

## Connecting Councillors – your broadband briefing

### *Dear Parish Councillor*

As a parish councillor, you may often be stopped and asked questions about the availability of broadband in your area. We hope that this briefing will be useful to you in answering most of the questions you may face and allow you to point residents to helpful resources which can help to get them connected.

It is fantastic that Suffolk has reached over 94% connectivity across the county. Whilst uptake rates are good, with 50% of premises taking advantage of Superfast Broadband, there is a real opportunity to increase uptake across the county by talking about the benefits of faster and more reliable broadband and encouraging people to upgrade.”

### *The Better Broadband Project Team*

#### Step 1

Finding out whether Better Broadband is available to your postcode.

This information is available online via the Openreach website.

[www.homeandbusiness.openreach.co.uk/fibre-broadband/when-can-i-get-fibre](http://www.homeandbusiness.openreach.co.uk/fibre-broadband/when-can-i-get-fibre)

There are some important things to know when looking at this information.

1. This information is coming from Openreach not Suffolk County Council. The council is not responsible for the content, we are just signposting residents to it.
2. Residents would need to use their full postal address including their postcode together with their landline phone number, should there be one available. Please be aware that this information will not be shared with anyone outside of the organisations mentioned.
3. Just having the ability to connect doesn't mean you automatically have superfast broadband – the resident will need to order their own upgrade with an internet service provider.

#### Step 2

Choosing a supplier to upgrade to fibre broadband

Just having a connection available doesn't mean the resident has faster connection speeds. They will need to upgrade by choosing an internet service provider that offers a Superfast Broadband service. The best way of doing this is by referring them to any broadband comparison website. Residents should be aware that there are a wide range of services and packages available from a large number of suppliers and they should choose something which best meets their own requirements.

#### Step 3

What if fibre broadband isn't available in the area yet?

Suffolk County Council is committed to getting Superfast Broadband to all premises in Suffolk. We have the commitment from Openreach to reach 98% by the end of 2020 and we are exploring funding options for the final 2%. We are working with all suppliers, including Openreach, to provide an up-to-date list of addresses which are not yet included in a plan for broadband rollout, however, this is still being developed so in the meantime please direct the resident to contact the Better Broadband for Suffolk Project team via the form on our website:

[www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/contact-us](http://www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/contact-us)

They will need to include their full name, address and landline telephone number in the query.

Please note: we may need to share their address and telephone numbers with Openreach to answer their query.

# **BETTER** **BROADBAND** *for* *Suffolk*



- Superfast Broadband in Suffolk is now available for over **94%** of homes and businesses across the county
- The project has been running since 2010 and has seen a public investment of **£64m** into the Better Broadband rollout across Suffolk
- Take-up for Superfast Broadband has been good. Overall over **50%** of customers have upgraded to Superfast Broadband to date where it is available
- Because take-up has been so good, Openreach are returning a proportion of the public investment made (known as gainshare) which is being reinvested to further extend coverage

## **The project is funded by**

- Suffolk County Council
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- Suffolk's District and Borough Councils

Openreach are contracted to deliver the work

# Other help

I would like an update on broadband rollout in my parish.

We are able to provide updates, but due to the combination of broadband infrastructure types found in some areas, it is helpful if you can provide a small sample of addresses and landline phone numbers from different parts of the parish area. We will then ask Openreach to check these properties to analyse their broadband situation. The more addresses that we have from within your parish area, the more accurate our response will be.

As this analysis can be complex, please allow at least 14 working days for the project team to respond. Further time may be required to provide a full analysis.

Please use the contact us form on our website or email us using [broadband@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:broadband@suffolk.gov.uk)

## Is there a regular newsletter?

Yes, residents and councillors who are interested in finding out more about the Better Broadband for Suffolk project can sign up for our quarterly email newsletter here.

[www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/about/subscribe-to-our-newsletter](http://www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/about/subscribe-to-our-newsletter)

## Any other information available?

Every Friday we have been running a social media campaign called [#FibreFriday](#) – you can follow along via the SCC Twitter account ([@Suffolkcc](#)) or the Suffolk County Council Facebook page.

Check out our website: [www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com](http://www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com)

## Contacting the team

There is a contact us form on the website available here.

[www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/contact-us](http://www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/contact-us)

# Glossary

Some of the terms you might hear when talking about fibre broadband could include

## Megabits Per Second (Mbs)

A measurement of internet speed. A megabit is a million units of digital information and this illustrates how many megabits can be transmitted across a network per second. Internet speed can vary due to a host of environmental factors, including distance from the exchange, type of connection, weather etc.

## Superfast Broadband

This is broadband usually delivered in part or full by fibreoptic cables. Superfast Broadband covers a range of speeds but is commonly defined as being 24Mbs and over (download speed).

## Internet Service Provider (ISP)

Internet service providers are the companies that offer a broadband service over the Openreach network. Examples of these are BT, Talk Talk, Plusnet, Sky, Vodafone, etc.