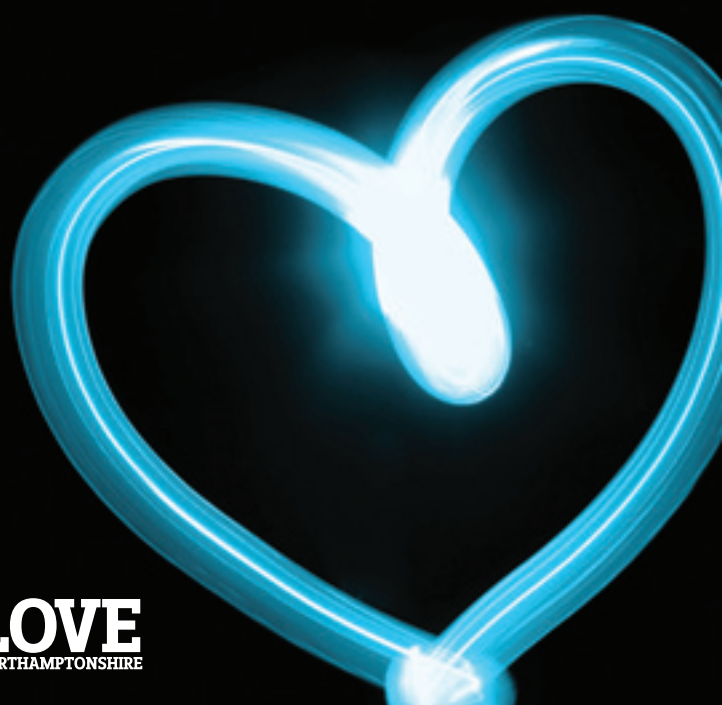


Realising the Benefits of Next Generation Access
for Northamptonshire

Superfast Northamptonshire:

Next Generation Strategy



Extending access to superfast broadband - A Consultation

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Introduction

The County Council is setting out its proposals to help secure access to superfast broadband for all businesses and homes in Northamptonshire by 2017.

This Executive Summary outlines the scope of the Next Generation Strategy including the Vision for Northamptonshire, the purpose of the Strategy, and our ambition and delivery targets. Importantly, it sets out our proposed approach to secure coverage for those premises yet to secure a committed solution – this is the ‘final deployment area’. Access to superfast broadband is a key theme of Northamptonshire’s 10 Point Plan for growth.

A **Prospectus** will be launched in the autumn of 2013 to attract market investment and help us to achieve our goals. It will promote competition, innovation and new investment to extend access to fibre based broadband to all.

We would like your views on our proposals to help us shape this Prospectus.



Why Invest in Northamptonshire?

Northamptonshire is an area with bold ambitions for growth.

The approach is outlined in a robust set of Plans: including Northamptonshire's **10 Point Plan** (March 2013) and the Northamptonshire **Arc Prosperity Plan** (October 2011).

Our goal is for Northamptonshire to continue building on the success stories of the past few years and place itself firmly on the national and international business map. We want to be the place of choice for ambitious small and medium-sized businesses looking to grow in an innovative, supportive and enterprising environment, for multinational companies looking to build their businesses in the UK, and for people wanting to settle and contribute to national economic prosperity.

We want to ensure that the residents of Northamptonshire are given every opportunity to contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity. Access to leading-edge digital connectivity is crucial to this aim.



Northamptonshire
'Most Enterprising Place in Britain'



Winner of two top awards in the Enterprising Britain
Competition 2012

Most Enterprising Place in Britain
Promoting Export



Northamptonshire
County Council

Vision and Targets



Northamptonshire has a clear Vision for the county to be at the leading edge of the global digital economy.

Providing access to superfast broadband for all businesses and homes by 2017 is the ultimate ambition and ensuring that benefits are maximised. The Northamptonshire Next Generation Strategy provides the framework to achieve this. It is being delivered through the 'superfast Northamptonshire' Project overseen by a cross-sector Partnership Board and led by the County Council.

The Strategy has a clear set of targets which aim to deliver:

- fibre based Next Generation Access (NGA) to all premises across the county by 2017, enabling the provision of superfast broadband services capable of providing access line speeds of 30Mbps or more;

Plus interim targets for:

- at least nine out of ten premises to have access to superfast broadband by 2015; and
- all remaining premises in the county to have minimum access line speeds of 2Mbps by 2015.

