



**BRIEFING PAPER**

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# Fixed Broadband: Policy and Speeds

By David Hirst

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## Summary

Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) is spending £790 million on its superfast (rural) broadband programme, which aims to improve superfast broadband provision to premises across the UK. The Coalition Government's revised its target dates for several of their broadband commitments a number of times, but the current targets are to extend:

- Superfast broadband for 90% of the UK by the end of 2015, and provide a basic broadband service (2Mbps) for all – **Phase 1**;
- Superfast broadband to 95% of the UK by 2017 – **Phase 2**;
- Superfast broadband coverage to the “final 5%” of UK premises – **Phase 3**.

### Britain's superfast broadband future

The Coalition Government's main broadband commitments were first detailed in a broadband strategy – [Britain's superfast broadband future](#) – in December 2010. This strategy set the Government's ambition and allocated £530 million: to provide everyone in the UK with access to broadband with a download speed of at least 2Mbps (megabits per second); and to bring 'superfast broadband' (at least 24Mbps) to 90% of UK homes and businesses.

Later, in 2013, [the Government increased its ambition](#), allocating an additional £250 million to provide 95% of the UK with 'superfast broadband' by 2017. The Government is also exploring different approaches to [delivering superfast broadband to the remaining hardest to reach areas](#)—namely, remote and rural areas—phase 3.

In February 2015, Sajid David MP explained that the Government's focus was now on reaching the “final 5%” of hard to reach, remote and rural areas. In the March 2015 Budget the Coalition Government announced a new ambition that ultrafast broadband (speeds of at least 100Mbps) would be available to nearly all UK premises, although no target date was given.

### Delays in rollout

On 5 July 2013 the [NAO reported on the Government's broadband programme](#). The report notes that Departmental forecasts predict the programme will complete its rollout 22 months later than originally planned. The NAO report was followed by a series of select committee inquiries. In January 2015 the NAO published an updated report on the rural broadband programme which noted that superfast broadband is likely to reach the phase 1 target of 90% of premises ahead of the revised date of December 2016.

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee report on [Rural Broadband and digital only services](#) was published on 3 February 2015. The report notes that the Government's target dates for broadband have changed a number of times, and raises concerns that the target for delivering superfast broadband to 95% of UK premises “may slip”. It also urged the Government to set a clear target date for when the last 5% of premises will obtain access to superfast broadband.

### New Conservative Government 2015-

The new Conservative Government's 2015 election manifesto reaffirmed its superfast broadband ambitions, pledging that rural Britain would have “near universal” superfast broadband by the end of the 2015 Parliament.

# 1. Policy on broadband access

The Coalition Government's main broadband commitments were first announced by Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Media, Olympics and Sport on 8 June 2010. They were then followed up in more detail in a broadband strategy – [Britain's superfast broadband future](#) in December 2010. The key elements of policy are summarised below.<sup>1</sup> The Chancellor confirmed that £530 million will be invested over the Spending Review period to support the UK's broadband network and to incentivise the roll out of superfast broadband in areas that the private sector would not otherwise reach.<sup>2</sup> This included £300 million made available from the BBC licence fee revenue.<sup>3</sup>

The new Conservative Government has reaffirmed the Coalition Government's key commitments regarding broadband.

## Box 1: Key commitments of the Coalition Government

- **Universal access to broadband at a minimum of 2Mbps for all by 2015**

*The previous Labour Government set this target but it had not been clear whether the 2Mbps was a minimum. Although the current Government kept this target it was "not convinced" that there was sufficient funding in place to achieve this the original 2012 deadline and has set a "more realistic target" of achieving this access within the lifetime of this Parliament bearing in mind the funding available in the short term.<sup>4</sup> This commitment was restated in the Coalition Government's broadband strategy (see below).*

- **Ensuring the UK has the best superfast broadband network in Europe by the end of the Parliament (2015).**

*The previous Labour Government's target was for 90% of the UK to have superfast broadband by 2017 (i.e greater than 24Mb/s). The current Government said that this commitment could be met using fixed or wireless technology.<sup>5</sup> Jeremy Hunt suggested that he wanted 90% of people in each local authority area to have access to superfast (24 Mbps) broadband ISP service by 2015.<sup>6</sup>*

- **Seeking to introduce superfast broadband in remote areas at the same time as in more populated areas.<sup>7</sup>**

*This was a Liberal Democrat manifesto commitment.*

<sup>1</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport website, [Key note speech](#) by Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media, Olympics and Sport, to the Hospital Society on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Cm 7942, [Spending Review 2010](#), October 2010, para 1.39

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, para 2.117

<sup>4</sup> [Speech](#) by Jeremy Hunt MP Secretary of State for Culture, Media, Olympics and Sport at Broadband Industry Event, 15 July 2010

<sup>5</sup> HC 17 June 2010 c.533W

<sup>6</sup> [Government plans 90% UK coverage of 25Mbps superfast broadband by 2015](#), *ISP Review*, 13 May 2011

<sup>7</sup> HL Deb 10 June 2010 c.WA58

- **Four market testing project schemes** to bring superfast broadband to rural and hard to reach areas. These were intended to provide information that would help the Government to target intervention and look at how to make superfast broadband viable in the most challenging areas.

*Activity in support of this objective has focused on rural pilot projects in Cumbria, Herefordshire / Gloucestershire Borders, North Yorkshire and the Highlands and Islands in Scotland.<sup>8</sup> The Government has provided a further £50m funding package (of the £530m allocation) to fund another wave of rural projects.<sup>9</sup>*

- **Facilitating mobile broadband:** In early 2013 Ofcom awarded 800MHz and 2.6GHz spectrum by auction to allow the development of next generation mobile services (4G). Ofcom included a coverage obligation of 95% of the UK population in the licence for the 800MHz spectrum.

- **Enabling and ensuring access to existing infrastructure** to reduce the cost of deployment.

*Ofcom has consulted on relevant measures to open up BT infrastructure (including ducts and poles) and on competition in broadband.<sup>10</sup> In July 2010 BIS published a discussion paper setting out the Government's thinking on broadband providers gaining access to other utilities' infrastructure and inviting views on the most effective ways to achieve it.<sup>11</sup> In October 2010, Ofcom issued a statement on its new regulatory obligations for BT to support investment and competition in superfast broadband.<sup>12</sup>*

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<sup>8</sup> HM Treasury website, [Spending Review Statement](#), 20 October 2010

<sup>9</sup> The Local Broadband Plan for an additional pilot project, Digital Rutland, was approved by BDUK in September 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Ofcom, [Enabling a superfast broadband Britain](#), 23 March 2010

<sup>11</sup> Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), [Broadband deployment and sharing other utilities' infrastructure](#): A discussion paper, July 2010

<sup>12</sup> Ofcom, [Review of the wholesale local access market – statement](#), 7 October 2010

## 2. Update on key commitments

### 2.1 Phase 1

#### Universal access to broadband speeds of 2 Mbps

The Coalition Government revised its target dates for several of their broadband commitments a number of times. As highlighted above, the original date for completion of universal access to 2 Mbps broadband (set by the previous Government) was 2012, but the Coalition changed this to 2015, and later revised it to 2016.<sup>13</sup> A Government response to an Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee report into Rural Communities stated in October 2013 that “*Virtually everyone will have at least 2Mbps by the end of 2016*”.<sup>14</sup>

However, in a PQ response in February 2015 the Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy said that the Department is developing plans to ensure remaining premises do have access to speeds of more than 2 Mbps by December 2015.

The Department estimates that by the end of 2015 fewer than 1 per cent of UK premises will have access to speeds of less than 2Mbps, down from 11 per cent in 2010. The Department is developing plans to enable these remaining premises to have access to speeds of more than 2Mbps by December 2015. The Department estimates that 90 per cent of UK premises will have access to speeds of more than 24Mbps by early 2016, and that 95 per cent will have access to these speeds by December 2017.<sup>15</sup>

The Department estimates that by the end of 2015 fewer than 1 per cent of UK premises will have access to speeds of less than 2Mbps, down from 11 per cent in 2010.

