



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2106/0132, 4 July 2016

Broadband in Wales

This debate pack has been prepared ahead of the debate on **broadband in Wales** to be held in Westminster Hall on Wednesday 6 July at 2.30pm.

Mr Mark Williams MP initiated the debate.

Commons Briefing Paper: Superfast broadband coverage in the UK

<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06643>

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. News items

Cambrian News

Farming leaders call for better broadband in rural Wales

22 June 2016

<http://www.cambrian-news.co.uk/article.cfm?id=105958&headline=Farming%20leaders%20call%20for%20better%20broadband%20in%20rural%20Wales§ions=news&searchyear=2016>

Daily Post

'Project Lightning' to strike Wrexham...but don't worry it's nothing to do with the weather

Owen Hughes 9 June 2016

<http://www.dailypost.co.uk/business/business-news/project-lightning-strike-wrexhambut-dont-11447897>

BBC News

Broadband in Wales “as vital as roads and water”

Jordan Davies 7 June 2016

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-36463335>

Daily Post

Superfast broadband will miss 96% target for Wales

Owen Hughes 25 May 2016

<http://www.dailypost.co.uk/business/superfast-broadband-miss-96-target-11380661>

Wales Online

BT announce £6bn investment to extend its ultrafast broadband network

Sion Barry 5 May 2016

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/business/business-news/bt-announce-6bn-investment-extend-11286450>

Western Telegraph

18 months to complete superfast broadband roll-out

Ruth Davies 9 April 2016

http://www.westerntelegraph.co.uk/news/14416534.18_months_to_complete_superfast_broadband_roll_out/

South Wales Evening Post

Swansea one of three UK regions to take part in new Ultrafast broadband trial

27 January 2016

<http://www.southwales-eveningpost.co.uk/broadband-trials-lead-way-swansea-helping-young/story-28619100-detail/story.html#ixzz4Cxwe5sxZ>

Wales Online

Is Wales' broadband infrastructure up to speed?

Nicholas Fearn 21 January 2016

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/business/business-opinion/wales-broadband-infrastructure-up-speed-10769211>

Daily Post

Wales is now the most connected Celtic nation

6 August 2015 Owen Hughes

<http://www.dailypost.co.uk/business/business-news/wales-now-most-connected-celtic-9801681>

Wales Online

Broadband and mobile access in Wales is blasted by MPs

25 June 2015 David Williamson

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/broadband-mobile-access-wales-blasted-9527602>

2. Press releases

Welsh Government

Superfast Broadband schemes expanded

5 January 2016

Two Welsh Government schemes are being expanded to further increase the number of people able to access superfast broadband in Wales, Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James has announced.

Wales already leads the way with the provision of superfast broadband among the devolved nations*, and Superfast Cymru continues to make good progress with over 530,000 premises in Wales now able to access fast fibre broadband thanks to the project.

The Superfast Cymru and commercial roll-outs mean that the vast majority of premises in Wales will be able access superfast broadband, but there will be a few per cent that will not.

Changes to the Access Broadband Cymru and Ultrafast Connectivity Voucher schemes will expand the availability of superfast broadband and will make faster internet speeds available to all homes and businesses across Wales.

For a two-year period, the Access Broadband Cymru scheme will be available to all homes and businesses across Wales which currently do not have a superfast connection.

This scheme will fund, or part-fund, the installation costs of new broadband connections for homes and businesses in Wales which deliver a step change in download speeds. There will be two levels of funding depending on the speed required, £400 for download speeds of 10Mbps and above and £800 for 30Mbps and above.

A range of technologies can be used to deliver superfast speeds including satellite, wireless and 4G.

The Ultrafast Connectivity Voucher is being opened up to businesses across Wales to help them meet the initial capital costs involved in installing ultrafast broadband services. The maximum grant available will be £10,000. This scheme was previously only available to businesses located in the Enterprise and Local Growth Zones.

Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James said:

“Superfast broadband is vital for homes and businesses, which is why the Welsh Government is committed to bringing faster broadband speeds to communities across Wales.

“These two expanded schemes, together with Superfast Cymru, our project to provide wireless broadband to 2000 premises on business parks and industrial estates, and the commercial roll-out by private companies, will make superfast speeds available to all homes and businesses across Wales.

“All the measures we are taking are helping to make Wales one of the best connected countries in the world.”

Ofcom

Ofcom launches Wi-Fi checker to improve broadband in Wales

1 December 2015

- Simple app for tablets and mobiles to check your Wi-Fi connection
- More than a quarter of a million homes and offices across Wales could improve their wireless connection
- Significant increases in next generation access and superfast broadband - the highest availability of superfast broadband services in the devolved nations
- Superfast broadband coverage in rural Wales up from 8% to 31% of premises

People can check whether their in-home Wi-Fi is giving them the best service by using a simple, powerful app launched by Ofcom today.

