



Welcome to the final edition of Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband's 'In the Loop'



The World, and Scotland within it, has changed dramatically since the first DSSB enabled cabinet went live in April of 2014 and I am proud that the £463 million DSSB programme has achieved and gone on to exceed its aim of delivering 95% fibre broadband coverage for Scotland. The programme's deployment has helped many people be able to work and stay in touch during this difficult time, and, of course, we will not rest at that 95% figure.

Superfast access has increased dramatically from 63% to 94%, or an increase of 31 percentage points over the period, with transformational growth since January 2014 of more than 60% in the proportion of premises with superfast access in Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, East Lothian, Highland, Moray, Na h-Eileanan an Iar and Scottish Borders, with several other areas of rural and island Scotland seeing more than a 40% increase.*

From the very outset it was recognised that extending superfast broadband across Scotland was about so much more than simply supporting economic growth. It's been about overcoming the clear imperfections of the UK-wide telecommunications market, for sure, but also about enhancing the quality of life for everyone in Scotland, creating and retaining jobs locally, reducing Scotland's carbon footprint and improving access to health and education.

The programme has deployed as far North as the Shetland Islands and as far South as Drummore in the Rhins of Galloway. Over 15,000km of fibre cable has been laid across Scotland in the process, with almost 950,000 homes and businesses now able to connect to fibre broadband that would not have been able to in the absence of the DSSB programme— almost 150,000 more than was at first envisaged with the available funding - with an astonishing 63.75% of people within the 'Rest of Scotland' project area having so far taken up the opportunity to upgrade to faster broadband speeds, which is more than double than anticipated at the outset.

Even before we had to deal with the restrictions brought about by Covid-19, more people were already relying on broadband as part of their day-to-day lives and, of course, digital technology is also helping avoid unnecessary commuting as we address the climate emergency.

That is why for those of you unable to access broadband, our £600 million [Reaching 100% \(R100\)](#) programme will ensure that everyone who wants to can get access to superfast speeds by the end of December 2021, either directly through our R100 contracts, or through our new Scottish broadband voucher scheme which we will launch this summer. Watch out for our new online checker, published at premises level, that we will launch in the near future to ensure you can see progress for your own household or business under R100.

DSSB has been transformational and I am proud of the leadership the Scottish Government provided to enable it. However, it succeeded because of the strong partnership approach and I want to thank each and every person who played their part in that. We now have a strong foundation on which to build our future connectivity through R100 as we seek to ensure that all have access to services at superfast speeds or better.

Best regards,

Paul Wheelhouse MSP Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands

*(Source: <https://www.thinkbroadband.com/>)

The future is R100



The [Reaching 100% \(R100\)](#) programme builds on the success of the DSSB programme. The 100% superfast broadband commitment will be met as a result of three strands of activity – the R100 contracts, a superfast broadband voucher scheme and commercial coverage.

The national demand-led broadband voucher scheme will be launching later this year. This will provide grants to broadband customers in non-domestic and domestic premises, offering support to access a range of technologies and suppliers. Anyone not able to access superfast broadband by the end of 2021 – even if build through the R100 contracts will ultimately reach them – will also be eligible for that voucher scheme.

Want to stay 'In the Loop'?

This is the final newsletter from DSSB, we will remove you from the subscriber list but if you wish to be kept informed around R100 please [register here](#).



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TO GO FASTER?**