In order to meet this target, Broadband Delivery UK is exploring the option of providing broadband by satellite to people who would still be unable to access speeds of 2 Mbps through the copper or fibre networks by the end of 2015.<sup>16</sup>

#### Superfast broadband for 90% of the UK

There has been some uncertainty surrounding the Coalition Government’s target of delivering superfast broadband to 90% of the UK (Phase 1 of its superfast broadband programme). The Coalition Government had originally targeted 2015 as the date for this but a 2013 report by the National Audit Office on rural broadband highlighted the Government had revised its target to secure this for 90% of homes by December 2016.<sup>17</sup>

However, the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee’s February 2015 report into *Rural Broadband and digital-only services* (discussed in section 4.2) noted that the Government’s objective of rolling out superfast broadband (i.e. greater than 24 Mbps) to cover 90% of premises by 2015 had been altered to 95% of premises by

<sup>13</sup> Efra Committee., [Rural broadband ad digital-only services](#), 3 February 2015, para 11

<sup>14</sup> Efra Committee, [Rural Communities: Government Response to the Committee’s Sixth Report of Session 2013-14](#), HC 764, October 2013, p6

<sup>15</sup> [PQ 223689](#) [on Broadband], 12 February 2015

<sup>16</sup> Oral Evidence, [Q6 Rural Broadband](#), *Public Accounts Committee*, 28 January 2015

<sup>17</sup> National Audit Office, [The rural broadband programme](#), 5 July 2013, para 18

2017.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, during a backbench business debate on rural broadband and broadband connectivity in February 2015, Chris Bryant MP argued that the superfast target of 24 Mbps had been changed from 2015 to 2016.<sup>19</sup> The Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy responded to this, and said that the Government had not moved its target date, and still had every chance of delivering superfast broadband to 90% of UK premises by 2015.

We had a target to get superfast broadband to 90% of the country by the end of 2015, and we have every chance of meeting that target. *[Interruption.]* I repeat that we have every chance of meeting that target. Then we set a new target of 95%—namely, getting to a further 5% of the country by 2016-17. That is not moving the target.<sup>20</sup>

### 2.2 Phase 2: Superfast broadband for 95% of the UK

In the 2013 Spending Review, the Coalition Government announced a further allocation of £250 million as part of the superfast extension project—or Phase 2—to help extend superfast broadband to 95% of all premises in the UK 2017.<sup>21</sup>

In their 2015 report into rural broadband the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee pointed out that it was by no means certain that the Government would even meet this Phase 2 target. BT has told the Committee that “it is there or thereabouts. It may end up being in 2018”.<sup>22</sup>

### 2.3 Phase 3: The ‘final 5%’

Phase 3 of the Government’s broadband programme is to extend superfast broadband coverage to the “final 5%” of UK premises. The remaining unserved premises (estimated at 1.5 million) are geographically dispersed across the landmass of the UK. They are found in a mix of locations, “with differing topographies, population densities and with different proximity to existing basic and superfast broadband networks”.<sup>23</sup> They therefore pose distinct challenges.

On 21 March 2014, the [Government announced](#) that it was opening up to bids a £10m innovation fund “to test innovative ways to help take broadband to Britain’s most remote communities”. Suppliers were invited to submit bids in three different categories:

- Technology – seeing whether a technology that works can be used in remote areas

In the 2013 Spending Review, the Coalition Government announced a further allocation of £250 million as part of the superfast extension project—or Phase 2—to help extend superfast broadband to 95% of all premises in the UK 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Efra Committee., [Rural broadband ad digital-only services](#), 3 February 2015, para 11

<sup>19</sup> [HC Debate, 3 February 2015, c237](#)

<sup>20</sup> [HC Debate, 3 February 2015, c242](#)

<sup>21</sup> DCMS, “[Spending Round 2015/16 - full details of funding for DCMS bodies published](#)”, 4 July 2013

<sup>22</sup> Efra Committee., [Rural broadband ad digital-only services](#), 3 February 2015, para 11

<sup>23</sup> DCMS, [BDUK Market Test Pilots: Exploring superfast coverage beyond 95%](#), February 2015

- Operating models – trying novel operating models such as joining smaller networks together into a common larger network
- Financial – testing innovative public / private funding models that could bring in new investment

Three months later in June 2014, the [Government announced that it had shortlisted](#) the 8 successful bids to progress to the feasibility stage, ahead of deployment later in the year.

### Box 2: Innovation fund: Shortlisted bids

The eight shortlisted [schemes include](#):

- In Wales, **AB Internet** is planning a hybrid fixed line and wireless network that will deliver speeds of up to 50Mbps (funding: £847,650)
- In North Yorkshire, **Airwave** plans to deploy four next-generation wireless systems, including making use of TV white space (funding: £1,564,600)
- In North Lincolnshire, **Quickline** plans to test a range of line of sight, near line of sight and non-line of site technologies combined with a BDUK funded voucher scheme to maximise early uptake and avoid social exclusion (funding: £2,054,000)
- Satellite provider **Avanti** wants to pilot a satellite broadband platform in Northern Ireland and Scotland (funding: £884,640)
- In Hampshire, **Call Flow** are testing a range of innovative 'hybrid' engineering techniques/solutions to achieve Next Generation Access delivery (funding: £1,194,145)
- **MLL** plans to aggregate small wireless networks in Kent (funding: 957,900)
- In Northumberland, **Cybermoor** wants to develop a fibre to the home network using a financial model that gets investment from the local community (funding: £449,997)

On Monday 9 February 2015, Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport wrote [a letter to all MPs and Peers on superfast broadband](#) which also included a table on constituency level data. Within this, he emphasised that the focus was now on the “final 5%”:

I firmly believe that this transformation of the digital landscape should reach every area of the UK if at all possible. Focus is now on the “final 5%” – those areas in the hardest to reach places in the UK that are not covered by existing plans. Last year we launched a £10m Innovation Fund to explore ways to take superfast broadband to the hardest-to-reach places in the UK. We subsequently funded a number of pilot projects around the country.

Today the suppliers for the pilot projects are publishing their initial feasibility reports and Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) has published a summary report to share knowledge across the industry from each of these projects. Having a greater knowledge of the technological, commercial and administrative challenges and opportunities present in these hardest to reach areas will better enable government and industry to roll out superfast broadband to the final 5%.<sup>24</sup>

Sajid David MP:  
[Our] focus is now on the “final 5%” – those areas in the hardest to reach places in the UK that are not covered by existing plans.

The Coalition Government did not set a target date for when the final 5% of UK premises will have access to superfast broadband. However, the new Conservative Government’s 2015 election

<sup>24</sup> DCMS, [Deposited Papers House of Commons](#), 9 February 2015



manifesto pledged that rural Britain would have “near universal” superfast broadband by the end of the 2015 Parliament.

Further information about this phase 3 of the superfast broadband programme is provided on the [Broadband Delivery UK](#) website.

### 2.4 March 2015 budget commitments

#### Ultrafast broadband

The Coalition Government announced a new ambition in the [March 2015 Budget](#) that ultrafast broadband (speeds of at least 100 Mbps) should be available to “nearly all UK premises”. No target date has yet been set for this.

#### Universal Service Obligation

To support the delivery of broadband in rural areas, the Coalition Government announced in the [March 2015 Budget](#) that they would look into raising the Universal Service Obligation (the legal entitlement to a basic service) from dial up speeds to 5Mbps broadband.<sup>25</sup>

### 2.5 2015 Conservative Government

In their 2015 election manifesto, the Conservative Party reaffirmed their commitment to deliver superfast broadband to 95% of the UK by the end of 2017.<sup>26</sup> The manifesto also pledged that rural Britain would have “near universal superfast broadband by the end of the next Parliament”, as well as restating the pledge set out in the March 2015 Budget that ultrafast broadband would be available to nearly all UK premises “as soon as practicable”.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> HM Treasury, [Budget 2015](#), March 2015, para 1.123

<sup>26</sup> [The Conservative Part Manifesto 2015](#), p15

<sup>27</sup> [The Conservative Part Manifesto 2015](#), pp21 & 15

## 3. Funding and delivery of the strategy

During the 2010-15 spending review period a total of £530 million which includes £300 million from TV licence revenue has been allocated to broadband delivery. Funding from 2015-17 has not yet been allocated from central Government but the licence fee settlement (agreed in 2010) provides a further £150 million in each of 2015-16 and 2016-17 for BDUK funding if required.<sup>28</sup>

### 3.1 Broadband Delivery UK

Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) is responsible for managing the Government's broadband funding. Individual projects are the responsibility of local authorities and the devolved administrations, as set out in BDUK's delivery model.