The Ofcom Wi-Fi Checker, which runs on smartphones and tablets, allows consumers and businesses to discover the quality of their wireless internet signal wherever they live or work - as well as offering practical steps to help people get the best from their connection.

Wireless broadband may not be working as well as it could in more than a quarter of a million homes and offices across Wales and in more than five million UK homes, according to Ofcom research published today. This is often caused by the Wi-Fi set-up in the house slowing down broadband.

It could be down to something as simple as interference from other electronic devices, such as a microwave oven, baby monitor, a lamp - or even Christmas fairy lights.

The app tests the Wi-Fi set-up and, if it finds a problem, will provide some troubleshooting tips to help improve broadband. It is free to download now from Apple's App Store and Google Play (search for 'Wi-Fi Checker').

A better-connected UK

The new app is being launched alongside Ofcom's Connected Nations 2015 report - the most authoritative, in-depth look at the telecoms and wireless networks of the UK and its nations.

This year's report shows good progress in the roll-out and take-up of services that have become a crucial part of people's personal and working lives. However, the report recognises there is still more to do; particularly in improving broadband and mobile availability and quality of service for consumers and businesses across the UK.

Today for the first time, Ofcom is publishing individual reports for each of the constituent nations of the UK, where availability of

communications services varies and where devolved administrations play a leading role in public interventions.

Broadband availability leaps ahead in Wales

Wales has seen dramatic increases in coverage of next generation access and superfast broadband with the highest availability of superfast broadband (SFBB) services in the devolved nations.

Seventy nine per cent of premises in Wales are now capable of receiving superfast services at speeds of 30Mbit/s (up from 55% in 2014). This compares to 77% in Northern Ireland, 73% in Scotland and 83% for the UK as a whole. The increase has benefitted Welsh rural areas in particular, with coverage rising from 8% in 2014 to 31% of premises in 2015.

The increase has largely been driven by the Welsh Government's Superfast Cymru programme reaching out to all parts of Wales.

Wales has also seen a substantial year-on-year percentage increase in average download speeds. Speeds increased by 5 Mbit/s to an average headline speeds of 23 Mbit/s, a 28% increase. Average upload speeds in Wales are 3.1 Mbit/s, compared to a UK average of 3.5 Mbit/s.

Today's Wales Connected Nation report highlights that households in the nations with access to superfast services have not taken up superfast packages as readily as the rest of the UK.

Welsh homes also use less data than the UK average. The average amount of data used each month in Wales is 77.7GB. This is short of the UK average 82.3GB per month and earlier Ofcom analysis suggests that lower speeds can affect how people use networks.

Around one in three Welsh homes that can access superfast broadband has taken it up. Twenty four per cent of premises in areas where superfast services are available (79%) have taken up the service.

Broadband speeds in rural areas

Rural areas have the greater number of lines currently incapable of supporting speeds of above 10 Mbps. In Wales, 19% of premises in urban areas and 40% of premises in rural areas cannot currently achieve speeds greater than or equal to 10Mbps. The number of premises that cannot get 10 Mbps in rural areas is more than double that of urban areas.

The difference between broadband speeds that are available in urban and rural areas has remained unchanged; however, the gap will ultimately increase as urban areas progress towards ultrafast speeds.

Swansea is being used as a test bed for BT ultrafast technology, called G.fast, which can provide speeds of up to 500Mbps and is based on the superfast technology being deployed across Wales.

The challenges of mobile in Wales

The rural and sensitive landscape in Wales, with its mountains and valleys coupled with areas of low population density, pose particular

technical challenges for the provision of mobile signals. The Connected Nations report shows there is more work to be done on mobile coverage and quality of service in Wales.

The availability of 2G voice services has remained broadly static over the past year at 90%, with modest increases in the availability of 3G voice and data, from 65% in 2014 to 67% in 2015. This is expected to increase following an agreement between the UK Government and all major operators for them to achieve 90% geographic coverage of 2G services by 2017. The agreement does not specify individual nations' targets. However, Ofcom estimates that geographic 2G/ 3G coverage in Wales (from all four operators) will be 83%.

This figure currently stands at 67.25%, compared to the UK average of 74.8%. Separately, Ofcom is preparing to award more spectrum next year which could be used by mobile operators to improve capacity.

There remain areas in Wales with no mobile coverage from all four of the network operators as well as complete not-spots where there is no coverage at all.