The County Council encourages investment in other technologies (such as 4G) where these can help deliver better connectivity and choice and meet our speed and coverage targets.

Steps towards full NGC Coverage

A number of elements will contribute towards the achievement of our 2017 target.

These include:

- The existing commercial footprint of network suppliers currently enabling access to superfast broadband and their future plans to extend that deployment commercially in the period up to 2015. This commercial deployment will provide almost three quarters of premises in the county with access to superfast broadband by 2015.
- The County Council's co-investment partnership with BT, the contract for which was signed in March 2013. This was procured under the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) Infrastructure Framework. This will extend coverage up to around 90% of premises by 2015 (when combined with commercial deployment); and
- Commissioning NGA solutions to provide access to superfast broadband for those premises in the final deployment area. These are mostly associated with the rural areas of the county but also include parts of some town centres and business parks. This is now a key priority for the County Council and the Partnership Board.



Purpose of the Strategy

The Next Generation Strategy provides a framework to guide activity in Northamptonshire towards success.

These are in terms of securing the physical deployment of broadband infrastructure to meet our demanding NGA targets, but also to add value to the outcomes and impacts enabled by access to superfast broadband and the technology and applications this supports.

Maximising benefits for business will be a priority in this respect as NGA has the capability to transform business growth, efficiency and productivity.

The Strategy has two strands:

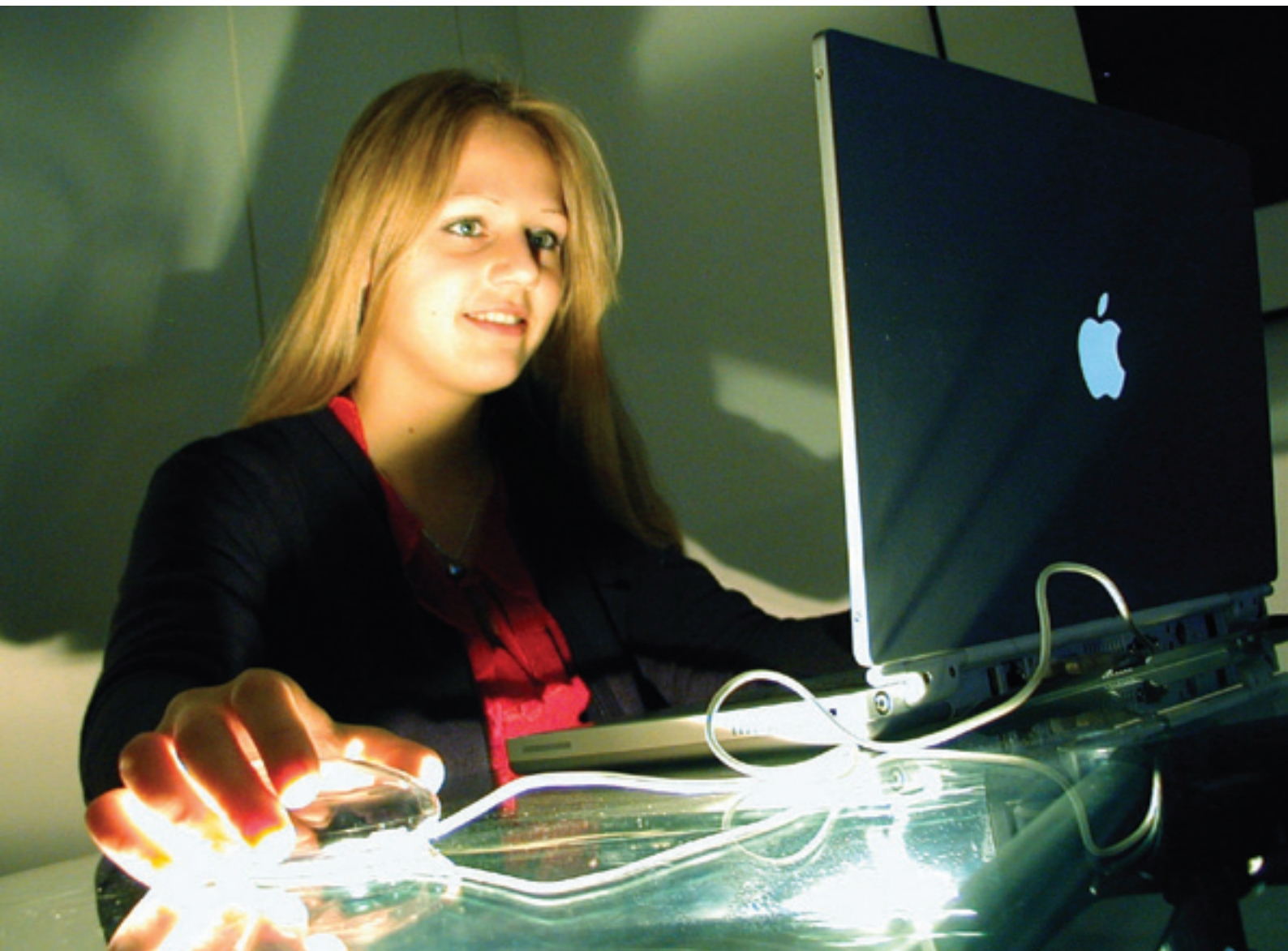
- **Next Generation Infrastructure** - commissioning physical NGA i.e. optical fibre based network capable of supporting access line speeds of at least 30Mbps; and
- **Maximising Benefits** - adding value to maximise the outcomes and impacts enabled through NGA deployment (including demand stimulation, optimising the application of technology (particularly for business), and aligning with other NGA enabled initiatives such as benefits for public sector service provision e.g. telehealth and virtual learning).

