

# Plan C - A Mobile Phone is a Household Internet Connection

by Graham Evans

When you connect to internet in Northcliffe you have a choice between the following three methods:

- ADSL2+ internet. ADSL connections piggyback on your landline phone and only available for some.
- NBN Satellite internet. These connections are available for all Northcliffe households and installation is free.
- Mobile internet.

Today I want to provide some information about Option C:

Mobile internet (or 'mobile broadband') can be accessed 2 ways:

- via a special modem with a SIM card inside (for many years people called these 'Telstra dongles').
- via a mobile phone.

Using a phone for household internet is becoming an increasingly common in Northcliffe. Turn on 'hotspot' mode on your phone, and you have an internet connection your whole house can use.

### The benefits include:

- COST.** You can combine your mobile phone and internet into a single bill. You can even get rid of your landline phone and save more money.
- SPEED.** When you have good reception the connection can operate reliably at higher speeds than all the other internet options. Below we talk about using a repeater and an aerial to boost reception.
- GOOD PLANS.** New mobile phone plans are available with 'no excess data charges'. When you have used up your data allowance (measured in GBs), your internet access will simply be slowed down. The slowed down internet is still fast enough to use Youtube and Netflix at passable quality..

### Some of the downsides:

- When you take your mobile phone with you, the internet in the house also turns off. If this is a problem for you then you need to consider a mobile internet modem (such as a 'Telstra Nighthawk') with a separate plan. This will cost more.
- The biggest data plan currently available is 180GB per month (enough for most Northcliffe households).
- if your home internet setup is complicated you may need additional equipment and skills, or otherwise move to a mobile modem with a separate plan. If you are running a Desktop PC you may need to buy a wi-fi adapter. Those with Chromecast devices will not be able to use them with a phone hotspot internet connection, without some additional equipment and technical wizardry.

Boost, Aldi-mobile and other phone providers work well in Northcliffe, however some of the best plans available are from Telstra. Telstra has come a long way. Dealing with them when things go wrong is just as horrible as ever.

With Telstra it is worth bargain hunting. I recently found the

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special offer pictured right, \$65, which is only valid for 12 months, and which **you can only sign up for until 16th November 2020.**

Other mobile phone plan options with Telstra are \$55 for 40GB per month, \$65 for 80GB per month, and \$85 for 120GB per month. You can freely upgrade or downgrade between these plans a maximum of once per month. There are no excess data charges and no fixed contract terms (unless you are paying off a phone).

I won't go through the **pre-paid plans**. At the moment they are not as good value as the month-to-month billed plans.

### What if I have Poor Phone Reception?

If you have one or two bars, you could consider getting a mobile phone repeater. The only legal repeaters in Australia are the "Cel-Fi Go" and the "Cel-Fi Pro". Don't, under any circumstances, consider installing a 'Mobile phone booster' or 'Mobile phone repeater' of a different brand. They are all ILLEGAL and very large fines apply.

This is where things get expensive. Cel-Fi repeaters start at about \$1000 and can go up to about \$1700 for a complete setup (including an external aerial). These prices do not include installation. If your reception is bad you will probably need the aerial. There are no subsidies available for Cel-Fi equipment.

You can buy and install these units yourself, at your own risk, if you have the technical know-how. Ideally, once you have completed the job, your mobile phone will suddenly start working as if you were standing right next to the phone tower. This allows uninterrupted mobile phone calls and high speed internet. A Parkfield Drive resident reports getting 5 bars on their phone, 30Mb download and 5Mb upload speed, after installing a Cel-Fi and antenna.

The only local installer we are aware of is Brockman Television. Brockman told us they can visit your home and do 'field strength testing' prior to supplying any equipment, to make sure your money is not being wasted. Phone Brockman on 9771 1945.

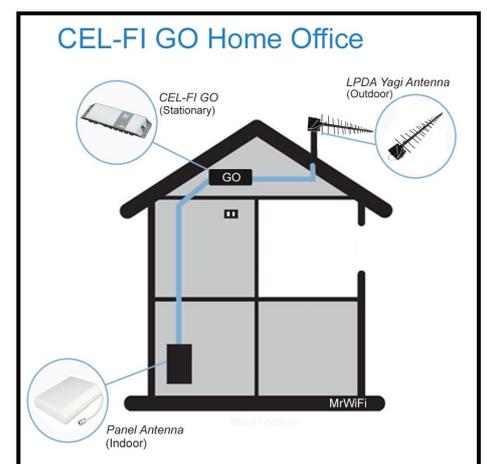
Right: A typical install.

**BEST VALUE**

**Extra Large 180GB**

Was \$115 per month.  
Now \$65 per month.  
\$50/mth credit for 12 months.

- ✓ [5G network access included](#)
- ✓ [No excess data charges in Australia](#)
- ✓ [No lock-in plan](#)



**Northcliffe CRC 2019/20 AGM**

**6:30pm Tuesday  
15th December  
Northcliffe Meeting Space**

Please renew your membership  
and fill in a proxy form  
if you can't attend.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 10am to 5pm • Thursday, Friday 10 am to 6pm