In geographic terms, Wales has more voice not spots (15%) than the UK (13%). A similar pattern is seen with data coverage. Wales has about the same level of data not-spots as the UK overall, with 21% of the landmass not covered by a data service from any operator.

Mobile coverage checker

Ofcom has today enhanced its Mobile Coverage Checker to include new features for people to discover the quality of their mobile service. This lets users zoom to a specific location in the UK map, or simply enter a place name or postcode, to receive data on coverage for each mobile network - down to 100 square metres.

The site allows consumers to provide feedback in order to make improvements to the maps so that they reflect consumers' experience across the UK as accurately as possible.

4G in the most populated towns and cities

The roll-out of 4G mobile broadband services has been good in highly populated areas and 77% of premises across the UK can now receive a 4G signal from at least one network.

Ofcom expects this to increase significantly in the coming year, and has put in place rules to ensure that 98% of premises can receive a 4G signal indoors by 2017. In addition, O2 hold the coverage obligation for data on the 4G network to cover 95% of each of the nations by the end of 2017, this obligation applies only to premises coverage rather than geographically.

Rhodri Williams, Ofcom's Director in Wales said: "Today's findings are encouraging, but there is more to be done to ensure improved communications services for consumers in Wales."

"Consumers' expectations are higher today than a few years ago. People want to use their mobile devices effectively wherever they are -

at home, at work and on the move. The challenge for Ofcom is to continue to support competition and innovation, while helping to improve coverage across Wales, especially in the most rural areas.”

Welsh Government

Superfast Cymru breaks the half a million barrier

30 September 2015

More than half a million premises in Wales are now able to access superfast broadband thanks to Superfast Cymru, Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James announced today.

Wales already leads the way among the UK’s devolved nations with the availability of superfast broadband, with 79 per cent of premises now able to access it when Superfast Cymru and the roll out by commercial companies are combined.

Superfast Cymru is the partnership between the Welsh Government, BT, UK Government and European Regional Development fund which brings faster broadband to areas which would not otherwise receive it.

Latest figures show that 504,352 premises can access superfast broadband in Wales as a result of Superfast Cymru.

Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James said:

“Breaking the half a million barrier is a significant milestone for Superfast Cymru. That’s over half a million premises in Wales which would otherwise not have access to faster broadband without the intervention of Superfast Cymru.

“The way we do business today and the way we live our lives means fast and reliable internet connections are vital. That’s why the Welsh Government has invested in Superfast Cymru, ensuring Wales is one of the most connected countries in Europe.

“This is a great day for Superfast Cymru, but the work is far from over. It is a challenging programme and BT engineers are continuing to work day in day out to bring superfast broadband to communities across Wales.”

Funding has been provided by the Welsh Government, the UK Government and the European Regional Development Fund, with BT contributing a further funding to deliver fibre across Wales through its commercial rollout.

Households and businesses which want to take advantage of the benefits of fast fibre broadband should contact an internet service provider (ISP) of their choice and place an order.

Welsh Government

£12.5m to help businesses make the most of superfast broadband

Tuesday 22 September 2015

A new £12.5m programme to ensure businesses across Wales maximise the benefits of superfast broadband was announced by Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James today.

Wales already leads the way among the UK's devolved nations with the availability of superfast broadband, with 79 per cent of premises now able to access it.

As a result of Superfast Cymru, the Access Broadband Cymru scheme and its successor, plans to bring superfast broadband to a number of business parks and industrial estates as well as the commercial roll-out, superfast broadband will be available across the whole of Wales in 2016.

In order to ensure businesses take full advantage of the benefits £12.5m will be provided for a five-year programme.

Funded by the Welsh Government, local authorities and £7m from the European Regional Development Fund, the project will support primarily small and medium sized businesses to understand, adopt and exploit the superfast infrastructure.

The project builds on lessons learned and evidence gathered following pathfinder projects undertaken in Gwynedd, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea and Blaenau Gwent.

Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James said:

"We are making tremendous progress in bringing superfast broadband across Wales.

"To reap the maximum economic benefit from this investment it is simply not enough for businesses to take-up superfast broadband. To take full advantage of the superfast enabled technologies businesses need to use them to change and improve the way they work.

"It is not just about doing things quicker, it is about doing things smarter.

"The £12.5m project I am announcing today will help businesses do just that, ensuring they make the most of what superfast broadband can offer."

Finance Minister Jane Hutt said:

"European funding has played a key role in bringing superfast broadband to communities across Wales through Superfast Cymru.

“As a pro-business government we want to see businesses make the most of this opportunity so that the economic benefits are maximised and I am pleased that further EU funding will support this scheme.

