

## Broadband in the Cairngorms National Park

This briefing provides more information on the two main programmes which are bringing improved broadband services to communities in the Cairngorms National Park<sup>1</sup> - the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme and a community-led initiative that is being supported by Community Broadband Scotland.

### What is the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme?

- The Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme is a contract between the Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and BT to provide access to fibre broadband for the majority of premises not covered by any commercial roll-out
- As part of this programme Highlands and Islands Enterprise will manage the contract that will deliver access to fibre broadband to around 84% of homes and businesses in Highlands and Islands by the end of 2016, you can check the availability of fibre in your area on their [website](#)
- Budget constraints and technical challenges mean that parts of Scotland will not benefit from this programme's roll-out of fibre broadband – this is where Community Broadband Scotland comes in

### What is Community Broadband Scotland?

- Community Broadband Scotland is a Scottish Government project led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise which operates over the whole of Scotland
- Community Broadband Scotland can provide funding which enables communities to develop projects that acquire the digital infrastructure they need to achieve more equitable broadband provision in areas that will not benefit from the DSSB fibre roll out (see above).
- CBS Advisors offer advice, guidance and financial support to communities across Scotland to enable them to pursue a community-led broadband solution

### What is the Cairngorms Community Broadband Project?

- The Cairngorms Community Broadband project aims to bring superfast (>30Mb) broadband to communities in the area that are not due to benefit from the DSSB fibre roll out.
- It's what we call an 'aggregated' project as rather than focussing on a single community it aims to bring a number of communities together in one large project. Aggregated projects have a number of advantages in that they can achieve economies of scale and may be attractive to commercial providers who could run the network once established.
- The project is in the early stages and a Working Group has been established to take forward the initial work - its current priorities are defining the area that will be covered by the community broadband project and establishing a legal body to take the project forward

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that areas bordering the Cairngorms National Park will not be excluded from the project.

- Community Broadband Scotland funded projects such as this cannot be built in areas that have already received public funding through the DSSB programme. This is decided on a postcode level with three classifications of postcodes:
  - White postcodes are where there are no plans to provide fibre coverage
  - Grey post codes are where there will be partial fibre coverage
  - Black postcodes are where there is fibre available to at least 80% of premises
- The Cairngorms project will be targeted at the white areas – clarification of those postcodes is expected in July 2016, when the full extent of the phase 1 DSSB coverage will be known. Once the project area is clarified, CBS and Working Group members will engage further with communities to provide further information and gather views
- The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is currently acting as Chair of the Working Group and is very supportive of the project but this project is community led and is not being led by the CNPA.
- The minutes from the Working Group are published online [here](#) and will be circulated to those that wish to keep up to date with the project
- The Cairngorms Community Broadband project fits within the Cairngorms Economic Strategy (2015 – 2018) which identified improved digital infrastructure as a necessity to support a growing, sustainable economy.
- The [GigaPlus Argyll](#) project is the first 'aggregated' project funded by Community Broadband Scotland and the first connections using this network are expected later this year
- At the June 2016 meeting the Working Group agreed to establish a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status to take forward the Cairngorms Community Broadband project.

## Key Questions

- *What technology will the community broadband project use?*

The final design of the project has not been confirmed but will be finalised through the project tendering process. Due to the topography of the project area it is likely that wireless technology will be used in the project design.

- *How much will it cost to subscribe to the community broadband project?*

The price points that would be offered through the community broadband project has not yet been finalised, pricing will be confirmed once the project design and business planning is completed BUT it is a condition of funding that the price points will need to be comparable to market rates.

- *When will I be able to subscribe and receive a service from the community broadband project?*

Projects like this are challenging and therefore the processes required for designing, funding and building the infrastructure can be lengthy. If there are no major set-backs we expect the project to be built in Autumn/Winter 2017 with the first connections going live in early 2018.

## Next Steps

- Establish a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status to take forward the Cairngorms Community Broadband project (July – September 2016).
- Issue State Aid Public Consultation document (August 2016).
- Go out to tender for the design, build and operation of the project (expected Autumn/Winter 2016)
- CBS and CCB will engage further with communities to provide further information to households in the project area (ongoing process)

## Working Group members

Name	Organisation
Murray Ferguson (Chair) and David Watson	Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA)
Helen Webster, Chris Bremner and Stephen Crockett	Cromdale and Advie Development Trust
Oliver Giles and Mary Williams Edgar	Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT)
Robert Cumming and Al Fleming	Badenoch Broadband & Communications (CIC) (BCCIC)
Peter Duffus and Jo Smith	Glenbuchat & Corgarff Broadband Project
Mark Tate and Philippa Grant	Cairngorms Business Partnership
Jamie Williamson	Alive Estate and Scottish Land and Estates
Brian Tolson	Boat of Garten Community Council
David Cameron and Alice Mayne	Cairngorms Local Action Group
Roger Clegg	Association of Cairngorms Communities

## Community Broadband Scotland contacts

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## Further information

[Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband](#)

[Community Broadband Scotland](#)

Meeting Papers are published on the [Cairngorms National Park Authority website](#)