

**You asked us about digital connectivity. Our partners at Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) were able to provide the following information:**

## **MORAY CONNECTIVITY**

There are two active projects in Moray which are currently investing public money in better connectivity. The first is the £146m Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) project being delivered in Moray by HIE, and there is also a community led broadband project running in the Cairngorms with support from Community Broadband Scotland.

## **DSSB PROGRESS**

Three years ago nowhere in Moray could access mainstream fibre broadband services. The commercial market had identified that the only coverage they considered viable was for parts of Elgin and Forres. Public investment was required to reach anywhere else. Over the last three years the DSSB project has extended the core fibre network in the area and has built 110 fibre cabinets in Moray towns and villages to deliver fibre broadband services, offering download speeds of up to 76 Mbps.

When the current commercial and project roll-out figures are combined, more than **40,000** Moray homes and business have access to the fibre network. This is around **90%** of all premises. Moray is the best connected local authority area in the Highlands and Islands region today.

Moray will see more fibre broadband coverage into 2017. Additional funds have come back into the HIE managed contract because of strong take-up of services, and also from efficient project delivery. This means coverage will extend a bit further in some areas. This is currently being modelled.

**AREAS WITH LIVE SERVICES INCLUDE:** Aberlour, Alves, Ballindalloch, Brodie, Buckie, Carron, Clochan, Cullen, Dallas, Dufftown, Elgin, Findhorn, Fochabers, Forres, Garmouth (Speybay), Glenlivet, Hopeman, Keith, Kingston (Speybay), Kinloss (Findhorn), Lhanbryde, Longmorn, Lossiemouth, Rothes, Rothiemay, Tomintoul.

**AREAS WITH ROLL-OUT TO COME:** Buckie, Dallas, Findhorn, Forres, Glenlivet, Keith, Lhanbryde, Mulben and Rothiemay.

Customers are reminded that they will not be upgraded to fibre services automatically, they must order. You can check availability on [www.hie.co.uk/fibre](http://www.hie.co.uk/fibre). The network is open to all service providers, so customers can use comparison websites to shop around for the best deal.

## **CAIRNGORMS COMMUNITY BROADBAND PROJECT**

In addition to the fibre roll-out, Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) is supporting a project which is targeting some of the hardest to reach areas in the Cairngorms National park area. Cairngorms Community Broadband has been set up to address poor connectivity in parts of the Cairngorms area. The group aims to deliver broadband speeds of 30Mbps or more to 100% of premises within the project area. The project is due to go out to procurement in April 2017. The procurement process is likely to take 7 – 9 months after which build will commence. It will be funded from Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) funding

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/caring-future/local-economy/community-broadband-project/>

## **WHAT ABOUT MOBILE?**

The mobile operators have announced plans to upgrade existing masts in the region to 4G. They are committed to a target of 95% coverage of Scottish premises by the end of 2017. Coverage is to be enhanced through a programme of sharing masts and an extensive programme of new sites. As part of the emergency services contract a further level of investment is being made to reach the most difficult areas by the Home Office to build additional mast sites.

#### **WHY CAN'T THE ROLL-OUT REACH EVERYONE?**

The current fibre contract has been modelled on a value for money basis. In each area it reaches as many people as possible within the available budget and technology. Roll-out is on-going. However, there are some areas, often those with smaller numbers of homes some distance from each other, the project can't reach in this phase. There are also others, who while drawn into a fibre cabinet, have been too far from it to benefit. This will be continually reviewed as Digital Scotland partners look at future coverage.

#### **WILL I GET COVERAGE THROUGH A DIGITAL SCOTLAND PROGRAMME IN FUTURE?**

Going forward, the Scottish Government has made a commitment that 100% of premises in Scotland will have access to superfast broadband by 2021. The Digital Scotland team is working together to explore the financial and technical challenges of bringing superfast to more people. A review of all premises will shape plans for a future procurement to find suppliers to deliver a further project.

#### **I NEED SOMETHING NOW**

If your download speed is below 2Mbps and you aren't going to get fibre or other access to superfast speeds soon, you can apply for a 'better broadband' voucher funded through Broadband Delivery UK. This helps with costs of installation for a satellite or wireless system, where available. <https://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/where-when/the-programme/alternative-solutions/>