

Update on Broadband in Kinlochbervie

A fibre broadband cabinet is planned for Kinlochbervie as part of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) fibre programme (<http://www.hie.co.uk/digital>). This fibre cabinet is currently being installed and the first premises in this area could be able to order fibre broadband by the end of December 2016, possibly into the new year.

If you are connected to the cabinet you are NOT automatically upgraded to a fibre service. It's a different service from existing broadband. You need to call your internet service provider (or shop around on comparison websites) to order a fibre based service. You can check if you will benefit from the fibre cabinet by putting your phone number or address details into the online checker here: <http://www.hie.co.uk/fibre>.

Fibre broadband is, in the main, delivered from green fibre cabinets. The fibre runs to the cabinet, it is connected to your phone line, and the services run along your existing phone line to your home. People connected to the cabinet, and with a line length of about 1km should get a superfast service. Most within about 2km should experience some uplift in service. Unfortunately, with current technology the speed drops off quickly and at around 2.5km it's unlikely there will be an uplift in service.

In many rural areas, people's phone lines came directly from the exchange. As part of the project many of these 'Exchange Only' lines have been re-routed into the new cabinets in order to be connected to the new network.

If you want more complex information on available speeds you can look at this network checker provided by BT. It doesn't provide results on all numbers, but you can also do a postcode check: <https://www.btwholesale.com/includes/adsl/main.html>. It will give you the minimum and maximum download speeds you should be able to get on your phone line for VDSL (a fibre service) and for ADSL (a copper line service).

There are two short term options for those that will not benefit from the DSSB fibre roll out:

1. **Better Broadband Voucher Scheme** The voucher is a one off payment of up to £350 towards the cost of the installation of satellite broadband or a fixed wireless network. There is more information about the voucher scheme here: <https://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/where-when/the-programme/better-broadband-scheme/>. There are eligibility criteria. Households with download speeds of less than 2Mbps are eligible for the voucher (other eligibility criteria may apply). Successful applicants to the voucher scheme are given an activation code that can be redeemed with a list of accredited broadband installers.
2. **Mobile Broadband** - There is due to be a significant roll out of 4G mobile signal over the next 12 – 18 months so it may well be that mobile broadband provision in your area improves. It is worth keeping an eye on mobile phone providers' websites to see where their 4G coverage is planned <http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/check-coverage/>.

Longer term, the Scottish Government has announced a target to reach 100% of premises with superfast broadband (> 30Mbps) by 2021. An open market review has started to establish existing and planned (next 3 years) commercial coverage of broadband services across Scotland. It will help the government define an intervention area for public investment. More detail on next steps is expected in early 2017.

Community Broadband Scotland is working closely with Kinlochbervie Community Company to discuss the best options for improving broadband in the area for those not benefitting from DSSB, including the potential for a community broadband project.

If anybody has any specific questions about broadband feel free to contact Sarah Marshall from Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) on sarah.marshall@hient.co.uk or 0300 013 5131/ 07551179104.