This consultation focuses on infrastructure and in particular the proposed approach to extend NGA to the final premises in the county for which provision has yet to be secured.

It is important to note that role of the public sector is limited under European State Aid law to only intervene in those areas where it is unviable for the market to deliver on a commercial basis (known as 'white' areas) or by exception, where only a single supplier is operating (a 'grey' area) and that supplier's solution is proven untenable following a thorough compatibility assessment i.e. where market failure is proven to persist.



Adding value to the outcomes and impacts enabled by access to superfast broadband and the technology this supports.



Scale and Characteristics of the Final Deployment Area

Northamptonshire is currently one of the few places in England which has more clarity on the geography of where the remaining premises requiring access are located.

These are shown on the map opposite (i.e. those areas within the 'by 2017' category of expected deployment). However, the ultimate make up of these final premises may still change during the lifetime of the Project. For example, deployment plans currently envisaged through the County Council's partnership with BT may require amendment once the outcome of survey and planning works is known; or the scope of the intervention area may change as a result of any future further consultation on suppliers commercial plans.

The total area for intervention for superfast Northamptonshire comprises around 87,200 premises located in 'white' areas across the county which would not otherwise support a commercial deployment. Of these, BT will be delivering NGA to around 53,100 premises including 3,000 businesses by 2015 with the support of County Council and BDUK 'gap funding'.

The remaining coverage area is estimated to include over 34,100 premises. These premises can be characterised into locations which include parts of:

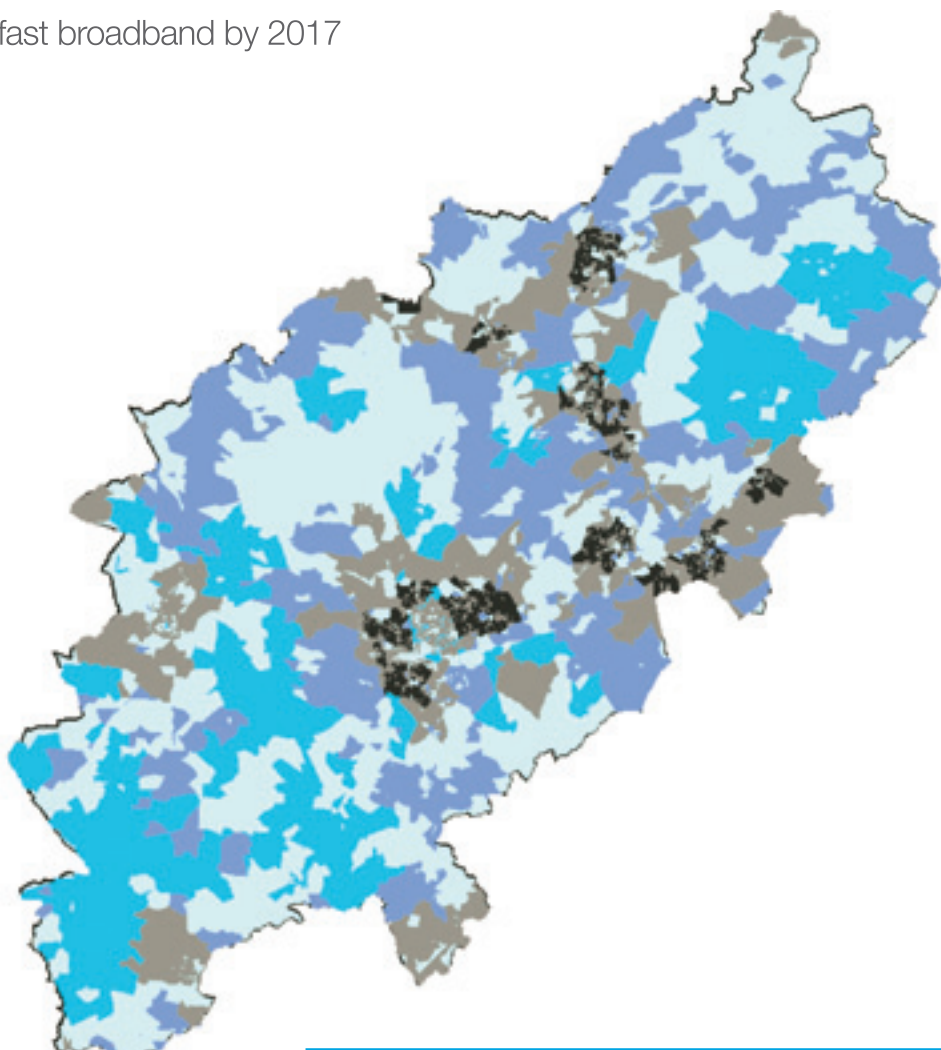
- the town centres of Northampton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough
- the Northampton Enterprise Zone
- a number of Business Parks/Industrial Estates; and
- some rural areas

Solutions for this final deployment phase will be developed in parallel to the mobilisation of the partnership contract with BT to ensure coverage is deployed at the earliest opportunity. Indeed, the County Council is already progressing a number of rural community proposals which if successful will help us boost coverage by 2015 and contribute to the final premises solution.

Superfast Northamptonshire: Expected deployment of superfast broadband by 2017

Purpose

- This map shows an overview of the expected roll out of superfast broadband in Northamptonshire including proposed commercial plans by 2015 and expected deployment in the Project intervention area up to 2017. It is based on information known at June 2013.
- This map is high level only. It is not accurate at premise or postcode level and should not be interpreted as such.
- The superfast Northamptonshire Project is at an early stage. Expected deployment plans as currently shown will be subject to change as further work is progressed including surveys and planning.
- Phased 'go live' announcements will be made on the Project website when confirmed. Visit www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net
- Your frequently asked questions are answered on the Project website
- The next edition of this map providing an update on deployment plans will be available by December 2013.



Deployment expected:

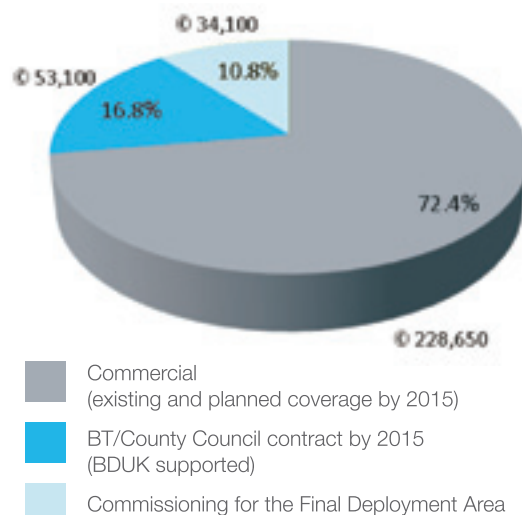
- To start in 2014
- To start in 2015
- Target completion by 2017

Existing and expected commercial coverage* of superfast broadband up to 2015

- One superfast broadband supplier
- Two superfast broadband supplier or more

**Information on commercial coverage collated through an Open Market Review and Public Consultation undertaken in 2012 (to be re-tested in 2014/early 2015)*

Deploying superfast broadband in Northamptonshire



Northamptonshire Approach for the Final Deployment Area

The County Council's proposal to extend NGA deployment towards full coverage by 2017 is based on a targeted and intelligent approach to commissioning.

