

# iNorthumberland

Superfast broadband for home and business

## Newsletter - Issue 1, 2018

### Phase 2 roll out continues during 2018

Last year we announced an extension to the second phase of the rollout of superfast (at least 24 Mbps) fibre broadband in Northumberland. As a result, the £10.5m phase 2 contract will seek to provide superfast broadband services to a total of 6,200 properties.

Several communities have already been upgraded as part of this latest phase.

Examples from Northumberland's five local areas include:

**North:** Craster, Denwick, Doddington, Hauxley, Lucker, Rennington, Rock & Scremerston

**Castle Morpeth:** Cresswell, Hebron, Longhirst, Netherwitton, Tranwell & Widdrington

**Ashington & Blyth:** Bebside

**Cramlington, Bedlington & Seaton Valley:** Bomarsund & Stakeford

**Tynedale:** Colwell, Gunnerton, Horsley, Langley, Matfen, Melkridge, New Ridley & Wall

### Phase 1 roll out - what was achieved?

Funding of £19.6m saw over 52,500 properties in the county provided with access to superfast broadband. Together with BT's commercially funded roll out and a £0.58m investment to connect over 1,600 properties in the Rothbury area, this led to over 90% of properties in the county being able to access superfast broadband services by the end of March 2016.

We expect 95% of properties to have access to the service by the completion of phase 2.

**SUPERFAST BROADBAND IS HERE!  
FOR WORK OR PLAY - CONNECT TODAY...**

Visit [inorthumberland.org.uk](http://inorthumberland.org.uk)



Northumberland  
County Council



Funded by  
UK Government

# Is superfast broadband available?

To see whether superfast broadband is available to your property visit our website at [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/check](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/check) and enter your postcode or view the coverage map. If it is available simply sign up with the broadband supplier of your choice, but don't forget to check that you're getting the best deal (see below). If you want to see the benefits of superfast broadband visit [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/benefits](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/benefits).

If it's not yet available to you then register via [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/updates](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/updates) and we will contact you and let you know what is happening in your area.

The website includes answers to the most frequently asked questions, but you can also contact the team if you have a specific query. Contact details are listed on page 7.

## Getting the best deal

The cost of superfast broadband depends on a lot of different factors such as the speed, monthly data allowance and whether you are in an existing a contract. Feedback from residents and businesses throughout the county has been that many have upgraded without paying more.

Providers have new offers all the time, so to help people understand which deals and offers are available we have teamed up with price comparison experts Cable who bring together all the latest information about which deals are available in your area.

More than half of the properties included in the first phase of the roll out have already upgraded to superfast broadband. For those looking to renew a contract or upgrade for the first time, visit [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/deals](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/deals) to see the latest offers.



# Community Broadband Fund

Northumberland County Council has made a further £2.2 million available to help bring superfast broadband to some of the most difficult to reach communities in the county.

Communities can apply for up to £2,500 per property depending on the technology used. Each community will need to nominate a person to apply for inclusion in the scheme and request a quote from Openreach. In some cases a community contribution will be needed, this can be in the form of self-dig which can reduce the cost.

We have been working with Openreach and local communities to progress with this scheme. Some areas are now contracted for delivery, these include Aydon, Bolam, Ingram Valley, Nunnykirk, Stanton, Pauperhaugh and Styford.

Where Openreach cannot provide a quote under the fund criteria, secondary funding has been allocated to be used for alternative network solutions with other suppliers.

If your area is not yet in any superfast broadband roll out plans and you are interested in finding out more about the community broadband fund please get in touch. The deadline for new applications is the end of May 2018.

## EE launches new mobile broadband packages

EE has recently launched new mobile broadband packages designed for those that are unable to access a superfast broadband service. An external antenna may be required for this service. Funding is available towards this via the Better Broadband Fund (see overleaf). You do not require a landline to make use of mobile broadband.

Further information is available by calling 0800 079 0131 or visiting

<https://shop.ee.co.uk/broadband/4g-home-broadband>.