Each local authority in England has been allocated funding to help provide 90 per cent of homes and businesses with access to superfast broadband and everyone with access to at least 2Mbps, while funding has also been allocated to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. As part of the Government's £530 million investment in the UK's broadband network, English counties are set to receive £294.8 million.<sup>29</sup> In England each county council or local enterprise partnership will lead broadband roll-out in their area, draw up an effective delivery plan, and match the Government's investment with European, their own or private funds. The BDUK website summarises how the process should work:

The rural broadband programme will be delivered through numerous separate local projects with complex procurements. The lead local authorities will have responsibility for managing the procurement process (the devolved administrations will be responsible for the process in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

To help speed up the procurement process, BDUK has put in place a framework agreement, with input from a number of the pilot local authorities. Local authorities and other local bodies can run a mini-competition from the framework to select a specific supplier to deliver broadband services for a local project.<sup>30</sup>

BDUK has developed a broadband delivery framework for use by the local authorities to assist in the procurement process. This framework contract was signed by DCMS and the suppliers BT and Fujitsu on 29 June 2012 (see section 3.2).

In total, Government, Local Authority and European Union funding combined has invested over £1.7billion to extend superfast coverage

Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) is responsible for managing the Government's broadband funding. Individual projects are the responsibility of local authorities and the devolved administrations

<sup>28</sup> BDUK, [Broadband Delivery Model](#), 2011 para 14.3.1-2

<sup>29</sup> The devolved administrations are set to receive the following: Scotland £100.8 million; Wales £56.9 million; Northern Ireland; £4.4 million

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/broadband-delivery-uk>

(download speeds of 24 Mbps and above) to 95% premises in the UK by the end of 2017.<sup>31</sup>

Up to date information on the [status of individual local authority programmes](#) is provided on the BDUK website.

### 3.2 Rural community broadband fund

On 10 March 2011, Defra announced funding expected to be worth up to £20 million for a new Rural Community Broadband Fund as part of a new rural support package which also included support for hill farmers. The fund is jointly funded by the Rural Development Programme for England (joint UK/EU funding) and BDUK. This has been set up to allow rural communities, including those in the uplands, to apply for help with small scale broadband projects.

The Rural Community Broadband Fund drew on RDPE European funds and the £530m BDUK fund announced in the Spending Review. The Rural Community Broadband Fund is now closed.

### 3.3 Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013

On 7 September 2012 the Coalition Government announced a range of measures to 'fast-track' the roll-out of superfast broadband.<sup>32</sup> The announcement included a proposal that broadband street cabinets and other equipment could be installed in any location other than a site of special scientific interest without the need for prior approval from the local council and without any conditions being placed upon the construction or design by local authorities except in exceptional circumstances.

The Growth and Infrastructure Act enables this by adding the need to promote economic growth as another consideration to be taken into account in making regulations which provide communications operators with rights to undertake development with the usual consents.

### 3.4 Super-connected cities

In 2011, the government set aside £100 million for an Urban Broadband Fund (UBF) that will create up to ten '[super-connected cities](#)' across the UK. This was followed in 2012 by a further fund of £50 million for [a 'second wave'](#) of cities to benefit from this programme.

The super-connected cities are eligible for a [voucher scheme](#), launched to contribute towards the cost of broadband connections for business. It offers them the opportunity to obtain a connection voucher worth up to £3,000 for faster, better broadband. In.<sup>33</sup>

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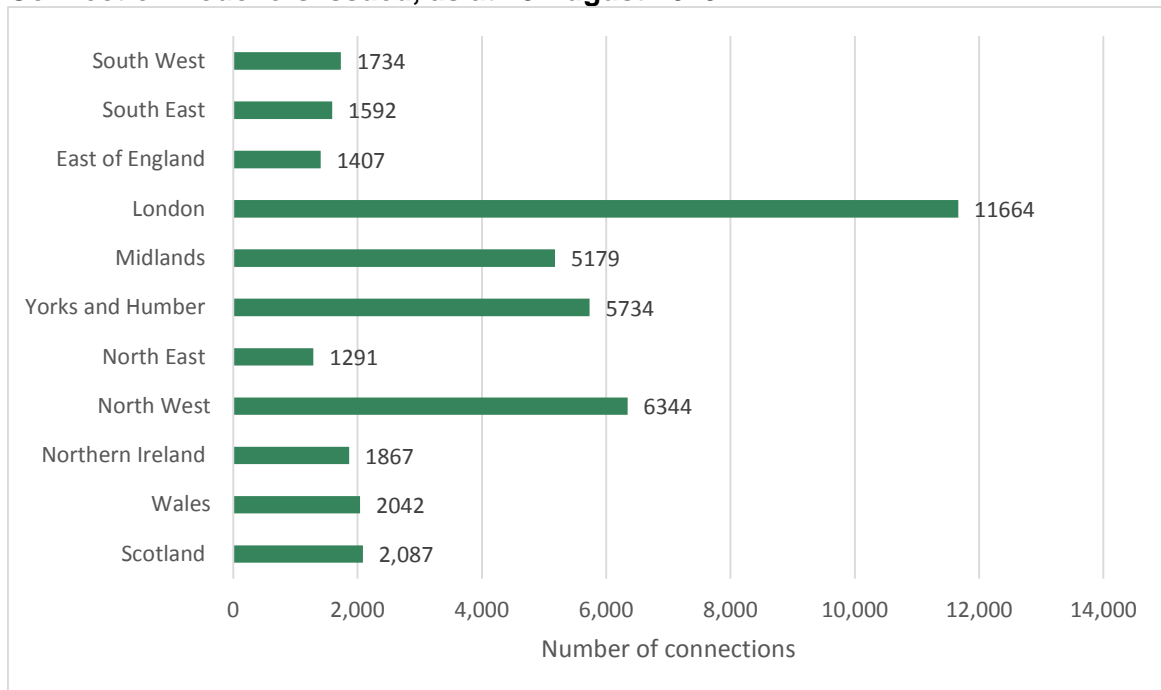
<sup>31</sup> [PQ 220396](#) [on Broadband], 12 January 2015

<sup>32</sup> [http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/media\\_releases/9331.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/media_releases/9331.aspx)

<sup>33</sup> [Autumn Statement 2014](#), para 1.118; DCMS, [Policy Paper: 2010 to 2015 government policy: broadband investment](#), 8 May 2015 [accessed on 12 July 2015]

The Coalition Government said in the [March 2015 Budget](#) that the connection voucher scheme has “directly supported broadband upgrades for more than 12,600 small and medium-sized businesses in 22 cities so far”.<sup>34</sup>

### Connection Vouchers issued, as at 25 August 2015



Source: [DCMS](#)<sup>35</sup>, House of Commons Library analysis

## 3.5 Satellite broadband

Broadband Delivery UK is currently exploring the option of providing broadband by satellite to people who would still be unable to access broadband speeds of 2 Mbps by the end of 2015. A PQ from February 2015 enquired about the potential cost of this, and how it was intended to be funded. The Minister responded that satellite broadband may involve a capital cost in the region of £150 to £200 per premises. Funding to allow for this is included in the local project superfast broadband contracts covering the first phase of the superfast broadband programme.<sup>36</sup>

The scheme is now being piloted in [Suffolk](#) and West Yorkshire, with plans for wider national implementation later in the year.