This seeks to maximise competition, innovation and value for money. In summary the approach involves a number of elements:

- Understanding the final deployment area - key analysis
- Promoting local community and business surveys to understand levels of demand and 'hot spots'
- Market testing and the launch of a NGA Prospectus
- Outlining technical and other requirements
- Creating a Data Bank providing intelligence to the market
- Developing a portfolio of potential investment models to address barriers to the market
- Pursuing and aligning funding from EU, national & local sources to create a Next Generation Investment Fund to support the Investment Portfolio approach
- Working with local stakeholders to identify other assets/ resources e.g. buildings able to 'host' technology or potential anchor tenancies
- Understanding the appetite and capability of community projects including self-build and other self-fund initiatives
- Managing State aid compliance and securing necessary approvals
- A multi-faceted but targeted approach to commissioning to enhance market competition

**Understanding the
Final Deployment Area**

**Resources & Investment
Models**

**Intelligent
Commissioning**

**Governance and
Approvals**

Market Opportunities in Northamptonshire and the NGA Prospectus

The proposed launch of a NGA Prospectus in the autumn will be a key stage.

This will provide more detailed information on the scope and characteristics of the likely final deployment area as well as identifying demand 'hot spots'. It will set out firmer details about the proposed commissioning approach, including the likely technical standards, qualities and key principles underpinning it. Whilst our ambition is for countywide fibre based NGA coverage, we also recognise that access for some premises may just be too costly. Alternative technology solutions with appropriate throughput capabilities and quality characteristics could be considered where the case for NGA is demonstrably unviable and other approaches provide better value for money. For example, advances being made in 4G connectivity could have an important role to play.

Importantly, the Prospectus will also consider the investment opportunity in Northamptonshire including the potential for multiple industry partners to take forward different 'lots' or perhaps a single industry partner or consortium capable of deploying to all of the final premises. It will provide further information on the proposed investment portfolio which the County Council could offer to address barriers to market investment; this may be grants or subsidies to fill gaps in commercial business cases, providing access to capital in the form of loans (commercial or soft), considering joint ventures or investing in different models such as Netco's or 'asset/op co' models. Procurement and State aid considerations in respect of different approaches will need to be managed.

Feedback from the market over the summer will help us to shape the Prospectus.



Programme and Timescales

Stage	2013
Partnership Board and Cabinet decision on proposal & commissioning approach	May – June
Consultation launched on the Next Generation Strategy (NGS) for the final deployment area	June – Aug
Understanding the characteristics of the final deployment area and demand - research data & analysis	June – Sept
Initial market warming	June – Oct
Funding & Resources progressed; NGA Investment Fund created	June – 2017
State Aid considerations & approval applications as required	July – 2017
NGA Prospectus and potential Market Day held in parallel with launch of the Open Data Bank providing intelligence to the wider NGA market; the Prospectus will set out the proposed final deployment area, outline technical & other requirements, investment models, and potential lots. It will invite Expressions of Interest (EOI's) from the market (Soft Market Testing).	Autumn
Review of Market EOI's; refinement of commissioning proposition	Winter
Cabinet decision on approach	Feb 2014
Public consultation with the market on commercial plans to confirm the eligible final deployment area	2014
Full commissioning approach launched	2014
Investment contracts secured – deployment to the final premises	2014 – 2017



We want to hear from you

We would like to hear your views on our approach, particularly from suppliers in the telecoms market, but also from key partners, Government and other stakeholders.

Feedback on our NGA proposals to 2017 will help us to refine our approach in advance of the launch of a NGA Prospectus in the autumn and commissioning which is expected to commence in 2014.

In particular, the County Council would welcome comments on what the barriers may be to extending NGA deployment to the final premises and what measures we can take, working with the market and others, to address these. Information from local partners on the potential availability of re-usable assets and resources will also be of interest. The County Council will also be launching an open 'Data Bank' alongside the NGA Prospectus. We would like to understand what data and information is important to inform market investment decisions to help us populate this.

A full copy of the Next Generation Strategy, including consultation questions, is available on the Project website at: www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net

Please respond by 30th August 2013 to:

Superfast Northamptonshire,
Northamptonshire County Council
Room 274 County Hall,
Northampton, NN1 1DN

Or by email to: bigidea@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Please use the subject description of
'Next Generation Strategy consultation'



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