



Government vouchers could fully cover your community's cost of getting FTTP

There is an opportunity to bring full fibre broadband to eligible properties in Goudhurst, utilising government funding, in partnership with Openreach.

Openreach is one of the government's registered network build suppliers and have helped hundreds of local communities across the UK to get high-speed broadband. That means they can access online services, video call, work from home, stream HD TV and game online - all at the same time; with no frustrating buffering, no connection dropouts, no waiting your turn. Ultrafast fibre broadband can deliver fantastic benefits for homes and businesses within your community.

Confirm government voucher availability

Government funding is available to help pay for the cost of having the fibre network installed. The Gigabit Voucher Scheme means every eligible rural home can get a voucher worth £1,500 (and up to £3,500 for small businesses) to improve broadband in their local area. Some eligible postcodes can also benefit from the new Kent voucher top-up scheme to £7,000 per property.

The voucher scheme could greatly contribute to the cost of the fibre partnership, potentially removing the cost to the community completely. We'll help throughout the application but the community needs to come together to begin the process and pledge their individual vouchers.

Here is some information to get started.

Step 1

Go to www.openreach.co.uk/connectmycommunityletter to check if you can get funding. You will need to be in an eligible postcode and have broadband speeds of less than 100mbps currently.

Step2

If you're eligible, pledge your Gigabit Voucher to Openreach.

Step 3

Encourage your friends and neighbours to do the same.

Step 4

When enough pledges come in Openreach will be in touch about getting the funding in place and the build started. These vouchers can cover the installation cost of bringing better broadband to the community of Goudhurst – so don't miss out!

Pledging couldn't be easier, but if you have a query then contact your local community lead David Knight / david.knight@goudhurst-pc.gov.uk / 07973729096

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the voucher scheme?

The Government recognise that Gigabit-capable, or Ultrafast broadband connections offer the fastest and most reliable speeds available. The Rural Gigabit Voucher scheme has been designed to support rural communities who are eligible for funding, team up with a network provider and bring that technology to their doorstep. We are one of the Government's registered network build providers.

More information can be found on the Department of Culture, Media and Sport website

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/>

The terms and conditions attached to the scheme seem very complicated, will I have any contractual obligations at the end of this?

The main ask is that once the network is in place, you sign up with a communications provider of your choice and start enjoying the benefits of ultrafast fibre broadband.

Do I have to order my broadband from BT, or can I choose which provider I use?

No, you are not tied to BT when you pledge your voucher. Openreach will build an open network, meaning that you can order from a selection of service providers, assuming they sell in your area.

How much will the fibre service cost?

Costs will vary depending on the package and the service provider. There are many price comparison sites available to review, Ofcom in particular is a good source of information.

Can I still keep my telephone number?

Yes. You can keep your existing telephone number as your phone service will continue to be delivered via the traditional copper network. You can however speak to your provider about the alternative options and benefits an ultrafast fibre service can give you.

Can I use the voucher to meet my current broadband costs?

No. The voucher can only be towards the cost of the infrastructure build only. You will have to pay for a broadband package.

My query isn't answered here, where can I get more information?

Please visit our website www.openreach.co.uk/connectmycommunityletter or email us at communityfibre@openreach.co.uk

Ten fantastic full fibre facts:

- Connecting everyone to 'full fibre' broadband by 2025 would create a £59 billion boost to the nation's economy.
- Fibre optics are strands of glass around one tenth the thickness of a human hair. They transmit data using light signals.
- A single strand of fibre can provide enough capacity to serve up to 32 individual properties with Gigabit speeds
- Pure fibre optic broadband can run at speeds of 1 gigabit per second (1000Mbps) – that's 18 times faster than today's UK average broadband speed. You can download a two-hour HD film in less time than it takes to make a cup of tea. And video gamers could download a 5-gigabyte virtual reality (VR) game in 1.7 minutes, instead of waiting half an hour.
- Full fibre is more reliable than traditional copper connections. A full fibre broadband signal isn't affected by external interference whereas copper can be impacted by outside electrical signals – including electric fences and even bad weather!
- A fibre optic cable can send a signal over 120 miles without any real loss of quality. Traditional copper cables can lose signal at around one mile.
- A family of four can all stream ultra HD or 4k quality video simultaneously, without waiting or buffering.
- Full fibre is better for the environment – the amount of electricity used to power fibre is significantly less than needed for copper cables. Better connectivity also enables more people to work from home – which cuts down on commuting. Research suggests fibering up the whole of the UK could save 300 million commuting trips – reducing carbon emissions by 360,000 tonnes.
- Full fibre can boost business productivity. It enables cheaper broadband powered phone services, and better access to cloud-based computing services. For example, full fibre connectivity combined with cloud computing means businesses can upload, store, access and download vast amounts of data in minutes instead of hours. Data is backed up and securely archived off-site so not relying on costly, ageing servers taking up expensive office space.
- Full fibre broadband will be crucial in supporting plans to give NHS patients access to 'virtual clinics' where patients who don't physically need to come hospital can get a video consultation with their doctor. It can also allow hospitals to share HD quality graphics of medical scans in seconds to improve diagnosis speeds. For example, medical staff can download a 2 gigabyte CT scan in 40 seconds, instead of 14 minutes.

You, your neighbours
and Openreach.
Let's get your
community connected.

