
Connecting Devon and Somerset



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What is Connecting Devon and Somerset?

Somerset County Council and Devon County Council, are working together to bring Superfast and Improved broadband to the area. With a successful bid for c. £30m of funding from government (BDUK), and a commitment of c.£10m from each county council, preparations are currently underway to procure and deliver the best solution possible for rural Somerset and Devon – the “final third”, **rural areas** that are unlikely to benefit from commercial investment.

Without this project 700,000 people and nearly 26,000 businesses with a combined turnover of £9 billion have no certainty of superfast or improved broadband.



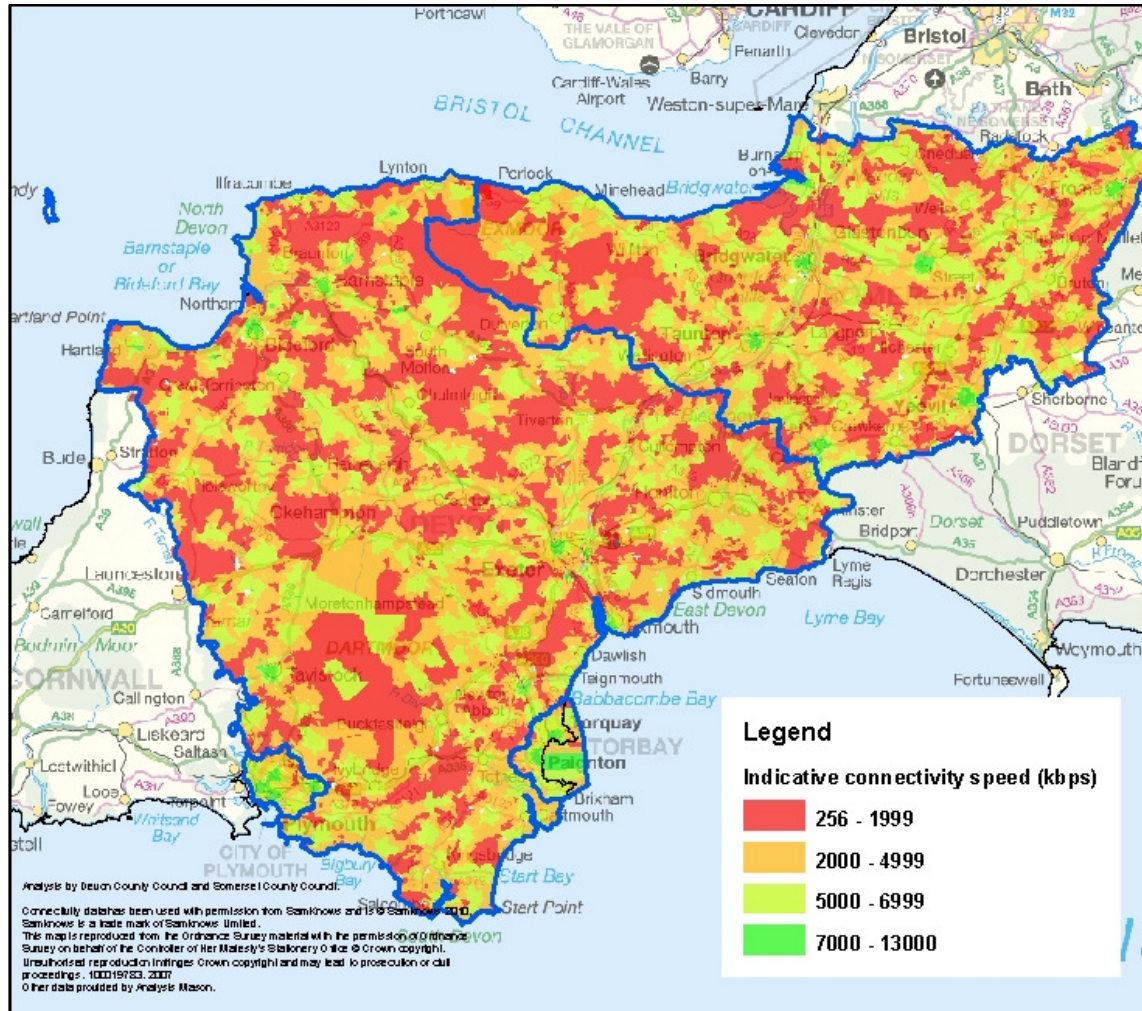
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Currently...

