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## DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PLACES

29 July 2020

#### DIGITAL DERBYSHIRE PROGRAMME UPDATE

##### **1. Purpose of the report.**

Digital Derbyshire has been asked to provide an update on the Digital Derbyshire fibre broadband programme with particular focus on how the programme is meeting the needs of rural communities and the increase in home working due to the COVID19 virus.

##### **2. Delivery**

The Digital Derbyshire programme consists of two separate contracts and delivery phases.

Contract 1 was completed in October 2016 and delivered fibre broadband to 85,904 premises of which 81,610 were able to receive a download speed in excess of 24Mbps.

Contract 2 is due to be completed at the end of 2020 and is on target to deliver fibre broadband to around 28,000 premises of which over 22,000 will be able to receive download speeds in excess of 24 Mbps.

This takes the combined total across both contracts to over 100,000 premises in Derbyshire that are now able to receive Superfast broadband services.

##### **3. Gain Share and Take-up**

Built into both contracts with BT is a “Gain Share” component, based on the level of take up of the upgraded service. The greater the take up, the more money the Council can “claw back” and reassign to upgrade broadband services in harder to reach areas. Consequently, Digital Derbyshire undertakes public engagement and demand stimulation activities to raise awareness when improved broadband services are available in an area. To do this the Digital Derbyshire team works with parish councils, county and district councillors and MPs to disseminate information. We also attach Digital Derbyshire branding to

the Green Cabinets and deliver information leaflets to residents.

The take up of fibre services in 2015 was 10.77% which improved to 46.74% in April 2017. Take up now stands at 63%.

#### 4. Broadband Delivery to Rural Communities

Access to good quality broadband services is essential for rural communities and this has been highlighted by the recent COVID19 related demand for internet access as people are confined to their homes and the huge increase in homeworking.

Delivering fibre broadband to rural communities is particularly challenging due to the high costs associated with the installation of fibre optic cabling and the logistical difficulties presented by rural environments and topography. These include but are not restricted to, narrow roads, dry stone walls, lack of footpaths, lack of re-useable cable ducting, rocky ground conditions, long transmission distances and low population densities.

Digital Derbyshire works very closely with the Openreach planning and estimating teams to try to reduce these costs to enable as many rural communities as possible to be upgraded to fibre within the Value for Money framework.

Despite these challenges the Digital Derbyshire Programme has been very successful in delivering fibre broadband to rural communities that would otherwise have not received a service, please see the attached list for examples of the communities we have delivered to



DD Delivered Rural  
Wards.xlsx

To date Digital Derbyshire has brought fibre broadband to around 23,000 homes and businesses in rural communities across Derbyshire.

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## 5. Rural Gigabit Voucher (RGC) Scheme

For the hard to reach rural areas where it's not possible for Digital Derbyshire to roll out fibre broadband there is a potential solution known as the Rural Gigabit Voucher scheme.

This has been developed by the UK government to provide subsidised broadband installation to rural homes and businesses that are currently unable to access a fibre broadband service and who will not benefit from the superfast broadband roll out.

The scheme provides vouchers towards the cost of full fibre installations (FTTP), up to the value of £1500 for residential properties and £3500 for business premises. Voucher values can be pooled for community schemes

Digital Derbyshire signposts communities to this scheme where appropriate and provides ongoing support to the community through the process as required.

## 6. Community Fibre Partnerships

Community Fibre Partnerships is an Openreach initiative where they work with the local community to build a customised fibre solution to bring fibre broadband to the homes and businesses. Openreach contributes towards the cost of the installation and the community funds the remainder, which can be in the form of RGC vouchers.

## 7. Moving forward.

The Digital Derbyshire programme is in the final year of Contract 2. We are currently engaging with Openreach and BDUK to seek an extension to the programme to utilise gainshare re-investment to extend the delivery of fibre broadband to more Derbyshire communities.

Digital Derbyshire is keen to work with DCMS and play an active part in any upcoming initiatives to ensure that Derbyshire receives an appropriate share of the recently announced £5b Gigabit programme and that rural communities in Derbyshire are suitably represented in the process.

