

NBG Report for KCC Meeting 17 Oct 2018

BT Openreach are making further, if slow progress! In addition to the new cabinet in Drumbeg Loan in Killearn, one part of the village has been investigated about running fibre through existing ducts. Unfortunately, the Drumbeg Loan cabinet activation stalled for a while. Meanwhile, fibre has been run along Napier Road and into Lampson Lane hopefully with a view to providing FTTP connections. Unfortunately there does not seem to have been any equivalent activity in The Branziert. It remains to be seen if the Drumbeg Loan cabinet will improve speeds in The Branziert too. Timescales appear unchanged from last month i.e. sometime between December and March!

The volunteer team creating the Stockiemuir Community Internet (Dualt) network have made good progress in the last month and the project is now nearing completion. Other community projects in Gartness, Buchanan, Balmaha and Strathblane (Auchengillan) amongst others have applied to Stirling Council for assistance via the new Rural Broadband Award Scheme which, though in its infancy, may help those on the periphery of existing landline coverage.

Fintry has also had its first cabinet installed, hopefully going live by Dec 2018, and a 2nd is also showing with the same live date. Additionally fibre has been installed along the B818 towards Killearn from Fintry reaching at least the junction for the back road to Balfron.

Otherwise in the other villages there do not appear to be any changes since last month.

As shown above, Stirling Council has proposed a Rural Broadband Award with delegated authority to approve projects upto £5K and, with full F&E Committee approval, upto £50K that will also permit some capital expenditure. The Rural Broadband Forum, replacing the BDG, is also anticipated to meet towards the end of November.

As well as the Better Broadband Subsidy scheme that has been running for some time, a new Gigabyte scheme has become available, geared to assist business premises to achieve a full-fibre connection but which can also help neighbouring residential premises as part of the same scheme. Subsidies of upto £3000 for the business and £500 for each residential property may be available. I don't know if we in Killearn have a suitable combination of properties to make a project of this format viable on costs.

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 3 planned supposedly to be live between July 2018 and April 2019 but locations unknown;
- Balmaha cabinets: there are still no cabinets shown as being planned;
- 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);
- Buchlyvie cabinets: P2 cabinet at FK8 3LP is live and services most of the village. Only 1 additional cabinet (P4) is now showing, but location unknown, in Field Survey and apparently planned for Mar 2019. Planned cabinet visible previously (E2) has been deleted;
- Croftamie cabinets: P2 live (at G63 0EP between village and A811 junction to Balloch). Cabinet P5, on the corner of Buchanan Cres and the A809, is apparently live and been available since Dec 2017;
- Drymen cabinets: 3 live (P1 at G63 0BY, and P3 at G63 0BD). P4 is at Buchanan Castle Gdns in the Castle Estate at G63 0HT with premises being Connected. This should have gone live in Feb 2018. Planning permission has been sought for a cabinet at G63 0BH that is possibly a cabinet listed as P6 (but location unknown) which is in Field Survey and supposedly to be live in March 2019;
- Fintry cabinets: 2 cabinets are now listed. One unmarked cabinet has been erected opposite the church on the Crow Road and will therefore be either cabinet P2 or P3 both of which are shown as to be live by Dec 2018. Locations for these 2 cabinets are not shown however. Work has still not started on the cabinet for which Planning Permission was sought approximately opposite the Garage in Main St). Meanwhile 4G now available from the mobile masts may provide an immediate solution for many premises, especially those furthest outside the village itself;
- Killearn cabinets: 4 cabinets are live (E1 at Blane Smithy), E3 (at jn of Station Rd and Gartness Rd), P1 (beside Exchange) and P2 (at the junction of The Square and Crosshead Rd). A further cabinet has appeared halfway down Drumbeg Loan over the summer recess. A proposed cabinet now labelled P3 (location unknown) may be this same cabinet, however it is only listed as 'Field Survey' and to be live by March 2019;
- 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