

South Hams Digital Connectivity Update

February 2023

Summary of work:

- Monthly engagement with main broadband suppliers (Airband, Openreach, Wildanet) and CDS. Please see appendix with updates on delivery dates.
- Airband delivery delays – pushing for updates from CDS/Airband
- Ad hoc support to broadband champions
- Local Government Association (LGA) report on the evaluation of the creation of a ‘digital champion’ within a district/borough level council to be published later this month.
- Awaiting outcome of further central funding from Project Gigabit to increase full fibre in Devon and Somerset. The contract would be managed by Building Digital UK (an arm of DCMC). Results expected March/April. Support to community groups paused until it is known if they may be part of a new public contract.
- Web tool to help residents/businesses identify ways to improve their broadband to be launched later in Feb. Discussions with LEP to develop this tool further and provide support for potential alternative digital connectivity options. LEP has optional £215k for supporting communities what could be in this way.

Project Gigabit

- Project Gigabit has the next wave of central Gov funding to deliver fibre to areas the market will fail to invest in. Contracts will be managed by BDUK rather than CDS.
- South Hams is in Lot 6 of Project Gigabit, part of a lot with Devon and Somerset.
- At the end of 2022 BDUK obtained information from suppliers on where they provide a service and where they intend to cover in an Open Market Review. This provides the most up-to-date information on coverage. The OMR information has been shared with CDS but not with district level councils. BDUK have said they will engage with us when it is known if an intervention area will be set.
- We do have the data on a postcode level and know the number of properties within each postcode – however I have been told Airband delivery is not represented in this, such that an address benefitting from the Airband contract may be shown as ‘Under review’. This is particularly unhelpful for us as CDS have not shared the Airband coverage with us.
- In terms of lot 6 – currently BDUK are working with suppliers to understand if there are viable areas to delivery fibre in Devon and Somerset
- Project Gigabit procurement size 1,000 – 8,000 (smallest scale)
- It is probable suppliers will show limited interest in bidding for a contract across Devon and Somerset, or only parts of this area, due to the dispersed nature of properties. This has happened in other parts of the UK where procurements are paused/delayed.
- If no interventions areas are set (due to lack of supplier interest) delivery might happen on a community basis via Gigabit Vouchers.

Other funding

- Gigabit Vouchers have increased to £4,500 per premise (residential or business), which is an increase from £1,500 for residential and £3,500 business.

- The LEP had given £500k for voucher top ups to CDS, however as the Voucher values have increased nationally the LEP expect this funding to be returned and could be used for another solution.
- Funding from Central Gov currently only supports Gigabit solutions (largely fibre) however they are currently trialling satellite solutions in very hard of reach locations. If Gov change their guidance to support alternative digital connectivity in remote locations other options can be considered.
- We are currently working with Teignbridge to devise a funding process to support homes and businesses who cannot improve their digital connectivity with fibre or fixed wireless. With this in place we will then be well placed to bid for potential further funding from the LEP or elsewhere to help smaller communities.

Appendix:

Openreach delivery of fibre (Q1 2023 update not yet received)

Area	Delivery dates
Dartmouth	70%
Kingsbridge	65%
Salcombe	30%
Stoke Fleming	46%
Ivybridge	28%
Kingswear	Planned to start July 23
Torcross	Planned to start July 23
Totnes	Planned to start July 23
Wembury	23/24
Loddiswell	24/25
Yealmpton	24/25
Sutton Cross	24/25
Holbeton	24/25
Stoke Gabriel	25/26
Modbury	25/26
South Brent	25/26

*source: Openreach update report 24/02/2023

Airband delivery of fibre

Area	Cluster ref	Delivery date
Berry Pomeroy	F015	Feb 2023
Marldon & Coombe Fishacre	F013	Q1 2023
Roborough to Elfordleigh	F018	May 2023
Rattery	F014	Summer 2023
Stoke Gabriel	F017	Q2 2023
Sparkwell to Bittaford	F019	Q2 2023
Dartmouth	F022	Summer 2023
Thurlestone to Salcombe	F030	End summer 2023
Yealmpton	F024	Q2 2023
Ugborough	F020	Q2 2024
Bigbury to Modbury	F027	Q2 2024
Halwell and Moreleigh	F021	Q2 2024

Kingsbridge	F028	Q2 2024
Sharpham	F016	Q3 2024
Wembury	F025	Q3 2024
Noss Mayo to Mothercombe	F026	Q3 2024
Sherford	F029	Q3 2024
Blackawton	F023	Q4 2024
East Prawle and South Pool	F031	Q4 2024

*source: Airband wholesale website on 22/02/23

*source: updates show in red from CDS press release 25/01/23

Wildanet delivery of fibre

Area	Delivery date
Totnes	2023
South Brent	TBC
Salcombe	TBC