

**Local Full Fibre Networks Programme  
Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme  
Supplier Bulletin #38  
29 July 2020**

**Introduction**

Take up for the rural part of the Scheme continues to be strong with over £22m worth of vouchers issued since May last year. As a result of this funding, over 2,800 new rural connections have already been delivered. Today we also announce three new top up areas in England.

**Pilot Campaign**

In our last bulletin we advised that BDUK would be launching a pilot advertising and PR campaign to help stimulate demand for rural vouchers in three areas of the UK.

The Broadband Upgrade Fund is now live and you can view the website, including a dedicated suppliers section, at: <https://broadband-upgrade-fund.campaign.gov.uk/>

The advertising campaign will invite residents and businesses eligible for rural vouchers under the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme in Cornwall, three counties in West Wales (Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire), and the English Borderlands (Cumbria and Northumberland), to register their interest for faster, more reliable broadband via the above Broadband Upgrade Fund website by 30th September 2020. Our aim is to help highlight the demand in these areas and make it easier for suppliers to identify potential projects. Residents and businesses will be encouraged to invite their neighbours to register and have the opportunity to volunteer as a Community Co-ordinator as part of the process.

You can see the growing demand in the pilot areas via pins on a map on the suppliers' page of the website <https://broadband-upgrade-fund.campaign.gov.uk/register/supplier>. On this page you will also be able to register your interest in some or all of the pilot areas. By registering your interest you will then be able to make offers to the communities where you are willing to build in response to the accruing value of the vouchers. Only suppliers who are registered for the GBVS will be able to take part in the pilot campaign.

We would appreciate your support to help promote the Broadband Upgrade Fund campaign and engage with Community Co-ordinators and local bodies during the course of the pilot. We will be in touch with you about next steps once you have registered your interest in the Broadband Upgrade Fund.

## **New Top Ups**

In addition to the top up funds we announced in Bulletin#36 we now announce three more areas where increased voucher values are available. To date, top up funds from local bodies have added over £12m to the resource available to support rural connectivity through voucher projects.

To help suppliers understand the range of funds available in different parts of the UK we have created a summary table available from the library area of the Scheme website.

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/media/>

The new areas are: Dorset, Hampshire and Warwickshire. We will update the postcode checker to help suppliers and customers identify whether a postcode is potentially eligible for a top up.

### **Dorset - Top up fund**

From the date of this bulletin, in qualifying parts of Dorset, increased maximum voucher values are available. For rural residential beneficiaries, the maximum value increases by £1,000 to up to £2,500. The maximum value of vouchers for qualifying SME beneficiaries increases by £2,500 to up to £6,000.

These increased values are available in qualifying rural locations where the currently available broadband speed is less than 100 Mbps.

Suppliers who wish to contact the team in Dorset who are keen to support the development of projects in their area, should email: [superfast@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:superfast@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

### **Hampshire - Top up fund**

From the date of this bulletin, Hampshire County Council is able to offer increased maximum voucher values in this area. In this part of the UK the maximum value of vouchers for rural residential beneficiaries increases by £1,500 to up to £3,000.

There is no change in the maximum value of vouchers for SMEs.

These increased values are available in qualifying rural locations where the currently available broadband speed is less than 100 Mbps.

The Hampshire Superfast Broadband team is taking an active role in promoting the scheme and to enable as many people to benefit as possible. Supplier enquiries should be directed to: [Glenn.Peacey@hampshire.gov.uk](mailto:Glenn.Peacey@hampshire.gov.uk).

### **Warwickshire - Top up fund**

From the date of this bulletin, Warwickshire County Council is able to offer increased maximum voucher values in this area. In Warwickshire the maximum value of vouchers for rural residential beneficiaries increases by £2,500 to up to £4,000. The maximum value of vouchers for qualifying SME beneficiaries increases by £500 to up to £4,000.

These increased values are available in qualifying rural locations where the currently

available broadband speed is less than 100 Mbps.

The CSW Broadband team is taking an active role in promoting the scheme to enable as many people to benefit as possible. Supplier enquiries should be directed to:

[broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk](mailto:broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk)

### **Changes to Supplier Terms and Conditions**

In order to make these changes effective, we have updated Schedule 8 – Additional Funding of the Scheme Terms and Conditions. A replacement version of the table in Schedule 8 is now available as a download from the website: <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/media/>

We have also added definitions related to these new top up schemes to Schedule 1 – Definitions. These are set out in the same document.

These updates take effect from the date of this Bulletin.

The PRP Application form has been updated to allow you to request the use of these increased maximum voucher values for qualifying projects in these parts of the UK.

### **Changes to Beneficiary Terms and Conditions**

With effect from the date of this Bulletin we have also updated the Scheme's Beneficiary Terms and Conditions to version 5.4. The changes we have made reflect the availability of these increased voucher values in the named locations. Only the schedules have been amended. <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/media/>

### **Existing Project PRPs in areas with new top up schemes**

Suppliers should be aware that we will only agree to increase voucher values for published Project PRPs, where there is clear evidence that the increase is justified. This could be where the Project contains eligible costs which would otherwise be funded by the beneficiary, or where it would increase the number of beneficiaries on a Project. Any request to make a change of the maximum voucher values in a project should be made using the formal Change Request form in the supplier self-service area of the website.

Vouchers that have been issued cannot be amended to reflect the Top Up voucher values. Suppliers are also reminded that vouchers are not transferable.

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### **Covid 19 Scheme Amendments**

Through earlier Bulletins we introduced a number of relaxations to the Scheme's terms and conditions to reflect the challenges created for suppliers as a result of the Covid-19 situation. Whilst we understand that "normal" has not returned, in order to maintain the Scheme's operational integrity we have begun to plan for the reinstatement of the original Scheme terms and conditions.

Any changes will be communicated to you through future bulletins and reasonable advance notice of the changes will be provided; however, where applicable suppliers should start planning now for the removal of the relaxations to the Scheme terms and conditions.

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For a broader overview of BDUK's work, please also see this webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-digital-uk>

And the link to the Digital Connectivity Portal here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/digital-connectivity-portal> provides additional information we hope you will find useful.

If you have any questions about the Scheme please contact us using the Support function when signed into the website.

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**A pdf version of this bulletin is available to download from:**

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/media/>