The deployment of superfast broadband is a key strategic priority for the County Council and Government. It is an essential driver for business growth, jobs creation and inward investment in the area. It will help local businesses to innovate and grow, and it will transform public services and ensure residents have improved access to resources and support.

The Superfast Leicestershire programme launched in 2013 and is a multi-million pound partnership managed by County Council and delivered by Openreach. It is funded by a range of partners including the County Council, Government, BT, LLEP, European Regional Development fund and District, Borough and City councils.

Our aim; to bring superfast broadband access to homes and businesses which have not been upgraded through commercially funded upgrades. Areas targeted have often been but are not exclusively the more rural and remote parts of Leicestershire.

In Hoby with Rotherby, through the Superfast Leicestershire programme we have enabled superfast broadband access of at least 24Mbps to 60% of the parish.

Coverage is not evenly distributed across the three parish villages and any property who currently cannot upgrade to superfast broadband will be eligible to target through our upcoming Phase 3.

Upgrades are achieved through two types of solution; Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) and Fibre to the Premise (FTTP). FTTC upgrades involve installing fibre cabling to the village and installing a new roadside fibre cabinet. This is then connected to a power supply and linked to the existing copper telephone network. The copper telephone lines already in place provide the last link to the home or business. FTTC provides the most cost-effective solution to deliver great speeds to as many properties as possible. In some instances, usually in smaller villages or hamlets, FTTC is not a viable option and here we instead deploy fibre cabling directly to the property. Details for each village in the parish are set out below.

**Hoby and Ragdale**

Hoby and Rotherby are served by a broadband cabinet (FTTC) called Rotherby 2 which is located on Frisby Road. This was upgraded in February and serves the following postcodes: LE14 3PR, LE14 3EA, LE14 3EB, LE14 3PE, LE14 3DT, LE14 3PB, LE14 3PP, LE14 3ED, LE14 3PT, LE14 3DY, LE14 3DW, LE14 3PG, LE14 3DU, AND LE14 3DR. Not all properties in each postcode may be able to upgrade. Residents can check by contacting their service provider and asking to switch to fibre broadband.
149 properties are served by Rotherby 2, the vast majority of which can receive 30Mpbs or above.

**Rotherby**

Rotherby will be served by broadband cabinet called Rotherby 3, located on Gaddesby Lane. Unfortunately our delivery partners Openreach have reported delays due to unforeseen engineering challenges.

In order to complete the installation process we will need to close the road temporarily and implement some traffic management measures. We are aiming to complete this as soon as possible and anticipate that all work will be complete by the end of the year.

Once Rotherby 3 is live it will serve more than 50 properties in the postcodes of LE142LP, LE142LW, LE142LE, LE142LH, LE74YS, LE142LN, LE143DN, and LE74YT.

**Brooksby**

Unfortunately there are a number of areas across Leicestershire where it’s proving more difficult and expensive than anticipated to upgrade to fibre broadband. Our contract with Openreach involves the use of public funding known as state aid. To make sure this money goes as far as possible, and benefits as many Leicestershire homes and businesses as can be reasonably expected, the use of this funding has to be below a ‘cost per property’ threshold. This applies to every programme of this type across the UK.

In some areas, initial scoping work estimated that it would be possible to reach some of the most hard to reach communities’ within this threshold. However, after detailed planning work has taken place, the overall cost is substantially higher and the use of public funds is unable to be included.

We had planned to upgrade Brooksby through an FTTP solution which Openreach have now placed on hold. The county council is working with Openreach and BDUK, government’s broadband delivery arm to find a way forward. We don’t want to see any area removed from the rollout and we remain committed to working towards 100% coverage. In the worst case scenario, should we be unable to find a way forward during this phase of work, we will ensure that Brooksby is brought into scope for Phase 3 of the Superfast Leicestershire programme, which we will shortly seek to appoint a delivery partner or partners to deliver with us.

**Next steps – What next for any unserved properties**

The Council’s Superfast Leicestershire Team are currently working on developing a Phase 3 of the programme which will see the Council reinvesting £5.7m to extend the reach of superfast broadband to many of the final 3% of the county that would otherwise be left
behind on slow speeds. We are prioritising rural areas and businesses and any property not upgraded through Phase 2 by the end of 2018 will be eligible. We will shortly launch a procurement to seek new delivery partners and hope to be in a position to award contracts in spring next year at which point we will be able to publish which areas are set to benefit. The Phase 3 build will likely take two years to complete and should get underway in summer 2019.

Contact Details

T: 0116 305 0023
E: broadband@leics.gov.uk
W: www.superfastleicestershire.org.uk