# Universal Service Obligation (USO)

Government has confirmed that universal high speed broadband will be delivered by a regulatory USO, giving everyone in the UK access to speeds of at least 10 Mbps by 2020.

This is the minimum speed that Ofcom, the independent regulator, says is needed to meet the requirements of a typical household. Government will set out how this will be achieved in further legislation later this year. Further information can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/news/high-speed-broadband-to-become-a-legal-right](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/high-speed-broadband-to-become-a-legal-right).

## Better Broadband Voucher Scheme

There is an existing commitment to provide access to a minimum of 2 Mbps download speed to every property in the UK. As part of this initiative we are working with Central Government to provide subsidised installation of alternative broadband solutions such as satellite, wireless and mobile (4G) technologies for eligible properties. The better broadband scheme has now been extended until the end of 2018.

If your application is successful you will be able to choose a service from any of the approved providers who are part of the scheme.

To apply visit [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/better-broadband](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/better-broadband) where you can also find out more about the scheme.

## Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme

In March 2018 Government announced a new Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme across the UK. The scheme offers vouchers worth up to £3,000 to support the capital costs of getting new gigabit (1,000 Mbps) capable connections for businesses and vouchers worth up to £500 to connect homes.

For further details see <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk>

The logo for the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is displayed on a black background. The text "GIGABIT BROADBAND VOUCHER SCHEME" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is framed by two horizontal lines: a top line in blue and a bottom line in purple. To the right of the text, there are several flowing, wavy lines in shades of blue, green, yellow, and purple, creating a dynamic, abstract graphic element.

**GIGABIT BROADBAND  
VOUCHER SCHEME**

# Case Study - Otterburn Mill

Otterburn Mill, once a traditional woollen mill but now a major visitor attraction which boasts a shop, country coffee shop, restaurant, and visitor information centre, lies less than 20 miles from the Scottish border. Otterburn was upgraded to superfast broadband in June 2015 and The Mill now benefits from speeds five times faster than before. As a result the business has been able to streamline its systems, boost its online presence and hire two new members of staff.

Owner Euan Pringle, said: "I feel so lucky to own this small piece of Northumberland history but being based in such a rugged, rural setting can make it more difficult to ensure the traditional can keep up with modern times.

"Upgrading to superfast broadband has enabled us to make better use of the internet. We now run an online shop as well as having a physical retail presence and the faster speeds have also allowed us to store data in the cloud and make use of online software.

"We now use stock control software that is integrated with the website meaning our stock is updated as we sell items. Our retail systems, including credit card terminals also work much more smoothly with the faster broadband service.

"But is the increased focus on mail order sales, which superfast broadband has made possible from rural Northumberland, which has led to the creation of two new jobs."

Euan added: "I'd recommend superfast broadband to anyone. I can't understand why any business that has the option of superfast broadband would not take it up. The price difference is minimal but even if it does cost slightly more, the difference in performance will outweigh the extra cost.

Councillor Nick Oliver, cabinet member for corporate services at the County Council, said: "Visitor attractions like this are vital to our rural economy so it is great to see the iNorthumberland programme supporting business growth. You can see from this example just how many different activities a company can need broadband for - the potential for it to assist businesses is really endless."



# Consultation on Broadband Coverage

Northumberland County Council is in the process of seeking additional funding to expand the reach of superfast broadband beyond the expected 95% of properties.

As part of this process we must consult with all broadband providers to understand existing and planned coverage of superfast broadband services. Public funds can only be directed at those areas without existing or planned coverage. We are currently consulting with a range of broadband suppliers. As this data will determine where future funding can be spent, it is important that it is accurate. We will therefore be asking people to look at the information held about your property and let us know if this is incorrect. Check our website during May for details on how to do this.

## Virgin Media set to arrive in Northumberland

Following positive talks with Virgin Media we are pleased to announce that for the first time parts of Northumberland are set to receive ultrafast broadband from Virgin Media during 2018.

