

# Six villages Hyperfast progress report

## We are making progress



**Voucher applications: 176**

**Investment: £19500**

We have three areas where we need to make progress. The first two (applying for voucher and investing) are about raising the money we need to build the network. The third area (wayleaves) is how we get permission to lay ducting on peoples' land.

### 1. Encouraging members of our community to apply for Gigabit Vouchers.

There are 770 addresses in our project area, and we need to get 50% to apply for Gigabit Vouchers to raise enough funding from the government to build our network

**176**

B4RN will start laying the ducting to carry the fibre when we get 30% (231 vouchers) of the community to

apply for vouchers and will start connecting people to the network when we reach 50% (385 vouchers). We currently have **176 voucher applications**.

### 2. Fund raising by investing in B4RN

The funding from each gigabit voucher is not made available until the property that applied for the voucher is connected to the network with a live broadband connection. To fund the initial costs of building the network we need to raise £98000 of extra funding by investing in B4RN.

**£19.5k**

So far, we have raised **£19500 of investment**.

### 3. Getting permission from landowners to lay ducting on their land

The document that formalises the agreement with a landowner giving permission to lay ducting on their land is called a Wayleave. Several landowners have already signed Wayleaves and we are working to encourage others to do the same.

## The Gigabit Voucher scheme is coming to an end

The DCMS (Department for Culture Media and Sport) Runs the Gigabit Voucher scheme to provide government funding for rural communities to build full-fibre networks. This scheme is ending at the end of March 2021. There is no information available about what if anything is going to replace the current scheme, so it is vital that we get as many people in our community to apply for their vouchers before the scheme ends.

## How parish councils can help

The restrictions due to COVID-19 have made it difficult for us to communicate effectively with the whole community. We have been able to contact about 250 residents by email throughout 2020 but there are 770 addresses in our project area. We need your help to contact more people in our community. To do that we are asking you to do the following:

1. Include an item in the agenda of each Parish Council meeting about our broadband project and include a summary of your discussion in the minutes of the meeting.
2. Include information about our project in any printed or electronic communication you distribute to the community
3. Contact your friends and neighbours to encourage them to apply for their Gigabit Voucher.

## What is special about B4RN?

B4RN are different to any other company that could possibly build a full-fibre network in our community:

- They are a non-profit community benefit society which means that everything they do has to benefit the community (by law)
- They are market leaders in full-fibre technology. They are the only company that offers a symmetrical 1Gbps service (the same speed for both downloading and uploading) as standard and they are the first company to offer a 10Gbps service to domestic customers.
- B4RN have 10 years of experience in building full-fibre networks in rural communities and have an excellent track record of service and support.
- B4RN will give the Primary School a full-fibre connection and a 1Gbps broadband service free of charge forever. This is a significant benefit to the school; it will greatly improve upon the current broadband connection and save at least £2000 per year. B4RN are currently working with primary schools within their project areas in Lancashire to upgrade the 1Gbps broadband service to 10Gbps still free forever.
- B4RN are able to help us to build a full-fibre network that will provide fast reliable broadband to everybody in our community that wants it. They can also start as soon as we have raised enough government funding by applying for Gigabit Vouchers.
- All for-profit broadband companies such as BT and Virgin raise their prices every year. B4RN has never increased its price. They do not have an introductory offer they simply charge £30 per month for their 1Gbps symmetrical service. This is the same as the price they charged when they connected their first customer in 2012 and they see no reason to increase their price for the foreseeable future.
- The cost of a B4RN 1Gbps connection is £30 per month which is about half of what the for-profit companies charge for a similar service (none of the other companies offer a symmetrical service as standard). All of the for-profit companies that provide gigabit broadband services have attractive introductory offers but it is unlikely that we will have access to a range of suppliers in order to switch providers once the introductory period expires as we have been used to in the past. When we choose a company to build our network and provide broadband services that is the company we will be stuck with so it is vital that we make the right choice now.

## How long will we have to wait?

If, with your help we can reach our targets for voucher applications and investment then by the end of this year we could be connecting people in our community to our full-fibre gigabit broadband network.

