

## **‘Better Broadband’ Delivery Completed Across Oxfordshire!**

### **Coverage Status for Ashbury Parish Council**

The Digital Infrastructure team are delighted to confirm that our ‘Better Broadband for Oxfordshire’ programme has completed its rollout of superfast broadband across Oxfordshire! Whilst we are underway with additional projects to deliver full fibre broadband across the county, this briefing summarises the key successes of ‘Better Broadband.’



### **Background of ‘Better Broadband for Oxfordshire’**

#### **Significant Achievements:**

- ✓ 98% Oxfordshire coverage by 2020
- ✓ 79,000 premises connected >24Mbps
- ✓ 23,000 additional premises fibre enabled
- ✓ 850kms of fibre laid – equivalent of Oxford to Orkney!
- ✓ 705 fibre structures delivered
- ✓ 76% take-up means over 140,000 Oxfordshire residents / businesses are using superfast broadband that would otherwise not have been available
- ✓ ‘Better Broadband’ delivered below budgeted costs
- ✓ Contract savings part-funded Phase three in 2018

‘Better Broadband for Oxfordshire’ was initiated in 2013 as a partnership between Oxfordshire County Council, BT and BDUK (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport) with the objective of providing superfast broadband to 64,500 premises in Oxfordshire by 2015 to reach 90% coverage.

Phase two then evolved and by the end of 2017, coverage had extended to 95% with a further 11,100 premises enabled due to co-funding received from OxLEP, SEMLEP, Oxford City Council and also Cherwell, South and the Vale of White Horse District Councils.

At the end of 2018, the final phase commenced with coverage extended to a further 2,400 premises, raising coverage to 98% across the county. This phase was funded entirely by contract savings achieved to date and from £2.56m of gainshare funding received from BT due to the high take-up of superfast broadband.

## Coverage Statistics for Ashbury Parish Council

The table below provides an overview of the broadband speeds delivered by, 'Better Broadband for Oxfordshire:'

Broadband Speed Bands	Outcome
Total <15Mbps premises	3
Total 15-23.9Mbps premises	6
Total superfast premises (>24Mbps) but <30Mbps	26
Total superfast premises (>30Mbps) <i>Including FTTP premises</i>	239 7
Percentage of premises in the parish with superfast (>24Mbps) coverage in 2020	96.72
Number of premises planned for delivery under BiRO	26

FTTP – Fibre-to-the-Premise

BiRO – 'Businesses in Rural Oxfordshire' Project

There is also a Coverage Map available on the Digital Infrastructure Programme website, which provides an overview of the current and future broadband provision across Oxfordshire.

The map will also display an estimate of existing speeds available to each premise and detail of any future planned fibre upgrades.

To use the Coverage Map, enter a postcode or place, which will then allocate the pop-up box with further details. Alternatively, you can explore the map by selecting the location or premise that you require, which will be represented as a coloured icon, then open the pop-up box.

### Visit the Coverage Map:

<https://digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk/progress-so-far/coverage-map>

## Place Your Order... Superfast Broadband is Here!

### Has my Fibre Cabinet been Delivered?

You can tell if your new fibre broadband cabinet has been delivered by 'Better Broadband for Oxfordshire' if it is displaying a large sticker (as shown on the right).



This means that the cabinet is live and ready to take customer orders! If there is a cabinet near you but it doesn't have a sticker displayed or if you can't find your cabinet and would like to check if broadband is available, you can either check the Coverage Map by entering your postcode or contact the team at: [Broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### Visit the Coverage Map:

<https://digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk/progress-so-far/coverage-map>

### What Sort of Connection Speeds Can I Access?

Fibre-to-the-Cabinet (FTTC) can provide you with speeds up to 80Mbps, dependent on the distance of your property from the new fibre cabinet. The closer you are to the cabinet, the higher your connection speed will be. In some cases, Openreach has further upgraded the infrastructure with a technology called Gfast, which offers speeds up to 330Mbps. If you are in a Fibre-to-the-Premise (FTTP) enabled area, you could benefit from ultrafast connection speeds up to 1000Mbps. FTTP provides a fibre optic connection all the way from the telephone exchange to your premise and offers lightning speeds to improve the performance of your internet connection.

### How Do I Place an Order?

Please note that you will not be automatically upgraded to fibre-enabled broadband! When superfast / ultrafast / gigabit broadband is available, you will need to contact your chosen Internet Service Provider (ISP) to request an upgrade or use a comparison website to find the best package available to suit your needs. There is also a list available on the Openreach website showing FTTC and FTTP Internet Service Providers:

**FTTC:** <https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fttc-providers>

**FTTP:** <https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fttp-providers>

Do remember to check the terms and conditions carefully with your existing Internet Service Provider as there may be cancellation charges if you switch supplier.

## **‘Better Broadband’ Initiated a Collaborative, County-Wide Approach!**

### **Digital Infrastructure Strategy**

Craig Bower, Programme Director for the Digital Infrastructure Programme produced the Digital Infrastructure Strategy, which sets out the framework for delivering full-fibre broadband and mobile provision across Oxfordshire.

