# Police probe spike in 5G mast arson attacks disrupting west Belfast connectivity



Police in Belfast are currently investigating a troubling wave of arson attacks targeting 5G masts in the city. Since January 2023, there have been at least 14 reported incidents in west Belfast, a situation that has increasingly raised concerns about both public safety and telecommunications infrastructure. The latest attack occurred at an industrial estate in the Dunmurry area, where firefighters from the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service managed to extinguish the blaze.

These attacks come at a time when many residents have raised persistent complaints regarding poor mobile phone coverage in the area. Paul Maskey, Sinn Féin MP for West Belfast, condemned the vandalism, noting that a recent survey his party conducted highlighted that a staggering 87% of respondents described their mobile signal as either poor or very poor. He stated, “This behaviour is both ludicrous and absolutely nonsensical," reflecting the frustration of local residents who rely heavily on reliable telecommunications.

This pattern of attacks is not a new phenomenon; reports indicate that there were significant escalations in June 2023 when five masts were set ablaze within a mere four-hour period. A year later, in July 2024, vandals targeted four masts across different locations within just 48 hours. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has acknowledged potential links between these incidents and appeals for public information aimed at tracking down those responsible.

The impacts of these arson attacks stretch beyond immediate destruction; they have disrupted service and capacity within the telecommunications network. A spokesperson for Virgin Media O2 stated that such acts are fundamentally compromising coverage for the community, complicating daily life for local residents.

Local authorities, including councillor Paul Doherty from the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), have echoed these sentiments, labelling the arson as an act of vandalism that harms both residents and local businesses. Doherty noted that such incidents, apart from being criminal in nature, create a ripple effect that undermines the community's connectivity and economic activity.

While there have been various theories regarding the identity of those responsible, some community members have speculated that opposition to 5G technology may be a motivating factor. Residents in parts of west Belfast have voiced disbelief that youths could be behind these attacks. They suggest a more organised group might be targeting the masts, which fit with the description of previous coordinated attacks.

As the PSNI continues to investigate these alarming developments, they urge anyone with information to step forward. The community’s response will be vital in addressing not only the arson issue but also the larger concerns surrounding mobile connectivity in Belfast.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.rte.ie/news/ulster/2025/0608/1517336-belfast-5g-masts/), [[2]](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/detectives-investigate-arson-attack-5g-mast-west-belfast)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.rte.ie/news/ulster/2025/0608/1517336-belfast-5g-masts/), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg0q73q5xdo), [[5]](https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2023-06-02/police-investigating-possible-link-between-arson-attacks)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/link-between-arson-attacks-west-belfast-phone-masts-investigated), [[6]](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/police-belfast-are-investigating-number-reports-arson-across-city), [[7]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/youths-not-responsible-for-arson-say-west-belfast-residents-4PW4RZENBNCJNAP5VNWD6GARJ4/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.rte.ie/news/ulster/2025/0608/1517336-belfast-5g-masts/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/detectives-investigate-arson-attack-5g-mast-west-belfast> - In November 2024, detectives in west Belfast investigated an arson attack on a 5G mast in the Andersonstown Road area. The fire was reported at approximately 9.55pm, and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service extinguished the blaze. No injuries were reported, but nearby street lights were affected. The PSNI treated the incident as arson and appealed for information from the public. ([psni.police.uk](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/detectives-investigate-arson-attack-5g-mast-west-belfast?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/link-between-arson-attacks-west-belfast-phone-masts-investigated> - In July 2024, the PSNI investigated two arson attacks on 5G phone masts in west Belfast. The first occurred on the Stewartstown Road, and the second near the Monagh by-pass. The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service attended both incidents. The PSNI investigated a potential link between these incidents and a previous arson attack on two masts on the Springfield Road. ([psni.police.uk](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/link-between-arson-attacks-west-belfast-phone-masts-investigated?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg0q73q5xdo> - In November 2024, a 5G mast was deliberately set on fire in west Belfast's Andersonstown Road area. The Northern Ireland Fire Service extinguished the blaze, and SDLP councillor Paul Doherty condemned the act as vandalism, highlighting its impact on local businesses and residents. ([bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg0q73q5xdo?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2023-06-02/police-investigating-possible-link-between-arson-attacks> - In June 2023, police investigated multiple arson attacks across Belfast, including phone masts and an electric box set on fire in five separate incidents. The Northern Ireland Fire Service attended each report. The PSNI investigated a potential link between these incidents and appealed for information from the public. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2023-06-02/police-investigating-possible-link-between-arson-attacks?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/police-belfast-are-investigating-number-reports-arson-across-city> - In June 2023, the PSNI investigated multiple arson reports across Belfast, including phone masts and an electric box set on fire in five separate incidents. The Northern Ireland Fire Service attended each report. The PSNI investigated a potential link between these incidents and appealed for information from the public. ([psni.police.uk](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/police-belfast-are-investigating-number-reports-arson-across-city?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/youths-not-responsible-for-arson-say-west-belfast-residents-4PW4RZENBNCJNAP5VNWD6GARJ4/> - In June 2024, residents in west Belfast expressed disbelief that youths were responsible for a 5G mast arson attack on Distillery Street. They suggested that objectors to 5G mobile phone masts could be behind the incident. The PSNI treated the fire as arson and appealed for information from the public. ([irishnews.com](https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/youths-not-responsible-for-arson-say-west-belfast-residents-4PW4RZENBNCJNAP5VNWD6GARJ4/?utm_source=openai))