopers and its predecessor firms have been BT's auditors since BT listed on the London Stock Exchange in 1984. The external auditors are required to rotate the lead partner every five years and other partners who are responsible for the group and subsidiary audits must change at least every seven years. Such changes are carefully planned to ensure business continuity without undue risk or inefficiency. The partner responsible for BT's audit is completing his sixth year within the group audit team and his third year as lead partner which is a role he can continue for a further year.

We are aware of the relevant regulation and guidance on audit tendering. EU regulations and the Competition and Markets Authority's ruling will impose rotation requirements meaning that the group's auditors must be changed by 2021.

The committee will continue to consider annually the timetable for audit tendering and rotation, taking into account the annual review of the effectiveness of the auditors and other relevant factors such as change programmes impacting the business. As we engage a number of audit firms for non-audit services we will carefully plan the rotation to ensure that the new auditors are independent.

Auditor effectiveness

We discussed the quality of the audit throughout the year and consider the performance of our external auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers, annually, taking into account feedback from a survey targeted at various stakeholders across the business and the committee's own assessment. The evaluation focuses on: robustness of the audit process, quality of delivery, reporting, and people and services. The external auditors' performance was rated as meeting or exceeding expectations and the quality of work and value add has been maintained. Some stakeholders felt that they would benefit from more detailed feedback during the audit process and greater value add through training in new accounting, risk and governance developments.

Independence and objectivity

BT has agreed policies in place on what non-audit services the external auditors can provide and the relevant approval process. The external auditors are not permitted to perform any work which they may be later required to audit or which might affect their objectivity and independence or create a conflict of interests. There are internal procedures in place for the approval of work given to the external auditors, the key points of which are:

- no work may be placed with the external auditors without the concurrence of the Group Finance Director or his delegate;
- certain non-audit work cannot be given to the external auditors. Other work may be agreed if there are clear business benefits of using the external auditors rather than an alternative supplier;
- specific approval is required in advance from the committee or committee chairman for all audit and non-audit services unless it is included on the list of pre-approved services or is below £10,000; and
- non-audit fees are reported quarterly to the committee.

We monitored compliance with the agreed policies and the level of non-audit fees paid to the auditors in order to satisfy ourselves that the types of services being provided and the fees incurred were appropriate. You can see details of non-audit services carried out by the external auditors in note 7 to the consolidated financial statements. In this context audit-related assurance services are considered to pose a low threat to auditor independence and therefore the proportion of other non-audit services to total services is considered the most suitable measure of the non-audit services provided. These represented 33% of the total fees (2013/14:15%). The primary reason for the increase is for the Reporting Accountants work performed by the external auditors in relation to the proposed acquisition of EE and the shareholder circular. Excluding this work, the ratio was 15%. Further details of the non-audit services that are prohibited and allowed under the policy can be found in the corporate governance section of the BT website.

The committee is satisfied that the overall levels of audit and non-audit fees are not material relative to the income of the external auditors as a whole and therefore that the objectivity and independence of the external auditors was not compromised.

Internal audit

In April 2014, we endorsed the internal audit plan of work. This integrates the assurance requirements for the internal financial controls testing programme, the company's overseas footprint, and the group's risk assurance mapping. It includes coverage of static and dynamic risks. Key areas of focus across the Internal Audit plan included data compromise, privacy and protection including cyber security, financial management and controls, customer service,

revenue assurance and billing, procurement and supplier contract governance and major contracts for networked IT services.

We reviewed all reports from the internal auditors and ensured that management took appropriate action on issues arising from those reports. We monitored management's responsiveness to the internal auditors' findings and recommendations. Examples included physical access security, data segregation and the global finance platform development and identification of new controls. We discussed with management the actions required to bring these matters to resolution and agreed that delivery plans are in place.

We monitor the relationship between the internal and external auditors and at the end of the year we received a report on the performance of internal audit.

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Internal controls and risk management

BT has in place an internal control environment to protect the business from material risks which have been identified within the group. Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate internal controls over financial reporting and we have responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of these controls. To enable us to do this, each quarter the lines of business certify compliance with the Turnbull guidance and Sarbanes-Oxley internal financial controls. Management reports the outcomes of these reviews to us and no significant weaknesses were identified in the annual review.

BT's risk management processes which have been in place throughout the period under review identify and monitor the risks facing the group. The risks which are considered material are reviewed regularly by the *Operating Committee* and the Board.

Enterprise risk management

This year we have paid particular attention to BT's:

- regional fibre deployment programme and the ongoing internal and external assurance programme to mitigate the risks arising; and

- financial transformation programme which seeks to replace legacy processes and systems with global standards.

During the year we heard from the Chief Executive on the enterprise-wide risk management process and the key risks facing the group as a whole. We heard from each line of business CEO on the key risks in their part of the business as well as the actions they are taking to address them.

I reported last year that the committee had given particular focus to BT's operations in Italy and Brazil. We have continued to monitor the position and significant progress has been made to improve the control environment. We continue to keep under review the current trends of security risks facing BT and the progress made to manage these risks.

We also consider any whistleblowing reports (including the confidential, anonymous submission by employees) regarding accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters, ensuring arrangements are in place for the proportionate, independent investigation and appropriate follow-up of such matters. We discussed the findings from the external review and benchmark of BT's confidential hotline programme at the joint meeting with the *Nominating & Governance Committee*.

The Board is ultimately responsible for the group's systems of internal controls and risk management. You can find details of the Board's and our review of the group's systems of internal control and risk management on page 132.

Governance

The Board approved the transfer of oversight of certain non-financial risks from the *Nominating & Governance Committee* to the *Audit & Risk Committee* in April 2015. These will be a new area of focus for us over the next year.

We have our performance reviewed annually by inviting members, key executives and the external auditors to complete questionnaires. The results show that the level of discussion and challenge led to a healthy debate at meetings and that the committee continues to be effective in terms of behaviours and processes.

Nick Rose

Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee

6 May 2015

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Nominating & Governance Committee Chairman's report

This year we continued our focus on succession planning, reviewed aspects of our governance framework and monitored the effectiveness of a range of our core compliance programmes.

Who we are

I chair the *Nominating & Governance Committee* at the request of the Board. We make sure that the Board has an appropriate balance of skills and experience, independence and knowledge of the group. I do not take part in any discussion concerning the selection and appointment of my successor.

We set out below our members and the meetings attended during the year.

The Company Secretary and, where appropriate at my invitation, the Chief Executive attend our meetings.

Committee members

	Meetings	
Member	Eligible to attend ^a	Attended