

Making Kent Quicker: December 2014 Update



The Making Kent Quicker Project is working to bring better broadband to parts of Kent and Medway that would otherwise not benefit from the commercial rollout of superfast broadband services.

This update provides an overview of the work currently underway and where to go for further information.

Project Overview

Kent County Council is working with the Government's broadband agency, Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), to bring better broadband to Kent.

This means, when combined with existing rollout plans, that:-

- 95% of all properties in Kent will have access to higher-speed fibre-based broadband infrastructure by the end of 2015;
- every property in the project area will be able to access a broadband service of at least 2Mbps; and

- 91% of premises will get superfast broadband of at least 24Mbps.

Despite representing one of Kent's largest infrastructure investments, the project will take less than three years to deliver – and will involve laying 7,000km of fibre the length and breadth of the County. The build, which started in autumn 2013, is due to be completed by the end of 2015.



Latest news

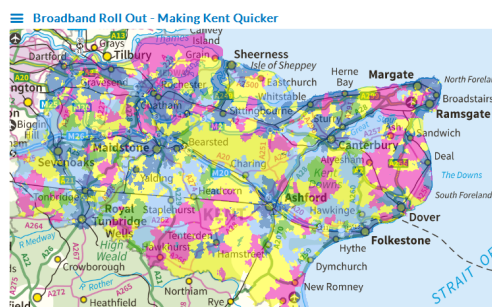
Significant progress has been made in delivering Making Kent Quicker across the County, since it began in March 2013, and the project remains on track.

Over 60,000 homes and businesses have so far benefited from the Kent and Medway BDUK Contract 1 Project who would otherwise have been left with no or slow broadband.

Further details on the project and deployment plan – including a 7 digit postcode checker and an interactive map are publically available on www.kent.gov.uk/broadband.

New interactive map

We have created an interactive map which is now live on our website. This sets out the project's indicative deployment plans and has been designed to complement the postcode checker. The data on this map, as well as our postcode checker service, is updated regularly when we are advised that services are now available.



Phase 2: Superfast Extension Programme

Kent County Council has been awarded additional Government funding of £5.6 million to extend the reach of superfast broadband services. This allocation, which is being matched by £5.6 million from the Council, is part of BDUK's 'Superfast Extension Programme'. The purpose of this programme is to build upon the current BDUK Contract 1 projects so that 95% of properties across the UK have access to superfast broadband of at least 24mbps by the end of 2017.

We are currently in the procurement for this BDUK Contract 2 project. We are looking to award contract in March 2015 and should be able to publish indicative roll out plans outlining those areas, which are likely to benefit, soon after.

Market Innovation Pilot: addressing the "final 5%" areas

Although the Kent and Medway BDUK Contract 2 Project will create another step change in the availability of superfast broadband services, it will not be possible to reach 100% of properties in identified areas of "market failure" with the current funding.

However, KCC remains committed to working with BDUK to realise our longstanding ambition of wanting all rural communities to have access to superfast broadband services.

To help support the development of new and more affordable solutions, KCC is working with BDUK as a pilot location for their "Innovation Market Testing" Scheme. This initiative involves 8 small-scale field trials across the UK of new technological approaches for delivering superfast broadband services in "final 5%" areas. We understand that the findings of this work will be used by BDUK to inform the development of a new national BDUK Programme to bring faster broadband to communities that will not benefit from Contract 1 or Contract 2 project work.

Key Messages

Whilst this project is bringing better broadband to many areas that would not otherwise benefit from upgraded services, not all premises in identified

postcode areas will be able to order faster fibre-based broadband services.

This may be because:-

- Some postcode areas are split into different delivery phases for this project (look at the postcode checker on www.kent.gov.uk/broadband for more information)
- Properties are not always connected to the nearest street cabinet– your broadband service provider should be able to give you more detail if this relates to you.
- Some properties are too far away from their nearest street cabinet to benefit from speed uplift. Where these properties are currently receiving a service less than 2mb, the Making Kent Quicker Project has funding to look at alternative technical solutions.

What you can do

Check our postcode checker or interactive map to see what is planned or already available in your area (www.kent.gov.uk/broadband).

To access the new services you will need to contact your chosen broadband service provider (ISP) and order a fibre-based service upgrade. Please note that not all ISPs will immediately offer a service once cabinets are "ready for service" and there may be a short delay with your chosen provider. You will also need to be aware of your existing contractual commitments– although most providers will allow customers in existing contracts to upgrade to a fibre package.

An engineer will then need to visit your property to install the necessary equipment to enable service. This will include replacing the face plate on the BT master socket and enabling the service at the local fibre cabinet.