[Satellite broadband has been criticised for various reasons](#), including:

- not offering comparable service and speeds to fibre broadband;
- issues with latency: as the satellite signal has travel to and from the satellite it makes certain functions difficult, such as real-time online gaming; and

<sup>34</sup> HM Treasury, [Budget 2015](#), March 2015, para 1.121

<sup>35</sup> DCMS, “40,000 UK businesses have their broadband boosted”, [Gov.uk](#), 3 September 2015

<sup>36</sup> [PQ 222974](#) [on broadband], 2 February 2015

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- unexpected downtime during periods of bad weather.<sup>37</sup>

Speaking to ComputerWeekly.com, [Andrew Ferguson, editor of comparison site thinkbroadband.com](#), described satellite broadband as a tantalising stop-gap with limitations:

Satellite broadband, while able to provide the speeds it suggests, comes with various usage limits, meaning if you want to enjoy gorging on streamed TV boxsets you will need the most expensive packages at over £60 per month.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Alex Scroxton, "[Consumers to get connection vouchers for satellite broadband](#)", *ComputerWeekly.com*, 16 September 2015

<sup>38</sup> Alex Scroxton, "[Consumers to get connection vouchers for satellite broadband](#)", *ComputerWeekly.com*, 16 September 2015

## 4. Comments and Issues

The overall reaction to the Coalition Government's plans for broadband has been broadly positive. The Commission for Rural Communities welcomed the initial funding announced in the spending review and the specific recognition of the need to address rural broadband.<sup>39</sup> The Labour Party's main criticism was that the £300m funding from the BBC licence fee for broadband would not be forthcoming until 2013, questioning whether the Government can make sufficient progress towards its targets before these additional funds kick in.

Success will ultimately depend on whether funding is enough to achieve the Government's broadband aims. And this will depend on the kinds of commercial partnerships that can be formed to match Government money.

### 4.1 EU State Aid

The local broadband projects will be subsidised to varying extents by funding from DCMS, as well as other UK and potentially EU public sources, which could be considered as state aid. Before these projects can be implemented and broadband rolled out state aid clearance has to be obtained from the European Commission.

Initially clearance was obtained on a case by case basis which held up the delivery of local authority procurement processes. Now an ['umbrella' clearance](#) has been given to all projects.

### 4.2 Suppliers

BDUK's framework contract was introduced to help local authorities with the procurement process. Though it was signed by the suppliers BT and Fujitsu on 29 June 2012 the Minister has since confirmed that contracts need not be restricted to BT and Fujitsu as per the Framework agreement, but contracts agreed with other organisations will have to be approved by BDUK.<sup>40</sup> BDUK set out the benefits of the framework:

- suppliers will need to only bid once to be selected for the framework agreement rather than face multiple procurements
- the process will ensure more uniform private sector solutions while still enabling local requirements to be met through the individual call-off contracts
- BDUK will seek state aid clearance from the European Commission for all call-off contracts which will avoid local bodies having to manage separate state aid clearance processes

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<sup>39</sup> CRC, [Government announcement on rural broadband](#), 9 June 2010

<sup>40</sup> HC Deb, 10 Sep 2012, c115

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Government anticipated that most projects entering into procurement in 2012 will use the framework.

Initially nine suppliers passed the selection process to be included in the framework agreement but 7 were subsequently deterred by the cost of delivering broadband to remote areas which left only Fujitsu and BT. Comment in the media suggested that to compete in the procurement process suppliers would have to work at scale and that realistically BT would be the only organisation in place to do this.<sup>41</sup>

As of April 2013, the media reported that BT was the only company to have been awarded a delivery contract.<sup>42</sup> On 18 March it was reported that Fujitsu withdrew from the BDUK process, leaving BT as the only participant in the framework agreement.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> E.g. FT, Broadband contract attracts two bidders, July 2 2012

<sup>42</sup> [The Guardian](#), BT creates 1,000 fibre-broadband installation jobs, 7 March 2012

<sup>43</sup> Computer Weekly, Fujitsu pulls out of BDUK, 18 March 2013

## 5. Progress in the Devolved administrations

Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) is responsible for managing the Government's broadband funding, while the individual projects are the responsibility of local authorities and devolved administrations.

The table below shows the coverage availability of Next Generation Access (NGA) and Superfast Broadband Services for the UK and each nation. It shows that NGA technology does not deliver superfast speeds for all premises. This is primarily due to geography. On average there is a 3% gap between NGA and superfast coverage. The difference is greatest in Northern Ireland.

### Availability of Next Generation Access and Superfast Broadband Services, by nation

	Superfast Broadband coverage 2014	Next Generation Access	
		2014	2013
UK	75%	78%	73%
England	77%	80%	76%
Scotland	61%	63%	52%
Wales	55%	58%	48%
NI	77%	94%	96%

Source: Ofcom (2014)

Below I have provided a brief overview of the progress achieved in extending superfast broadband in each of the devolved administrations. I have also provided information on the disbursement of funding provided to each country.

### 5.1 Digital Scotland

The [Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme](#) is "a key step in the Scottish Government's aim for Scotland to become a world class digital nation by 2020". The Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband Programme aims to provide fibre broadband infrastructure to around 95% of premises in Scotland by the end of 2017 and 85% by the end of 2015.

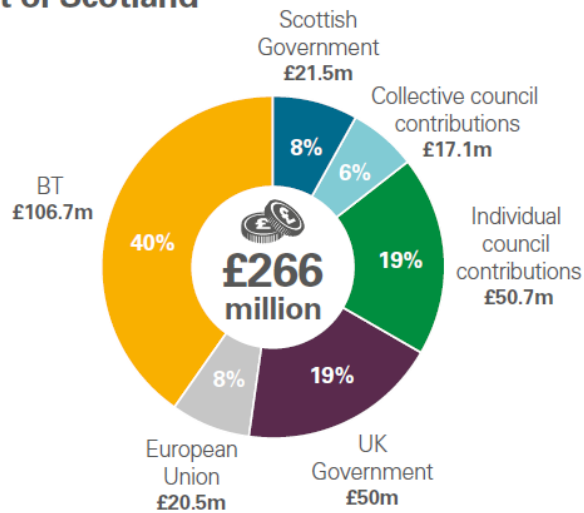
The programme is being delivered through two projects: One covers the Highlands and Islands—the [Highlands and Islands Enterprise project](#) valued at £145.8 million; and the second covers the rest of Scotland—the [Rest of Scotland project](#) valued at £266 million. The chart below sets out where the funding for the two projects has come from, and is taken from the Audit Scotland report on Scotland's superfast broadband rollout.

The Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme is "a key step in the Scottish Government's aim for Scotland to become a world class digital nation by 2020"



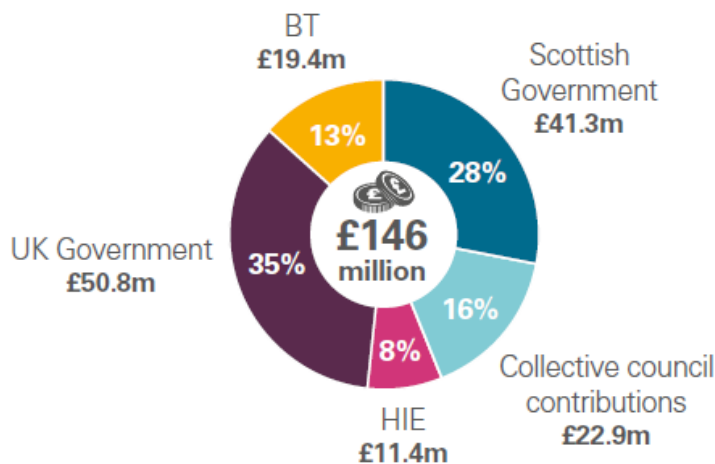
### Funding of superfast broadband in Scotland by source and project

#### Rest of Scotland



Source: [Audit Scotland](#)<sup>44</sup>

#### Highlands and islands



Source: [Audit Scotland](#)<sup>45</sup>

The Scottish public sector is contributing £165 million over a five-year build period towards total contract costs of about £412 million.