The strategy builds on the extensive work that the Digital Infrastructure Programme has already undertaken with suppliers, partners and government in helping Oxfordshire to have superfast broadband access to over 98% of premises.

In early 2020, all Oxfordshire Digital Infrastructure partners formally signed agreement to the Digital Infrastructure Strategy, which sets out how the programme will continue to improve both fixed and mobile digital connectivity in collaboration with partners, suppliers, & central government.

### **Read the Strategy:**

<https://digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk/whats-next/timeline-strategy/digital-infrastructure-strategy>

### **Memorandum of Understanding with Oxfordshire Partners**

In early 2020, our programme finalised the formal, Digital Infrastructure Partnership comprising of Oxfordshire County Council, all District Councils, Oxford City Council and OxLEP.

The aim of this enterprise, is to advance the rollout of digital infrastructure by way of facilitating commercial operators to access public sector assets, ease the process with wayleave and planning applications and to assist with all delivery aspects, such as accessing highways for laying new fibre.

### **Street Works Toolkit for England & Wales**

This toolkit was produced in July 2018 by government, HAUC (England), JAG UK and Street Works UK along with local authorities, operators and contractors to offer advice and best practice for engaging in street works. The toolkit also includes examples of real-life case-studies of common issues that arise and aims to advise on improving consistency, trust, promoting collaboration and complementing current legislation.

### **Read The Street Works Toolkit:**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/804471/Street\\_Works\\_Toolkit\\_2.0.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/804471/Street_Works_Toolkit_2.0.pdf)

## What's Next?

### **'Businesses in Rural Oxfordshire' Project (BiRO)**

Due to the completion of 'Better Broadband for Oxfordshire' and to continue working towards closing the coverage gap in Oxfordshire, the Digital Infrastructure Programme at Oxfordshire County Council applied for DEFRA funding in 2018/19 and was awarded £6.3m. The purpose of, 'Businesses in Rural Oxfordshire' is to connect as many rural businesses to full-fibre broadband (FTTP) as possible. Following an OJEU procurement in November 2019, both BT and Airband were awarded contracts to collectively deliver, full-fibre broadband to nearly 1,000 businesses in the most rural parts of the county. Under these contracts, a further 900 residential properties are due to be connected - premises in scope are displayed on the Coverage Map in yellow with the annotation of either 'business' or 'residential' premise in plan. The full-fibre connection will offer speeds up to 1Gbps and will bring superfast coverage in Oxfordshire up to nearly 99%. Overall, this will add several hundred kilometres of fibre to the most rural parts of the county with completion anticipated by June 2022.

### **National Infrastructure Strategy**

In November 2020, HM Treasury produced the policy paper, National Infrastructure Strategy, which sets out plans to transform UK infrastructure in order to level up the country, strengthen the Union and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The paper also outlines how the Government is working to target a minimum of 85% gigabit-capable coverage by 2025 and will seek to accelerate rollout further to get as close to 100% as possible.

#### **Read the Policy Paper:**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/938539/NIS\\_Report\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/938539/NIS_Report_Web_Accessible.pdf)



### **Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) 'Outside-In' Programme**

This will become the nationwide programme aimed at achieving 85% full-fibre coverage across the UK by 2025. The £5bn funding was announced in the last budget with further details to be published by the end of 2020 (note the Spending Review in November now details a budget of £1.3bn to be used in the period to 2025). The procurements are expected to be run centrally during the course of 2021. A technical consultation has now been launched with Local Authorities and Telecoms Operators on the draft procurement strategy for the UK Gigabit Programme, which sets out the plans to connect the first one million homes and businesses with gigabit speed broadband and maximise coverage in the hardest to reach 20% of the UK by 2025. Oxfordshire County Council will be responding to this consultation. The input will be used to refine the proposal, followed by proceeding to market in the Spring with procurements. Following the feedback, there will also be revised maps and the procurement pipeline.

**Read the consultation, Planning for Gigabit Delivery in 2021:**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/947250/20201222 - Planning for Gigabit Delivery in 2021 V2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/947250/20201222_-_Planning_for_Gigabit_Delivery_in_2021_V2.pdf)

**Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review**

This review was first published in July 2018 setting targets and strategies for the UK to move to gigabit capable digital infrastructure. Back in 2018, the statistics suggested that only 4% of UK premises could access full-fibre compared to 71% in Spain and 89% in Portugal. The review also identified that road and street works accounted for 70% of the cost of fibre deployment. Therefore, as advice for best practice when engaging in street works, government and partnership organisations produced the Street Works Toolkit.

**Read the Review:**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/732496/Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732496/Future_Telecoms_Infrastructure_Review.pdf)



**Thank you...**

For your continued support to the Digital Infrastructure Programme.

We hope this update has been informative, however if you should require any further assistance, please contact the team: [broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk)