

Update on Super Fast Broadband in Lazonby Parish
and how to access faster broadband

Introduction

The current situation as of May 2018 is that under the Connecting Cumbria programme BT Openreach have upgraded the two cabinets in Lazonby village to a fibre connected status. (The cabinet on the corner of the Great Salkeld road junction near to the Co-op and also the cabinet at the Town Head junction near to the duck pond).

A third cabinet on the B6413 next to the junction for Salkeld Dykes and Brackenbank is about to go live within the next month.

The result of this is that the majority of properties which are no more than one mile (by road) from these cabinets should be able to receive at least 24 Mbps download speeds (SFBB) after upgrading their contract to fibre broadband.

Almost all the properties in the following post codes and are connected to the Lazonby exchange should be in this SFBB category.

SFBB capable post codes				
CA10 1AA	CA10 1AB	CA10 1AD	CA10 1AE	CA10 1AF
CA10 1AG	CA10 1AH	CA10 1AL	CA10 1AQ	CA10 1AR
CA10 1AT	CA10 1AU	CA10 1AW	CA10 1BB	CA10 1BD
CA10 1BE	CA10 1BG	CA10 1BJ	CA10 1BL	CA10 1BN
CA10 1BQ	CA10 1BS	CA10 1BT	CA10 1BU	CA10 1BW
CA10 1BX	CA10 1AJ *	CA10 1AX		
* Several properties on this post code may be sub-24Mbps				

Most but not all Internet Service Providers (ISP's) will now be able to offer you an upgrade to a SFBB contract if you are in the above post code areas.

The following post codes are likely to be outside the area covered by the fibre enabled cabinets and therefore will be unable to receive SFBB speeds and many will be sub-10 Mbps or even sub-2 Mbps.

Many on these post codes will receive sub 24 Mbps over the existing BT Openreach network				
CA10 1AX	CA10 1AY	CA10 1AZ	CA10 1BA	CA10 1BH
CA10 1BY *				
* Some of these properties could be as slow as 2Mbps				

The above post codes are all connected to the Lazonby exchange via the three green cabinets described above.

The following post codes are connected to cabinets linked to either the Armathwaite, Calthwaite or Southwaite exchanges. These cabinets are all expected to be fibre enabled by the end of 2018 but the broadband speed at a property, as always, will be dependent upon distance from the cabinet.

These post codes are not connected to the Lazonby exchange				
				Exchange
CA11 9PF	CA11 9RF	CA11 9RQ *		Calthwaite
CA4 9TR *	CA4 9TS *			Calthwaite
CA4 0JE	CA4 0JF			Southwaite
CA4 9PQ	CA4 9PY	CA4 9TN		Armathwaite
CA4 9TP	CA4 9TW *			Armathwaite
* Many of these properties could be as slow as 2Mbps				

All the post codes listed in these tables have been obtained from published public data.

If your post code does not appear please let me know and I will follow up.

The following URL will connect you into the BT Openreach web site:

<https://www.homeandbusiness.openreach.co.uk/fibre-broadband/when-can-i-get-fibre>

This provides the most accurate and up to date information on both availability of SFBB and the likely speed of connection.

The Connecting Cumbria programme will finish by end 2018 and there is unlikely to be any further Government funding available through Connecting Cumbria.

BT Openreach have been offering a Community Fibre Partnership (CFP) over the past few years which would result in a FTTP connection and deliver a future-proof fibre solution. Delivering such a solution would involve the community in managing the project and a major fund-raising programme. The details of this scheme can be found at <https://communityfibre.openreach.co.uk/#home>

The viability of a CFP project will be dependent on identifying a cluster of premises (such as Renwick) and would require both funding and resourcing from the community plus any grants that may be applicable.

These projects tend to be expensive in total but can become viable if the funding options deliver a significant percentage of the total costs.

If through your own experience and the measurement of your own connection with a broadband speed checker you identify any errors I should appreciate feedback in order to improve the quality of this document.

Alternative fast or SFBB broadband services

Until recently the only alternative services for obtaining a fast broadband connection have been by using a fixed wireless or a satellite service.

Fixed wireless broadband

LonsdaleNet (LNS) <http://www.lonsdalenet.co.uk/> are the only supplier of a fixed wireless service within our parish. This service has been available for more than six years and has

benefited the residents of Renwick and many other locations. This technology requires a clear line of sight between the mast fixed to your property and the LNS mast, which will be verified by LNS free of charge before you have to commit to a contract. The standard LNS contracts offer download speeds of either 10 or 20 Mbps with options up to 60 Mbps.

Satellite broadband

There are currently two satellite systems accessible and with up to ten service providers offering a service utilising these satellites. The position of the satellites ensures that almost any location will be able to connect to these services but there are a number of technical issues that impact upon the quality and speed of this technology and generally the cost of this type of connection is higher than either land-line or fixed wireless services.

One of the technical issues with satellite connections is the long latency which makes VOIP telephone calls difficult and any real-time applications such as gaming will not work.

In February this year a third technology became commercially available and this is a fixed 4G service based on the 4G mobile signal.

