

NBG Report for KCC Meeting 16 May 2018

Apart from Killlearn there have been few visible changes to the landline connectivity premises across Strathendrick over the last month. The status of the cabinets in the other villages also remains unchanged. For Killlearn though, the long-awaited cabinet expected in The Square, adjacent to the old cemetery has finally appeared.

For the new cabinet, P2, several postcodes are now shown as in the process of being connected to it in preparation for 'Accepting Orders'. The postcodes benefitting are: G63 9NE, G63 9PX, G63 9PY and G63 9RL. It should be noted though that not all premises on these postcodes are actually able to be connected. They appear to be on Exchange Only, or long lines. Some postcodes have also been moved to 'In scope – FTTP' although again not all the premises within the postcode. These postcodes are: G63 9LL, G63 9PD and G63 9QW.

In Balfron no premises appear to have had upgraded landline connections in the past month. The cabinet status remains unchanged. Balfron several postcodes have had some premises within them down-graded from 'In Scope – FTTP' to 'Exploring Solutions – consider co-funding'. The postcodes affected are: G63 0NL, G63 0NN, G63 0NW and G63 0SQ.

Landlines for Balmaha premises are again unchanged this month.

In Blanefield/Strathblane no premises appear to have had upgraded connections in the past month. The cabinet status remains the same.

In Buchlyvie, no premises appear to have had upgraded connections in the past month. The cabinet status remains the same.

Premises on several Drymen premises have changed status this month. Several postcodes (except for G63 0HX) that were in a 'Connect' status, i.e. nearly operational, have reverted to 'In Scope FTTP' however other postcodes sitting at 'Exploring Solutions' have moved forward to 'In Scope FTTP'. Also the cabinet that should have been operational in February has apparently not moved forward. Croftamie premises appear unchanged.

For Fintry nothing seems to have changed. The dates for the three cabinets are the same i.e. 1 indicating that it should be live already, although still no work has started beside the exchange; and the dates for the 2 other cabinets to go live are still Sept and Dec 2018.

Remember the status of your individual connectivity can be checked on either of the WhereandWhen pages of the BT Openreach or Digital Scotland websites. The additional 'refinements' of status from the BT Openreach Where and When website are shown at the end of the detail section overleaf.

Highlights from last month's Broadband Delivery Group meeting: ● Approaches have been made to the Planning Department to encourage a good broadband connection at an early stage, but guidelines remain weak. ● Premises built since Digital Scotland did their survey last year will not be included in the R100 scheme. ● Shaun Marley (ex-Community Broadband Scotland) has been appointed as Stirling Council's new Community Broadband Officer. ● Brig o'Turk are working with a private supplier to get a community project going. Balquidder are continuing to install their fibre connections. ● SC expect to launch a competition soon for community groups to bid for the prize of support from the CBO to do a feasibility study. ● SC continue to promote the establishment of Community WiFi hubs and Aberfoyle and Callander have each set one up. ● The current Digital Scotland upgrade project is now into its GainShare phase with the original targets already met and 89.3% getting a speed of 24Mbps or more. ● R100 contractual negotiations continue with 4 bidders, at present: Axion (French company), BT, GigaClear (key supplier in rural England), and SSE Telecom (key supplier in Northern Scotland). Some premises are still expected to be outside the R100 project and may then be part of an 'Aligned Solution' or voucher scheme. ● The business voucher scheme is being re-started with upto £3000 available to help a business connect to an available fibre source. There can be help too for adjacent residential properties.

Do not forget the Digital Scotland "Better Broadband Scheme" provides a subsidy to establish a better connection using either satellite or fixed wireless for those currently getting download speeds of less than 2Mbps. With improved mobile connectivity available now, this alternative may be a viable solution to a poor landline connection, but not it seems included in the voucher scheme. See the KCC website for specific links.