“This project will help businesses to change the way they operate to achieve economic benefits not only for their business but for Wales as a whole.”

Main features of the programme will include:

- Direct business support and advice through Business Wales. Superfast business workshops, clinics and one-to-one sessions at a local level
- Research and intelligence, including the tracking and of adoption and exploitation of superfast broadband by businesses and providing insight into emerging technologies to ensure new opportunities are included.
- Training and accreditation for business advisors who are delivering support on the ground.
- Champions for each local authority who will help lead engagement with their authority and local business community.

GOV.UK

Half a million more homes and businesses in Wales can now get superfast broadband

12 August 2015

More homes and businesses in Wales have been reached by the Government’s nationwide rollout of superfast broadband; figures published today (Wednesday 12 August) reveal.

The rollout is delivering superfast access - internet speeds greater than 24 Mbps - to those properties not covered by existing commercial networks and is on track to take superfast access to 95 per cent of the UK by 2017. More than four out of five UK premises already have access to superfast speeds, and the rollout is currently reaching an additional 40,000 homes and businesses every week.

The announcement comes on the same day as Government has announced the nationwide rollout of superfast broadband has now passed more than three million UK homes and businesses.

Today’s announcement comes following news last week that BT will make up to £129m available to extend the Government led roll-out of superfast broadband across the UK.

Wales Office Minister, Alun Cairns will meet with BT Openreach to see first hand how fibre broadband infrastructure is being installed during a visit to Caldicot on Thursday 13 August.

Culture Secretary John Whittingdale said:

“Reaching three million properties is a huge achievement and I’m delighted that this includes more than 482,000 in Wales. Our rollout of superfast broadband is transforming lives up and down the UK as every day thousands more homes and businesses are gaining access to superfast speeds.

“It’s fantastic to see that the rollout of superfast broadband is now delivering for customers and for the taxpayer. The levels of people taking up superfast broadband in areas where we invested public money are beyond our expectations, and BT is now reimbursing the public purse to deliver further coverage across the UK. This now means that BT will be providing up to £129m cashback for some of the most hard to reach areas.”

Wales Office Minister Alun Cairns said:

“The digital landscape in Wales has been transformed by superfast broadband and today’s figures show that this technology revolution is far from over.

“With the highest availability of superfast broadband among the devolved nations, more homes and businesses than ever before now have access to superfast broadband - revitalising the way we communicate, shop, bank and work.

“Tomorrow I will visit Caldicot with BT Openreach to see how fibre broadband is being installed across Wales and to learn the benefits that superfast broadband can provide customers as well as the jobs and growth it brings to the local economy.

“The UK Government will continue to do all it can to support the rollout with funding and I encourage people across Wales to seize this fantastic opportunity.”

Welsh Government Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology Julie James said:

“Providing faster internet speeds to homes and businesses is a priority for the Welsh Government. That is why the Welsh Government is committed, through the Superfast Cymru programme, to bring faster broadband across Wales.

“The latest Ofcom report has shown Wales to be making the most progress among all the devolved nations in bringing superfast broadband to premises.

“Wales’ contribution to the 3 million premises across the UK is also significant with over 482,000 premises now able to receive faster broadband.”

Bill Murphy, BT’s Managing Director for Next Generation Access, said:

“Today marks another very important stage in the rollout of an exciting technology, which is transforming the lives of communities across Wales and the UK as a whole.

“BT’s multi billion pound investment in superfast broadband through its involvement in partnerships and its own commercial programme has already made fibre broadband available to many hundreds of thousands of households and businesses in Wales – and the number is continuing to grow rapidly. Our engineers are rolling out the technology at a world class pace, reaching thousands more premises every week.

“Successful broadband partnerships are creating a lasting legacy, which will play a key role in the future prosperity of communities for many years to come.”

3. Parliamentary material

3.1 Welsh Assembly

Questions to the First Minister
[Superfast Cymru](#)
 2 February 2016

Rhun ap Iorwerth: Will the First Minister provide an update on the Superfast Cymru scheme?

Carwyn Jones, The First Minister: Well, £150 million has been invested to date that ensures that 0.5 million homes and businesses across all parts of Wales have access to broadband, and we continue to lead the way on the availability of superfast broadband among the devolved nations.

Questions to the First Minister
[Superfast Broadband \(North Wales\)](#)
 24 November 2015

Janet Haworth: Will the First Minister provide an update on the superfast broadband roll-out in North Wales?