For phase 1 of the broadband programme BDUK allocated £100.8 million to the two Scottish programmes: £50.8 m to the Highlands and Islands and £50m for the Rest of Scotland.

<sup>44</sup> Audit Scotland, [Superfast broadband for Scotland: A progress report](#), February 2015

<sup>45</sup> Audit Scotland, [Superfast broadband for Scotland: A progress report](#), February 2015

In the 2013 Spending Review, Scotland was allocated a further £20.99 million by the UK Government as part of the superfast extension programme (phase 2). The Scottish Government indicated that it will match fund the UK Government contribution, taking the total investment available to £41.98 million.

## 5.2 Superfast Cymru

Superfast Cymru is the Welsh Government's delivery body for its superfast broadband programme.

The Welsh Government have determined that around 41% of premises in Wales were forecast to have access to next generation broadband through commercial rollout by 2015.<sup>46</sup> The Superfast Cymru project aims to bring superfast broadband access to premises in Wales where it was not commercially viable to do so, estimated at around 727,000 premises.<sup>47</sup>

In July 2012, the Welsh Government signed an agreement with BT Openreach for the provision of access to superfast broadband infrastructure for 95% (691,000 premises) of the premises in the intervention area. The agreement stated that:

- a minimum of 90% of all premises in the intervention area should be capable of having access to speeds of at least 30 Mbps;
- a minimum of 95% of all premises in the intervention area should be capable of having access to speeds of at least 24 Mbps; and
- a minimum of 40% of all premises in the intervention area should be capable of having access to speeds of at least 100 Mbps.<sup>48</sup>

On 28 May 2015, the [Welsh Audit Office reported](#) that the Welsh Government's Superfast Cymru contract, signed with BT in 2012 and supported by up to £205 million of public funding, is "making reasonable progress" in rolling out access to next generation (superfast) broadband services.<sup>49</sup>

The report also found that "the procurement and management of the Superfast Cymru contract has been generally effective, with appropriate controls in place to manage costs and delivery." The report highlighted that 47% of targeted intervention areas could now access next generation broadband, but Wales still had the lowest levels of next generation broadband access of all the UK countries:

As at 31 December 2014, 47 per cent of the intervention area covered by the Superfast Cymru contract – just under 346,000 premises – are now able to access next generation broadband.

The Welsh Government have determined that around 41% of premises in Wales were forecast to have access to next generation broadband through commercial rollout by 2015

<sup>46</sup> Welsh Audit Office, "[Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure](#)", 28 May 2015

<sup>47</sup> Welsh Audit Office, "[Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure](#)", 28 May 2015

<sup>48</sup> Welsh Audit Office, "[Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure](#)", 28 May 2015

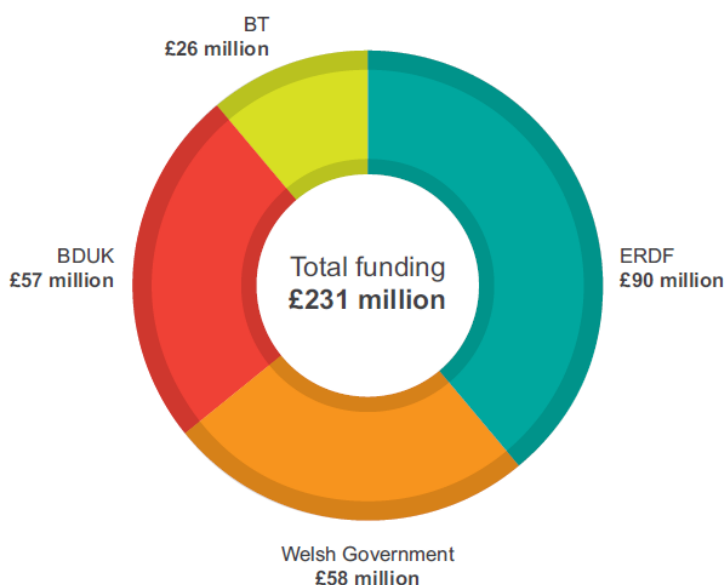
<sup>49</sup> Welsh Audit Office, "[Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure](#)", 28 May 2015

The take-up of next generation broadband at these premises was 13 per cent. However, many of the more difficult-to-connect premises remain. For both the commercial and intervention areas, Ofcom data showed that, at 55 per cent in June 2014, Wales still had the lowest levels of next generation broadband access of all the UK countries. Welsh Government data indicates that by 31 December 2014, this had increased to 70 per cent of premises, although this is still lower than the UK average of 75 per cent as reported by Ofcom in June 2014.<sup>50</sup>

Ofcom data showed that, at 55 per cent in June 2014, Wales still had the lowest levels of next generation broadband access of all the UK countries.

Below is a chart from the Welsh Audit Office report which details that Superfast Cymru contract is worth £231 million with BT contributing £26 million of capital funding.<sup>51</sup>

Figure 2 – Funding capital contributions for the Superfast Cymru contract



Source: [Welsh Audit Office](#)<sup>52</sup>

### 5.3 Superfast Northern Ireland

The [Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project](#) (NIBIP) is a scheme to provide increased or improved broadband services in certain areas. It only started in 2014. As part of phase 1 of the superfast broadband programme, Northern Ireland was allocated £4.4 million through BDUK, and as part of phase 2, BDUK allocated a further £7.2 million.<sup>53</sup> The £7.2 million is set to be matched by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and BT has agreed to commit £3 million of its own money.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Welsh Audit Office, "[Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure](#)", 28 May 2015

<sup>51</sup> The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is a fund allocated to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the EU by correcting imbalances between States

<sup>52</sup> Welsh Audit Office, "[Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure](#)", 28 May 2015

<sup>53</sup> BDUK, "[BDUK: Table of local broadband projects](#)", Accessed online: 7 October 2015

<sup>54</sup> Mark Jackson, "[N.Ireland Secures Another GBP17m to Extend Superfast Broadband](#)", *ISPReview*, 2 March 2015

## 6. Coverage and performance

### Box 3: Headline figures on coverage and performance data

On 9 February 2014, DCMS announced that:

- the programme had extended superfast broadband to more than 2 million homes and businesses across the UK; and
- it was on course to extend superfast broadband to 95% of UK homes and businesses by 2017<sup>55</sup>

Ofcom's [Infrastructure Report](#), published in December 2014, noted:

- the average download speed for the entire UK is 23Mbps, although speeds available to customers vary considerably;
- only 3% of UK premises fall below the Government's aim for universal availability of speeds of at least 2Mbps broadband
- superfast broadband – speeds greater than 30 Mbps – is now available in 75% of UK premises, with take-up of 21%

Ofcom publishes data on four headline indicators for broadband delivery: coverage and take-up; speed; price; and choice. These four indicators are being used to compare the UK's broadband network relative to France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

[Figures published](#) on 12 March 2014 demonstrated that using the scorecard approach – proposed by BDUK – the UK comes out top for superfast, standard and mobile broadband coverage, with 83 households per 100 broadband connected.<sup>56</sup>

These figures also showed that (as of March 2014) superfast broadband coverage had increased with 70-75% of households covered. This means that the UK now has the highest level of coverage amongst the EU5: Germany (65-70% of households covered), Spain (60-65%), France (20-25%) and Italy (10-15%).<sup>57</sup>

There has been some criticism of the speeds offered and of the Government's targeted ambitions. For instance, on 14 July 2014, the [Federation of Small Businesses \(FSB\)](#) published a [report looking into broadband provision and access for businesses in the UK](#). This report found that<sup>58</sup>:

- 14 % of small businesses consider lack of reliable and fast broadband connectivity to be their main barrier to growth.

As of March 2014 [...] the UK [70-75% of households covered] now has the highest level of [superfast] coverage amongst the EU5: Germany (65-70% of households covered), Spain (60-65%), France (20-25%) and Italy (10-15%).

<sup>55</sup> DCMS, "[Press Release: Two million more homes and business can get superfast broadband](#)" Gov.uk (February 2015). Accessed online: 2 February 2015

<sup>56</sup> Ofcom, "[The European Broadband Scorecard](#)" (March 2014). Accessed online: 21 August 2014.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> FSB, "[The fourth utility: Delivering universal broadband connectivity for small businesses across the UK](#)" (July 2014).