For commercial reasons we are unable to give details at this stage on the areas to be connected, but keep an eye on our website for further updates.

Discussions are still underway between the County Council and Virgin Media in an attempt to encourage wider scale build in 2019 as part of the company's 'Project Lightning' roll out.

Part of the business case used by Virgin Media to decide where to roll out services is the local demand. Therefore if you are interested in seeing Virgin Media services in your area complete the form on their website. The more people in an area that do this the greater the chance of services being rolled out in future.

To register your interest visit [www.virginmedia.com/postcode-checker](http://www.virginmedia.com/postcode-checker)

We have also been discussing with Virgin Media the potential to roll out their community contribution model to some areas of the county that are not commercially viable. If you think your community could benefit from this approach please get in touch with iNorthumberland.



## Digital Inclusion

Alongside the deployment of superfast broadband we are starting to tackle digital exclusion, rural isolation and loneliness in Northumberland. We already have lots of activities ongoing including the promotion of Code Club (in collaboration with Code Club UK) and the ignition of CoderDojo's (in collaboration with CoderDojo UK).

We are also launching digital media hubs in Northumberland, the first one being at Amble Development Trust. Finally, we have kicked off some work in collaboration with additional partners including Lloyds Bank and Age UK Northumberland.

We will have more news of what we are up to in our next newsletter. In the meantime if you have any questions, would like any support or are interested in volunteering in any of our activities please get in touch with us. Further information is available at [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/digital-inclusion](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/digital-inclusion).

## Subscribe for future updates

Due to changes in data protection regulations we will no longer be sending updates such as this newsletter to people who have previously subscribed. If you want to continue receiving updates on the iNorthumberland programme you will need to sign up again at [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/updates](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/updates).

Everyone that signs up will automatically be entered into our competition to win an Amazon Echo (see below).

## Win an Amazon Echo

Throughout 2018 we are running a competition in which you could win an Amazon Echo. To enter, simply visit us at one of our drop in events or weekend shows from the list enclosed in this newsletter and ask for an entry form. Why not talk to us about your broadband at the same time?

## Contact iNorthumberland

Website: [www.inorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk)

Email: [info@inorthumberland.org.uk](mailto:info@inorthumberland.org.uk)

Telephone: 01670 626 001 or 0345 600 6400

Social Media:



@my\_broadband



inorthumberland

# Where can I visit iNorthumberland?

You can visit the team at the following events. Please note this is subject to change and other events will be added. See [www.inorthumberland.org.uk/events](http://www.inorthumberland.org.uk/events) for updates.

Date	Time	Venue
18th April	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Bell View, Belford
19th April	5.30pm - 6.30pm	St James Hall, Alnwick
24th April	1pm - 2pm	Heddon on the Wall Village Hall
24th April	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Corbridge Village Hall
26th April	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Centre of Britain Hotel, Haltwhistle
2nd May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Hirst Welfare Centre, Ashington
8th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Fourways2, Amble
9th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Jubilee Hall, Rothbury
10th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Longhirst Village Hall
17th May	10am - 11am	Bellingham Town Hall
17th May	2pm - 3pm	Otterburn Memorial Hall
23rd May	2pm - 3pm	Cheviot Centre, Wooler
23rd May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Breamish Hall, Powburn
24th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Longframlington Memorial Hall
28th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Stannington Village Hall
30th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Seaton Sluice Community Centre
30th May	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Choppington Welfare Centre
4th June	5.30pm - 6.30pm	St Oswins Church Hall, Wylam
5th June	3pm - 4pm	Wark Town Hall
5th June	5pm - 6pm	Belsay First School
12th June	10am - 11am	Embleton Village Hall
14th June	5.30pm - 6.30pm	St James Hall, Morpeth
20th June	10am - 11am	Allendale Forge Studios
3rd July	4pm - 5pm	Tilmouth Village Hall
10th July	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Stamfordham Village Hall