Carwyn Jones, The First Minister: Over 521,000 premises now have access to superfast broadband as a result of Superfast Cymru. Around 80 per cent of premises are able to access it across Superfast Cymru and commercial roll-out. In north Wales, over 170,000 premises can now access superfast broadband as a result of the Superfast Cymru project. [[OAQ \(not reached in plenary\) 15](#)]

Questions to the First Minister
[Information Technology Infrastructure](#)
 24 November 2015

Altaf Hussain: What is the Welsh Government doing to improve the information technology infrastructure available to public services in Wales?

Carwyn Jones, The First Minister: Through the new public sector broadband aggregation contract with BT, we are creating a faster, more reliable, higher capacity and cost-effective network for public services in Wales.

[Statement: Superfast Broadband West Wales](#)
 The First Minister
 13 October 2015

[Statement on Superfast Cymru](#)
 The First Minister
 6 October 2015

[Statement: Superfast Broadband Business Exploitation](#)
 Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer

22 September 2015

Questions to the First Minister

[Broadband Connectivity](#)

15 September 2015

Janet Haworth: Will the First Minister outline what the Welsh Government is doing to improve broadband connectivity in rural Wales?

Carwyn Jones, The First Minister: The Welsh Government remains committed to the provision of broadband to rural communities through the ongoing delivery of the Superfast Cymru project. To the end of July, the project has provided superfast connectivity to nearly 0.5 million homes and business premises throughout Wales, taking us above the EU average.

[\[OAQ \(not reached in plenary\)8\]](#)

3.2 Westminster: PQs

Asked by: Vernon Coaker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of (a) homes and (b) businesses in Wales have access to superfast broadband.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport:

Ofcom's Connected Nations Infrastructure Report 2015 states that in May 2015, 79% of homes and businesses in Wales had access to superfast broadband. The full report can be found here:

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/infrastructure/2015/downloads/connected_nations2015.pdf

The Government's programme to deliver superfast broadband has ensured that so far more than 504,000 additional homes and businesses in Wales now have access to superfast broadband, which would not have been reached commercially, following almost £67 million of contracted Government funding.

[HC Deb 8 December 2015 c19273W](#)

Asked by Nia Griffith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with Ofcom on its proposals to open up BT fibre for business lines in Wales.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Ofcom has proposed that competitors be granted access to BT's fibre network in Wales and across the UK. It has consulted on this proposal and expects to publish its decision in early 2016. This is a matter on which the regulator must decide.

[HC Deb 23 November 2015 c17309W](#)

Asked by Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 3 March 2015 to Question 225611, on broadband: urban area, how much funding from the SuperConnected Cities budget has been assigned to each city; and how much has been spent (a) in total, (b) on broadband connection vouchers, (c) on free WiFi in public buildings, (d) on advertising and (e) on other items to date in (i) the programme as a whole and (ii) each city.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

The 22 SuperConnected Cities were given 'up to' funding allocations at the start of the SuperConnected Cities Programme. Spending priorities have developed over the course of the Programme, and the cities are now committed to delivering over 10,000 vouchers, free public Wi-Fi in 1,000 public buildings and on buses, trams and trains, as well as other digital connectivity projects for a total spend of around £80m. The majority of the spend will come at the end of the Programme - particularly with vouchers where there is a period of time between when the voucher is issued and the connection work is completed - with some wrap up costs in the next financial year.

For Northern Ireland and Scotland funding is given to cities via the budget transfer system, so a split for spending on individual projects is not applicable.

The table below outlines the original 'up to' allocations and current spend across the 22 cities of the Programme.

It is not possible to provide city allocations for marketing as it was a nationwide campaign.

England and Wales						
"Up To" Allocation	£M	Spend to February (Qtr 3 claims) 2014-15				£M
	Total		CVS	WFPB	OTHER	Total
Birmingham	8.25	Birmingham	0.39	0.39	0.00	0.78
Brighton	2.52	Brighton	0.07	0.00	0.56	0.63
Bristol	11.37	Bristol	0.02	0.00	1.52	1.54
Cambridge	4.12	Cambridge	0.05	0.47	0.00	0.52
Cardiff	10.17	Cardiff	0.85	0.08	0.00	0.93
Coventry	2.35	Coventry	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.09
Derby	2.27	Derby	0.03	1.22	0.00	1.25
LeedsBradford	13.54	LeedsBradford	0.93	0.32	0.50	1.75
London	25.00	London	1.68	0.41	0.00	2.10

Manchester	10.25	Manchester	2.15	1.96	0.00	4.12
Newcastle	5.25	Newcastle	0.20	0.00	0.58	0.78
Newport	6.00	Newport	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.04
Oxford	4.83	Oxford	0.04	0.00	0.09	0.12
Portsmouth	4.89	Portsmouth	0.07	0.68	0.00	0.74
Salford	7.10	Salford	0.34	1.11	0.00	1.45
York	1.65	York	0.10	0.00	0.11	0.21
Total	119.56	Total	7.04	6.64	3.36	17.04

