



Connecting **Devon and Somerset**

Briefing, February 21st, 2022

Programme update

- **Airband and Openreach contracts in Devon**
- **CDS Mobile Boost Scheme**
- **Vouchers**

Summary

- CDS has delivered superfast connections to over **315,000** homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset.
- **Airband** and **Openreach** teams are working in dozens of communities across Devon under contract to CDS to connect thousands of additional homes and businesses.
- Hundreds of homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset have benefited from the CDS Mobile Boost Scheme funded by the Heart of the South West LEP.
- Over **2,000** additional homes and businesses in Devon now have gigabit-capable connections or are in the process of being connected through the Gigabit Voucher scheme.
- **Storm disruption:** Contractors worked late into the evening over the weekend reconnecting homes and businesses. Many are now reconnected, but the recovery work is ongoing. Overhead cabling work had to be halted and planned road closures postponed until safe to resume.

Network Live:

Airband

Following the extensive build work in **North** and **West Devon**, Airband have moved into the final “Test and Commissioning” phases of new networks for CDS in **Great Torrington, Langtree, Weare Giffard, East Anstey, South Molton, Meshaw** and **Mortehoe**. These areas will be ready to serve customers from March onwards. Airband have also gone live in many areas in-and-around **Barnstaple, Braunton, Croyde, Goodleigh** and **Bratton Fleming**, with designated teams working on the final ‘hard-to-reach’ properties to complete their deployment.

Openreach

Openreach have live connections in **Combeinteignhead** and **Lane End**, outside Mary Tavy. Openreach say residents in **Shillingford** will be able to order a broadband service from towards the end of this month (February).

Network Build:

Airband

Once designs are checked, Airband teams install cabinets in key locations in the new network and get these built and powered up in advance of their cabling teams. Work will be carried out in **Okehampton, North Tawton, Taw Green, Hatherleigh, Jacobstowe, Monkokehampton, Northlew, Cheriton Bishop, Colebrook, Lifton** and **Lewtrenchard** in the coming weeks.

Airband teams are busy deploying fibre and splicing joints in **Abbotsham, Bideford, Instow, Fairy Cross, Clovelly, Hartland, Tavistock, Teignmouth, Bere Alston, Crapstone, Gulworthy** and **Milton Combe**.

Airband anticipate having the network completed and ready for testing by the end of March, from **Tiverton to Nomansland** (including **Ashley, Calverleigh, Frogwell, Hensleigh, Loxbeare, Lurley, Nomansland, Pennymoor, Puddington, Tiverton, and Withleigh**) and down the Exe from **Exminster**, through **Kenn and Kenton to Starcross**, as well as between **Bishopsteignton, Luscombe and Berry Pomeroy**. Whilst all efforts are made to minimise disruptive roadworks by careful timing and the use of existing infrastructure, some road closures have been required and others will be necessary to safely carry out work in some of these areas.

Openreach

Openreach are now building for CDS in and around **Dulverton**, including **Bampton, Oakford, Oakfordbridge, Morebath and Shillingford**. Teams are also now undertaking the planning required to shortly begin build in **Bickleigh** (Nr Plymouth), **Wotter, Shaugh Prior, Coffinswell, Watermouth, Blue Anchor and Kentisbury Ford**.

Network Survey:

Airband

Survey work is drawing to completion in the Airband networks for **Bridgetown, Buckfastleigh, Crabbers Cross, Dartington Hall, Diptford, Harbertonford, Mill Cross, Rattery, Dartmouth**, as well as **Budleigh Salterton and Ottery St Mary** and the information returned to the design teams will be used to refine plans ready for construction. Surveys are also scheduled to be undertaken in **Berry Pomeroy, Blagdon, Littlehempston and Totnes** in the next few weeks.

Before the fibre deployment commences Airband send out teams to check ducting, clear blockages and erect poles. These enabling works will be taking place over the next couple of months in **Cullompton, Halberton and Bradninch**.

Openreach

Meanwhile, Openreach are finalising the survey work required to submit network designs for the final element of their contracted build for CDS, covering **Twitchen, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Satterleigh and Warkleigh, South Zeal and Throwleigh** and **Murchington**.

Network Design:

Airband

Network design by Airband continues to progress well in **Kings Nympton, Chulmleigh, Dolton, Halwill Junction, Hatherleigh, Northlew, Jacobstowe, North Tawton, Taw Green and St Giles on the Heath**. Construction is currently on target to begin in these areas in **Spring/Summer 2022** subject to securing the necessary wayleaves.

Airband's design teams are also busy preparing plans for **East Devon** areas near **Sidmouth, Gittisham, Seaton, Axminster** and as far as the Dorset border. In **Teignbridge** and the **South Hams**, Airband are designing new connections to **Dartmouth, Thurlestone, Salcombe, Marldon, Collaton Fishacre, and Dawlish** with surveyors' vans expected in these areas soon. The resulting plans will be passed back to the survey teams in March-April to check and report.

Airband's [website](#) now includes a list of the community areas covered by the new contracts, the anticipated completion dates and a map of the coverage areas. Airband have enhanced their online premise level checker for communities covered by all CDS contracts, new and pre-existing, allowing for detailed checks.

Openreach

Openreach have now finalised and submitted plans for their network south of **Tiverton**, covering **Bickleigh, Silverton, Cadeleigh** and **Butterleigh**.

Mobile Boost Scheme

Businesses and households across Devon and Somerset have benefited from improved indoor mobile coverage thanks to the Mobile Boost Scheme, an initiative funded through the Heart of the Southwest Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Growth Deal. The Mobile Boost Scheme offers vouchers of up to £1200 towards the cost and installation of mobile signal boosters to upgrade indoor 4G coverage in "not-spot" areas, improving the quality of mobile phone calls and connectivity. Beneficiaries are required to contribute to the cost and installation of equipment, the amount varies depending on the type of equipment adopted.

The LEP set a target of 400 installations by 31 January 2022 and the scheme has proved popular with **427 Mobile Signal Boosters having been installed to date**. The scheme remains open and businesses and residents in Somerset, Devon, Torbay and Plymouth are invited to apply.

Applications for the scheme are made through the Connecting Devon and Somerset website. Once a voucher code has been issued the beneficiary contacts a supplier from the approved supplier list on the website. Suppliers then work with the beneficiary to discuss the best technology option for their premises and carry out the installation of the equipment.

More information and a link to the application form can be found on the Connecting Devon and Somerset website [The CDS Mobile Boost Voucher Scheme – Guide - Connecting Devon and Somerset | Faster broadband is on its way](#)

Vouchers

In parallel with our broadband contracts and other initiatives, CDS works closely with Building Digital UK (BDUK) to expand take-up of the Government's Rural Gigabit Voucher programme. CDS offers support to communities who wish to contract with telecoms providers to design and shape broadband solutions for their areas. CDS can provide additional financial support where appropriate through its Community Challenge Programme to help bridge any local funding gaps.

To date, vouchers worth £4.5 million have been issued in Devon and **2,458 additional homes and businesses have gigabit-capable broadband or are in the process of being connected**.

Additional information

CDS has delivered connectivity to more homes and businesses than any other broadband programme in England. Source: DCMS.

CDS is one of the most cost-effective programmes in England with costs per premise in the lowest quartile nationally. Source: BDUK.

Take-up of CDS funded broadband services is nearly 70% compared with a national average of 61.4%. Source: BDUK.

Further information: Connecting Devon and Somerset: Matt Barrow, matt.barrow@devon.gov.uk, www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk

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