



Get your hands on a slice of £2m for a fibre partnership

As part of the BT Community Fibre Partnerships programme, £2m is available via a grant for Community Fibre Partnerships that could benefit a local school. This enables communities to apply for a grant of up to £20,000 toward the cost of their new fibre infrastructure, if that new infrastructure could also serve their local school. So for example, if the cost for a gap-funded solution that serves a school has been quoted as £23,000, the community would pay £11,500 and £11,500 would be match-funded from the grant. See our website for more information.



Welcome!

With Summer just about upon us we're delighted to be helping around 45,000 homes and businesses so far get connected to the national fibre infrastructure through having a Community Fibre Partnership with us. In the Spring we announced the 250th community to partner with us and we'll soon be celebrating our 300th. Don't get left in the digital slow lane! We're here and ready to explore having a jointly funded fibre partnership with you.

Partner with us for your fibre and benefit from Openreach, the UK's primary infrastructure provider

Openreach – the part of BT that provides the vital infrastructure which is the foundation of the UK's vibrant internet economy – looks after the fibres, wires and cables that connect the country. The Openreach network is available to all communications providers – that's well over 500.

This enables them to deliver a wide range of services that provide consumers and businesses with real choice. The infrastructure already provides a complete network covering virtually the entire country and supporting 28 million phone lines.

Openreach maintains and improves their infrastructure. They have invested £10.5bn in improving our network over the last 10 years. And on top of all that, they have years of experience using tried and tested technology to deploy a superfast fibre rollout which is the foundation of the UK's vibrant internet economy. For the main, whether you're making calls, video conferencing with clients, sharing files, downloading music, streaming movies, or indulging in a bit of online retail therapy – it's most likely on the Openreach network.

All systems go for Cotwalton's fibre build

Excitement is growing in the rural village of Cotwalton, near Stone, in Staffordshire where residents are gearing themselves up for the arrival of ultrafast broadband – made possible by the residents entering into a Community Fibre Partnership programme with BT.

This follows the completion of an Openreach ground survey, looking closely at everything from the area's existing infrastructure to new infrastructure requirements, resource and equipment needs, route planning and logistics.

"I'm thrilled to say we're now at build stage in Cotwalton," said Kasam Hussain, one of BT's senior contract managers. "Over the last few months we've been carrying out lots of behind-the-scenes evaluation and planning. In particular,



we wanted to work out where we will be laying all the new cables and determining exactly what's needed in terms of new kit and infrastructure. But now we're ready to start the physical installation work."

Minimising disruption

Added Kasam: "We've spent a fair bit of time with the local community in Cotwalton looking at where the properties lie and how we can connect them up in the most efficient, non-disruptive way. It's all going to plan. Our mission is to make everything as painless as possible for the residents." Engineers from Openreach have already started working on putting up new overhead cabling where it's needed and are set to begin working on underground installation any time soon.

Fed up with slow broadband and not included in any fibre rollout plans, residents of Cotwalton approached BT about having a Community Fibre Partnership last year.

Co-funding made possible

Guidance and support from BT together with joint funding from BT, Superfast Staffordshire and the villagers of Cotwalton enabled the whole installation process to begin. Said Kasam: "It won't be long before ultrafast broadband is a reality for Cotwalton. The village has benefitted from working with the Community Fibre Partnership. I'd urge other communities up and down the country who are in the so called five per cent to get in touch with BT and find out what can be done."

A Barefoot Guide to Connectivity

Some of the hardest to reach communities across the UK are really starting to benefit from mobile working technology, meaning that talent and skills aren't drained away to hubs like London, Manchester or Glasgow.

Connectivity increasingly means the difference between commuting great distances or being able to work where you live. And of course, with increased connectivity comes the requirement to get the most out of your technology. For the next generation, tech dependency for life and work will be even more vital to avoid being left behind.

This is where initiatives like the Barefoot Computing Project can help. The Barefoot Computing Project was set up to help primary teachers get to grips with changes to the ICT curriculum that were introduced in 2014. The changes saw the national curriculum move away from traditional IT towards computing and computational thinking skills. Since then, Barefoot has been providing primary schools with free computing resources, teacher workshops and lesson plans to help foster a culture of tech literacy and help pupils develop those much-needed digital skills.

Any primary school is eligible to receive free Barefoot resources and a workshop, so if there's one in your community, you can get them on board. Getting involved is easy. A representative of the school simply needs to visit www.barefootcas.org.uk to register for free resources and free teacher workshops. By telling people about Barefoot, you'll be helping prepare young people for their digital futures.





THE RURAL BUSINESS AWARDS

in
partnership
with



Supporting rural businesses

We're proud to be working with the Rural Business Awards (RBAs) as an Associate Partner for 2017 via our Community Fibre Partnership programme. Established in 2014, the RBAs recognise businesses that operate across the rural sector. And because we work with many rural communities to help get them connected to the national fibre infrastructure, we share the RBA's passion about firms that value their rural roots.