[HC Deb 25 March 2015 c226442W](#)

Asked by Hywell Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what information his Department holds on superfast broadband connectivity rates in each parliamentary constituency in Wales.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Ofcom has published fixed broadband data by UK unitary authority and English county council as of June 2014 at http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/infrastructure/2014/Fixed_local_authority.csv and by postcode at http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/research/ir/Fixed_postcode.zip including "Take-up of lines > 30 Mbit/s (number of lines)". The House of Commons Library has analysed some of the Ofcom data by parliamentary constituency in its Standard Note Fixed Broadband: Policy and Speeds SN06643 at <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/SN06643>
[HC Deb 9 March 2015 c226203W](#)

Asked by Mr David Hanson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many fibre broadband hub stations there are in each local government area in Wales; how many such hubs are live; and what the expected roll-out date is for each station.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Superfast broadband coverage in Wales has now reached over 1 million premises, over two-thirds of the total in Wales. 345,000 premises have gained coverage as a result of the Superfast Cymru broadband programme which has funding from the UK government, Welsh Government and European funds.
 The contract for Superfast Cymru is not based on delivery of cabinet or exchange upgrades, but instead requires target numbers of premises able to access superfast broadband. A list of exchanges and deployment

status by local authority area is available on the Superfast Cymru website: <http://www.superfast-cymru.com/where-and-when>

Openreach publishes a list of exchanges accepting orders which can be searched at: <https://www.superfast-openreach.co.uk/where-and-when/>
[HC Deb 27 February 2015 c224961W](#)

Asked by Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent meetings he has held with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on improving broadband access in areas along the Wales-England border.

Answering Member: Alun Cairns | Wales Office

The UK Government has provided the Welsh Government with £69 million to roll out superfast broadband right across Wales. So far, this investment has connected almost 300,000 more homes and businesses in Wales to first class digital infrastructure, including premises along the border.

I have discussed the improvements that this investment will bring to Wales with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy and Broadband Delivery UK.

[HC Deb 9 February 2015 c223041W](#)

Asked by Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to improve broadband capacity in rural areas along the English-Welsh borders.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

BDUK has allocated £56.93m under Phase 1 and up to £12.11m under Phase 2 of the Superfast Broadband programme, alongside investment from the European Regional Development Fund, Welsh Government and BT, to the Superfast Cymru project taking coverage to at least 96% of Welsh premises by the end of 2017. Work is now under way in all 22 Local Authority areas in Wales, including those along the border area. A total of £31.5m has been allocated to the local projects that border Wales (Herefordshire and Gloucestershire, Cheshire and Shropshire) under Phase 1 of the programme, taking coverage in these areas to a further 233,185 premises. Up to £25.1 million has been allocated to these projects under Phase 2. Full details on individual project allocations are available on the following link:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zwLLqmDfnjA.khRmsBy2kR70>

[HC Deb 10 February 2015 c223037W](#)

Asked by Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 October 2014 to Question 209985, how much of the Super Connected Cities Programme

budget has been spent to date in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Scotland and (d) Northern Ireland.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

The Superconnected Cities Programme capital spend to 31 December 2014 was (a) £15.98m for England and (b) £0.97m for Wales, with annual budget transfers to the devolved administrations of (c) £7.65m for Scotland, (d) £5.78m for Northern Ireland.

Programme spend in all cities is expected to increase significantly as they complete their projects, and cities have been encouraged to commit their spending allocations by the end of March.

[HC Deb 10 February c222937W](#)

Asked by Lord Wigley: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many premises or households in Wales benefit from superfast broadband; and what was the figure 12 months previously.

Answering member: Lord Gardiner of Kimble | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

According to Ofcom's UK Infrastructure Report published in December 2014, superfast broadband was available to 55% of premises in Wales. There are no comparable figures available for superfast broadband availability in 2013, but according to Ofcom's 2013 UK Infrastructure Report, 48% of the premises in Wales had access to Next Generation Access networks.

[HL Deb 3 February 2015 HL4514W](#)

Asked by Simon Hart: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the progress of the roll-out of superfast broadband in Wales.

Answering member: Stephen Crabb | Wales Office

It is a priority of this Government to invest in broadband infrastructure, linking communities right across Wales.

Since 2010, 293,000 homes and businesses have been connected to superfast broadband in Wales.

