

Stroud District Local Strategic Partnership Meeting

07 / 06 / 2024

Fastershire Overview

Since 2012, Fastershire has been working to transform broadband access across Gloucestershire and Herefordshire.

Using funding from the local authorities, central government and the EU, Fastershire has awarded delivery contracts to Openreach, Gigaclear and Airband. Fastershire also created a number of bespoke grant schemes, the Fastershire Community Grant (FCG) and the Marches and Gloucestershire Broadband Grant (MGBG) that targeted some of those hardest-to-reach communities and businesses.

The project also included social and digital inclusion activities, as well as an extensive business support programme that provided free training sessions and consultancy, designed to help small and medium size businesses get the most from fibre broadband and be more competitive.

Broadband Coverage: Stroud District

- **Superfast** (>30 Mbps): **97.95%**
- **Gigabit** (1000 Mbps): **51.23%**

Fastershire's intervention has delivered the majority of improved broadband in the Stroud District, however, the district has also benefited from some commercial delivery by Virgin Media, as well as on-going builds by Netomnia in Stroud and FullFibre Ltd in Cam and Dursley.

Openreach delivered Fastershire's first rollout contract and this provided properties with superfast connection using Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) technology, but also some gigabit capable full fibre.

Fastershire's lot 3e rollout contract with Gigaclear covers much of the rural parts of the Stroud District and the build is on-going. The lot 3e build is 94% complete and almost 9,000 already have access to a gigabit capable full fibre connection, with the build due to complete later in the year.

Netomnia's commercial build in Stroud has connected almost 7,000 properties and by the end of the year, Netomnia expect another 3,000 premises will be live.

Beyond Fastershire

Moving forward, the Government's new £5billion Project Gigabit programme is replacing the local authority led superfast projects, like Fastershire.

In February this year, Project Gigabit awarded the lot 18, East Gloucestershire contract, to Gigaclear. Lot 18 will see Gigaclear extend their full fibre network to around 4,400 additional premises in hard-to-reach rural areas.

To support those properties that still can't access a superfast connection, Gloucestershire County Council has launched the Digital Household Grant. The grant will fund the installation and hardware cost of a 4G solution and aims to provide an interim solution until Project Gigabit is delivered.