

The Partnership – Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband

Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband is a public-private partnership that is working together to build a world class digital infrastructure across the country.

The commercial rollout of fibre broadband has enabled 66% of homes and businesses in Scotland to enjoy faster speeds, mainly in the more heavily populated areas. Since its launch in April 2014, the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme has been bringing fibre broadband to areas that would not have been covered by commercial operators such as Virgin and BT.

By the end of 2015, 85% of homes and businesses in Scotland had access to fibre broadband as a result of the continued commercial rollout and the Digital Scotland programme. Around 95% will have access by the time the programme ends in March 2018. This includes bringing fibre broadband to remote rural areas such as Orkney, Shetland and the Hebrides.

The programme is made up of two interlinked projects – one focussing on the Highlands and Islands and the other working to bring fibre broadband to the rest of Scotland. Together, the two projects represent the highest value telecommunications infrastructure investment in Europe, and will bring fibre broadband to over 750,000 premises across Scotland.

“We are aiming to close the ‘digital divide’ and make sure people of all backgrounds and ages can take advantage of fibre broadband”

Director of Digital Participation (SCVO)

“We are aiming to support businesses of all sizes and within all sectors to adopt and make the most of digital technology in the way in which they operate and promote their organisations”

Business Excellence Partnership

“We are proud to be part of a broad reaching partnership, where organisations and authorities across Scotland are all pulling together, to build a digital nation which can take its place on the world stage”

Brendan Dick, Director, BT Scotland

The Highlands and Islands Project

A total of £146 million is being invested in the Highlands and Islands fibre broadband programme, which is a partnership between the Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) and BT.

£126.4 million is being contributed by public bodies (Scottish Government, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Highland and Islands Enterprise and all seven local authorities that form part of the project area) and £19.4 million is being contributed by BT.

The rugged terrain and scattered population in the Highlands and Islands create significant challenges. The area covers some 15,000 square miles – but has one of the lowest population densities in Europe. Moray, the most densely populated part of the Highlands and Islands, has only 39 people per square kilometre and Western Isles has only nine people per square kilometre.

This makes Highlands and Islands by far the most challenging fibre broadband project to be undertaken anywhere in the UK.

Openreach, BT's local network division, which provides and maintains the infrastructure used by more than 500 service providers, has installed more than

400km of subsea cabling over 20 crossings to the islands. This is the largest subsea cabling project ever undertaken through BT!

84% of premises in the Highlands and Islands will have access to high speed fibre broadband by the end of 2016. This is estimated to be around four times the number of premises that would have had access to fibre broadband, if this exciting partnership programme had not taken place.

Rest of Scotland Project

This £264 million project is bringing fibre broadband to all those areas of Scotland (outside of the Highlands and Islands) that were not covered by commercial rollout plans.

This is made up of £157 million from public sources (Scottish Government, European Regional Development Fund, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and all 27 local authorities that form part of the Rest of Scotland Project area), together with £106.7 million from BT.

This ambitious project will ensure that around 95% of homes and businesses in Scotland have access to fibre broadband by March 2018.

Scotland's local authorities are jointly contributing £40 million to the programme as a whole. However, fourteen of those

local authorities have chosen to further supplement their funding, boosting the level of investment by an additional £50.65 million. The local authorities that have made additional contributions are:

Aberdeenshire, Angus, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, Fife, Midlothian, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Perth and Kinross, Scottish Borders, South Ayrshire, Stirling and West Lothian.

Through working in partnership, the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband initiative is building a future-proof high speed fibre infrastructure that will enable Scotland to become a world class digital nation by 2020.

The wider Digital Scotland Partnership is helping everyone make the most of the opportunities.

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TO GO FASTER?