The latest status of cabinets in each of the villages is shown overleaf:

- **Cabinet status summary:**

- Balfron cabinets: 2 live (P1 at G63 0LH & P3 at G63 0NA) plus a further 4 live between March & Sept 2018 but locations unknown. About 85% of the village (by postcode) is now Accepting Orders. The majority of other premises are shown as In Scope, although some have been downgraded to Exploring Solutions (G63 0NL, G63 0NN, G63 0NW and G63 0SQ);
- Balmaha cabinets: some postcodes are showing as In Scope i.e. more advanced than Exploring Solutions;
- Blane/Strathblane cabinets: 3 live (P1 cabinet at Netherblane; P2 cabinet at G63 9BY, and P3 cabinet showing as Field Survey, location unknown, but now supposedly live). Over 85% of the village (by postcode) is now shown as Accepting Orders for fibre (subject to distance). The remaining postcodes (i.e. G63 9AH, G63 9EH, G63 9ET, G63 9EU, G63 9EX, G63 9EY, G63 9EZ & G63 9HA) are showing as in Build but connected to cabinet PE1 that confusingly shows as unavailable;
- Buchlyvie cabinets: P2 cabinet at FK8 3LP is live and services most of the village. Some more premises are connected now while other premises are still Exploring Solutions. A 2nd cabinet is showing, location unknown, in Design and apparently planned for March 2018. Premises at FK8 3LS & G63 0QU remain Exploring Solutions. About 88% of the village (by postcode) is now shown as Accepting Orders for fibre (subject to distance);
- Croftamie cabinets: P2 live (at G63 0EP between village and A811 junction to Balloch). Another cabinet has appeared on the corner of Buchanan Cres and the A809, but it's unclear whether it is live. A cabinet is also being shown at Cattermills (G63 0BB), available since Dec 2017. These latter cabinets may be the same one, but with a faulty postcode;
- Drymen cabinets: 3 live (P1 at G63 0BY, P2 at G63 0EP i.e. Croftamie, and P3 at G63 0BD). Additional premises are shown as Accepting Orders (within G63 0NH) using a cabinet number 3 at G63 0AA. P4 has appeared at Buchanan Castle Gdns in the Castle Estate at G63 0HT with premises being Connected. This should have gone live in Feb 2018, with 2 further cabinets: P5 also at G63 0BB i.e. in Croftamie (allegedly already live from Nov 2017), and E10 in Field Survey supposedly going live in July 2018, but location unknown. Planning permission has been sought for a cabinet at G63 0BH that is possibly the 2nd of these cabinets i.e. E10;
- Fintry cabinets: 3 cabinets are now shown, E1 (location unknown but possibly opposite the Garage in Main St) allegedly scheduled to be live in Sept 2017 (although no actual work has actually started) and E2 (location also unknown and scheduled to go live in Sept 2018. A 3rd cabinet has now appeared (again location unknown) scheduled to go live in Dec 2018. The fixed-wireless solution similar to that delivered to Auchengillan is now on hold indefinitely due these plans by BT;
- Killearn cabinets: 3 cabinets are live (E1 at Blane Smithy), E3 (at jn of Station Rd and Gartness Rd) and P1 (beside Exchange). 2 further cabinets (P2 & E6) appear to be proposed (although neither location is known) however the expected cabinet at the junction of The Square and Crosshead Rd has now appeared although both still appear as at 'Field Survey'. P2 is allegedly live by July 2018 and E6 allegedly live by Sept 2018. Several premises (on G63 9NE, G63 9PX, G63 9PY and G63 9RL) appear to be linked to this new cabinet, P2. Additional premises on postcodes G63 9LL, G63 9PD and G63 9QW have become 'In Scope – FTTP';
- Milton of Buchanan – see Balmaha above.

Note that the reliability of dates shown is uncertain, as are the specific locations, which refer to the often large areas within a single rural postcode. You can check your own situation using the BT Openreach WhereandWhen website.

Note: the stages in “the Fibre Journey” are:

Exploring Solutions, In scope, Design, Field Survey, Build, Connect, Activate, Accepting Orders.

The timescale for “the journey” is likely to be about 12-18 months.

Status 'refinements':

Exploring Solutions: We're working with government and industry to explore ways to bring Superfast fibre to as many people as possible but don't have a plan for your area yet. You might consider co-funding fibre access in your community. Knowing there's a healthy demand in your area can also really help.

In Scope: You're in a plan to get Superfast fibre but we haven't started work yet. It'll be built either as part of our fibre programme or through a partnership with your local authority.

In scope – FTTP: Your area is currently in our plans to be upgraded with Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), however we follow a different design and build process for FTTP so you won't see updates at each stage. Once the engineering work is completed there is a commissioning period of up to eight weeks before an order can be placed. When you are able to place an order you will see the Accepting Orders message.

Accepting Orders but line Too Long: Your cabinet is enabled for Superfast fibre however you're not able to order fibre just yet. This might be because the length of the line is too long to get Superfast speeds. We're actively looking at other options.

Doug Ashworth

Chair, Killearn Broadband Group