



# news release

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## **£1.2M CASH INJECTION FOR SUPERFAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PROJECT WILL HELP BOOST PROSPERITY**

Nearly 3,300 homes and businesses in parts of Grange Park, Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone and the town centre will get access to superfast broadband (download speeds above 24Mbps) thanks to an extension of the Superfast Northamptonshire project.

These latest plans have been confirmed by Northamptonshire County Council following its earlier success in securing additional funding for the project including new commitments from local councils agreed last month.

The £1.2m public/private investment comprises £614,000 of public funding including £338,000 from the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme and contributions from South Northamptonshire Council, Northampton Borough Council and Grange Park Parish Council. BT is contributing a further £613,000.

This brings the total public funding secured for the Superfast Northamptonshire programme to more than £20m over the lifetime of the project. It is being invested in stages and through a range of initiatives to extend the roll out of superfast broadband to those parts of the county which fall outside the private sector's commercial fibre broadband plans.

Over the past few months, the County Council has been working with BT to complete network modelling and design work for the extension plans, which will be delivered as part of the first stage of the Superfast Northamptonshire project, and completed by the end of March 2016.

It is expected that more than 880 properties in Grange Park and more than 2,400 homes and businesses in Northampton will be able to benefit. 180 of these are properties located in the Waterside Enterprise Zone (EZ).

Securing access to superfast broadband is an essential part of the strategy for the EZ to maximise inward investment and indigenous business growth and retention. The plans aim to serve the majority of premises in the EZ, providing speeds up to 80Mbps for those premises located closest to the new fibre cabinets.

The plans are expected to bring the total superfast broadband coverage to be delivered through the first stage of the project to 53,400. It is expected that all of these homes and businesses will benefit from access to superfast broadband speeds of above 24Mbps, with many other properties also gaining access to faster speeds. To upgrade to the faster services when available, people should contact an internet service provider of their choice.

The county council has set an ambitious target to achieve countywide coverage of superfast broadband, working with Government, local partners and telecoms providers.

Over the project's lifetime, public investment could help to bring superfast broadband to as many as 90,000 homes and businesses across Northamptonshire.

The county council is continuing to bring forward initiatives through the Superfast Northamptonshire project, engaging with BT and the wider telecoms market.

The latest plans can be viewed on the project's When and Where map at [www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net](http://www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net)

## **COUNTY COUNCIL, BT AND LOCAL PARTNER QUOTATIONS FOR PRESS USE**

**Cllr Andre Gonzalez De Savage, county council cabinet member for strategic infrastructure and public protection, said:** "This is more great news for the county following announcements at Christmas about the extension of plans in some of our rural villages as well as a second major contract with BT. These take superfast plans secured with public investment to over 73,850 premises and when combined with commercial coverage, provides for 95% of premises in the county.

"Securing connectivity for business is critical to support its success and the Northampton Waterside EZ continues to be a key focus for infrastructure investment for the county and borough councils."

**Steve Henderson, BT's regional director of next generation access said:** "More and more small businesses are now trading far beyond just their local area so a fibre broadband connection is a key part of a successful future for the Waterside Enterprise Zone. Equally, those living in

Grange Park will be pleased to have access to superfast speeds and the many entertainment and learning opportunities it brings.”

**Cllr Dermot Bambridge, South Northamptonshire Council portfolio holder for economic development and regeneration, said:** “It is important that as many houses and premises as possible have superfast broadband available to them, and this is why we have supported this particular case.”

**Cllr Simon Clifford, South Northamptonshire Council ward member for Grange Park, said:** “This is fantastic news for us all across Grange Park. Many people work from home or even run businesses across Grange Park, including many key workers, and this will make a significant difference to all.”

**Councillor David Mackintosh, leader of Northampton Borough Council, said:** “Businesses have an increasing need for superfast connectivity, particularly those operating in knowledge-based sectors.

“The borough already has some of the country’s best superfast broadband coverage, but there is still plenty of work to do if we are to create a level playing field for everyone.

“Ideally, everyone in Northampton will have access superfast broadband in the not-too-distant future.”