- Only 15 per cent of small firms say they are very satisfied with their broadband provision, while a quarter say they are fairly or very dissatisfied.

[John Allan, FSB's National Chairman, has said:](#)

The fact that we have around 45,000 businesses still on dial up is unacceptable and many more throughout the country, even in London, are receiving poor service. Evidence from our members shows this clearly is a problem affecting all corners of the UK, rural areas and cities alike.

## 6.1 Committee Activity

### National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee

On 5 July 2013 the National Audit Office published a report [on the rural broadband programme](#) to make superfast broadband widely available in each area of the UK. Within this they stated that the programme was expected to be delivered nearly two years later than planned. However, the NAO highlight that in June 2013 the Coalition Government had announced a revised target to secure delivery to 90% of homes by December 2016 in its business plan:

The Department currently estimates that the Programme will reach its target 22 months later than initially planned. Only nine local projects are estimated to meet the Programme's target of supplying 90 per cent of premises with superfast broadband access by May 2015. The delay in roll-out is partly because of an extended negotiation to gain EU approval under state aid rules, which took six months longer than expected. In June 2013, the Department announced a revised target to "secure delivery by December 2016" in its business plan. The Department projects the Programme will reach 4.6 million premises in total, completing its roll-out in March 2017. At this point estimates show 92 per cent of premises in areas covered by the Programme would then have access to superfast broadband, although four local areas are not predicted to reach the 90 per cent target.<sup>59</sup>

In June 2013 the Coalition Government also announced it was setting a new target for superfast broadband to reach 95% of premises by December 2017.<sup>60</sup>

The Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP, Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts on 5 July 2013 made a [statement](#) on the delayed programme:

Opaque data and limited benchmarks for comparison mean the Department has no idea if BT is being reasonable or adding in big mark ups. Private sector organisations need to be 100% transparent about their figures when spending public money. It is not acceptable to hide behind arguments about commercial sensitivity. Ofcom needs to up its game and ensure BT does not

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<sup>59</sup> National Audit Office, [The rural broadband programme](#), 5 July 2013, para 18

<sup>60</sup> DCMS, [1.4 million more premises to get superfast broadband after £250 million capital investment](#), 27 June 2013

make super profits out of its dominance of the wholesale broadband market. DCMS must take more control of the programme to ensure people in rural areas get the super-fast broadband they were promised, at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer. (extract).

After publication of the NAO report, the [Public Accounts Committee \(PAC\) took oral evidence](#) on the rural broadband programme on 17 July 2013. Following this, Ian Livingston, BT Chief Executive, was quoted in the [press](#) criticising the evidence session and the committee. In September 2013, PAC published their [Report](#) on the Rural Broadband Programme

Following the Government's response to its report PAC considered the Department had 'failed to engage constructively with our conclusions and recommendations'. They recalled the Department and BT to give further evidence in January 2014 and following this, on 1 April 2014, the PAC published a [further report](#) on the rural broadband programme.

In this second report, the PAC queried costs and commented that the released maps did not show detailed coverage and broadband speeds. The report stressed the need for data transparency and more detail to encourage competition, increased co-operation with local authorities and scrutiny of the use of public money.

In response a BT spokesman stated:

BT is delivering value for money and the National Audit Office acknowledged there are 'robust' processes in place to ensure that. As for maps, most councils have published coverage maps with our support. More detailed data will be released by them in due course once surveys have been completed and we know for sure that we are going to an area.<sup>61</sup>

The NAO published an update on the progress of [Superfast \(Rural\) Broadband Programme](#) on 28 January 2015 for the Public Accounts Committee. This noted that superfast broadband coverage is 'likely' to reach its phase 1 target of 90% of premises ahead of the revised schedule.

BDUK's analysis of the 44 contracts between local bodies and BT indicates that superfast broadband coverage is likely to reach 90% of premises in Programme areas by April–June 2016.<sup>62</sup>

The NAO memorandum also commented on phase 2 (extending superfast broadband coverage to 95% of UK premises by December 2017), which is currently in the procurement stage. Referring to the Public Accounts Committee's call for increased competition, it noted that as BT is now the only participant in the BDUK's procurement framework, competition may remain limited.

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<sup>61</sup> BBC News Article, [Rural broadband maps criticised for lacking detail](#), 1 April 2014

<sup>62</sup> National Audit Office, [The Superfast \(Rural\) Broadband Programme: update](#), January 2015, p25

## Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee published their [Rural Communities report](#) on 24 July 2013 - which identifies the rural broadband programme as running '*nearly two years behind schedule. The roll-out of superfast broadband to 90% of rural areas will be delivered late and it is unclear when the target of universal access to 2Mbps broadband will be achieved.*'

In February 2015 the Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs Committee published their report on *Rural Broadband and digital only services*. The report raised concerns that the Government's present target of ensuring 95% of premises received superfast broadband by 2017 'may slip'. Similarly, the Committee noted that no target date has been set for providing the 'final 5%' of UK premises with superfast broadband. The Government was urged to set a date for this.

The Committee's report also commented on broadband speeds, noting that BT regards 2 Mbps as the minimum speed for an acceptable broadband service. However, the Committee heard evidence that for many services 2 Mbps is already an outdated figure, with 10 Mbps being increasingly recommended for a suitable standard provision.<sup>63</sup> The Government's definition of superfast broadband (speeds of at least 24 Mbps) was also scrutinised, with the Committee noting that the EU expects all Member States to have access to 30 Mbps by 2020.

Millions of pounds are being invested in the rollout of superfast broadband at 24 Megabits per second. Within three years of the expected delivery date, however, that speed will no longer be considered 'superfast' by European standards.<sup>64</sup>

## House of Lords Digital Skills Committee

In February 2015 the House of Lords Digital Skills Committee's published a report on the [UK's Digital Future](#). This commented on the issue of urban broadband, and drew particular attention to data from Ookla's Net Index Explorer showing that in January 2015 London's average download broadband speed ranked 26th out of 33 other European capital cities. London's average speed was found to be 25.44 Mbps, which contrasted drastically with Bucharest (which came 1st), which had average speeds of 80.14Mbps. The data showed London had a speed more than 10Mbps slower than the European average of 36.4Mbps.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Efra Committee., [Rural broadband ad digital-only services](#), 3 February 2015, para 20

<sup>64</sup> Efra Committee., [Rural broadband ad digital-only services](#), 3 February 2015, para 22

<sup>65</sup> House of Lords Digital Skills Committee, [Make or Break: The UK's Digital Future](#), February 2015, para 30

## 7. Broadband speeds and superfast availability: detailed region and constituency level data

The following tables and maps are based House of Commons Library analysis of detailed postcode-level data published by Ofcom in December 2014.<sup>66</sup>

As Table A shows, broadband speeds and superfast broadband availability are higher in England than in Scotland or Wales. 'Superfast' here uses the 'next-generation access' definition: at least 24 Mb/s. This differs from the European definition of 30 Mb/s, which was used in earlier versions of this publication.

**Table A: Average Fixed Broadband Speeds and Superfast Availability, June 2014**

UK Countries and English Regions

Country	% Superfast	Speed Mb/s	Region	% Superfast	Speed Mb/s
England	80%	24.1	East Midlands	76%	23.3
Scotland	64%	21.3	East of England	76%	23.9
Northern Ireland	94%	25.0	London	90%	27.3
Wales	60%	18.2	North East	82%	24.1
			North West	84%	24.0
			South East	82%	24.7
			South West	70%	21.5
			West Midlands	82%	24.5
			Yorkshire and The Humber	75%	21.7

Outside of London, the highest English broadband speeds are found in the South East and the West Midlands. Speeds in the South West are the lowest in England and are only slightly higher than those in Scotland.

As one would expect, urban areas have higher broadband speeds than rural areas, as **Table B** shows. Over four-fifths of urban areas have access to superfast broadband, compared to two-fifths of rural towns and less than one-fifth of rural villages.