[HC Deb 21 January 2015 c907071W](#)

Asked by Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the eight pilot schemes for reaching areas without superfast broadband are; and what progress those pilot schemes have made.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

The market test pilots, announced by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in June 2014, will put the government and broadband industry in a better position to roll out superfast broadband to the final 5% of premises by:

- Generating evidence about the cost of delivering superfast speeds in these hardest to reach areas, in order to better understand the level of public investment that will be needed;
- Building capacity and capability in the market, and increase the market's knowledge of State aid requirements, by sharing the pilot findings as widely as possible;
- Generating evidence about expected levels of take-up in hardest to reach areas, and how it can be incentivised.

The eight pilots have now completed their feasibility phase and Broadband Delivery UK is assessing whether projects have demonstrated that they are financially and technically viable before they proceed into deployment early in the New Year.

A table with details of the eight pilots is below.

Testing	Supplier	Proposed solution	Location	Total Funding
Wireless	AB Internet	A hybrid fixed line/fixed wireless superfast rural broadband network. All services on the proposed pilot network will be delivered via an end to end network and will deliver end user speeds of up to 50Mbps	Wales	£847,650
Wireless	Airwave	Demonstrating how four next-generation wireless systems will operate in the field. The four are: Wi-Fi at 2.4Ghz, point-to-multipoint broadband fixed wireless access at 2.4 Ghz or 5.8Ghz, LTE small cells and TV white space.	North Yorkshire	£1,564,600
Wireless	Quickline	Testing 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.	North Lincolnshire	£2,054,000

Satellite	Avanti	Piloting a new superfast satellite broadband wholesale platform to deliver a 30Mbps service using its Ka-band satellites.	Northern Ireland and Scotland	£885,640
Satellite	Satellite Internet	Piloting superfast satellite broadband using Ka-band satellite for both uplink/downlink as backhaul for local wireless networks, and directly to customers' premises.	Devon and Somerset	£175,125
Mixed: Fibre, fixed wireless, sub-loop unbundling	Call Flow	Testing a range of innovative "hybrid" engineering techniques/solutions to achieve NGA delivery such as: sub loop unbundling of cabinets; building a significant fibre network that connects as many of the deployed 'SLU node areas' together as possible; NGA delivery using fixed wireless access; and fibre to the premise (FTTP).	Hampshire	£1,194,145
Financial model	Cybermoor	Financing through social investment Developing a financing solution to leverage social investment into fibre to the premise and wireless networks in the last 5%.	Northumberland	£449,997
Operating model	MLL	Aggregating small wireless networks Creating a common wholesale OSS/BSS platform for integrating/aggregating rural wireless networks. In addition integrate an existing rural network to allow it to be	Kent	£957,900

		provided wholesale to other operators/ISPs and deploy a new Fixed Wireless Access network.		
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[HC Deb 16 December 2014 c217994W](#)

Asked by Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what investment the Government has made in infrastructure in Wales since May 201; and what estimate he has made of the level of that investment in the next five years.

Answering member: Stephen Crabb | Wales Office

The Government has made huge progress in delivering the infrastructure that the UK needs, establishing the first ever national infrastructure plan, which now shows that more than 2,500 projects have been completed since 2010.

We have invested over £69 million to provide superfast broadband to over 275,000 homes and businesses in Wales and work has begun on the £212 million investment at the new prison in north Wales. We have provided the Welsh Government with £924 million in additional capital spending power since the Spending Review in 2010, and the Welsh Government will be able to borrow up to £500 million to enable them to complete the investment needed on the M4.

Over the next five years Wales will benefit from major infrastructure projects, including the electrification of the south Wales mainline and the Valley lines rail network. The Government will also continue to work with Hitachi and Horizon to secure the new investment in energy generation at Wylfa Newydd.

[HC Deb 15 December 2014 c217585W](#)

Asked by Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2014 to Question 200020, what reports he has received of political bias in the prioritisation of the broadband rollout programme in Wales; if he will hold discussions with the Welsh Government on this matter; and if he will ensure that all areas in Wales benefit equally from the broadband rollout programme.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

World class broadband coverage across the UK is a priority for this Government. Funding for all local projects, including the Wales project has been allocated to achieve maximum coverage and value for money from the public investment.

At the end of September 2014 276,320 premises had been reached.

The Superfast Cymru project is set to achieve 93% superfast broadband coverage by the end of 2017.

[HC Deb 17 November 2014 c213845W](#)

Asked by Chris Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the timetable is for the extension of high-speed internet to the South Wales Valleys.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

The Superfast Cymru has already enabled over 230,000 Welsh homes and businesses to access superfast broadband and aims to cover 700,000 (93%) by the end of 2017. The Welsh project team recently announced that all exchanges in Wales will be covered in the programme, with work commencing in all exchanges by September 2015. The programme within in the South Wales Valleys has already connected 24 exchanges in the Caerphilly area, with two remaining exchanges due to be upgraded in December 2014. The final two will be enabled in 2015.

