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Rats chew Reefton internet cable

Chris Tobin

Some businesses and residents in Reefton continue to have difficulty accessing the internet more than a week after rats chewed through a cable, causing widespread disruption.

Earlier this week some businesses were back on dial-up.

Dawsons Hotel manager Helen McKenzie said her home internet was out overnight, while service to the hotel had been erratic.

"The first outage was last week and then it went out again this week with a lot of landlines out as well," Ms McKenzie said.

"It has been bloody inconvenient with all our bookings through booking.com and people having meals who couldn't pay with eftpos, so we had to get credit card details."

They had no contact from Chorus explaining what had happened or when the service would be fully restored.

Chorus spokesman Nathan Beaumont said the Reefton exchange had suffered fibre damage due to rats munching through the cable.

"All services should have been restored by no later than March 9. If there have been service disruptions since then it is strongly recommended that impacted

customers contact their retail service provider and log a fault so we can investigate," Mr Beaumont said.

"We've also laid plenty of bait and traps to catch our fibre-loving friends, so hopefully there won't be a repeat of the incident."

Zie Rosanowski from the Reefton i-SITE said the first outage caused "mayhem" in the town.

"It lasted from 6pm to midday the next day. Trying to run an i-SITE without information was difficult. Another failure in the last couple of days has not affected us, but private cellphones were not working," Ms Rosanowski said.

"There's a general disdain for the networks and people are not happy at all. My personal provider, Vodafone, has been very good and won't be billing me for when it was out."

West Coast District Health Board general manager Philip Wheble said telecommunications issues had posed some minor challenges for DHB staff at Reefton Health.

"However, they have managed to continue to offer health care for the people of Reefton and surrounds."

West Coast Racing Clubs secretary Colin Stephenson said the Reefton Trotting Club meeting on Sunday went ahead without any internet problems.