



Your Winter update



The start of 2017 represents a key stage in the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire programme. To date, over 100,000 working hours have enabled our programme to deliver access to superfast broadband for nearly 70,000 premises in the county, installing some 421,258 metres of fibre and 480 new fibre broadband cabinets.

The challenge becomes greater as we move into the very rural parts of the county, with the distances over which fibre needs to be dug along our highways becoming much greater, and the number of premises connected to individual cabinets significantly reduced. By way of example, the average number of premises enabled per new cabinet currently stands at 170, whereas the remaining deployment has on average just 30 premises enabled per new structure – many of these needing to be the relatively complex Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) installations. By definition, this means the average (per premise connected) increases very significantly. We remain nonetheless confident on reaching our target of 95% coverage across the county*.

Negotiations are still on-going with BT to agree what can be additionally delivered by way of the efficiency savings achieved to date, and the take-up accelerated gain-share available under the BT contract. The detail of this will be made available during February 2017. We are also in the final stages of establishing possible options for the remaining 4% of the county*. This is likely to include a co-funded option, whereby for those premises which are simply unaffordable to be entirely funded by the public purse, the County Council would offer to co-fund communities willing and able to raise funds locally. We will be updating our website with further information on this during February 2017 and will also push out an update to this effect to those registered to receive these newsletters.

Meanwhile we wish you a Happy New Year, and thank those of you remaining to be connected for your patience.

Councillor Nick Carter, Cabinet Member for Business and Customer Services

* Excluding West Oxfordshire, please see www.westoxon.gov.uk/broadband.

Coming to a cabinet near you!

Since our last update in November 2016, 12 more cabinets have gone live – including cabinets providing superfast broadband to premises in the vicinity of:

- **Claydon village, Cherwell district**
- **Cottisford village, Cherwell district**
- **Launton Road/Murdock Road area, Bicester**
- **Little Bourton village, Cherwell district**
- **Park Drive area, Milton Park**
- **Western Avenue area, Milton Park**
- **Station Road, Culham**
- **Beckett Drive/Faringdon Road area, Shrivenham**
- **Greys Green opposite Hill Close area, Rotherfield Greys**
- **Holton village, South Oxfordshire district**
- **Kidmore Lane area, Kidmore End**
- **Littleworth village, Vale of White Horse district**

In the coming weeks, 5 more cabinets are expected to go live, providing superfast broadband to premises in the vicinity of:

- **Longcot village, Vale of White Horse district**
- **Wigginton village, Cherwell district**
- **Cuddesdon village, South Oxfordshire**
- **Milton Park, Vale of White Horse district**
- **Lower Heyford, Cherwell District**

For further updates about our delivery plans see [the coverage map](#) on the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire website.



How better broadband has improved communications for one family in Oxfordshire

John Kennedy is based in the US, whilst his wife, teenage son and their three younger nephews and nieces are based in Oxfordshire district. Before John moved to the US, his previous employment in the UK required him to work remotely but the introduction of superfast fibre broadband has had a positive impact on John and his family, in more ways than one. [Read the full case study...](#)

Residents and businesses can follow the progress of the roll-out via the [Better Broadband website](#).

People opting for an upgrade will be able to access broadband download speeds of up to 80 megabits per second (Mbps) and uploads of up to 20Mbps*.

Because the network is being rolled out by Openreach – BT's local network business – people have a wide choice of fibre broadband provider.

* These are the top wholesale speeds available from Openreach to all service providers; speeds offered by service providers may vary.

Alternative solutions for better broadband

If your area isn't currently included in the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire Programme there are a number of alternatives that can significantly improve your current speed or provide a connection while you wait.

Better basic broadband subsidy scheme

The Oxfordshire Better Broadband Programme is supporting the national Universal

Service Commitment, also known as the Better basic broadband subsidy scheme. The scheme offers residents with broadband connections of less than 2Mbps the opportunity to apply for a subsidy towards the installation and setup of a satellite or fixed wireless broadband solution.

In some circumstances, residents can aggregate their subsidies and put the combined funding towards a fixed wireless or fixed line superfast broadband service for the wider community. [Find out more and how to apply.](#)

Additional alternatives

Some communities have decided that superfast broadband is so important to them that they have sought to fund a solution for themselves rather than wait for a government sponsored rollout to reach them. We have put together a short list of companies that offer various types of solutions for varying types, and sizes of communities.

Fixed line broadband providers that sell superfast broadband solutions directly to communities

- [BT](#)
- [Gigaclear](#)

Fixed wireless broadband providers

- [Sugarnet](#)
- [Village Networks](#)
- [Rural Broadband](#)
- [Countryside Broadband](#)
- [Wurzel](#)

Fixed line broadband providers specialising in new build sites

- [BT](#)
- [GTC Networks](#)
- [Hyperoptic](#)
- [Virgin Media](#)

Connections via 3G/4G

As 3G network and the improved 4G coverage in rural areas of Oxfordshire

expands, 3G and 4G services might present a viable alternative as a faster home broadband solution. To improve mobile network reception it might be necessary to install an antenna on the roof, however, the mobile network signal may be strong enough to connect directly via a router in the living room, achieving speeds up to 60Mb on the fastest 4G connections.

In areas closer to mobile masts even simpler solutions such as wireless dongles may offer residents a reliable connection and the opportunity to connect up to 10 devices. However, it is worth mentioning that as with all radio-based systems, 3G and 4G services may be affected by a number of local factors, such as building materials, tree cover and weather conditions.

When using this technology make sure to choose a tariff that will allow you comfortable browsing without exceeding capped limits, as the charges outside the allowance might be costly.

Autumn Statement 2016

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, The Right Hon Philip Hammond MP, gave his [Autumn Statement](#) to Parliament on 23 Nov 2016 and revealed plans to encourage investment worth £1bn+ towards the roll-out of ultrafast pure fibre optic broadband and 5G Mobile technology. Please visit our [website](#) to read the key points related to broadband following the announcement.

Your frequently asked questions

Q. My cabinet has been upgraded. What do I do now?

Read these [five simple steps](#) on how to get your home or business connected with high-speed fibre broadband.

For a full list of our most frequently asked questions, [visit our FAQs page](#).

Visit us at the [Better Broadband for Oxfordshire website](#) for more information.