- Many of our rural areas experience poor connectivity speeds, coverage and reliability because of the excessive distance or the quality of the line from the telephone exchange
- A real Urban v Rural divide
- Brake on rural business growth – access to markets, customers, research, complying with regulation etc
- Undermines vitality of our rural communities – job opportunities, education, tele-health, delivering public services
- Risk of businesses moving to areas of better connectivity
- Harder to attract inward investment

Currently...



This map shows the indicative internet speeds received at postcode level across Devon and Somerset. All those areas in red currently receive less than 2 Mbps.



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Programme Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Deliver 'standard' universal broadband for every home and business, by 2015, that is reliable, robust, future-proofed, significantly better than currently experienced, and at least 2Mbps
- **Objective 2:** Deliver 'superfast' broadband for at least 85% of homes and businesses by 2015

- **Objective 3:** Ensure that the 2015 network can be upgraded between 2015 and 2020 to deliver **100% superfast broadband**, and even higher superfast speeds where needed
- **Objective 4:** Provide broadband access through **at least 10 service providers** offering services at prices equivalent to national averages, and achieving agreed benchmarks for quality of service and speeds experienced by end users

- **Objective 5:** Support economic growth, enable digital inclusion and enhance our attractiveness to the telecoms market through an effective programme of demand stimulation ensuring take-up of standard and superfast broadband services by **at least 50%** of households and businesses in ‘white’ areas and an **additional 25% take-up** in ‘grey’ and ‘black’ areas
- **Objective 6:** Balance competing priorities in **phasing roll-out** to ensure that rural communities are not disadvantaged whilst ensuring that businesses receive the broadband they need when they need it

- **Objective 7:** Deliver the **best value for money solution** without ongoing public sector subsidy by making the best use of public sector assets and facilitating the development of community broadband hubs where appropriate
- **Objective 8:** **Transform the way public services are delivered** through moving as many services online as possible, developing innovative methods of delivering services, equipping businesses and residents with the skills and motivation to utilise these services effectively

What is Superfast Broadband?

- The new generation of broadband - much faster, more reliable and using a different technology than we are all used to today.
- Whilst traditional broadband is delivered via copper telephone lines, superfast broadband commonly uses fibre optic cable, often in conjunction with copper lines – FTTC
- Upload and download speeds that are lightning fast when compared to traditional broadband - sometimes as high as 40Mbps to 100Mbps.
- Although mainly associated with fibre optic, other technologies such as wireless, satellite and advanced copper solutions (ADSL2+) can also be used to deliver high speed broadband – we expect our project to use a combination of these technologies

Benefits for all

- There is the potential for every person in the area to benefit from superfast and improved broadband. Here are just a few examples:
 - People with disabilities or caring responsibilities who would find it hard to travel to work may now be able to work effectively from home
 - Flexible/remote working will improve people's quality of life through having more control over where and when they choose to work
 - Elderly people could stay at home and enjoy 'telecare' rather than entering residential care
 - Connections to friends, family and colleagues will have a new dimension with video becoming an everyday occurrence.

Some of the business benefits

- Helping our small businesses to grow
- Increased use of online tools
- Flexible working – multiple benefits
- New innovative ways to reach out to potential customers eg B&B video tours, easier to upload large files
- Streamlining working practices, leading to greater productivity
- Become more competitive
- Opening up of new markets

Some of the business benefits

- Doing things quicker and more efficiently
- Improved customer service
- Environmental impacts and cost savings through use of video conferencing
- Opportunities to collaborate in real time
- Improve viability of rurally located businesses and start ups
- Supporting the self-employed

Our Approach

- Joined with Somerset and North Somerset – critical mass, shared land border and growth agendas
- Supported by the Heart of the South West LEP
- Endorsed and supported by 19 MPs and several MEPs
- Buy-in from other public sector bodies
- Supported by two National Parks
- Organisations and businesses significant support – represented more than 40,000 businesses across area
- 4000 residents registered their support
- DCC and SCC investing own capital and providing revenue funding to deliver the project
- Lobbying other funding sources – ERDF, DEFRA etc

Project update

- Funding - £100m
- The Area
- Timescales & procurement
- Extent of the challenge
- Demand Stimulation/Registration Programme
- Skills
- Community Hubs

Staying in touch

www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk

Newsletter sign up and the latest news

Local Broadband Plan available for download

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