<sup>66</sup> <http://infrastructure.ofcom.org.uk>. Data for Northern Ireland cannot be aggregated from postcode level to parliamentary constituencies in the same manner. Data for Northern Ireland by administrative authority can be found on the Ofcom site.



**Table B: Fixed Broadband Speed and Superfast Availability, June 2014**

By urban/rural classification of LSOA

Classification of LSOA	Superfast Availability	Speed Mb/s	Number of LSOAs
Rural town and fringe	45%	16.7	3,189
Rural town and fringe in a sparse setting	34%	14.9	197
Rural village and dispersed	17%	8.5	2,490
Rural village and dispersed in a sparse setting	10%	6.8	328
Urban city and town	85%	25.6	15,724
Urban city and town in a sparse setting	38%	14.3	94
Urban major conurbation	90%	27.3	11,523
Urban minor conurbation	85%	25.1	1,208

**Table C** shows the highest and lowest parliamentary constituencies in the UK by fixed broadband speed. Full constituency rankings are found in the appendix to this document. 16 of the top 20 constituencies are in England. Only two are in London (and both in South West London), despite the fact that London's average speeds are higher than that of any other region.

The highest speeds in the North of England are found in Great Grimsby. Hartlepool (rank 35) and Middlesbrough (47) have the highest speeds in the North East; Bootle (37) and Wythenshawe & Sale East (40) in the North West, and Swansea East (57) in Wales. The lowest speeds in the South East are found in Buckingham (rank 595), Arundel & South Downs (562) and Bexhill & Battle (561).

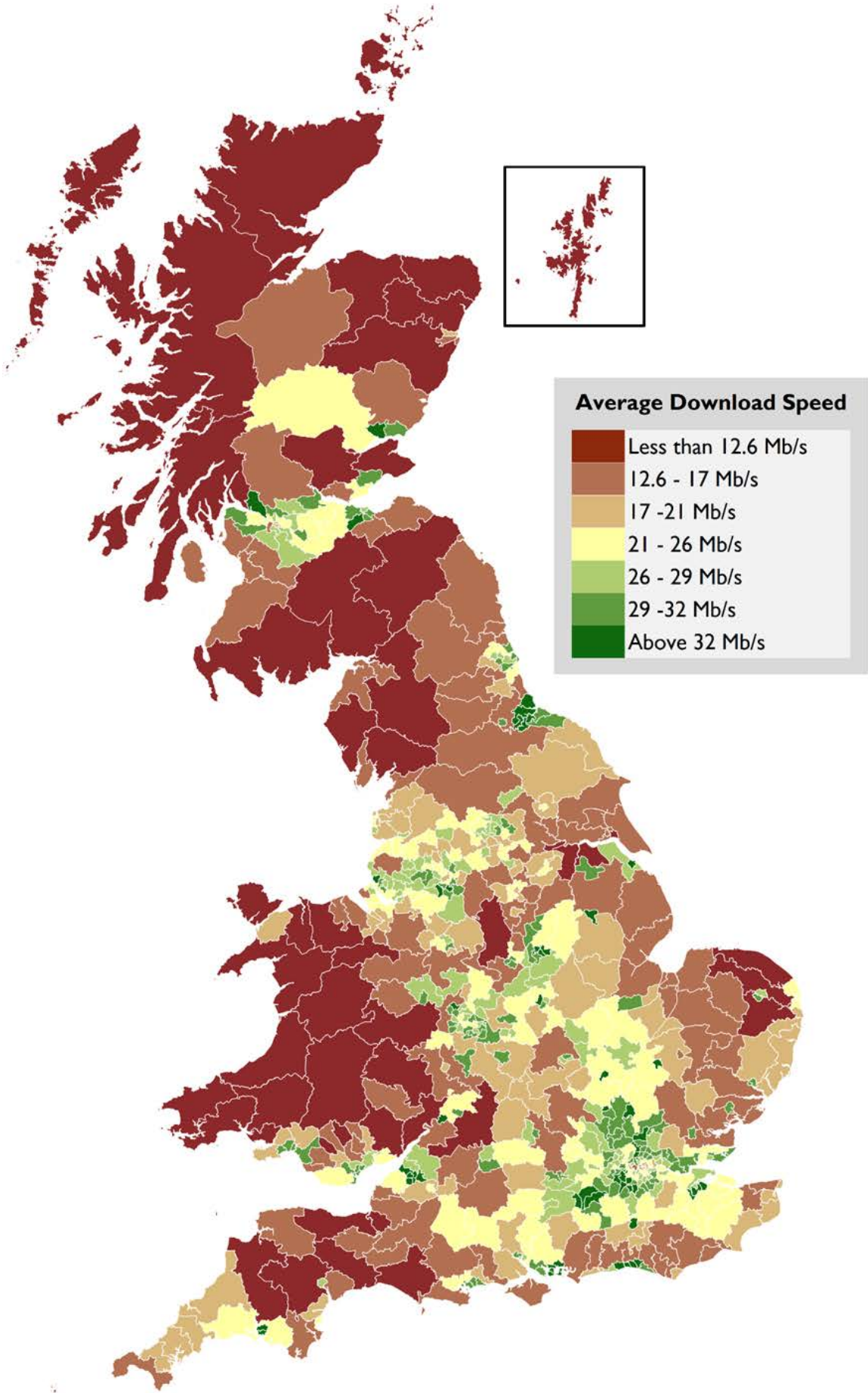
**Table C: Fixed Broadband Speed by Parliamentary Constituency, UK, June 2014***Highest Speeds*

Rank	Constituency	Speed Mb/s
1	Eng Bristol South	36.1
2	Eng Great Grimsby	35.9
3	Eng Gillingham and Rainham	35.7
4	Eng Aldershot	34.8
5	Eng Portsmouth North	34.6
6	Eng Surrey Heath	34.3
7	Nlr Belfast East	34.3
8	Nlr Belfast South	34.2
9	Eng Lincoln	33.9
10	Scot West Dunbartonshire	33.8
11	Eng Bristol North West	33.7
12	Eng Bristol East	33.6
13	Scot Edinburgh South West	33.6
14	Eng Chatham and Aylesford	33.5
15	Eng Richmond Park	33.5
16	Eng Portsmouth South	33.5
17	Eng Wolverhampton North East	33.4
18	Eng Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport	33.3
19	Eng Stevenage	33.3
20	Eng Kingston and Surbiton	33.3

*Lowest Speeds*

Rank	Constituency	Speed Mb/s
650	Scot Na h-Eileanan an Iar	5.3
649	Wal Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	7.0
648	Scot Argyll and Bute	7.1
647	Wal Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire	7.5
646	Wal Ceredigion	7.5
645	Wal Montgomeryshire	7.7
644	Scot Orkney and Shetland	8.0
643	Wal Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	8.4
642	Scot Ross, Skye and Lochaber	8.5
641	Wal Preseli Pembrokeshire	8.6
640	Scot Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	9.1
639	Wal Brecon and Radnorshire	9.2
638	Wal Aberconwy	9.4
637	Eng Copeland	9.8
636	Eng North Herefordshire	9.8
635	Eng South Norfolk	10.4
634	Scot Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	10.5
633	Eng Penrith and The Border	10.6
632	Eng Derbyshire Dales	10.7
631	Wal Clwyd West	10.8

**Map 1** (overleaf) shows this data for Great Britain in map form, June 2014



**Table D** shows the highest and lowest speeds for of constituencies for certain urban/rural classifications. Average speeds are calculated on the basis of the urban/rural classification of LSOAs in each constituency. So the first sub-table shows that when we restrict to ‘Rural Town and Fringe’ LSOAs, the slowest average speeds are found in Dartford constituency and the fastest are found in Lincoln constituency. Similarly, when we restrict to ‘Urban Conurbation’ (either major or minor) LSOAs, the slowest are found in Penistone & Stocksbridge and the fastest are found in Surrey Heath. In each category, only constituencies with at least three LSOAs matching the relevant urban/rural category are included.