The awards acknowledge and celebrate the vital contributions made by companies to the development and success of the rural sector. They encourage entrepreneurial spirit and recognise excellence in business set-up, operation and management.

This year's awards ceremony takes place on 5th October at Denbies Wine Estate in Surrey. Shortlisted firms will compete across 13 categories aligned to fit with the CLA's classification of rural businesses types: Land Based businesses, Land Related Businesses and Other Businesses located in rural areas.

"We're passionate about helping rural businesses grow, reach new

markets, and work more efficiently" said Steve Edwards, BT's director for Fibre Broadband Clients and RBA judge. "These awards offer a fantastic platform for rural businesses to get credible recognition through a broad range of categories. I'd encourage anyone running, or involved with a rural business to enter."

Anna Price, co-founder of the Rural Business Awards said "We are thrilled that a commercial force like BT has decided to become an RBA Associate Partner to help us recognise and reward the success of rural businesses. As the UK's only dedicated awards programme for rural business, the

Rural Business Awards is becoming an essential part of the rural business landscape. We would encourage all firms that are based in a rural location, or those that serve a rural marketplace, to enter the Awards. We have 13 categories, as well as an overall winner, and the closing date is 30 June so there is plenty of time to get your entry together. Entering is very simple and if you have any questions we have a dedicated helpline to support you through the application process."

Entries are open until the end of June so we encourage people to see if their eligible to enter, and do so at www.ruralbusinessawards.co.uk.

The 250th community signs deal with BT for a fibre partnership and the local primary school will benefit

Armitage Church of England Primary School in Ardwick, Manchester, marked a national milestone when it signed the 250th agreement in the UK for our Community Fibre Partnerships programme.

The partnership includes a £4,900 BT grant to help towards the cost of extensive engineering work to deliver ultrafast broadband for the school. Eligible communities can apply for a match-funded BT grant of up to £20,000 towards the cost of a new local fibre network, as long as the technology is capable of serving the local school.

Engineers from Openreach will install the latest Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology capable of delivering ultrafast speeds up to one gigabit per second (Gbps). The new high-speed technology will offer many benefits for the school and its pupils, including rapid downloading of education materials and seamless online streaming of videos.

Visiting the school to announce the good news, Kieran Charleson, BT's regional director for the North West, said: "We have been working closely with Armitage Primary School to agree this funding solution to bring ultrafast fibre to the pupils and staff of the school and it's great news that the contract, the 250th of our CFP programme, has now been signed and the service will be up and running by Spring 2018.



“We're keen to have conversations with other schools and communities who might be able to benefit from this approach.”

Andrew Curvis, school business manager for Armitage Church of England Primary School, said: "The internet plays an important role in our school today, from students researching projects to developing new computing skills which are vital for their working lives ahead.

"We're looking forward to seeing the benefits of the new ultrafast link to our students and staff when it goes live next year." BT's long term ambition is to help young people in the UK to make the most of technology through initiatives such as the BT Tech Literacy Programme, to inspire them to embrace the role technology plays in their lives.

Interested?

If your community is not served by superfast fibre – and it also includes a school that doesn't have access to superfast broadband then your community could be eligible for a grant.

The fibre journey

It often takes a few months before communities see Openreach working in their area once signing up for a Community Fibre Partnership, but a great deal is happening behind the scenes. Below are the main stages of the fibre journey to get faster internet.



Openreach take the blueprints from the design stage to your community, and check that what looks good on paper works in the real world. Their surveyor needs to check that there's enough space alongside all the existing utilities underground for our new cables, and whether there's enough space to accommodate their equipment. They'll also need to determine things like whether any road closures are needed to install fibre and, if so, apply to the local authority for road traffic management, traffic lights etc... They'll work closely with your local authority to make sure fibre is installed safely and with the minimum of disruption to local people.



At this point Openreach is ready to start the physical work in your community. They'll be installing the new equipment and bringing fibre cables from your local telephone exchange to your area. You might see teams working in the footway boxes along your street as they bring the fibre cable through the underground ducts or overhead on telephone poles. Putting the equipment in position might cause a bit of disruption with traffic diversions and closed pavements, Openreach will do their best to reduce this. Throughout the build phase they'll continue to work closely with the power companies and local authorities to reduce delays and keep disruption to a minimum.



For a Fibre to the Cabinet connection this stage is about connecting the power and fibre cables to the cabinet in your area. The existing and new cabinets are now connected to each other by underground copper cables. The physical build is now completed and there shouldn't need to be any further works in your area. For a Fibre to the Premises connection this stage is part of the build phase.



At this stage Openreach performs their final quality and safety checks in your area and will let service providers know that Superfast or Ultrafast connections are available. This is when you can upgrade to fibre via a service provider of your choice.

Here at BT, we're committed to working with all communities to find a fibre solution, and our Community Fibre Partnership scheme is designed to do just this.