[HC Deb 29 October 2014 c211551W](#)

Asked by Michael Dugher: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many households in (a) England and Wales, (b) South Yorkshire and (c) Barnsley East constituency do not have access to (i) a fibre optic broadband connection, (ii) high speed broadband and (iii) the internet.

Answering member: Mr Edward Vaizey | Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Ofcom have reported that Internet availability is virtually 100% across the whole United Kingdom.

Ofcom has also published fixed broadband data by local area, for example in its infrastructure report (stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/telecoms-research/broadband-speeds/infrastructure-report-2013/) and map (maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband/), which included the data for 2013:

Area	Next Generation Access broadband availability 2013	Broadband take-up (including superfast broadband) 2013	Superfast broadband take-up 2013
England	76%	72%	16%
Wales	48%	70%	9%
Barnsley	70.3%	66.9%	17.3%
Doncaster	76.1%	69.3%	15.9%
Rotherham	72.6%	70.3%	13.8%
Sheffield	81.3%	68.5%	17.7%

Ofcom is likely to publish updated numbers later in 2014. It did not however publish data on a constituency basis.

Broadband take-up may be higher than these numbers suggest, as some households use mobile broadband but not fixed broadband and Internet usage likely to be higher still, as some individuals access the internet away from home.

[HC Deb 14 October 2014 c209400](#)

Asked by Baroness Neville-Rolfe: To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on the rollout of (1) basic broadband, (2) superfast broadband, and (3) mobile coverage, in rural areas; and what assessment they have made of the impact of those technologies on the rural economy.

Answering member: Lord Gardiner of Kimble

The Ofcom 2013 UK communications market report and infrastructure update report that broadband was available to 100% of UK premises, whilst 8% of connections were operating at less than 2mbps; that was down from 11% of connections in 2009.

By the end of summer 2014, 1 million new premises will have superfast broadband available for the first time as a result of our superfast broadband programme and 4 million additional premises will have superfast broadband available to them from the current projects; that will mean 90% of UK premises will be able to access superfast services. The second round of projects will add over 1 million more premises, taking coverage to 95% across the UK.

With respect to the impact of the broadband programme, an independent Broadband Impact Study by analysts SQW (with Cambridge Econometrics), revealed the Government's investment in superfast broadband is expected to deliver a major boost to the UK economy; for every £1 the government is investing in broadband, the UK economy could benefit by up to £20 by 2024. It also demonstrated that the benefits will be shared across the UK, helping the rebalancing of our economy; approximately 89 per cent of the benefits will be in areas outside London and the South East of England with rural areas set to benefit most.

The report focussed on impacts of mass market broadband services – i.e. 'affordable broadband' for SMEs and households – and estimated that by 2024, net annual GVA impacts attributable to intervention include:

- £0.8 billion from safeguarding local enterprise employment,
- £5 billion from productivity growth for broadband- using firms,
- £0.3 billion from improved teleworker productivity, and
- £0.2 billion from increased labour force participation.

The majority of these benefits will be to SMEs, and over half to rural areas.

With respect to mobile coverage the 4G rollout will ensure we continue to have some of the best mobile broadband services in Europe. As a result of the 4G auction in 2012, O2 has an obligation to provide indoor 4G coverage to 98% of the UK population and to at least 95% in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland by the end of 2017. The other three UK mobile network operators have publicly committed to match O2's coverage obligation by the end of 2015.

[HL Deb 16 July 2014 HL125W](#)

3.3 Westminster: Oral answers to Questions

Wales

[HC Deb 13 January 2016 cc842-843](#)

Broadband

[HC Deb 9 July 2014 cc277-278](#)

Broadband: Wales

[HC Deb 3 July 2014 c1066](#)

3.4 Westminster Hall debates

Rural Broadband

[HC Deb 10 Sep 2015 cc137-159WH](#)

Superfast Broadband

[HC Deb 24 Jun 2015 cc285-311WH](#)

North Wales Economic Infrastructure

[HC Deb 25 March 2015 cc479-501WH](#)

BT Openreach

[HC Deb 21 October 2014 cc235-244WH](#)

4. Further reading

Ofcom *Connected Nations 2015* December 2015

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/infrastructure/2015/downloads/connected_nations2015.pdf

POST research briefing *UK Broadband Infrastructure* May 2016

<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/POST-PN-0494>

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