openreach

Community Fibre Partnerships

Choosing a next generation broadband provider

If you're thinking about a fibre broadband solution for an area that network providers haven't considered as commercially viable, you'll need to factor in various options and outcomes. That includes both from an infrastructure perspective, and yourself as an end user.

If you live or work in an area that's not already covered under current rollout plans for fibre, you need to secure funding, appoint an infrastructure provider and attract a range of communications service providers.

And of course, you'll want to achieve the best possible fibre broadband solution.

How to secure funding?

To meet the cost of bringing fibre broadband to your community – however large or small – you'll need to work with an infrastructure provider. This is on assumption that your local authority has confirmed they don't already have a plan/project to upgrade your area to superfast.

How to choose an infrastructure provider?

There are many fibre infrastructure providers but not all are national. When choosing a provider to partner with, lots of options need careful consideration before you make a decision. Below are some key points to consider when choosing who's best placed to get you fibre:

- Clear, inclusive costing – will all installation work be included in the quoted price, without a premium to pay or other works to undertake? Are there connection charges to pay? Do you have to dig up your own drive for a fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) solution?

- Ongoing maintenance – If a fault develops with your connection, or network upgrades need carrying out in future, who carries that responsibility?

- Professional standards of work – will the network provider adhere to National Joint Utilities Group Guidelines, e.g. ensuring that ducts are at the right depth and cabinets are located to minimise the risk of damage?

- Back-up voice services – in the event of a power cut, does the infrastructure support voice calls, including emergency 999 services?

- Open, competitor-friendly network – is the infrastructure open to all communications suppliers, creating an environment that keeps prices low and offers a choice of services?

What else needs to be considered for the community and the end user?

There needs to be an understanding of what choice of services communications providers can offer different groups of end users.

These are some key points to consider:

- Connection costs – explore charges for connecting to a fibre broadband service, including any hub/router installation and activation costs.

- Equipment ownership – understand who owns the hubs/routers in the home or office.

- Cost comparisons – check how costs per month compare with other suppliers (especially if you're looking at a network provider whom you have to buy the service from) and if voice calls are included.

- Usage caps and contract restrictions – explore any caps and restrictions on end users and additional costs.

- Penalties – understand end users' costs for change or early termination of services.

- Support – What level of customer support is available?

- Security – check whether anti-virus, anti-spam and firewall security is provided.

- Additional services – check other services and costs, e.g. for email, computer backup/storage, own website space and wi-fi access.

Reasons to choose Openreach, the UK's primary infrastructure provider

- Our Openreach network is available to all UK communications providers – that's well over 500. This enables them to deliver a wide range of services that provide consumers and businesses with real choice.

- Our infrastructure already provides a complete network covering virtually the entire country and supporting 28 million phone lines.

- Regular maintenance and improvement of the infrastructure – £11bn has been invested in improving the network over the last 10 years.

- Capability of delivering both FTTC services (up to 80Mbps download) and fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) services (up to 330Mbps download).

About Openreach

Openreach is Britain's digital network business. We're around 30,000 people who connect homes, mobile phone masts, schools, shops, banks, hospitals, libraries, broadcasters, governments and businesses – large and small – to the world.

Our mission is to build the best possible network, with the highest quality service, making sure that everyone in Britain can be connected.

We work on behalf of more than 580 communications providers like Sky, TalkTalk, Vodafone, and BT, and our fibre broadband network is the biggest in the UK, passing more than 26.5 million premises. We're also the platform for Britain's thriving digital economy, which is the largest in the G20.

We're working hard to give people the speeds they need to run and enjoy their daily lives. Over the last decade, we've invested more than £11 billion into our network and we now manage more than 158 million kilometres of cable stretching from Scotland to Cornwall, from Wales to the east coast. And we're continuing to take that network further – making superfast broadband speeds available to thousands more homes and businesses every week.

Openreach is a wholly owned and independently governed division of the BT Group, and it is a highly regulated business, with more than 90 per cent of our revenues generated from services that are regulated by Ofcom. Any company can access our products under exactly the same prices, terms and conditions.