Fixed 4G broadband

The first mobile operator to introduce a 4G based fixed broadband service is EE:

<https://shop.ee.co.uk/dongles/pay-monthly-mobile-broadband/4gee-router/details>

EE have piloted the technology in the Northern Fells area of Cumbria before the national launch in early February 2018. This service obviously depends upon there being a 4G signal available at your property but because they install an external mast on your property to link into the inhouse router a weak signal on your mobile (at ground level) may not be a true reading of the available signal strength. Their installation charge is £100 and because they are using a mobile contract you have a 14 day “cooling off” period so that if the actual service does not deliver satisfactory speed or reliability you can cancel the contract and receive a £90 refund (equivalent to a non-refundable cost of £10 for a survey). EE are stating that download speeds of up to 70 Mbps should be available with a minimum of 32 Mbps.

The 4G mobile service is dependent upon access to a 4G mast but it is not as sensitive to line of sight issues as is the fixed wireless technology. Additionally the new Emergency Services Network being implemented by EE under a Government contract using 4G technology demands 4G service from anywhere that an Emergency Services vehicle needs to access.

It is highly likely that the other mobile operators will introduce a similar 4G home broadband service, assuming that EE’s service is commercially successful. This would then assist in keeping the charges competitive on an on-going basis.

The other three primary mobile operators (Three, O2 and Vodafone) appear to be playing “catch up” to EE’s 4G offerings currently. None of them offer a tested and integrated external aerial option currently, which in our area is likely to be a requirement for signal boosting.

The following URL's will take you to the web sites of the other mobile operators and you will need to check on these web sites for the latest information if you decide to use one of their services:

Three

<http://www.three.co.uk/Discover/Devices/Huawei/HomeFi?memory=0&colour=Black>

Three offer a router-based service as part of their packages but do not currently offer an integrated external aerial that is likely to be required for boosting the signal to an acceptable level in many of the locations where we are trying to boost broadband.

Vodafone

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/shop/mobile-broadband/dongles-and-mobile-wi-fi/>

Vodafone offer a mobile Wi-Fi service that creates a Wi-Fi hotspot wherever you locate the device. Once again Vodafone do not offer a tested and integrated external aerial for their Mobile Wi-Fi device, hence it will be dependent on the mobile signal strength within your property.

O2

Currently O2 do not appear to offer a fixed broadband service using their 4G signal. They refer you to Sky.com who admitted that their offering uses any available landline service.

Future mobile technologies

Looking further ahead the recent successful Government auction of the 5G mobile frequencies opens up an even faster technology. The introduction of 5G mobile services will ensure that the mobile technology remains competitive for the foreseeable future. There is no date announced yet for the start of 5G services but the sale of the licences should ensure that 5G will be available within the next few years.

How to decide the best option for your location

This is a difficult problem to advise on because there are strengths and weaknesses in each technology and there are many different commercial offerings with each technology.

Firstly, a fixed landline based broadband service, if available with an acceptable speed, is likely to be the least expensive solution.

If you cannot obtain an acceptable fixed landline connection then the attached spreadsheet is an attempt to compare the currently available offerings (as of April 2018) for fixed wireless, satellite and 4G broadband services. These numbers can only be indicative because prices as well as terms and conditions for the offerings are constantly changing and hence I have included the URL for each service provider to enable you to check their current offering.

Beware when you make an enquiry for a 4G mobile signal-based service. Some mobile operator's customer service staff may be offering you a broadband service based on a landline connection with a very optimistic estimate of the speed. EE have defined a service named Home 4GEE but the other mobile operators may not be so clear in their offering.

The satellite-based services in the spreadsheet are a representative selection but there are other operators that can be found via Google (satellite broadband services).

Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme

The Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme (BBS) has been developed by the UK government to provide access to a subsidised broadband installation to homes and businesses that are unable to access a broadband service with a download speed of at least 2 Mb per second and who will not benefit from the superfast broadband roll out.

The Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme will ensure that no household or business will need to pay more than £400 to install and access a basic broadband service over a 12 month period.

The scheme is now open until end-2020 and further details can be found on the following web site:

<https://basicbroadbandchecker.culture.gov.uk/guide-to-better-broadband-subsidy-scheme.pdf>

Universal Service Obligation

David Cameron committed in November 2015 to implementing a Universal Service Obligation (USO).

This USO will give people the legal right to request an "affordable" connection to broadband with speeds of at least 10 Mbps, no matter where they live.

The process of implementing this commitment has reached the stage of Ofcom publishing on 28th March 2018 the Government's response to the public consultation on design.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/695121/USO_consultation_government_response_28_March.pdf

The final definition of the USO is still some way off and subject to negotiations with the broadband service providers.

The implementation of this USO is unlikely to happen before the end of 2020 and hence is very much a medium-term option.

Other sources of information on broadband services

One of the best web sites for up to date broadband news and information is the Think Broadband web site and this can be accessed via the following URL:

<https://www.thinkbroadband.com/>

Disclaimer

I have prepared this statement in my capacity as Broadband Hub Coordinator for the parishes of Lazonby and Kirkoswald.

I have used authoritative sources for the information.

Due care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information but readers should be aware that the information can change at any time.

I do not make any recommendations for service quality or standards for specific suppliers and potential service users are strongly advised to make their own enquiries and be satisfied with the terms on offer before entering into contractual arrangements.

This report has been placed on the website of Lazonby Parish Council for information only.

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