

FAQs for Superfast Broadband

Q. What can the Council do to help me with superfast broadband?

The Council is supporting the Digital Scotland Programme for superfast broadband which is being delivered by BT Openreach. There is also a commercial rollout of fibre broadband by BT and other companies such as Virgin, Sky and Talk Talk in parts of Perth and Kinross also. Through the combination of the public and commercial programmes it is anticipated that 90% of premises in Perth and Kinross will have access to a next generation broadband service of 24MBPS or more by 2018.

Not all BT exchange areas in Perth and Kinross have a planned solution for superfast broadband, but you can find out what the plans are for your exchange area by putting your postcode into the checker at <http://www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/when-can-i-get-fibre.aspx>. If you are in an area where the maps states that the Programme is still exploring solutions it may be that Community Broadband Scotland can help you to develop a next generation broadband solution. <http://www.hie.co.uk/community-support/community-broadband-scotland/> . There is also an option of the local community installing fibre broadband themselves through a partnership with BT Openreach. You can register your interest in this on the Openreach website mentioned above.

The Council has already made a contribution of £1.2m to the roll out of the superfast broadband programme in this area. The first phase of the national rollout programme is now completed and Digital Scotland are now working with BT Openreach on phase 2 of the Programme. However, all parties acknowledge that there are many rural areas of Perth and Kinross that have yet to be connected and that this is a priority to be addressed in the next phase of the Programme.

Q. I have checked on the postcode checker and I can see that I am in a planned area for superfast broadband does that mean that I will definitely get it?

You may do but as the plans vary across each BT exchange area and there are technology issues in each area. In most communities in Perth and Kinross, the current Programme uses a Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) solution which will mean that new green cabinets – known as a digital subscriber line access multiplexer or DSLAM - are being installed and connected to existing green BT communication cabinets. Detailed surveys commence around six months before deployment in each community and confirmation as to which premises can access next generation broadband will be available once the service goes live. The Council gets confirmation of these and there is a programme of encouraging take up of broadband services in each community following the go live by BT. Again the BT Openreach website gives much helpful information on this. <http://www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/when-can-i-get-fibre.aspx>

Q. How do I get next generation broadband once my Cabinet has been installed?

If you have seen that your new green cabinet has been installed you will have a Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) solution. Once this infrastructure is in place you will need to order new broadband services from a variety of internet service provider. You can find these on <http://www.broadbandchoices.co.uk/broadband/check-my-area> . Just choose the service that best meets your home or business needs.

Q. I have got a Cabinet but I am some distance from it and I have been told that this will affect the speed I will get?

The Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) technology relies on the existing copper cables from the cabinet being used to provide the broadband to your premises. In many cases this copper cable has been in place for a number of years and this reduces the speed that you are likely to get. The length and quality of the copper cable makes a difference to the speed of broadband received. Unfortunately BT may not be replacing or upgrading the existing copper cables immediately. If you have an existing problem with your line you should report this to your service provider. Areas where there is the most difficulty to reach are often due to long lines, this is a technological limitation issue that you can read more about here ([What is the technology limitation of fibre broadband and distance from cabinet?](#))

Q. I am in an area where according to the Digital Scotland website solutions are still being sought – what are these?

This will mainly involve wireless or satellite. A fully wireless broadband solution is not currently offered by BT Openreach but they may use wireless technology to communicate between cabinets. This may be one of the solutions that they need to look at for the most rural areas. The other is satellite. Satellite broadband operates by sending and receiving your broadband signal to a satellite in space. Because the satellite sits high up in space, it can provide equal quality of coverage to every home or business in its footprint. The National Satellite Scheme has been set up to assist in these areas. (<http://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/where-when/the-programme/national-satellite-broadband-scheme/>) and you can now fill out an application form for this scheme. If you are eligible you will receive a voucher that you can use to subsidise a subscription to a satellite broadband service for a minimum period of 12 months.

Q. I can't wait for the national superfast broadband programme, what about if I want to develop a community broadband community project?

Many communities are being helped by Community Broadband Scotland <http://www.hie.co.uk/community-support/community-broadband-scotland/> to develop solutions for the most remote communities. They are administering a Start Up Fund which is intended to help communities with the costs involved in establishing local community-led projects to access superfast broadband services – where projects can demonstrate local need and demand, and the capacity to make it happen at a reasonable cost. They will not support ongoing running or maintenance costs of the

service and this will need to be met by service users (subscribers) and other forms of income that may be available to the community body. In most cases a community company would be set up but is not required at the start of the process. Projects developing a community-led superfast solution would be taken out of the BT programme but would need to keep up with the UK standard for broadband over the long term. The Council is working with Community Broadband Scotland to take a planned approach to assist rural communities where we know that the fibre broadband is not going to reach.

Q. I think I am connected to an Exchange Only Line what does that mean?

The vast majority of premises are connected to a green roadside cabinet which then connects to the local exchange. However, a small proportion of business and consumer properties are served directly by the local exchange rather than by a green cabinet – these are called “Exchange Only” lines. It may be more time-consuming to bring fibre broadband to properties served by EO lines but BT will employ most appropriate solution to deliver the speeds they are contracted to deliver. There is a very good video that explains the fibre technology being deployed here <http://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/where-when/how-we-are-building-the-fibre-network/>

Q. I am in a rural area and I don't think I am getting or am likely to get speeds of more than 2Mbps, what can I do?

The national programme is intended to give access to fibre broadband to as many of the people who are not already included in commercial roll-out plans. The UK Government intends to give everyone access to at least 2Mbps, but not necessarily using fibre broadband. [Broadband Delivery UK \(BDUK\)](#) has developed a programme offering subsidised satellite broadband installation to eligible properties in Scotland. You can read more about this and apply for this here (<http://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/where-when/the-programme/national-satellite-broadband-scheme/>). But there may also be opportunities for you to work with neighbours and the local community to develop a wireless broadband option with Community Broadband Scotland.

Links

Digital Scotland website (<http://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/where-when/>)

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