**Table D: Fixed broadband speed (Mb/s) for each LSOA urban/rural classification, June 2014**

England and Wales, parliamentary constituencies

<b>Rural Town and Fringe</b>			
	<i>Highest</i>		<i>Lowest</i>
Lincoln	36.0	Dartford	6.5
Redcar	34.8	Grantham and Stamford	7.4
St Helens North	34.2	Amber Valley	8.5
Broxbourne	31.5	Rossendale and Darwen	8.6
Thurrock	31.1	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	8.6
<b>Rural Village and Dispersed</b>			
	<i>Highest</i>		<i>Lowest</i>
Truro and Falmouth	17.7	Kettering	4.1
St Austell and Newquay	17.0	Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	4.5
Camborne and Redruth	16.8	Preseli Pembrokeshire	4.6
Mole Valley	15.8	Clwyd West	4.9
Maidenhead	15.7	North Thanet	4.9
<b>Urban City and Town</b>			
	<i>Highest</i>		<i>Lowest</i>
North East Hampshire	36.5	Amber Valley	7.1
Bristol South	36.1	Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	7.7
Great Grimsby	35.9	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	8.4
Gillingham and Rainham	35.7	Montgomeryshire	9.0
Aldershot	34.8	Brecon and Radnorshire	9.0
<b>Urban Conurbation</b>			
	<i>Highest</i>		<i>Lowest</i>
Surrey Heath	34.7	Penistone and Stocksbridge	15.7
Woking	33.7	North Durham	15.9
Richmond Park	33.5	Wirral West	15.9
Wolverhampton North East	33.3	Cities of London and Westminster	16.0
Kingston and Surbiton	33.3	North East Derbyshire	16.1

**Table E** shows the availability of Superfast Broadband (‘next-generation access’) by constituency. The highest availability in Scotland, not listed in the top 20 constituencies, is found in Edinburgh South West (93%, rank 167). Cardiff North (97%, rank 46). leads in Wales. The highest availability in the North East is Houghton & Sunderland South (95%, rank 116). All other regions have at least one constituency in the top 20. 229 constituencies have availability above 90%.

**Table E: Superfast Broadband Availability by Parliamentary Constituency, June 2014**

Rank	Constituency	Available %	Rank	Constituency	Available %
1	Eng Luton North	99.4%	650	Wal Aberconwy	0.0%
2	Nlr Foyle	98.7%	=	Wal Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	0.0%
3	Eng Wolverhampton North East	98.7%	=	Wal Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire	0.0%
4	Eng Leyton and Wanstead	98.6%	=	Soo Na h-Eileanan an Iar	0.0%
5	Eng Bournemouth East	98.4%	=	Soo Orkney and Shetland	0.0%
6	Eng Hornchurch and Upminster	98.3%	645	Wal Brecon and Radnorshire	0.1%
7	Eng Nottingham North	98.2%	644	Soo Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	0.2%
8	Eng Enfield, Southgate	98.2%	643	Wal Montgomeryshire	1.0%
9	Eng Edmonton	98.1%	642	Soo Argyll and Bute	3.6%
10	Eng Eltham	97.9%	641	Wal Preseli Pembrokeshire	7.7%
11	Eng Kingswood	97.8%	640	Wal Clwyd West	11.3%
12	Nlr North Down	97.8%	639	Wal Ceredigion	11.6%
13	Eng Gedling	97.8%	638	Eng Kingston upon Hull East	12.6%
14	Eng Gosport	97.8%	637	Eng Haltemprice and Howden	13.6%
15	Eng Gillingham and Rainham	97.8%	636	Eng Beverley and Holderness	14.4%
16	Nlr Belfast West	97.8%	635	Eng Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle	14.7%
17	Eng Sutton and Cheam	97.7%	634	Eng Brigg and Goole	17.9%
18	Eng Chingford and Woodford Green	97.6%	633	Soo Ross, Skye and Lochaber	18.3%
19	Eng Birmingham, Yardley	97.5%	632	Eng South Norfolk	18.4%
20	Eng Leeds North East	97.5%	631	Soo Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	20.0%

**Table F** shows the prevalence of slow connections in each constituency, where 'slow' is defined as a connection less than 2 Mb/s. 15 of the 40 Welsh constituencies are in the top 100 by highest percentage of slow connections, while 10 of the 59 Scottish constituencies are in the top 100.

**Table F: Percentage of slow connections (less than 2 Mb/s) by parliamentary constituency, June 2014**

<i>Lowest % slow connections</i>			<i>Highest % slow connections</i>		
Rank	Constituency	% slow	Rank	Constituency	% slow
1	Eng Bristol West	1.0%	650	Wal Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	19.2%
2	Soo Edinburgh South	1.1%	649	Wal Ceredigion	18.5%
3	Eng Holborn and St Pancras	1.2%	648	Soo Na h-Eileanan an Iar	18.5%
4	Eng Islington North	1.2%	647	Eng Penrith and The Border	16.9%
5	Eng Liverpool, Wavertree	1.3%	646	Nlr West Tyrone	16.6%
6	Eng Westminster North	1.3%	645	Nlr Fermanagh and South Tyrone	16.6%
7	Soo Edinburgh South West	1.3%	644	Wal Montgomeryshire	15.8%
8	Eng Hampstead and Kilburn	1.3%	643	Eng North Herefordshire	15.4%
9	Eng Islington South and Finsbury	1.3%	642	Nlr Mid Ulster	15.3%
10	Eng Bristol South	1.3%	641	Wal Carmarthen West and South Pembrokesh	15.0%
11	Eng Liverpool, Riverside	1.3%	640	Nlr South Down	14.7%
12	Eng Hornsey and Wood Green	1.4%	639	Nlr Newry and Armagh	14.5%
13	Eng Leicester South	1.4%	638	Eng Bassetlaw	14.4%
14	Eng Reading East	1.4%	637	Wal Preseli Pembrokeshire	14.2%
15	Eng Battersea	1.4%	636	Soo Ross, Skye and Lochaber	14.1%
16	Eng Hackney South and Shoreditch	1.4%	635	Eng Brigg and Goole	13.8%
17	Eng Kingston and Surbiton	1.5%	634	Wal Ogmores	13.7%
18	Soo Glasgow Central	1.5%	633	Eng Brecon and Radnorshire	13.6%
19	Eng Rochford and Southend East	1.5%	632	Eng Waveney	13.2%
20	Eng Walthamstow	1.5%	631	Soo Orkney and Shetland	13.1%

The Ofcom data also allows us to see where speeds of superfast broadband are fastest. Table G shows the constituencies with the highest speeds when only superfast connections are considered. The top 5 on this measure are all in East Yorkshire, an area which performs poorly on overall broadband speed measures (the three Hull constituencies rank 516th, 574th and 622nd on the overall speed measure, while Haltemprice & Howden ranks 582nd). This discrepancy results from relatively low availability and takeup of superfast broadband in these constituencies. The high performance of constituencies in the Scottish central belt on this measure is also notable.

**Table G: Highest fixed broadband speeds  
Superfast connections only, by parliamentary constituency, June 2014**

Rank		Constituency	Speed Mb/s	Rank		Constituency	Speed Mb/s
1	Eng	Haltemprice and Howden	79.0	11	Sco	Livingston	62.0
2	Eng	Kingston upon Hull North	76.2	12	Sco	Paisley and Renfrewshire North	62.0
3	Eng	Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle	74.4	13	Sco	Linlithgow and East Falkirk	61.4
4	Eng	Kingston upon Hull East	73.5	14	Sco	Glasgow South	61.2
5	Eng	Beverley and Holderness	67.3	15	Sco	Falkirk	60.8
6	Sco	East Dunbartonshire	64.2	16	Eng	Bexleyheath and Crayford	60.8
7	Eng	Blackpool South	63.2	17	Eng	Neath	60.8
8	Eng	Kensington	62.9	18	Eng	Gillingham and Rainham	60.7
9	Sco	Glenrothes	62.5	19	Sco	Airdrie and Shotts	60.7
10	Sco	Paisley and Renfrewshire South	62.3	20	Sco	West Dunbartonshire	60.7

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