**Naim Waqas (Digital Derbyshire Project Officer)**  
**Andrew Globe (Digital Derbyshire Engagement Officer)**

# Digital Derbyshire

Derbyshire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

29<sup>th</sup> July 2020

# What is Digital Derbyshire?

- Upgrade fibre services in rural/semi urban areas
- National framework
- Supplier and partner – Openreach
- Reduce the digital divide
- Complex infrastructure project
- Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC) and Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) technology.

## Phase 1

- Contract 1
- Completed October 2016
- Fibre broadband available to 85, 904 premises.
- 81,610 receiving Superfast or above download speeds. (24+ Mbps).

## Phase 2

- Contract 2
- Due to complete at the end of 2020
- On target to deliver fibre broadband to around 28,000 premises additional to phase 1.
- Of which around 22,000 receiving Superfast download speeds.

## Total Delivery

- Combined Phase 1 and 2 delivery
- Over 100,000 premises in Derbyshire will be able to receive Superfast broadband services by the end of 2020



# Take up of fibre

- April 2015 - 10.77% take up of fibre services
- June 2016 - 31.5%
- April 2017 – 46.74%
- April 2020 – 63%
- Important to increase and maintain a high take up figure for DCC
- Gainshare mechanism linked to take up.

# Demand Stimulation

- Public engagement
- MPs
- County and District Councillors
- Parish Councils
- DD stickers on cabinets
- DD leaflets delivered to communities
- DD website
- DD mailbox

# Cabinet sticker example



# Broadband delivery to rural communities

- Fibre broadband is essential for homes and businesses
- COVID19 highlighted this demand
- Working from home, home schooling, entertainment.
- Delivery to rural communities is challenging due to logistical difficulties and topography.
- High costs v low population density also adds to the complexity.
- DD works closely with Openreach planning team to identify opportunities for rural delivery.
- Delivered fibre broadband to around 23,000 rural homes and businesses.

# Broadband delivery to rural communities

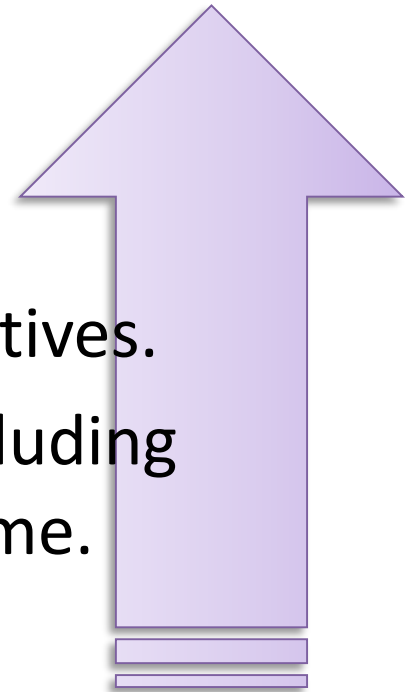


# Broadband delivery to rural communities

- Delivery to rural communities in all 9 Derbyshire districts.
- Roll out map and interactive map available on Digital Derbyshire website
- <https://www.digitalderbyshire.org.uk/where-and-when/maps/maps.aspx>

# Moving Forward

- Exploring the opportunities to extend the fibre footprint in Derbyshire
- Active participation in the £5bn Gigabit programme.
- Investigating D2N2 Digital inclusion initiatives.
- Potential voucher “Top up” schemes, including Rural Gigabit Connectivity Voucher Scheme.



# Useful Websites

## **Digital Derbyshire**

<http://www.digitalderbyshire.org.uk/>

## **BT Wholesale checker**

<https://www.broadbandchecker.btwholesale.com/#/ADSL>

## **Openreach Fibre Broadband - See how it's built**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0qN5XHui5Q>

## **Community Fibre Partnerships**

<https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/community-fibre-partnerships>

## **Gigabit Voucher Scheme**

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/>





# Any Questions?

