

Update on Fastershire delivery

Briefing Note – March 2022

For: Ward Members of Birch, Dinedor Hill, Golden Valley North, Golden Valley South, Kerne Bridge, Ledbury South, Ledbury West, Llangarron, Old Gore, Penyard, Ross North, Stoney Street, Wormside.

Introduction

This briefing note is for ward members whose areas have been affected by the decision of 18 November 2021 to alter the broadband delivery due to Gigaclear's withdrawal from the south of the county areas and the opportunity presented by the national government regarding the Project Gigabit programme.

This note can be shared with parish councils to support communications

The total number of premises adversely affected in Herefordshire is 2,324 (though this number is reducing as we find that BT is reaching some new premises after investing in the replacement of end-of-life technology).

Project Gigabit

BDUK (Building Digital United Kingdom) has launched its Open Market Review (OMR) to identify properties in the county with broadband speeds of less than 100Mbps. The OMR is based on feedback from Internet Service Providers about current and planned coverage. The process will identify properties (intervention areas) that need public funds to benefit from access to gigabit-capable broadband.

The last OMR was undertaken before the Gigaclear contracts were awarded in 2017. The review will consider all the changes in broadband coverage resulting from commercial investment and Fastershire's community and business programmes.

After the review closes on 6 May 2022, BDUK will assess the best procurement route and how to break down different areas based on a future public review. The OMR aims to enable the delivery of speeds of over 100Mbps and build a full fibre network across the county.

To achieve this broadband coverage, the government is planning additional investment in Herefordshire that recognises the cost of reaching deep into rural areas.

Independent figures from thinkbroadband have 93.7% of premises in the county as having over 30Mbps, of which 43.89% of premises have over 100Mbps.

Details of the OMR can be found here also promoted on the Fastershire website.

Digital Household Grant

The Digital Household Grant is being made available to the 2,324 premises the south of the county descoped by Gigaclear and has a broadband connection of less than 30Mbps. A new webpage has now received 109 expressions of interest to the grant, which will cover the installation cost of a 4G LTE internet connection using external directional antennas.

A low earth orbit satellite solution will be explored for properties where a 4G signal is not available. The grant is in the final stages of procuring a provider. The evaluation of tender responses took place on Tuesday, 29 March.

Business Grant

Businesses can now register for a grant to part-fund the installation of fibre or alternative faster broadband connections via the postcode checker at <http://www.fastershire.com>. The Business grant will allocate up to £20k per eligible premise with a 20% contribution from the business.

[Click here](#) to watch a short film about how Fastershire supported a Herefordshire business.

New website

Fastershire's new [website](#) is now live, making it easier for users to find relevant information. The changes now emphasise current activity and reflect project achievements through case studies and videos.

Broadband take-up is addressed in a new 'Broadband Explained' section which features helpful information and videos to help people understand how to make the most of their internet.

Email: info@fastershire.com

Web: www.fastershire.com

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