

Questions and Answers - Better Broadband in Ashendon

What speeds will I get?

BT Openreach have estimated up to 80mbps depending on where you are located in the village. Some outlying properties will get lower speeds. However, whatever the speed it is a significant improvement over what we currently have. A full breakdown of the estimated speeds is available at

<https://www.hugofox.com/community/ashendon-parish-council-10421/broadband-working-group/>

Broadband speed – additional note:

There has been some discussion amongst the village regarding the communicated broadband speed. The Working Group has discussed the points raised with our BT Community Fibre contact and have been advised that: The potential speeds provided in the BT Openreach proposal are confirmed by them to be a good indication of the speeds at the different distribution points listed. The potential speeds are available to view on the Parish Council website at the link above. (These are potential, not guaranteed speeds.)

What about Poor Quality of Copper Wiring to Properties?

Some houses report that corroded copper wiring causes their currently slow broadband. We are advised that the current low speeds available to the village mean that BT Openreach will not replace copper wire as any improvement would be negligible. However, when we have a cabinet sending 80Mbps and a target speed of (for example) 60 Mbps, BT tell us that degradation will be much less than now but if a household is not achieving a speed that relates to their distribution point and distance from it, it is a fault and BT Openreach will address this once reported to them by the customer's Internet Service Provider. So it is something that will be addressed after installation. The working group will, however, raise this point with BT Openreach during the design phase of our project, as appropriate.

How is Fundraising Going?

We have less than £9,000 to raise (as at 22nd March 2017). Two fundraising efforts (Children's filmshow and The Hundred Pub Meals) will also contribute but as yet we are unable to quantify the amounts. So, we still need pledges to ensure we can sign the contract with BT Openreach by 31st March 2017.

What if Pledges exceed the amount required?

We are not yet in that happy circumstance but if we are, then the directors of Connecting Ashendon CIC will make a decision on this. For example, a small excess may be donated to a village charity, or larger amount will be refunded (pro-rata) to pledgers. This decision may not be until the end of the project and may depend on the decision of grants/awards we have applied for. Given the above, I recommend that if you wish to make a pledge, you do so to an amount for which will be comfortable not receiving any rebate. Some residents have added to their pledge, a request that the working group come back to them in the event of a shortfall.

Who is Connecting Ashendon CIC?

Connecting Ashendon CIC is a Community Interest Company (CIC) This is a limited liability company and will be the legal entity that BT Openreach will be contracting with. Funds will go into and out of the CIC. Further details of this company will be shared as the set-up is completed.

The directors of this company are: David Crwys-Williams; Pietro Ranieri; Kelvin White.

Connecting Ashendon CIC has to conform to company law and will publish funds raised and accounts on the Parish Council website.

When Do We Pay Pledges?

Connecting Ashendon CIC will request payment as soon as the contract is signed. Payments will be into the company bank account.

Do I really need better Broadband?

For some villagers the benefits of Superfast Broadband do not need to be explained as many are already struggling already to do the things they want or need to do from their home in Ashendon. These are the things that 95% of the British population already do without thinking, including people in the villages that immediately surround Ashendon.

If you do not feel an immediate need to improve your Internet speeds or to change your current provider you will not need to do so BUT please consider the longer-term benefits that the ability to gain access to Superfast Broadband will provide. Here is a good article that might help to inform on what these are:

<http://www.increasebroadbandspeed.co.uk/reasons-superfast-broadband>

If you can't view this website, please ask a neighbour or friend to do so for you – it is important to be aware of the benefits of Superfast Broadband.

Is Fibre to the Cabinet the best option?

The Parish Council set up a working group to consider all the options for Ashendon. BT Openreach Fibre to the Cabinet was concluded to be the best option because it provides a robust, upgradeable and competitive solution. Because Openreach doesn't sell phone or broadband services each individual household/business will all be able to choose who to go to for their own Broadband service provision on the 'open market'.

A full breakdown of the solutions considered is available on the Ashendon Parish Council Website at: <https://www.hugofox.com/community/ashendon-parish-council-10421/broadband-working-group/>

The installation for Ashendon Fibre to the Cabinet will be through the Community Fibre Partnership offered by BT Openreach.

What is Community Fibre Partnership?

This is a programme set up by BT Openreach to find an affordable solution to bring fibre Broadband to areas in the 5% of the country not covered by an existing fibre upgrade plan. The partnerships are usually based on a joint funding arrangement, where BT Openreach cover the costs in line with our commercial model used throughout the country and the community self-funds the remaining gap.

What is our funding gap?

Ashendon (and hamlets of Upper and Lower Pollicott) will be required to fund £65,744 (no VAT).

Better Broadband vouchers with the Dept. of Culture, Media & Sport will fund £31,150.00 of this and the balance must be raised by the community. Of the £34,594.00 still need to raise just under £9,000.

How will we fund that?

If you recall we asked every household in Ashendon to give permission for an application to be made for Better Broadband Scheme Vouchers to be applied for on their behalf. We have registered our Better Broadband vouchers with the Dept. of Culture, Media & Sport and this will have raised £31,150.00 (subject to confirmation). In addition we have been awarded a £6,000 grant by the Waddesdon Local Area Forum and village organisations and individuals have pledged amounts they can afford to contribute. We are currently working on other sources of funding. We may consider a loan to secure the contract if necessary.

We must pay a deposit of 50% when the order is placed. We cannot use the funding from the Broadband Voucher scheme for this deposit so we were left to raise a further £26,872 before we can place our order. That figure is decreasing daily and we now have less than £9,000 to raise. We aim to place our order by 31st March 2017.

Who will raise the funds?

The Broadband Working Group will lead the fundraising effort. A Community Interest Company (CIC) is being set up and will be known as: Connecting Ashendon CIC. This is a limited liability company and will be the legal entity that BT Openreach will be contracting with. Funds will go into and out of the CIC. Further details of this company will be shared as the set-up is completed.

When will it be installed?

When our order is placed BT Openreach will confirm the installation plan and dates. To benefit from the Better Broadband Voucher scheme this must be before 17th March 2018. That is what we are working toward as a significant part of our funding will be from the voucher scheme.

Will I Save Money Compared to my Current Broadband/Internet?

There are possible savings. At the moment you could be paying separately for broadband and landline. Here is a simple **real** example of current expenditure from one villager per year:

	Now	With BT Openreach
Broadband	£354 <i>(£29.50 per month Village Networks)</i>	£384 <i>(£32 per month TalkTalk – 24 month contract)</i>
Landline	£277 <i>(BT Line Rental + Calls)</i>	Included in Broadband contract
Total	£631	£384

Total potential annual saving = £247

Please check for yourself as offers do vary and we cannot be liable for this quotation but it does indicate that this resident could save money.

You can check the Superfast broadband deals Service Providers have on their website (via their logos below) and choose the deal that best meets your needs at home or work.

<https://www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/fibre-broadband/superfast-fibre/buy-it-now.aspx>