



Connecting Cumbria through superfast broadband

Strategy for 2011 – 2015 : Summary

What is superfast broadband?

Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), the government body responsible for delivering superfast broadband, defines it as access to speeds of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps).

Why is superfast broadband important?

Superfast broadband can bring many opportunities and benefits: easier and more efficient ways to do business, better communications with family and friends, different ways of receiving public services, being able to work from home or access education, and more online shopping and entertainment options.

Our vision for Cumbria

Our vision is that everyone in Cumbria – every resident, business, organisation and visitor – has access to superfast broadband.

We want every house and business in Cumbria to have a choice of Internet Service Provider (ISP) at a cost that is no higher than that paid by consumers' anywhere in the country.

Our ambition is that at least 90 per cent of properties in the county have access to superfast broadband by 2015.

How will this benefit people and businesses in the county?

Fast and affordable broadband will help improve the quality of life and opportunities available to people who live, work and study in Cumbria. This will mean:

- it is more efficient for organisations to deliver services and easier for members of the public to access them
- improved competitiveness and productivity of Cumbrian businesses – helping support the growth of the county's economy
- better communications and links within and between communities

How will we make this happen?

We will:

- use the public funding we've received to focus on areas that commercial markets won't reach by themselves
- use a mix of technologies to meet the needs of different communities
- deliver speeds that meet the needs of local people and businesses
- bring connections to central locations in communities, called community broadband hubs
- work with local communities to connect homes and businesses to community broadband hubs in areas where it isn't viable for commercial providers to do this
- encourage demand for broadband amongst communities and businesses. This will also show investors and commercial organisations that there is a market for their services
- do all we can to attract a high level of investment from the private and public sector to deliver the best broadband solution we can

How will we do this?

Initially the focus will be on delivering the Connecting Cumbria project. This project involves recruiting a commercial organisation to work with us to upgrade the infrastructure so that more areas can benefit from superfast broadband.

The project is intended to be delivered by 2015 and will focus investment on areas the commercial market does not currently supply. This will make it possible for communities, often in rural areas, which won't be reached by the market itself to access superfast broadband.

Delivery will be supported by funding and resources provided by BDUK, Cumbria County Council, the private sector, and others.

How we will measure success?

We'll know this project has been a success when:

- At least 90% of properties in Cumbria will have access to a connection of at least 25 Mbps by 2015
- Where a 25mb/s connection is not available we will ensure that properties in Cumbria have access to an internet connection of at least two Mbps.

How can local people and businesses get involved?

There are volunteers across the county called Hub Coordinators and Broadband Champions. They are working with communities to help them develop solutions to bringing broadband to their area.

You can get involved by:

- Becoming a Hub Coordinator or Broadband Champion as we are still recruiting in some areas.
- Speaking to your Hub Co-ordinator about how you can help develop plans in your area
- Where there is not a Hub Co-ordinator in your area you can speak to your parish councillor

Go to www.connectingcumbria.org for contact details of your local Hub Co-ordinator and how to contact your parish councillor. You can also get latest updates and sign up for our regular newsletter.