

# Interested in improving broadband in our area?

## New Government Grants to install fibre broadband are now available

**£1500 for individuals and £3500 for businesses**

Did you know that 96% of homes and businesses in Cheshire now have access to high speed broadband but here in the Norbury area we are stuck in the 4% that don't? BT are unlikely to fund any improvements themselves as there are too few of us to give them a profitable return on investment, and the Connecting Cheshire consortium have run out of money for public subsidy.

Instead of waiting for the industry to get around to us, there is now a possible alternative route to a better service. The Government have recently introduced a **Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme** for areas such as ours to help fund installation of fibre broadband. These vouchers are not available to individuals, but must be claimed as part of a group project.

The best way to do this is to form a **Community Fibre Partnership** with BT. We tell them which properties we want to include, then BT work out an outline cost estimate and how much of their own money they want to invest. The difference is the cost to the community of installing new fibre. If that can all be covered by grants (which BT claim on our behalf), the project goes ahead. If additional personal contributions will be required, that is a separate discussion for the future. The initial cost estimate by BT is **free and without obligation** – if we don't like the answer, we simply walk away and stay with our current inferior options of 3G/4G and satellite.

There are over 80 homes and businesses in the Norbury area that get either limited broadband or none at all, so there is a lot of potential grant money available that could be used to fund the project.

We are looking for support in signing up for the initial cost estimate from BT. It is totally without obligation, and all we need is your 01948 telephone number, postal address, and whether it is residential or business. If you could also provide an e-mail address please (which will not be shared with anybody else without your permission) that will help us keep people informed of developments.

The more people who sign up for the initial estimate, the more attractive the project looks to BT to make their own investments. You can read more about the schemes below.

Links:

Community Fibre Partnerships -	<a href="http://www.communityfibre.openreach.co.uk">http://www.communityfibre.openreach.co.uk</a>
Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme -	<a href="https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/rural">https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/rural</a>
Connecting Cheshire consortium -	<a href="http://www.connectingcheshire.org.uk">http://www.connectingcheshire.org.uk</a>

If you would like to support this, need more information or want to chat about it then please contact us at **norburyfibre@gmail.com** or call on the numbers below. We will provide BT with the addresses for scoping in mid-October, so would appreciate responses by Monday 14<sup>th</sup> please.

Thank you!

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**170 communities are already using Government Gigabit vouchers worth £2.8m to bring fibre to 6,000 homes and businesses, from remote hamlets to *The Shambles* in historic York city centre**